



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

For educational programmes implemented within the first and second levels of higher education and Georgian language preparation educational programme

Bachelor of Nursing (B.N), 6th level

Caucasus University LLC

23-24 February 2026.

07 august 2026.

Tbilisi

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Information about a Higher Education Institution ¹

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	Caucasus University LLC
Identification Code of Institution	205050567
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Ivana Carev, University of Split, Croatia
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¹ In the case of joint education programme: Please indicate the HEIs that carry out the programme. The indication of an identification code and type of institution is not obligatory if a HEI is recognised in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country.

I. Information on the education programme

Name of Higher Education Programme (in Georgian)	საქონ სსიპი
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	Nursing
Level of Higher Education/programme	Bachelor's
Qualification to be Awarded ²	Bachelor of Nursing (B.N)
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	0913 Nursing and Midwifery
Indication of the right to provide the teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant cycle of the general education ³	
Language of Instruction	English
Number of ECTS credits	240 ECTS
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/ Newly proposed/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	New
Additional requirements for the programme admission (in the case of an art-creative and/or sports educational programme, passing a creative tour/internal competition, or in the case of another programme, specific requirements for admission to the programme/implementation of the programme)	
The quota for MD students requested by the HEI (In the case of Medical Doctor one-cycle educational programme)	

² In case of implementing a joint higher education programme with a higher education institution recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, if the title of the qualification to be awarded differs, it shall be indicated separately for each institution.

³ In case of Integrated Bachelor's-Master's Teacher Training Educational Programme and Teacher Training Educational Programme

II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

▪ General Information on Education Programme

The reviewed Bachelor's programme in Nursing is a four-year, first-cycle higher education programme, delivered primarily in English responding directly to a well-documented shortage of qualified nurses in Georgia and the wider region, where the nurse-to-physician ratio remains significantly below European averages.

Its major strengths include a strong clinical component, small-group practical training supported by a mentorship model, and the use of diverse assessment methods (including OSCE/OSPE, case-based learning, and structured bedside evaluation). The programme benefits from the institution's established experience in medical education, a functional quality assurance system with evidence of feedback-based improvements, updated learning resources with strong digital access, and a clear international orientation.

At the same time, the programme faces several notable challenges. The limited availability of academically trained nursing staff leads to reliance on MD programme staff and invited lecturers, which may affect the long-term development of a distinct nursing academic profile. Language barriers in clinical settings, particularly for international students, remain only partially mitigated despite preparatory Georgian language courses and mentorship support. Research output and academic qualifications among staff involved in the programme are limited, student engagement in governance structures lacks visibility, and international mobility opportunities for nursing students are still underdeveloped. A significant weakness of the programme is the insufficient scientific infrastructure in the biomedical sciences at the university, particularly in relation to research facilities and equipment. While the programme relies on clinical partners for practical training, the material resources for preclinical education (including laboratories, simulation equipment, and research-orientated teaching facilities) require further development to ensure full alignment with contemporary standards of biomedical and nursing education and to adequately support skills training, applied research, and evidence-based learning.

The programme demonstrates strong relevance, sound structure, and adequate institutional support, while requiring targeted development in staffing, language integration in clinical practice, research capacity, student participation, and international mobility to ensure long-term quality and sustainability.

▪ Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit

The visit of the accreditation expert group took place 23–24 February, 2026. Meetings were held with the university administration, the self-evaluation group, the head of the programme, the head of the quality assurance service, academic staff, invited lecturers, students of CU and with the employer. During the meeting, the goals of the bachelor program, results and ways of their implementation, methods of teaching and ways of their implementation, budget and financial resources of the program, human and material resources of the program, syllabi and evaluation system, practice bases, student services, involvement of employers and possible employment opportunities, quality assurance and performance evaluation mechanisms, and the material and technical base was inspected.

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

- Standard 1 – Substantially complying with requirements
- Standard 2 – Substantially complying with requirements
- Standard 3 – Complying with requirements
- Standard 4 – Substantially complying with requirements
- Standard 5 – Complying with requirements

- **Recommendations**

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

- [1.1. Programme Objectives](#)

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- [1.2. Programme Learning Outcomes](#)

- Ensure that learning outcomes are clearly defined, achievable, and **formulated using measurable action verbs in accordance with Bloom’s taxonomy**. Establish **explicit constructive alignment by directly mapping learning outcomes** to specific teaching methods (seminars, lab work, etc.). Provide students with a detailed outline of how each method contributes to the development of knowledge, skills, and competencies.
- Clearly communicate the teaching methods, **constructive alignment**, and learning expectations for each course in detailed syllabi. Ensure students understand how these methods will help them achieve the desired learning outcomes and connect to real-life applications.

- [1.3. Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes](#)

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- [1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme](#)

- To enhance students’ readiness for clinical practice and ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes, it is recommended to integrate adequate level of practical preclinical skills training into foundational courses. This could involve incorporating practical laboratory sessions, hands-on activities, and simulations to help students apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings early in their studies.
- To avoid confusion and ensure alignment with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology in course descriptions and syllabi, particularly regarding laboratory work and “practical”. Some syllabi mention lectures, seminars, and laboratory work, but due to the lack of laboratory facilities, this terminology may be misleading. In the terms of “practical” it is not clear is it seminar, laboratory work or some other teaching method. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations or virtual labs.

1.5. [Academic Course/Subject](#)

- Review and adjust the content of academic courses to ensure that it comprehensively covers the necessary knowledge and skills required to achieve the defined learning outcomes. Ensure that the course content is sufficiently detailed and aligned with the overall program objectives, providing a cohesive learning journey for students.

2. **Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering**

2.1. [Programme Admission Preconditions](#)

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2.2. [The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/ Creative/ Performance and Transferable Skills](#)

- It is recommended to allocate funding to upgrade existing classrooms into nursing skills laboratories, equipped with preclinical laboratory equipment, professional-grade mannequins, essential medical supplies, and basic simulation technology. This will ensure a safe and structured environment for students to begin practicing fundamental nursing procedures from the first year, bridging the gap between theory and clinical practice.
- It is recommended to establish dedicated nursing and clinical research spaces that support evidence-based practice. These labs should be equipped for data collection, patient assessment simulations, and basic clinical investigations. Collaboration with local hospitals, healthcare institutions, and external funding bodies can strengthen resources and provide opportunities for student-led research projects.

2.3. [Teaching and Learning Methods](#)

- To ensure that students develop essential technical skills and achieve key learning outcomes, it is recommended to better align and integrate preclinical and practical laboratory training into foundational courses. This will allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in a hands-on environment, enhancing their clinical reasoning and biochemical data analysis capabilities, which are critical for nursing practice.

2.4. [Student Evaluation](#)

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3. **Student Achievements and Individual Work with Them**

3.1. [Student Consulting and Support Services](#)

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3.2. [Master's Student Supervision](#)

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4. **Providing Teaching Resources**

4.1. [Human Resources](#)

- To address challenges with language barriers in clinical settings, it is recommended to provide language training focused on medical English for both clinical staff and teaching staff who interact with international students.
- Given the diverse and complex nature of nursing education, it is recommended to recruit more full-time faculty members who can dedicate more time to the programme. This will alleviate the strain on current staff members who hold multiple roles and improve the consistency of instruction, research support, and student interaction. This will also help in managing the student-to-staff ratio more effectively, ensuring adequate supervision and mentorship in both academic and clinical settings.
- It is recommended to increase support for academic staff involvement in research and scientific activities by allocating time and resources to engage in research projects. This will not only enhance their professional development but also ensure that research-based learning is embedded throughout the curriculum. This could involve adjusting workloads to allow staff members to balance teaching duties with research activities.

4.2. [Qualification of Supervisors of Master's Student](#)

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4.3. [Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff](#)

- It is recommended to provide greater institutional support to academic and scientific staff for their participation in international research projects and conferences. This could include providing financial support, adjusting workloads, or offering research leave to allow staff to focus on these opportunities.

4.4. [Material Resources](#)

- To enhance the research competencies of both staff and students, it is recommended that the university invest in dedicated biomedical research laboratories.
- While the university has some clinical skills laboratories and medical equipment, it is recommended to upgrade and expand the existing **teaching** laboratory equipment. Ensuring that the labs are state-of-the-art with the latest technology, such as advanced mannequins, biomedical diagnostic tools, and simulators, will significantly enhance students' learning experiences.
- It is recommended that the University systematically review and update its library holdings and course syllabi to ensure all required literature, electronic databases, and learning resources reflect current evidence-based nursing science and clinical practice. The institution must integrate recent editions of core textbooks, high-impact peer-reviewed nursing journals, and up-to-date biomedical databases across all foundational and clinical syllabi prior to program implementation.
- To ensure that students receive the most relevant and up-to-date clinical training, it is recommended that the university improve communication and coordination with clinical practice settings. This could involve better alignment of clinical placements with

the current curriculum, ensuring that clinical mentors are fully aware of the programme goals and learning outcomes.

4.5. [Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability](#)

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

5.1. [Internal Quality Evaluation](#)

5.2. [External Quality Evaluation](#)

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5.3. [Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review](#)

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▪ Suggestions

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

1.1. [Programme Objectives](#)

- To ensure full achievement of programme objectives—particularly those related to independent clinical decision-making, patient-centred care, and professional identity—the university should further develop a dedicated nursing academic staff base. Strengthening nursing-specific expertise will support the effective delivery of competencies defined in the objectives and reinforce the distinct professional role of nurses.
- Given that programme objectives emphasize effective communication, patient-centred care, and safe clinical practice, additional structured support should be introduced to ensure students can fully achieve these outcomes in real clinical environments. This includes strengthening language preparation and clinical communication training to better align intended competencies with practical implementation.
- As the programme objectives highlight preparation for both local and global healthcare contexts, the university should further operationalize these goals through formalized international partnerships, mobility opportunities, and clinical collaborations specific to the nursing programme. This will ensure that the intended contribution to the labour market and global employability is consistently achieved in practice.

1.2. [Programme Learning Outcomes](#)

- Given the learning outcomes' emphasis on effective communication with patients, families, and healthcare teams, the university should further enhance its language support for international students.
- In addition to Georgian language courses, it would be beneficial to offer more focused, medical terminology training in Georgian, as well as structured mentorship programmes that allow international students to practice communication in real-world clinical environments.

- Review and revise the program's organization to ensure a logical progression of courses and modules.

1.3. [Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes](#)

- Given that the nursing programme is new, it is suggested to conduct targeted evaluations and site visits once the programme has been fully implemented for at least one cohort. These evaluations should specifically focus on the unique aspects of the nursing programme, including student performance, clinical placements, and the alignment of learning outcomes with real-world practice.
- To ensure the new nursing programme is on track to meet its learning outcomes and professional standards, it is suggested that the university integrates regular monitoring and observation of the programme's progress into its broader institutional assessment system.
- Implement a structured feedback loop where program assessment results are consistently analyzed and used to inform curriculum adjustments, teaching methods, and the development of learning outcomes. This ensures that the program evolves based on student performance and aligns with both academic standards and industry needs.

1.4. [Structure and Content of Educational Programme](#)

- It is suggested to update the study materials used in the syllabi, to ensure that students are working with the most current resources. While the selected materials are generally appropriate, some may be outdated. Providing the latest editions of textbooks, research articles, and clinical guidelines will ensure that students are learning from the most up-to-date knowledge and practices in the nursing field, which is crucial for preparing them for professional practice.
- The programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations and collaborative laboratories for practical skills development.

1.5. [Academic Course/Subject](#)

- To enhance students' readiness for clinical practice and ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes, it is recommended to integrate practical preclinical skills training into foundational courses. This could involve incorporating practical laboratory sessions, hands-on activities, and simulations to help students apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings early in their studies.
- To avoid confusion and ensure alignment with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology in course descriptions and syllabi, particularly regarding laboratory work. Some syllabi mention lectures, seminars, and laboratory work, but due to the lack of laboratory facilities, this terminology may be misleading. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations or virtual labs.

- The programme should incorporate the latest editions of textbooks, as well as current clinical guidelines and international standards from organizations such as WHO, CDC, and ANA. This will ensure that students are exposed to the most relevant research, technological advancements, and best practices in nursing, keeping the curriculum aligned with contemporary healthcare developments.

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

2.1. [Programme Admission Preconditions](#)

2.2. [The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/ Creative/ Performance and Transferable Skills](#)

- Introduce high-fidelity patient simulators and simulation rooms to replicate complex clinical scenarios. These environments will enable students to develop clinical reasoning, decision-making, and patient care planning skills in a controlled and safe setting. Regularly scheduled simulation sessions should be integrated across all years of study.
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of all nursing skills and simulation labs to ensure compliance with healthcare safety standards. This includes appropriate infection control measures, emergency equipment, ventilation, and secure access. Establish clear maintenance protocols and continuous staff training to uphold quality and safety in practical teaching environments.
- Update the syllabus to mandate weekly lab rotations from year one, embedding them in teamwork, leadership, and communication modules with mentorship pairings. Use booking software for access; program coordinator tracks utilization to ensure high capacity and ties sessions to conference prep.
- Train staff on protocols through workshops, then create a digital maintenance log for all new facilities. Nursing faculty lead annual audits with student feedback surveys; allocate ongoing funds for upkeep, adjusting based on metrics like safety incidents or competency gains.
- Integrate simulation-based learning and research activities into core nursing competencies, including teamwork, leadership, communication, and ethical decision-making. Provide structured mentorship for students to engage in research dissemination (e.g., conferences, posters), and implement annual reviews to monitor progress in clinical skills development and scientific inquiry.

2.3. [Teaching and Learning Methods](#)

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2.4. [Student Evaluation](#)

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3. Student Achievements and Individual Work with Them

3.1. [Student Consulting and Support Services](#)

- Caucasus University is encouraged to increase awareness and clearly communicate the structure and functioning of different student service units and self-governance structures to its students.

3.2. [Master's Student Supervision](#)

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4. **Providing Teaching Resources**

4.1. [Human Resources](#)

- It is suggested to reevaluate the workload distribution of academic staff who also hold positions in clinics and at multiple universities. Given their multiple professional commitments, this could affect their availability for student engagement, mentorship, and high-quality instruction. The university should ensure that staff members have the appropriate time to dedicate to the programme and its students, preventing any negative impact on the quality of education and student support.
- It is suggested to increase the availability of staff for direct student mentorship and support. To maintain the quality of clinical training, individual consultations, and personalized academic guidance, it would be beneficial to adjust staffing levels and consider hiring additional faculty members or administrative support to ensure that students receive the attention they need to succeed.
- It is suggested to organize regular training sessions on teaching methods for academic staff, particularly those involved in the nursing programme. As teaching practices evolve and new instructional technologies emerge, providing staff with up-to-date pedagogical training will enhance the quality of education and ensure staff are equipped with the most effective methods for delivering both theoretical and practical content.
- Develop clear indicators and regularly track staff turnover, workload, and satisfaction to ensure early identification of potential risks and maintain long-term programme stability.
- Develop a strategic staffing plan that anticipates future needs (e.g., increased student enrollment, expansion of clinical training), ensuring timely recruitment and balanced distribution between academic and invited staff.

4.2. [Qualification of Supervisors of Master's Student](#)

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4.3. [Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff](#)

- To ensure sustained professional growth, it is recommended that the university develop clear career development pathways for academic, scientific, and invited staff. This should include opportunities for advancement, access to research funding, and regular evaluations of performance, which could be tied to research achievements, teaching excellence, and contributions to the nursing profession.

- To ensure that academic and scientific staff stay current with emerging trends in nursing education and research, it is recommended to offer regular training sessions on research methodologies, funding opportunities, and academic writing.
- To support the development of junior academic staff and invited lecturers, it is recommended to implement a mentorship program that pairs less experienced faculty members with senior staff or external experts.

4.4. [Material Resources](#)

- Clinical settings should be adequately equipped to support students in their clinical rotations, with sufficient resources such as medical equipment, computers for patient data entry, and access to electronic health records for a seamless integration of theory into practice.
- Simulation-based learning is a vital part of the nursing curriculum, and it is recommended to increase the investment in simulation technologies. This could involve expanding the simulation labs with more high-fidelity mannequins, virtual reality (VR) tools, and interactive medical software.

4.5. [Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability](#)

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

5.1. [Internal Quality Evaluation](#)

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5.2. [External Quality Evaluation](#)

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5.3. [Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review](#)

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- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)⁴**
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- **Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI**
- **Quantitative Data Analysis of the educational programme in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation standards, for example:**
 - **Staff and Supervisors** - Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, international and invited staff), including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction; ratio of the

⁴ A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

academic/scientific staff and invited staff; ratio of the affiliated and academic staff; ratio of Master's students to supervisors; supervisors' workload scheme;

The study program is supported by a diverse and multidisciplinary academic body, ensuring adequate coverage of teaching, research, and clinical components.

The total number of academic staff involved in the program is 73, structured as follows:

Professors: 8 (of which 5 are affiliated staff)

Associate Professors: 8 (of which 4 are affiliated staff)

Assistant Professors: 10 (of which 8 are affiliated staff)

Assistants: data not specified

In addition, the program benefits from the engagement of 47 visiting (invited) staff, contributing to the practical, clinical, and international dimensions of the program. Scientific staff are also involved, although their number is not separately specified. The inclusion of international staff further strengthens the global perspective of the program and supports the delivery of courses in English. Affiliated staff form a significant proportion within senior academic ranks, ensuring continuity, institutional commitment, and alignment with program objectives.

Regarding staff qualifications, the program includes academic personnel with sectoral expertise and doctoral degrees (PhD) in relevant fields, particularly within higher academic ranks, which supports the scientific and research-based orientation of the program.

The ratio of academic/scientific to invited staff reflects a model that combines strong institutional academic capacity with additional expertise from clinical practice and international environments.

Supervision of students, particularly in clinical and practical components, is organized through: small-group teaching (8–10 students per practical group), mentor-based supervision in clinical settings, ensuring individualized guidance and continuous assessment, structured workload distribution among staff to balance teaching, mentoring, and research responsibilities.

Although the program does not explicitly include Master's-level supervision ratios, the existing structure ensures that student-to-supervisor interaction remains intensive and supportive, particularly during clinical training.

- **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 index; Staff participation rates in local and international conferences; other scientific/research indicators;

The scientific and research indicators of the staff involved in the programme demonstrate a solid level of academic activity, particularly in terms of publication output and engagement in scholarly dissemination over the past five years. The total research index of 202, including 107 publications in international peer-reviewed journals, reflects a strong orientation toward internationally recognized research, which is a positive indicator of academic quality and visibility. The additional 35 publications in local journals further support engagement with the regional academic community.

Staff participation in conferences, with 18 presentations at international and 15 at local events, indicates moderate but consistent involvement in scientific exchange and professional networking. These

activities contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and the integration of contemporary developments into teaching practice. Furthermore, the presence of 27 additional scientific/research outputs suggests broader engagement in academic and professional activities, including projects and collaborations.

- **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.);

As this is a newly established study programme, the academic staff turnover rate cannot yet be assessed in the traditional sense over a five-year period. However, available data indicate a stable initial staffing structure, with 26 newly engaged academic staff and no recorded staff departures, resulting in a 0% turnover rate at the initial stage.

- **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;

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

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

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

	Standard	Evaluation
1.	1.1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	Substantially complying with requirements
1.1	Programme Objectives	Comply with requirements
1.2	Programme Learning Outcomes	Substantially complying with requirements
1.3	Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Complying with requirements
1.4	Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Substantially complying with requirements
1.5	Academic Course/Subject	Substantially complying with requirements
2.	Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Substantially complying with requirements
2.1	Programme Admission Preconditions	Comply with requirements
2.2	The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/ Creative/ Performance and Transferable Skills	Partially complying with requirements
2.3	Teaching and Learning Methods	Substantially complying with requirements
2.4	Student Evaluation	Comply with requirements
3.	Student Achievements and Individual Work with Them	Complying with requirements
3.1	Student Consulting and Support Services	Comply with requirements
3.2	Master's Student Supervision	/
4	Providing Teaching Resources	Substantially complying with requirements
4.1	Human Resources	Substantially complying with requirements
4.2	Qualification of Supervisors of Master's Student	/
4.3	Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff	Substantially complying with requirements
4.4	Material Resources	Partially complying with requirements

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

Guidelines and Standards (See link)

[Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programmes](#)

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

[Suggestions on the evaluation of the methodology for determining the threshold number of student quotas on a higher education institution educational programme of a certified medical doctor](#)

[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

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 HEI. 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.

1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives consider the specificity of the field of study, level and 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The objectives of the programme are appropriately framed within the context of nursing as a regulated healthcare profession. They address the development of broad theoretical knowledge, clinical and practical competences, patient-centred and evidence-based care, communication and teamwork skills, ethical and legal awareness, and the ability to use modern healthcare technologies and informatics in professional practice. The programme also aims to foster professional development, leadership, and research awareness, which demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary nursing role.

A particular strength of the programme is its clear response to a documented societal and sectoral need. During the site visit, university representatives, employers, and academic staff consistently emphasized the severe shortage of qualified nurses in Georgia, as well as the low nurse-to-doctor ratio compared to European standards. The programme objectives are therefore not only educationally appropriate, but also socially relevant, as they aim to contribute to strengthening the healthcare workforce and improving the quality of patient care in the country. In this respect, the programme demonstrates a meaningful contribution to the development of both the field and society.

The objectives also reflect international orientation. The programme is to be implemented in English, which is justified by the international student population, the university's strategic orientation, and the need to prepare graduates for both local and global professional contexts. The use of English-language first-hand medical literature, international clinical partnerships, and the intention to align the programme with international standards further support the relevance of the programme objectives. The programme's design also appears responsive to cross-border mobility and international employability, especially given the demand for nurses in European healthcare systems.

The programme objectives are generally well aligned with the Georgian National Qualifications Framework, sectoral benchmarks, and relevant international frameworks, including the expectations associated with regulated healthcare education. The university demonstrated awareness of national healthcare regulations and explained the rationale for the four-year structure of the programme in light of governmental decisions and international recommendations. This indicates that the programme objectives are not arbitrarily formulated, but embedded within the regulatory and professional framework of the field.

At the same time, the site visit identified several issues that may affect the full realization of the programme objectives in practice. While the objectives themselves are appropriate and ambitious, some implementation-related challenges remain. Although the institution considers access to English-language sources a strategic advantage and does not wish to rely on delayed translations, this may still present difficulties for some students, especially in the local context. In addition, the language barrier in clinical practice for international students remains a significant challenge. The programme includes Georgian language instruction in the first two semesters and a mentorship model for clinical placements, but it is not yet fully convincing that this support alone will be sufficient to ensure smooth and independent clinical communication from the third semester onward.

Another challenge concerns the professional identity and status of nursing in the Georgian context. Several interviewees pointed out that nurses are still often perceived primarily as assistants to doctors rather than autonomous healthcare professionals with independent responsibilities in patient care. While the programme objectives appropriately aim to address and transform this mentality, this also means that the programme is operating in an environment where the intended professional profile is not yet fully established in practice. This creates a degree of risk for the practical achievement of the stated objectives, especially in clinical placements where existing professional culture may not fully reflect the intended graduate attributes.

The staffing model also raises some questions relevant to the sustainability of the programme objectives. The university explained that several courses overlap with the MD programme and therefore rely on existing academic staff, while new invited lecturers and practitioners are involved for nursing-specific components. This is understandable in the initial phase; however, the programme would benefit from further strengthening of a stable core of academically and professionally qualified nursing staff, particularly staff with advanced academic qualifications in nursing. During the visit, it became evident that there is still a limited pool of highly qualified nurse educators in Georgia, which is itself a broader sectoral problem, but one that directly affects the programme's capacity to fully achieve its goals.

The fact that local and international clinical partners were unaware of the start of the program highlights a serious issue in communication and coordination. Effective collaboration requires clear and timely communication between educational institutions and their clinical partners. This oversight could lead to delays in clinical placements, missed learning opportunities for students, and strained relationships with clinical partners.

The issue of speaking English for staff in the clinical settings raises concerns about the preparedness of the clinical partners for international students. English proficiency is crucial, especially in healthcare environments where clear communication is essential for patient care. If clinical staff cannot communicate effectively in English, international students will face significant challenges in their clinical practice, potentially compromising both their learning experience and patient safety.

Nevertheless, the programme shows several positive features supporting the achievement of its objectives. These include substantial clinical practice volume, collaboration with local and international clinical partners, plans for scholarships, opportunities for participation in research and university publications, and institutional support for conferences and extracurricular academic activities. Employers expressed clear support for the programme and confirmed the urgent labour market need for such graduates. The university has also benchmarked the programme against other nursing programmes and sought to incorporate employer expectations, which strengthens confidence in the relevance of the objectives.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum Bachelor of nursing;

- Bachelour of Nursing program syllabi;
- Medicine Sector Benchmarks of Higher Education;
- National Qualifications Framework,;
- Statute of Caucasus University.

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- To ensure full achievement of programme objectives—particularly those related to independent clinical decision-making, patient-centred care, and professional identity—the university should further develop a dedicated nursing academic staff base. Strengthening nursing-specific expertise will support the effective delivery of competencies defined in the objectives and reinforce the distinct professional role of nurses.
- Given that programme objectives emphasize effective communication, patient-centred care, and safe clinical practice, additional structured support should be introduced to ensure students can fully achieve these outcomes in real clinical environments. This includes strengthening language preparation and clinical communication training to better align intended competencies with practical implementation.
- As the programme objectives highlight preparation for both local and global healthcare contexts, the university should further operationalize these goals through formalized international partnerships, mobility opportunities, and clinical collaborations specific to the nursing programme. This will ensure that the intended contribution to the labour market and global employability is consistently achieved in practice.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
1.1 Programme Objectives	Comply with requirements

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The programme learning outcomes are mostly aligned with the programme objectives and reflect the specificity of the nursing profession as a regulated healthcare field. They are structured in accordance with the sectoral characteristics of higher education for Bachelor-level nursing programmes and are designed to ensure the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and professional values. They provide a solid foundation for a quality learning process and a curriculum focused on professional development and patient-centred care.

The learning outcomes comprehensively address the three key domains: knowledge and understanding, skills, and responsibility and autonomy.

In the domain of knowledge and understanding, the outcomes appropriately include the identification and application of key concepts, theories, and principles of nursing disciplines relevant to evidence-based practice. They emphasize patient-centred care, cultural competence, ethics, health policy, and patient safety. Students are expected to classify and interpret clinical information, differentiate between normal and pathological conditions, and apply evidence-based reasoning to predict patient outcomes. The inclusion of research literacy and the use of health informatics and modern technologies further demonstrates alignment with contemporary healthcare standards.

In the domain of skills, the learning outcomes reflect the applied and practice-oriented nature of the programme. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in essential nursing procedures, risk assessment, and the planning, implementation, and evaluation of individualized care programmes. Critical thinking, clinical judgment, and the ability to analyse patient data are explicitly emphasized. Communication skills with patients, families, and multidisciplinary teams are also well embedded, supporting the delivery of quality care. Furthermore, the integration of evidence-based practice, use of modern healthcare technologies (including electronic health records and telemedicine), and continuous evaluation and adjustment of care plans indicate a comprehensive and up-to-date skill set.

In terms of responsibility and autonomy, the learning outcomes clearly define expectations related to professional accountability, ethical conduct, and lifelong learning. Graduates are expected to take responsibility for their own professional development, engage with ongoing research and innovation in nursing, and uphold standards of patient dignity, advocacy, and confidentiality. This is particularly important in the context of strengthening the professional identity of nurses and promoting a more autonomous role within healthcare systems.

The alignment between programme learning outcomes and course-level implementation is generally appropriate. Assessment methods—including clinical evaluation, case-based learning (CBL), problem-based learning (PBL), OSCE/OSPE formats, and practical checklists are suitable for measuring the intended competencies across all domains.

However, despite the strong formulation of learning outcomes, several challenges identified during the site visit may affect their full and consistent achievement in practice.

While it is mentioned that the learning outcomes are logically related to the program objectives and the specifics of the study field, the reality described in the syllabi contradicts this. If some learning outcomes are deemed "not reachable" due to the organization of the work, this indicates a misalignment between the curriculum design and the expectations set for students. This could result in students being assessed on outcomes that are unrealistic or unattainable given the structure of the program.

The lack of clarity regarding whether students will have seminars or lab work is a serious issue. Seminars and lab work are different pedagogical approaches that lead to different learning outcomes. Seminars tend to focus more on theoretical knowledge, discussion, and critical thinking, whereas lab work is more hands-on, focusing on the practical application of knowledge and skill development. The absence of clear information about which methods will

be used hinders students' ability to prepare effectively for their learning, and may result in confusion regarding their academic progress and expectations.

The failure to clarify the instructional methods leads to inconsistency in learning experiences. Different types of learning environments (seminars vs. labs) cultivate distinct skills. If the program doesn't specify which learning method will be employed in certain modules or courses, students may not fully develop the intended skills, especially practical skills needed for real-life settings. This can undermine the value of the learning outcomes and affect the program's overall quality.

The clinical environment in Georgia, where nurses are still often perceived as assistants rather than independent professionals, may limit students' ability to fully develop the level of autonomy and responsibility described in the learning outcomes. Additionally, language barriers in clinical settings, particularly for international students, may hinder the effective attainment of communication-related competencies. Although language courses and mentorship support are provided, their sufficiency remains to be demonstrated in practice.

Another challenge relates to the limited number of academically qualified nursing staff. While the programme benefits from experienced medical professionals and invited practitioners, the development of nursing-specific competencies, especially those related to leadership, research, and professional identity, would be further strengthened by a more stable core of highly qualified nursing educators.

Nevertheless, the programme demonstrates important strengths that support the achievement of learning outcomes, including a strong emphasis on clinical practice, alignment with labour market needs, collaboration with healthcare institutions, and institutional support for research and professional development. Employers confirmed that the competencies outlined in the learning outcomes are relevant and needed in the healthcare system.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum of Bachelor of Nursing program;
- Bachelor of Nursing program syllabi;
- Mechanism for evaluation learning outcomes.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that learning outcomes are clearly defined, achievable, and **formulated using measurable action verbs in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy**. Establish **explicit constructive alignment by directly mapping learning outcomes** to specific teaching methods (seminars, lab work, etc.). Provide students with a detailed outline of how each method contributes to the development of knowledge, skills, and competencies.
- Clearly communicate the teaching methods, **constructive alignment**, and learning expectations for each course in detailed syllabi. Ensure students understand how these methods will help them achieve the desired learning outcomes and connect to real-life applications.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Given the learning outcomes' emphasis on effective communication with patients, families, and healthcare teams, the university should further enhance its language support for international students.

- In addition to Georgian language courses, it would be beneficial to offer more focused, medical terminology training in Georgian, as well as structured mentorship programmes that allow international students to practice communication in real-world clinical environments.
- Review and revise the program's organization to ensure a logical progression of courses and modules.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	Substantially complying with requirements

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

- Evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes are defined; the programme learning outcomes evaluation cycle 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 Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the self-evaluation report (SER), supporting documents, and information collected during the site visit, the education programme demonstrates a robust and comprehensive evaluation mechanism for measuring programme learning outcomes. The assessment mechanisms in place are well-integrated with the programme's structure and are aligned with its goals. The system uses a combination of direct and indirect evaluation methods to assess the achievement of the programme learning outcomes, providing a thorough and objective measurement of students' progress and competencies.

The programme employs direct evaluation methods, which include observation of students' use of the programme components and the achievement of mandatory learning outcomes. This is done through various tools and assessment techniques, such as quizzes, tests, essays, midterm exams, presentations, and final exams. These assessments are linked to specific learning outcomes defined in the syllabus, ensuring that students meet the minimum competency rate required for each component. The programme's direct evaluation method uses a threshold of 80% of students (or at least ten students per group) achieving the required competencies in order to deem a learning outcome successfully met. This percentage aligns with best practices in higher education, ensuring the programme's focus on quality learning and accountability.

The grouping of study courses related to specific learning outcomes provides a clear overview of how individual courses contribute to the overall achievement of programme learning outcomes. The aggregation of results from various assessments in the different courses further strengthens the reliability and validity of the evaluation process. This systematic monitoring mechanism, which is updated annually, allows for continuous reflection and improvement based on performance metrics.

In addition to direct assessments, the programme incorporates indirect evaluation methods, such as monitoring student dynamics, programme completion rates, student mobility, and the employment rate of graduates. These indicators provide valuable insights into the broader impact of the programme on students' long-term success and their integration into the workforce. Regular surveys of stakeholders—students, academic and invited personnel, graduates, and employers—provide additional feedback and qualitative data on the programme's effectiveness. These surveys, conducted both electronically and in face-to-face “round table” meetings, contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the programme's strengths and areas for improvement.

The programme's assessment mechanism adheres to principles of objectivity, reliability, validity, and transparency, ensuring that each component of the programme is evaluated according to predefined indicators and standardized methods. These assessment techniques comprehensively cover all aspects of nursing education:

1. **Assessment of Clinical and Practical Skills:**
 - **OSCE/OSPE** (Objective Structured Clinical Examinations) are employed to assess technical skills, communication, ethics, and patient safety competencies.
 - **DOPS** (Direct Observation of Procedural Skills) and **WPBA** (Workplace-Based Assessment) allow for practical, real-world assessments of professional behavior, clinical reasoning, and communication in clinical settings.
 - Clinical practice assessments are conducted based on a detailed skills matrix, ensuring that students demonstrate proficiency in the practical application of nursing knowledge.
2. **Assessment of Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making:**
 - **CBL** (Case-Based Learning), **PBL** (Problem-Based Learning), and **CBCR** (Case-Based Critical Reflection) sessions assess students' analytical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork skills.
 - Clinical case analyses help students demonstrate the ability to justify diagnostic and care decisions, reinforcing critical thinking in patient care.
3. **Assessment of Theoretical Knowledge:**
 - **MCQ Exams** (Multiple Choice Questions) assess students' theoretical understanding and integration of nursing concepts.
 - **Oral Assessments** are used to check students' ability to reason, communicate, and interpret their knowledge effectively.
4. **Assessment of Academic, Research, and Professional Competencies:**
 - **Presentations, Essays, Research Assignments:** These tools assess students' academic communication, research skills, and evidence-based thinking.
 - **Portfolios and Student Diaries** track professional growth, self-reflection, and accountability over the duration of the programme.
 - **Mentor Assessments** provide individual monitoring of students' professional development, ensuring a personalized approach to student evaluation.

The integration of these diverse assessment methods ensures a well-rounded evaluation of student progress, with a focus on both theoretical and practical competencies. The continuous feedback system further supports the development of students' skills and professional behavior, ensuring they meet both the programme's learning outcomes and the professional standards required for independent practice.

The programme's evaluation mechanism meets the formal accreditation requirements by using objective and standardized methods of assessment, thus ensuring that students acquire the necessary competencies to practice safely and effectively as registered nurses. The use of various direct and indirect evaluation tools guarantees that the programme learning outcomes are consistently measured and aligned with international nursing standards. Additionally, the balance between formative (ongoing) and summative assessments allows for continuous student development and improvement, both academically and professionally.

It is important to note that the programme being evaluated is new, and during the site visit, many of the observations and insights were drawn from assessments and experiences of other established programmes within the university. While this provided valuable context, it also meant that some of the specific mechanisms and practices related to the new nursing programme were not fully developed or observable in real-time. As the programme progresses and more data becomes available, it will be essential to conduct further evaluations and site visits to assess the programme's effectiveness and ensure that its learning outcomes and assessment mechanisms are being fully implemented in alignment with the university's standards and the expectations of the healthcare sector.

The evaluation mechanisms of the program learning outcomes should be closely aligned with the defined learning outcomes, and it is crucial that the entire evaluation cycle, comprising the definition, collection, and analysis of data, is clearly established and effectively implemented. A key area for improvement is ensuring that the learning outcomes are not only achievable but also measurable through appropriate assessment methods. As mentioned earlier, a lack of clarity in the instructional methods and program organization can make it difficult to assess whether students are reaching the intended outcomes. To improve this, clear and specific evaluation criteria should be developed for each learning method (seminars, labs, etc.), with distinct metrics for both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that the results from program assessments are actively utilized for the continuous improvement of the program. If assessment results are not consistently analyzed or tied to actionable feedback, the program cannot effectively evolve based on student performance. Implementing a well-structured feedback loop where evaluation results directly inform curriculum updates, teaching methods, and learning outcomes can significantly enhance the program's overall effectiveness. Regularly collecting and analyzing data from both students and faculty will provide a clear picture of where improvements are necessary, making it easier to align the program with both academic standards and the needs of the job market.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum of Bachelour of Nursing Program;
- Bachelour of Nursing program syllabi;
- Mechanism for evaluation learning outcomes.

Recommendations:

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Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Given that the nursing programme is new, it is suggested to conduct targeted evaluations and site visits once the programme has been fully implemented for at least one cohort. These evaluations should specifically focus on the unique aspects of the nursing programme, including student performance, clinical placements, and the alignment of learning outcomes with real-world practice.
- To ensure the new nursing programme is on track to meet its learning outcomes and professional standards, it is suggested that the university integrates regular monitoring and observation of the programme's progress into its broader institutional assessment system.

- Implement a structured feedback loop where program assessment results are consistently analyzed and used to inform curriculum adjustments, teaching methods, and the development of learning outcomes. This ensures that the program evolves based on student performance and aligns with both academic standards and industry needs.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Complying with requirements

1.4. Structure and Content of Education Programme

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Bachelor of Nursing programme is developed in accordance with the Sectoral Characteristics of Nursing Education (2025) approved by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of Georgia. This is fully aligned with the National Qualifications Framework, professional regulatory requirements, and the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.

The curricular structure of the Caucasus University Nurse educational program ensures the progressive and systematic development of professional competencies. The programme comprises 240 ECTS credits, which are spread across eight semesters (four years), with each academic year consisting of 60 ECTS credits. This structure is consistent with standard European higher education frameworks, ensuring that students are provided with a balanced workload throughout the duration of the programme. The credit distribution (with an average of 29-31 ECTS credits per semester) is well-calculated and adheres to the norm of 25 hours per ECTS, which includes both contact hours (e.g., lectures, seminars, and practical sessions) and independent study (e.g., assignments, research, and self-directed learning). This careful planning of academic workload helps facilitate student-centered learning, allowing students to manage their study pace while achieving the programme's goals effectively.

The mandatory component (223 ECTS) includes basic medical sciences (111 ECTS), extensive clinical practice (97 ECTS), language courses (Georgian/German/French – 12 ECTS), and a research methodology module (3 ECTS). The elective component (17 ECTS) broadens students' knowledge in contemporary fields such as innovative care technologies, global health, patient safety, and professional development.

The structure of the programme ensures a logical progression of courses, with mandatory courses making up 223 ECTS and elective courses accounting for 17 ECTS. The inclusion of both mandatory and elective courses offers students a solid foundation in essential nursing knowledge while providing opportunities for academic exploration and specialization in areas of interest. The content of the programme is comprehensive, covering core areas such as anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, and pathophysiology, which are necessary for understanding the fundamentals of nursing practice.

The content and credit allocation for each course directly align with the intended learning outcomes required of the nursing profession. The curriculum includes general education courses, foundational biomedical subjects, clinical disciplines, and professional nursing modules, ensuring coherent and incremental competency development. Theoretical learning is closely integrated with simulation-based activities and real clinical practice, enhancing clinical reasoning, decision-making, professional responsibility, and patient-centered care.

Based on the self-evaluation report (SER), supporting documents, and observations from the site visit, the structure and content of the Bachelor of Nursing programme are well-aligned with the programme's goals, ensuring that students are prepared to achieve the desired learning outcomes. The programme is designed in accordance with the ECTS system, focusing on a student-centered approach that aligns with best practices in higher education and ensures the academic workload is appropriately distributed to meet the learning objectives.

The content of the programme covers essential nursing disciplines, including core subjects such as anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and microbiology, ensuring that students gain a solid theoretical foundation. The inclusion of clinical practice as the primary practical component is a strong focus of the programme, allowing students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world healthcare settings. This hands-on experience is critical for the development of practical skills and professional competencies.

To ensure that the programme's learning outcomes are achievable, it is recommended to integrate practical activities and laboratory work into courses like Biochemistry, where students are expected to develop skills such as analyzing and interpreting biochemical data (e.g., arterial blood gases, lipid profiles, HbA1c) and performing laboratory procedures. As stated in the course description, students are expected to apply biochemical principles to assess clinical conditions and integrate biochemical knowledge into nursing assessments and patient education. Without adequate practical activities or laboratory facilities, it will be impossible for students to achieve these outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial to incorporate hands-on learning opportunities and ensure that biochemical laboratory resources are available to support the theoretical knowledge being taught. This will not only enhance student learning but will also ensure that students gain the necessary competencies required for effective clinical practice.

However, it is worth noting that the practical activities in the programme are limited to clinical practice and do not include sufficient preclinical skills training. Courses like Anatomy and Physiology, Biochemistry, and Microbiology are crucial for understanding the scientific foundation of nursing but currently lack a practical or hands-on component. This could potentially hinder the achievement of some of the programme's learning outcomes, especially those related to technical proficiency and the application of theoretical knowledge to real-life scenarios. Integrating preclinical practical training in these areas could enhance students' readiness for clinical placements and ensure that they can effectively translate their theoretical knowledge into practice from the very beginning of their studies. While the programme's focus on clinical practice is essential, expanding practical activities to include preclinical practice and skills labs would provide students with the opportunity to develop basic nursing skills and techniques in a controlled environment before they enter clinical settings. This would ensure

that students are fully prepared to handle clinical situations with greater competence and confidence.

To align the course descriptions and learning outcomes with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology used in the syllabi, particularly in relation to laboratory work. Some syllabi mention that students will have lectures and seminars followed by lectures and laboratory work, but there is a clear mismatch in terminology, as the laboratories are almost nonexistent, as observed during the site visit. This suggests that students may only experience seminars and not actual laboratory sessions. To ensure the achievement of learning outcomes—especially for courses like Biochemistry, where laboratory skills are crucial—the programme should either provide the necessary laboratory facilities or revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should clearly state this and consider alternative ways to incorporate hands-on practical experiences or simulations to meet the required learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes of the main study courses in the Bachelor's Program of Nursing are designed to align with the overall program learning outcomes. This integration ensures that the content and number of credits for each study course are appropriate for achieving the specific learning outcomes of the course, which, in turn, contribute to the program's comprehensive goals. The study materials specified in the syllabi are based on the latest advancements in the field of nursing. These materials are carefully selected to ensure they support the achievement of the program's learning outcomes. Although the literature which have been selected in syllabi are appropriate but many of them have more recent editions and it seems necessary to provide the latest version in the syllabi. The integration of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, ethical standards, and research principles ensures a comprehensive educational experience. The program's clinical practice components provide essential hands-on training across various medical fields, preparing students for successful careers in nursing. This focus on student-centered learning and the integration of clinical practice align well with both national and international standards for nursing education.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum of Bachelor of Nursing program;
- Bachelor of Nursing program syllabi;
- Rules for the implementation of educational programs;
- Mechanism for evaluating the learning outcomes of Nursing Program.

Recommendations:

- To enhance students' readiness for clinical practice and ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes, it is recommended to integrate adequate level of practical preclinical skills training into foundational courses. This could involve incorporating practical laboratory sessions, hands-on activities, and simulations to help students apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings early in their studies.
- To avoid confusion and ensure alignment with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology in course descriptions and syllabi, particularly regarding laboratory work and "practical". Some syllabi mention lectures, seminars, practical and laboratory work, but due to the lack of laboratory facilities, this terminology may be misleading. In the terms of "practical" it is not clear is it seminar,

laboratory work or some other teaching method. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations or virtual labs.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- It is recommended to update the study materials used in the syllabi, to ensure that students are working with the most current resources. While the selected materials are generally appropriate, some may be outdated. Providing the latest editions of textbooks, research articles, and clinical guidelines will ensure that students are learning from the most up-to-date knowledge and practices in the nursing field, which is crucial for preparing them for professional practice.
- The programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations and collaborative laboratories for practical skills development.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
<u>1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme</u>	Substantially complying with requirements

1.5. Academic Course/Subject

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Bachelor of Nursing programme is well-structured, with mostly well alignment between course content, credits, and learning outcomes. Based on the self-evaluation report (SER), supporting documentation, and observations from the site visit, the programme effectively prepares students to achieve the required competencies.

The curricular structure of the Caucasus University Nurse educational program ensures the progressive and systematic development of professional competencies. The mandatory component (223 ECTS) includes basic medical sciences (111 ECTS), extensive clinical practice (97 ECTS), language courses (Georgian/German/French – 12 ECTS), and a research methodology module (3 ECTS). The elective component (17 ECTS) broadens students' knowledge in contemporary fields such as innovative care technologies, global health, patient safety, and professional development.

The content and credit allocation for each course align with the intended learning outcomes required of the nursing profession. The curriculum includes general education courses, foundational biomedical subjects, clinical disciplines, and professional nursing modules, ensuring coherent and incremental competency development. Theoretical learning is closely integrated with simulation-based activities and real clinical practice, enhancing clinical reasoning, decision-making, professional responsibility, and patient-centered care.

Courses within the programme are designed with defined aims and learning outcomes that are aligned with the programme-level objectives and the Nursing Field Characteristics (2025). The content of these courses directly supports the development of the 13 essential professional competencies for registered nurses, such as patient assessment, clinical reasoning, ethical and legal responsibility, infection prevention, and leadership. This systematic integration of competencies ensures that students develop the necessary skills, knowledge, and professional behaviour progressively over the course of the programme.

The programme's structure includes foundational, professional, clinical, and integrated courses, ensuring that students build a solid theoretical foundation in early semesters, transitioning to more advanced clinical practice in the later stages. The alignment between course content and learning outcomes is clear, with each course contributing to the overall achievement of the programme's goals.

However, there are significant gaps in the practical training provided, particularly in foundational courses such as Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, and Microbiology. While these courses provide crucial theoretical knowledge, the lack of practical laboratory skills training in these areas is a serious concern. The absence of hands-on experience in laboratory settings limits students' ability to apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios, thereby hindering the development of essential practical competencies. For instance, in Biochemistry, where students are expected to analyze and interpret biochemical data (e.g., arterial blood gases, lipid profiles, HbA1c), without adequate laboratory resources or practical exercises, it is not feasible for students to fully develop these skills. This gap in laboratory training could potentially affect the achievement of key programme learning outcomes, particularly those related to technical proficiency and the ability to safely and effectively apply theoretical knowledge in clinical settings.

In addition to the lack of practical preclinical skills, the study materials used in the programme, although largely appropriate, are outdated in some cases. It is crucial that the programme regularly updates its study materials, especially in core subjects, to ensure students are learning from the most current and relevant resources. The use of recent editions of textbooks and the incorporation of up-to-date clinical guidelines (from organizations such as WHO, CDC, and ANA) are essential for maintaining the programme's alignment with contemporary healthcare practices.

The alignment between the content of academic courses, the number of credits, and the achievement of learning outcomes is crucial for ensuring that students are fully prepared to meet the goals set by the program. While it is mentioned that the course content and credits are intended to support the achievement of learning outcomes, it is important to ensure that both the depth and scope of the content are sufficient for students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. If the course content is not appropriately aligned with the intended learning outcomes, students may find themselves underprepared for real-world application.

In terms of the content of the main field of study, it is essential that it comprehensively covers the areas needed to achieve the broader learning outcomes of the program. The program should ensure that each course in the main field of study builds on prior knowledge, contributing to a cohesive learning journey. If gaps exist in the content, or if some outcomes are not adequately addressed, students may miss critical aspects of the program that are necessary for success in their professional field.

The integration of theory and practice is generally one of the programme's strongest components. The programme ensures that theoretical learning is progressively linked to clinical practice through simulation-based training and real-world clinical placements. However, the absence of preclinical laboratory training in key foundational courses significantly limits this integration, as students are not given enough opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in a controlled, practical environment before they enter real clinical settings.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interview
- Curriculum of Bachelour of Nursing program;
- Bachelour of Nursing Program Syllabi.

Recommendations:

- Review and adjust the content of academic courses to ensure that it comprehensively covers the necessary knowledge and skills required to achieve the defined learning outcomes. Ensure that the course content is sufficiently detailed and aligned with the overall program objectives, providing a cohesive learning journey for students.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- To enhance students' readiness for clinical practice and ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes, it is recommended to integrate practical preclinical skills training into foundational courses. This could involve incorporating practical laboratory sessions, hands-on activities, and simulations to help students apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings early in their studies.
- To avoid confusion and ensure alignment with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology in course descriptions and syllabi, particularly regarding laboratory work. Some syllabi mention lectures, seminars, and laboratory work, but due to the lack of laboratory facilities, this terminology may be misleading. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations or virtual labs.
- The programme should incorporate the latest editions of textbooks, as well as current clinical guidelines and international standards from organizations such as WHO, CDC, and ANA. This will ensure that students are exposed to the most relevant research, technological advancements, and best practices in nursing, keeping the curriculum aligned with contemporary healthcare developments.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

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

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The prerequisites for admission to the Bachelor's Educational Program in Nursing are clearly defined. They are consistent with Georgia's current legislation and the applicable regulations governing higher education. Enrollment in the program is based on a document certifying the completion of full general secondary education (a school-leaving certificate or its equivalent) and on the results of the Unified National Examinations, thereby ensuring a minimum standard of academic preparedness for admitted students.

The curriculum provides for distinct admission mechanisms for foreign nationals and for individuals who completed their full general secondary education abroad. These mechanisms are grounded in legally established exceptions and ensure equitable access to the program. Given the program's instruction in a foreign language, a minimum level of English proficiency (no lower than B1) has been established, which must be demonstrated by an internationally recognized certificate or an internal assessment conducted by the university.

The system of admission prerequisites is transparent, predetermined, and accessible to all prospective applicants. It ensures the equitable selection of candidates and establishes the foundation for the realistic attainment of the program's intended learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit
- Self evaluation report

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- /

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions	Complying with requirements

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

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the self-evaluation report (SER), supporting documentation, and site visit observations, the Bachelor of Nursing programme demonstrates an intention to support the development of students' practical, scientific/research, creative/performing, and transferable skills. The programme is conceptually designed to enable the progressive acquisition of competencies required for effective nursing practice, combining theoretical instruction and practical experience.

The curriculum places emphasis on the early development of practical skills, with clinical skills identified as key components. Students are expected to engage in hands-on learning, practicing nursing procedures, delivering patient-centred care, and participating in clinical decision-making. These experiences are further extended through clinical placements in healthcare settings.

However, site visit observations reveal inconsistencies between the programme's stated design and its implementation. There is a lack of clarity and precision in the use of terminology related to laboratory-based learning, with spaces described as "clinical skills laboratories" or "laboratories" not consistently aligning with standard expectations of such facilities. This suggests a degree of overstatement in programme documentation and raises concerns regarding the accurate representation of teaching conditions.

Under international accreditation frameworks (such as the World Federation for Medical Education [WFME] and European Quality Assurance standards [ENQA]), there is a strict functional and structural distinction between a Classroom with Visual Aids, a Teaching Laboratory, and a Research Laboratory. Presenting a standard lecture classroom equipped with visual demonstration aids does not constitute a functional Teaching Laboratory (where every student actively executes hands-on scientific protocols) or a Research Laboratory (equipped with operational BSL containment, biosafety cabinets, and utility lines).

In addition, inconsistencies were identified between course syllabi and defined learning outcomes, particularly in relation to the development of practical and preclinical skills. The articulation of these skills is not consistently aligned across modules, which may limit the coherence and progression of skill acquisition throughout the programme. This lack of alignment raises concerns regarding the systematic development and assessment of essential competencies.

Additionally, there is a lack of dedicated laboratory facilities for research activities in areas like biomedicine, which severely limits students' opportunities to engage in hands-on scientific inquiry. The absence of these resources compromises the achievement of the programme's scientific/research competencies and restricts students' ability to gain research experience in a

controlled, safe environment. Without appropriate laboratory spaces, students cannot fully engage in scientific research or develop critical research skills such as data collection, analysis, and evidence-based conclusions.

The programme includes research components, such as case analyses, small-scale research projects, and the application of evidence-based practice, which aim to develop scientific and research competencies. Students are encouraged to engage in research projects, where they learn to collect and analyze data, prepare research presentations, and strengthen their academic writing and critical appraisal skills. However, given the lack of research facilities, particularly in the biomedical and clinical fields, the programme faces challenges in fully delivering on its scientific/research goals. It is essential that the university invests in research laboratories and provides appropriate resources to support students' engagement in scientific inquiry and biomedical research, in line with the programme's objectives.

The creative/performing skills component of the programme, which involves the innovative application of professional practice and care planning, is implemented through clinical case studies, assignments, and simulation exercises. While these activities promote critical thinking and problem-solving, the absence of adequate simulation laboratories limits the ability to fully assess and develop students' creative approaches to managing complex clinical situations. Providing more simulation opportunities would allow students to explore innovative solutions and develop clinical decision-making skills in a realistic yet controlled environment.

The programme effectively integrates transferable skills, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and ethical responsibility, through both classroom learning and clinical placements.

Despite the emphasis on transferable skills, the lack of dedicated research laboratories and simulation facilities for clinical practice creates gaps in the development of students' competencies. This is particularly important for the creative/performing and scientific/research skills, which require access to proper resources, including laboratories and simulation tools. The absence of these facilities hinders students' ability to fully engage with the hands-on aspects of nursing practice and scientific inquiry.

Several critical gaps were identified in the practical and research components of the curriculum. The lack of adequately equipped laboratories and research facilities significantly limits students' opportunities to develop the required competencies in clinical practice and scientific research, which are essential for a comprehensive nursing education. Furthermore, the lack of safe, accessible laboratory environments raises concerns about student safety and the effectiveness of learning in these areas.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum of Bachelour of Nursing Program;
- Bachelour of Nursing Program Syllabi.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to allocate funding to upgrade existing classrooms into nursing skills laboratories, equipped with preclinical laboratory equipment, professional-grade mannequins, essential medical supplies, and basic simulation technology. This will ensure a safe and structured environment for students to begin practicing fundamental nursing procedures from the first year, bridging the gap between theory and clinical practice.

- It is recommended to establish dedicated nursing and clinical research spaces that support evidence-based practice. These labs should be equipped for data collection, patient assessment simulations, and basic clinical investigations. Collaboration with local hospitals, healthcare institutions, and external funding bodies can strengthen resources and provide opportunities for student-led research projects.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Introduce high-fidelity patient simulators and simulation rooms to replicate complex clinical scenarios. These environments will enable students to develop clinical reasoning, decision-making, and patient care planning skills in a controlled and safe setting. Regularly scheduled simulation sessions should be integrated across all years of study.
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of all nursing skills and simulation labs to ensure compliance with healthcare safety standards. This includes appropriate infection control measures, emergency equipment, ventilation, and secure access. Establish clear maintenance protocols and continuous staff training to uphold quality and safety in practical teaching environments.
- Update the syllabus to mandate weekly lab rotations from year one, embedding them in teamwork, leadership, and communication modules with mentorship pairings. Use booking software for access; program coordinator tracks utilization to ensure high capacity and ties sessions to conference prep.
- Train staff on protocols through workshops, then create a digital maintenance log for all new facilities. Nursing faculty lead annual audits with student feedback surveys; allocate ongoing funds for upkeep, adjusting based on metrics like safety incidents or competency gains.
- Integrate simulation-based learning and research activities into core nursing competencies, including teamwork, leadership, communication, and ethical decision-making. Provide structured mentorship for students to engage in research dissemination (e.g., conferences, posters), and implement annual reviews to monitor progress in clinical skills development and scientific inquiry.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
2.2. The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills	Partially compliant

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

The programme is implemented by use student-oriented 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 Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Bachelor of Nursing programme employs a student-centered approach to teaching and learning, utilizing a wide range of active and integrated pedagogical methods that align with the programme's objectives and intended learning outcomes. The teaching methods foster the transformation of theoretical knowledge into practical competencies and engage students in critical thinking and clinical reasoning. The instructional process includes interactive lectures, seminars, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Case-Based Learning (CBL/CBCR), and Team-Based Learning (TBL), all of which are effective in promoting active student engagement and independent learning. These methods contribute significantly to developing students' clinical skills and professional behaviors.

Simulation-based instruction, including the use of standardized patients and bedside teaching, creates a safe environment for students to develop practical and communicative skills. Clinical rotations further enhance the integration of theoretical knowledge into real-world practice. Additionally, the use of digital technologies and electronic learning platforms supports information retrieval, clinical decision-making, and the development of research skills.

A key strength of the programme is the mentorship programme, which provides students with individual support and feedback, fostering the development of professional identity, ethical behavior, and leadership competencies. This is complemented by the use of systematic feedback mechanisms that allow students to reflect on their progress and foster self-assessment competencies.

However, despite these strong instructional methods, there is a significant gap in the development of laboratory skills, which is crucial for the students' overall practical competency. While the programme includes clinical skills training and simulation-based learning, laboratory work is almost non-existent in foundational courses such as Biochemistry, Anatomy, and Microbiology, where hands-on laboratory practice is essential for reinforcing theoretical knowledge. The lack of sufficient laboratory-based teaching limits students' ability to develop technical and practical skills that are necessary for clinical practice, particularly in areas like biochemical data analysis and clinical diagnostics.

The current focus on clinical practice and simulation is commendable, but it does not adequately address the foundational need for preclinical laboratory skills. Without proper laboratory facilities and practical exercises, students are not able to engage in key aspects of their education, such as performing biochemical analyses or learning technical procedures in a controlled environment. This gap in practical training could hinder the achievement of certain learning outcomes, particularly those related to technical proficiency and the safe application of clinical knowledge.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Curriculum of Bachelour of Nursing Program;
- Bachelour of Nursing Program Syllabi.

Recommendations:

- To ensure that students develop essential technical skills and achieve key learning outcomes, it is recommended to better align and integrate preclinical practical laboratory training into foundational courses. This will allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in a hands-on environment, enhancing their clinical reasoning and biochemical data analysis capabilities, which are critical for nursing practice.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
2.3. Teaching and learning methods	Substantially complying with requirements

2.4. Student Evaluation

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the review of institutional documentation, including course syllabi and the assessment policy, as well as interviews conducted with academic staff, students, and administrative representatives during the site visit, it can be concluded that student evaluation at Caucasus University is generally conducted in accordance with established procedures and demonstrates substantial alignment with the requirements of fairness, transparency, reliability, and compliance with existing legislation. The syllabi clearly describe assessment components, methods, and grading criteria in advance, all of which is provided in a timely manner to students, as well as information regarding midterm examinations, final examinations, clinical performance assessment, and other course-specific requirements.

The assessment methods observed during the visit appropriately reflect the specificity of the courses and correspond to the stated learning outcomes. In theoretical and pre-clinical components, evaluation includes written MCQs, case-based learning (CBL) and problem-based learning (PBL) formats, ensuring active participation of every student within small groups. The limited number of students per group (generally 6-10 students for practical laboratory sessions and clinical clerkships) creates conditions conducive to individualized observation and fair assessment. During CBL and PBL sessions, each student is actively engaged and assessed through structured questioning, analysis of evidence-based cases (including cases modeled on USMLE formats), and clinical reasoning exercises. Additional questioning is used to assess less active students, thereby ensuring that evaluation is comprehensive and equitable. The use of Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) models during midterms and final exams, as well as clinical case presentations organized by organ system, further supports alignment between assessment methods and intended learning outcomes.

In clinical training, the mentorship model appears to provide a structured and individualized approach to assessment. Each clinical group (6-8 students) is assigned a dedicated mentor responsible for direct observation and evaluation. Assessment tools such as bedside evaluation and structured checklists are used to evaluate specific competencies, including history-taking, communication skills, and clinical reasoning. The mentor follows each student during patient interactions and evaluates performance objectively. The daily summary hour, during which students present oral case reports, further contributes to formative assessment and feedback.

The integration of role-play exercises in bioethics and communication, functioning as a mini-OSCE format, strengthens the assessment of professional and communication competencies. At the same time, it was noted that, limited direct patient interaction in certain settings due to language barriers, history-taking may at times be facilitated through translation by mentors or other healthcare professionals. While this ensures objective evaluation of the student's performance, it may limit opportunities for independent patient communication in authentic contexts.

Caucasus University demonstrates mechanisms for providing feedback to students. Students receive feedback immediately after quizzes and class activities, as well as during designated consultation hours. An additional five hours per course are allocated for student consultations, during which professors discuss individual performance, strengths, and areas requiring improvement. This structured opportunity for dialogue supports formative development and allows students to reflect on their learning outcomes. Institutional-level feedback mechanisms are also in place: students complete questionnaires through an electronic platform, and the Quality Assurance manager analyzes the results. Findings are shared with the school administration. Evidence was provided of adjustments made by lecturers in response to student feedback, including modifications to assessment methods and recommended literature, demonstrating that evaluation results are analyzed and utilized for improvement of the teaching process.

The appeals process is formally regulated and communicated to students in advance. Students may submit a written appeal to the lecturer if they contest an assessment result. If dissatisfied with the initial review, they may submit a second appeal, which is examined by a committee including representatives of the Quality Assurance unit, monitoring personnel, and a field specialist other than the original lecturer. The decision is then communicated to the student. This multi-level process contributes to transparency and objectivity by allowing review by independent evaluators and ensuring that mechanisms for redress are accessible.

Overall, Caucasus University has established structured and diverse assessment methods that correspond to course-specific learning outcomes, provide transparency of criteria, ensure opportunities for feedback and appeal, and incorporate academic integrity mechanisms. Small-group formats, mentorship-based clinical assessment, structured checklists, OSPE models, and active learning approaches collectively support fair and reliable student evaluation. While minor barriers were noted regarding direct patient interactions with foreign medical students, the HEI has experience from its other programmes and demonstrates readiness to facilitate these interactions so the students can gain as much knowledge as possible. Therefore, the institution demonstrates compliance with the standard and a functioning system for monitoring and improving the reliability and validity of student assessments, including in contexts that may require structured or distance-supported learning approaches.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report;
- Institutional Documentation (course syllabi, assessment policy);
- Interviews during the sight visit.

Recommendations:

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Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Caucasus University should establish and formally document a clear mapping of learning outcomes to specific assessment components and responsible evaluators within combined modules, ensuring transparency, accountability, and consistency in student evaluation.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
2.4. Student evaluation	Complying with requirements

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 involvement in local and/or international projects; proper quality of scientific guidance is provided for master's student.

3.1. Student Consulting and Support Services

Students receive consultation and support regarding the planning of 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the review of the self-evaluation report, institutional documentation, and interviews conducted with students, alumni, academic staff, and administrative representatives, Caucasus University demonstrates a range of mechanisms aimed at supporting students in academic planning, professional development, and participation in extracurricular and international activities. At the same time, certain structures would benefit from enhanced visibility to ensure their consistent understanding and utilization by students.

Academic support is primarily provided through direct and accessible communication between students and academic or administrative staff. Students and alumni described a

system in which they feel comfortable approaching the administration or faculty members directly – either in person or via email – for guidance related to academic matters and professional advice. Alumni expressed high levels of satisfaction with the educational process, particularly emphasizing the quality of clinical training, the smooth organization of studies, and the value of the final semester research assignment in developing research competencies. Workshops and academic activities were perceived as helpful in preparing graduates for qualification examinations and in maintaining awareness of developments in the medical field.

While institutional documentation refers to structured student services, including a Department of Student Services and a Career Development and Employment Facilitation Office, students were not always able to clearly describe the specific functions of these units. This suggests that, although support is available in practice, the roles and services of these structures could be communicated more explicitly to ensure that students fully recognize and utilize the available resources. Career guidance appears to be provided effectively, though largely through academic staff engagement rather than through a distinctly visible centralized unit.

With respect to internationalization and extracurricular engagement, the Caucasus University demonstrates positive institutional initiatives. The university maintains active cooperation within the framework of Erasmus+ and reports a high level of mobility participation. Although specific agreements for the nursing programme have not yet been finalized, partner institutions have expressed readiness to expand cooperation. Students are aware of exchange opportunities, even if participation has been limited or has not yet occurred. Additionally, Caucasus University supports student involvement in research, publications in the university journal, conference participation (including financial sponsorship), scholarships for high academic achievement, and extracurricular initiatives. Alumni confirmed opportunities for research dissemination and expressed satisfaction with institutional support during their studies.

Overall, students and alumni conveyed a positive perception of their educational experience and indicated that they feel supported within the institutional environment. Caucasus University provides various forms of academic and professional support; however, increased visibility of certain student support and representation structures (i.e Department of Student Services and a Career Development and Employment Facilitation Office, Ombudsman's Office) would further strengthen alignment with the standard and enhance transparency and student engagement.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report;
- Interviews during the sight visit;
- University website;
- Memoranda signed with employers.

Recommendations:

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Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Caucasus University is encouraged to further formalize and clearly communicate the structure and functioning of student self-governance, ensuring inclusive representation of both Georgian and international students, as well as the structure and functioning of different student services.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	Complying with requirements

3.2. Master's Student Supervision

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

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Data related to the supervision of master's students	
Number of master theses supervisors	
Number of master's students	
Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	

Evidences/Indicators

- /

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- /

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
3.2. Master's Students Supervision	/

4. Providing Teaching Resources

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme ensure 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 of appropriate competence.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the self-evaluation report (SER), supporting documents, and observations from the site visit, the staff involved in the English Language Bachelor of Nursing programme is highly qualified, with rich theoretical and practical experience in the relevant field. The programme employs a mix of academic staff (27 members) and invited lecturers(46 members), ensuring a broad spectrum of expertise in both teaching and clinical practice. There are 73 academic and invited staff are involved in the Nurse educational program, including 27 academic staff: 8 Professors (including 5 affiliated Professors), 8 Associate Professors (4 – affiliated), 10 Assistant-Professors (8 affiliated), and 47 invited lecturers.

The staff holds Doctoral degrees in relevant fields or are pursuing doctorates, and possess significant practical experience, publications, and active involvement in current research. This expertise ensures that the learning outcomes of the programme can be effectively achieved, supporting both theoretical and practical learning. The programme staff's qualifications, including those of the academic and invited staff, are sufficient to facilitate the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes. The staff's experience in research, clinical practice, and teaching ensures they are well-equipped to guide students in their academic journey, including providing mentorship and supervision during internships and clinical rotations. The teaching methods employed, such as interactive lectures, problem-based learning (PBL), and simulation-based instruction, are effectively supported by the expertise of these faculty members. This allows students to develop both practical skills and critical thinking needed for a successful nursing career.

A notable challenge in the Bachelor of Nursing programme is the issue surrounding nurses in clinical settings who do not speak English, especially considering the programme's emphasis on preparing students to work in both local and international healthcare environments. For international students, particularly

those whose native language is not Georgian, this language barrier can significantly hinder their ability to communicate with patients, staff, and faculty members during clinical placements. Since English proficiency is crucial in the medical field for accurate communication, clinical decision-making, and ensuring patient safety, the lack of English-speaking nurses in clinical settings creates an additional challenge. This is especially critical in international internships or clinical rotations in global healthcare systems, where English is often the common language.

Furthermore, while the programme includes qualified academic staff, some teaching staff may also face challenges when interacting with students who speak limited Georgian or English. **Because the program is delivered entirely in English, the linguistic proficiency of all instructional and clinical personnel is vital to educational quality and student safety. During the site visit interviews, key teaching and hospital clinical staff designated to supervise students were unable to communicate fluently in English and conducted discussions in Georgian, revealing a clear language barrier that directly affects clinical instruction, supervision, and student evaluation. This observed gap represents an immediate operational issue rather than a prospective enhancement.** This may lead to communication difficulties, affecting the quality of instruction, student understanding, and overall engagement in the learning process. Teachers may struggle to provide adequate feedback or mentorship if there is a language gap, particularly in a programme focused on complex, technical subjects like nursing care, clinical decision-making, and research methodologies. It may also impact the quality of clinical mentoring and patient interactions, as effective communication is essential in both clinical and educational settings.

Administrative and technical staff support also plays a vital role in ensuring smooth programme delivery. The Director of Educational Programmes and Student Services Manager work in close coordination with academic staff to maintain the structure of the curriculum, support individual student progress, and ensure that administrative functions are efficiently managed. Students have direct access to mentorship and counseling, which is essential for personal and professional development.

While the number and workload of academic and invited staff are described as appropriately distributed to ensure the sustainability of the programme and the achievement of learning outcomes, there are several concerns regarding the availability and workload management of key staff members. Many professors involved in the programme also work in clinics and hold positions at multiple universities. This dual workload may lead to time constraints and inconsistent availability for students, potentially impacting the quality of instruction, mentorship, and research activities.

Although the methodology for planning staff numbers takes into account the specifics of the field, the number of students, and the admission contingent, the reality of staff availability—particularly in light of their multiple professional commitments—could affect the quality of student support and engagement. The staff-to-student ratio may appear adequate on paper, but the actual capacity of staff to provide individualized attention and deliver high-quality instruction could be compromised by the demands of multiple roles. Additionally, the integration of research activities and the level of engagement in creative contributions may be limited due to staff being spread across various professional and academic obligations.

To maintain the quality of instruction and support for students, it is critical to reevaluate staff workloads, ensuring that the programme does not rely too heavily on professors with external commitments that may interfere with their full involvement in programme delivery. The university should also consider adjusting the staff-to-student ratio and ensuring that academic staff are able to devote the necessary time to the programme to support individual student needs and research initiatives effectively.

There are significant challenges due to the lack of adequate research facilities at the university. Currently, research activities are limited because the necessary facilities, especially in fields like biomedicine and nursing, are either unavailable or insufficiently equipped. As a result, much of the research conducted by academic staff is not happening within the university, which impedes the development of research-based learning as part of the curriculum.

The Head of the Programme, is highly qualified and possesses the necessary knowledge and experience for the elaboration and implementation of the programme. Her background in teaching and applied research ensures that the programme benefits from strong academic leadership. Associate Professor Machitidze is directly involved in programme development and provides guidance throughout its implementation, ensuring that the curriculum remains aligned with both national and international nursing standards. Her active involvement enhances the credibility of the programme and ensures its continuous improvement.

The administrative and support staff assigned to the programme, including the Student Services Manager and the Director of Educational Programmes, ensure that students are provided with comprehensive technical support, guidance on academic progress, and assistance with extracurricular activities. The mentorship programme also plays a crucial role in fostering student development, helping students navigate both academic and professional challenges. The support staff is appropriately trained, and their responsibilities ensure that students receive the necessary assistance to achieve their learning outcomes and succeed in their studies.

The management of academic human resources is conducted according to established institutional policies and quality assurance frameworks that govern staff recruitment, selection, appointment, and ongoing professional development. These policies and procedures are designed to ensure transparency, equity, and merit-based selection, while guaranteeing that the program is delivered by qualified professionals who possess the necessary educational credentials, clinical expertise, and pedagogical competencies.

The recruitment and selection of both permanent academic staff and invited lecturers are conducted through systematic processes that emphasize:

Candidates are evaluated based on their academic credentials, specialized knowledge in nursing and related health sciences, and evidence of expertise in their respective areas of teaching responsibility.

Given the applied nature of nursing education, significant weight is placed on candidates' clinical practice experience, currency of clinical knowledge, and ability to bridge theoretical content with practical application.

The selection process considers candidates' demonstrated teaching abilities, pedagogical knowledge, and capacity to employ diverse instructional strategies that facilitate student learning.

For academic positions, consideration is given to candidates' engagement in research, scholarly publications, and contribution to the advancement of nursing knowledge.

The appointment of invited lecturers follows comparable criteria, with emphasis placed on their specialized expertise, current clinical practice, teaching experience, and ability to contribute effectively to specific components of the curriculum. The inclusion of invited practitioners enriches the program. Strengths:

- Transparent system for the selection and professional development of academic staff, including training, individual development plans, and mobility opportunities.
- International cooperation and support for academic mobility, strengthening the program's global integration and competitiveness.

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise⁵	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction⁶	Among them, the affiliated staff
Total number of academic staff	73			
- Professor	8			5

⁵ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

⁶ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

- Associate Professor	8			4
- Assistant-Professor	10			8
- Assistant				
Visiting Staff	47			—
Scientific Staff				—
Including International Staff				

As this is a newly established study programme, the academic staff turnover rate cannot yet be assessed in the traditional sense over a five-year period. However, available data indicate a stable initial staffing structure, with 26 newly engaged academic staff and no recorded staff departures, resulting in a 0% turnover rate at the initial stage.

This reflects a high level of institutional stability and commitment in the programme's early implementation phase. The recruitment of academic staff appears to have been strategically planned, ensuring adequate coverage of teaching and clinical components from the outset.

Nevertheless, as the programme develops, it will be important to continuously monitor staff retention, workload distribution, and long-term sustainability, particularly considering potential challenges such as staff mobility, engagement of invited professionals, and increasing student enrollment. Establishing systematic tracking of turnover indicators and implementing retention strategies will be essential for maintaining programme quality over time.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Personal files of academic and invited staff;
- Contracts signed with (previously) academic and invited staff;
- Rules for academic and invited staff workload;
- Order on approval of Program Coordinator and Co-coordinator;
- Statute of Medicine School

Recommendations:

- To address challenges with language barriers in clinical settings, it is recommended to provide language training focused on medical English for both clinical staff and teaching staff who interact with international students.
- Given the diverse and complex nature of nursing education, it is recommended to recruit more full-time faculty members who can dedicate more time to the programme. This will alleviate the strain on current staff members who hold multiple roles and improve the consistency of instruction, research support, and student interaction. This will also help in managing the student-to-staff ratio more effectively, ensuring adequate supervision and mentorship in both academic and clinical settings.
- It is recommended to increase support for academic staff involvement in research and scientific activities by allocating time and resources to engage in research projects. This will not only enhance their professional development but also ensure that research-based learning is embedded throughout the curriculum. This could involve adjusting workloads to allow staff members to balance teaching duties with research activities.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- It is suggested to reevaluate the workload distribution of academic staff who also hold positions in clinics and at multiple universities. Given their multiple professional commitments, this could affect their availability for student engagement, mentorship, and high-quality instruction. The university should ensure that staff members have the appropriate time to dedicate to the programme and its students, preventing any negative impact on the quality of education and student support.
- It is suggested to increase the availability of staff for direct student mentorship and support. To maintain the quality of clinical training, individual consultations, and personalized academic guidance, it would be beneficial to adjust staffing levels and consider hiring additional faculty members or administrative support to ensure that students receive the attention they need to succeed.
- It is suggested to organize regular training sessions on teaching methods for academic staff, particularly those involved in the nursing programme. As teaching practices evolve and new instructional technologies emerge, providing staff with up-to-date pedagogical training will enhance the quality of education and ensure staff are equipped with the most effective methods for delivering both theoretical and practical content.
- Develop clear indicators and regularly track staff turnover, workload, and satisfaction to ensure early identification of potential risks and maintain long-term programme stability.
- Develop a strategic staffing plan that anticipates future needs (e.g., increased student enrollment, expansion of clinical training), ensuring timely recruitment and balanced distribution between academic and invited staff.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
4.1 Human Resources	Substantially complying with requirements

4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's Students

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the education programme 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.

Number of supervisors of Master's theses	Thesis supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated staff
Number of supervisors of Master's thesis			
- Professor			
- Associate Professor			
- Assistant-Professor			
Visiting personnel			—
Scientific Staff			—

Evidences/Indicators

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

Recommendations:

- Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's Students	/

4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Caucasus University has established a systematic framework to evaluate the academic, scientific, and invited staff involved in the Bachelor of Nursing programme. The Research Support Department collects and regularly updates data on scientific papers published by the academic staff, as well as research projects submitted to local donor organizations, primarily the LEPL Shota Rustaveli Georgian National Science Foundation. Additionally, the university holds annual internal calls for research projects, providing funding to support staff research and development.

The staff evaluation process is designed to identify the professional development needs of academic and invited staff, with training and research facilitation being key components. Regular information meetings and training sessions for staff focus on grant funding and research dissemination, enhancing staff knowledge and encouraging participation in local and international scientific events. The programme staff also regularly participates in Erasmus+ mobility programmes and international conferences, contributing to the university's growing emphasis on internationalization and research engagement.

While these structures are in place to support academic and research activities, there are significant shortcomings regarding the biomedical research component of the programme, particularly in terms of facilities and staff engagement in biomedical research. Although the university offers access to electronic scientific databases and provides funding for international projects and conferences, there is a lack of dedicated infrastructure for biomedical research, which limits the ability of academic staff to engage in scientific inquiry in this field.

The Research Support Department has outlined a well-structured process for evaluating research activities and providing support for scientific endeavors, but the lack of laboratory facilities and biomedical research infrastructure presents a serious challenge for both academic staff and students. Despite research opportunities being available in various fields, there is no focus on biomedical research specifically. This limits the programme's ability to foster research skills in critical areas like biomedicine, clinical diagnostics, and nursing sciences, which are central to the nursing curriculum.

Biomedical research, which is crucial for advancing nursing science, is not supported within the current framework. The lack of research infrastructure for these activities also affects the programme's ability to provide students with hands-on experience in scientific inquiry and data collection in biomedical fields.

Moreover, research skills among academic staff are primarily developed through participation in international conferences and EU-funded projects, but the absence of biomedical research facilities means staff are forced to engage in research externally, rather than in-house. This limits the development of scientific skills within the university itself and affects students' opportunities to participate in local research projects, especially those focused on biomedical sciences.

While the Research Support Department at Caucasus University provides a clear framework for supporting research activities, including regular evaluations of academic staff and participation in local and international projects, it is important to note that much of the research work and scientific output of the academic staff is conducted outside the university due to the lack of dedicated biomedical research facilities on campus.

However, the evaluation also identifies certain limitations. Research activity appears to be primarily concentrated within academic staff, while the significant number of invited staff are less visibly engaged in scientific output. Additionally, the absence of formally designated scientific staff (e.g., postdoctoral researchers) and a clearly structured research framework may limit the programme's long-term research capacity and sustainability. Conference participation, while present, could be further strengthened, particularly at the international level, to enhance global academic integration.

Despite the university's support for faculty participation in EU-funded projects, international conferences, and collaborations with foreign universities, the actual research activities are carried out externally, often in partnership with other institutions, research centers, or clinics. This suggests that the university lacks the

necessary infrastructure to support biomedical research within its own facilities. This creates a disconnect between the university's research initiatives and the nursing programme's curriculum, as students are not exposed to research projects or methodologies that are conducted in-house, especially in the biomedical field, which is critical for nursing practice and education.

Moreover, the reliance on external institutions for research diminishes the opportunity for students to engage in local research activities, limiting their access to hands-on, university-led biomedical research projects. Without sufficient laboratories, research spaces, and dedicated biomedical equipment, both staff and students are unable to carry out critical scientific inquiry within the university itself.

Additionally, despite the university's provision of various mobility opportunities, funding for conference participation, and support for paper publishing, these resources are not being fully utilized by the academic staff. While the programme offers access to Erasmus+ mobility programmes, international conferences, and funding for research projects, there is a noticeable lack of active engagement from staff in these opportunities. Many professors and academic staff members seem to have limited involvement in publishing research papers or participating in international events that could enhance their professional development and contribute to the academic visibility of the programme. This underutilization of available research and mobility opportunities hinders the growth and international recognition of both staff and the university. It is crucial for the university to encourage and incentivize staff participation in these programmes to ensure they stay updated with the latest trends in nursing research and education while fostering a culture of academic collaboration on a global scale.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interview
- Questionnaire for academic staff;
- International mobility statistics;
- Memoranda, agreements;
- Reports on the work done by the Research Promotion Department;
- Rules and procedures for internal university funding of research activities
- Information on meetings / events implemented within the framework of international projects on the University website: <https://www.cu.edu.ge/ka/news-page>

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to provide greater institutional support to academic and scientific staff for their participation in international research projects and conferences. This could include providing financial support, adjusting workloads, or offering research leave to allow staff to focus on these opportunities.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- To ensure that academic and scientific staff stay current with emerging trends in nursing education and research, it is recommended to offer regular training sessions on research methodologies, funding opportunities, and academic writing.
- To support the development of junior academic staff and invited lecturers, it is recommended to implement a mentorship program that pairs less experienced faculty members with senior staff or external experts.
- To ensure sustained professional growth, it is recommended that the university develop clear career development pathways for academic, scientific, and invited staff. This

should include opportunities for advancement, access to research funding, and regular evaluations of performance, which could be tied to research achievements, teaching excellence, and contributions to the nursing profession.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
<u>4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff</u>	Substantially complying with requirements

4.4. Material Resources

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Bachelor of Nursing programme at Caucasus University is supported by a variety of information resources and technical infrastructure, including a well-equipped library with access to a comprehensive collection of both printed and electronic materials. The university provides students and staff with access to international academic databases, including EBSCO HOST, ScienceDirect, Scopus, MEDLINE, and others, which are essential for supporting research and academic learning. The university library is also equipped with modern technology, including multimedia projectors, smart boards, and computers with internet access, providing students with the necessary resources for research and academic work. This infrastructure supports the student-centered pedagogical approach, allowing students to access learning materials and engage in research activities relevant to their field of study.

However, despite the university's strong focus on clinical skills training, there is a significant gap in terms of research facilities, particularly in biomedical research. The lack of dedicated research spaces for biomedical sciences and laboratories for scientific inquiry limits the ability of both academic staff and students to engage in comprehensive research activities within the university. Biomedical research, including laboratory work in biomedical fields, is completely absent, which diminishes the opportunity for students and researchers to gain hands-on experience in critical areas of nursing and biomedical sciences.

Additionally, there is a disconnect between the curriculum and the clinical settings. Many clinics and clinical mentors were unaware of the new nursing programme at the time of its launch. This lack of awareness among clinical staff and clinical practice facilities presents challenges in integrating the programme's clinical components effectively. As the clinical rotations are an integral part of the nursing education process, this disconnect could hinder the seamless integration of students into real-world healthcare settings.

While the university offers a wide range of teaching resources and clinical training facilities, the absence of research-focused laboratories severely limits the ability to foster research competencies in students. In particular, the lack of dedicated biomedical research labs hinders the university's ability to engage in scientific research related to nursing practice. Without adequate biomedical facilities, students cannot

develop crucial research skills in fields like pathophysiology, biochemistry, and microbiology, which are vital to the nursing profession.

Furthermore, the lack of dedicated spaces for scientific research means that academic staff have to seek external collaborations for their research activities, resulting in fewer opportunities for students to participate in university-led research projects. This external reliance also limits the ability of staff to build research-based curricula and evidence-based practices within the programme.

The Bachelor of Nursing programme benefits from strong academic resources, including access to modern technologies and well-equipped clinical training laboratories. However, to fully support the development of both practical and scientific competencies, it is critical for the university to invest in biomedical research infrastructure and establish dedicated research laboratories for nursing and related biomedical fields. This will ensure that students not only receive hands-on clinical experience but also engage in research activities that contribute to the advancement of nursing science.

Additionally, the lack of awareness among clinical staff about the programme's launch highlights the need for better communication and integration between the university and clinical practice settings. This gap should be addressed to ensure that clinical placements are effectively aligned with curriculum objectives and that clinical mentors are well-prepared to guide students in applying their knowledge in real-world settings.

The programme is provided by necessary infrastructure, information resources relevant to the field of study and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes. During the site visit, the expert panel had the chance to evaluate the Caucasus University campus located on N1 Paata Saakadze Str., Tbilisi, 0102, Georgia. The campus includes recreational areas for students and staff, foyers, teaching auditoriums, sanitary facilities, a library, research laboratories, conference hall, computer class, spaces for professors, classrooms, and work rooms.

The campus buildings are well-lit, fully adapted for persons with special educational needs (SEN), and comply with sanitary-hygienic standards. Classrooms equipped with essential teaching tools (computers, projectors, projection screens, and other): A library equipped with modern information and communication technologies, an electronic catalogue, and internet access (Wi-Fi and wired connection); Within the program, the following laboratories exist on both university campuses: Main Campus have Two Clinical Skills Training Laboratories, a Histology/Pathology Research Laboratory, and two Anatomy teaching rooms. Second (New) Campus is equipped with Two laboratories for Clinical Skills; additionally, an Anatomy teaching room; Biochemistry, Immunology, Bacteriology, and Molecular laboratories. For nurse and medical programs, University has 12 mobile (modular) OSCE stations.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Material and technical resources of the University;
- Access to international library and academic databases;
- Library Book Fund;
- Medical program laboratories and technical equipment.

Recommendations:

- To enhance the research competencies of both staff and students, it is recommended that the university invest in dedicated biomedical research laboratories.
- While the university has some clinical skills laboratories and medical equipment, it is recommended to upgrade and expand the existing **teaching** laboratory equipment. Ensuring that the labs are state-of-the-art with the latest technology, such as advanced

mannequins, biomedical diagnostic tools, and simulators, will significantly enhance students' learning experiences.

- It is recommended that the University systematically review and update its library holdings and course syllabi to ensure all required literature, electronic databases, and learning resources reflect current evidence-based nursing science and clinical practice. The institution must integrate recent editions of core textbooks, high-impact peer-reviewed nursing journals, and up-to-date biomedical databases across all foundational and clinical syllabi prior to program implementation.
- To ensure that students receive the most relevant and up-to-date clinical training, it is recommended that the university improve communication and coordination with clinical practice settings. This could involve better alignment of clinical placements with the current curriculum, ensuring that clinical mentors are fully aware of the programme goals and learning outcomes.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- Clinical settings should be adequately equipped to support students in their clinical rotations, with sufficient resources such as medical equipment, computers for patient data entry, and access to electronic health records for a seamless integration of theory into practice.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
<u>4.4</u> <u>Material Resources</u>	Partially complying with requirements

4.5 Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in the programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to the programme needs. Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard The budget includes financial support for processes that aim to enhance developmental potential of the faculty, the budget also accounts

for international events, representation and other global engagements, scholarships and other forms of financial support for students, faculty and administrative staff.

Budget of Caucasus University is calculated in accordance with regulations within the university: Rule for Funding Student Projects, Rule for Funding Scientific-Research Projects; Special "Bonus System" for Supporting and Encouraging Scientific-Research Activities. The financial resources allocated by the budget are economically feasible. Furthermore, the financial indicators in the budget fully cover the implementation of activities defined in the strategic development and action plans. Financial resources at the university are used efficiently and are focused on the effective implementation of the university's core activities. After meeting with financial department administrators it was mentioned that in Program budget also noted activities of affiliated staff, Infrastructure projects and Laboratories Costs/ practical centers. Funding professional development of the teaching staff and costs of improving electronic systems will be beneficial for university in accordance with student number increase. The unified University budget also includes costs for Internationalization and Career support measures for students and graduates, which provides program support and accordingly, achievement the learning outcomes set by the program.

Evidences/Indicators

- Site visit and interviews
- Educational program budget.

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- /

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
<u>4.5. Programme/ Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability</u>	Complying with requirements

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

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

5.1 Internal Quality Evaluation

Programme staff 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the submitted documentation and interviews conducted during the accreditation process of the English-language nursing educational program at Caucasus University, it is clear that issues related to internal quality assurance at the university are coordinated by the academic director/coordinator of the presented program at the Caucasus University School of Medicine, the program co-director, and the Quality Assurance Department.

They monitor and are involved in all stages of the processes: planning, implementation, verification, and development (ongoing assessments, the main task of which is to improve the quality of teaching and research at the university and promote integration into the common European educational space).

It should be noted that the relevant procedures, assessment tools, and mechanisms are described in the concept of internal quality assurance of the university and in the program implementation and evaluation procedures.

According to the heads of the Quality Assurance Department, the Quality Service, through the evaluation of educational and scientific-research activities, professional development of academic personnel, and the development of appropriate recommendations, participates in the preparation of self-assessment for university authorization and accreditation in cooperation with academic/administrative personnel, in identifying strengths and weaknesses in relation to standards, and in developing appropriate recommendations to eliminate the identified weaknesses.

To ensure the above, the Quality Assurance Service relies on the regulatory provisions governing its activities.

Well-planned and implemented procedures are in place, on the basis of which the assessment of ongoing processes is carried out. Based on the assessment results, further development and improvement are carried out in accordance with the principle of "plan, do, check, act."

It is important to note that participation in surveys of stakeholders ensures not only the receipt of important feedback, but also the sharing of responsibility for improving the presented program. It is desirable to establish a student governance body, which would contribute to enhancing student engagement, including in research activities, and strengthening communication with students.

According to representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, the evaluation of the educational program is a regular process, for which both direct and indirect methods are used, as well as both quantitative and qualitative data.

This is supported by the presented package of documents and the information voiced in interviews.

The interviews also reveal that the university systematically surveys stakeholders, researching their satisfaction with the quality of student and staff services, the material and technical base, the use of library funds, etc. Questionnaires are periodically updated.

In the survey process, the school uses both university-level recommended questionnaires and additional questionnaires related to the specifics of the field.

According to the interviewers, various types of surveys are used in the research: surveys of students, graduates, and employers, as well as the analysis of questionnaires. According to them, the specialists of the Quality Assurance Department, together with the program leaders, are actively involved in the internal quality assessment process, which contributes to the enhancement of the culture of cooperation. During the interview, it was also revealed that there is an active focus on the evaluation of the scientific activities of academic personnel, which is carried out within the framework of the research center.

The Quality Assurance Department constantly consults academic, scientific, invited, administrative,

and support personnel on issues related to internal and external quality assurance, authorization, and accreditation.

In this process, a systematic survey of students is conducted in terms of organizing the educational process and its evaluation.

It is worth noting the active cooperation of the program director, co-director, and personnel involved in the program with the Quality Assurance Department, as well as their participation in various types of meetings scheduled by the Quality Service, such as those related to the smooth functioning of the educational and scientific process, program development, preparation of syllabi, continuous modification of individual courses as a result of feedback, and participation in various formats of consultation or training meetings.

In order to familiarize oneself with new regulations or to create or update internal regulations, it is also important to reflect the information received on assessment tools and regulations in the program.

Thus, the internal quality mechanism implies a cycle consisting of interconnected components of planning, implementation, evaluation, and development, the goal of which is to improve the quality of the presented educational program.

Based on the above, the internal quality assessment mechanisms used by the educational program are adequate.

According to the program leaders, the self-assessment process is important and is based on student and graduate surveys (focus group reports).

According to the representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, questionnaires are periodically completed by students, and quantitative questionnaires are also sent to students for completion.

It is also important to note that the academic staff submit a mandatory scientific/research report, which is reviewed by the Quality Service representatives for the purpose of staff assessment.

According to the representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, the annual report form, which the staff complete according to the academic year, combines various types of activities, both scientific and educational.

The data is then processed by the managers of the Quality Assurance Department, after which the staff are provided with suggestions for areas of improvement. Activities are planned individually with the academic staff based on the identified needs.

The agreement signed with the staff details the scientific and practical hours to be completed by the staff.

Interviews conducted during the meetings show that the academic and invited staff of the program are familiar with these mechanisms and consider their use effective for the program and for self-development.

The shortcomings identified by the internal quality mechanisms are actively discussed by the self-assessment working group, as well as at the meetings of the school council. Valuable recommendations are developed, on the basis of which the relevant changes are implemented. Finally, they are approved by the HEI Academic Council.

It was noted in the interviews that the results of the staff assessment are taken into account in the program development process, which increases the responsibility of professors and teachers and contributes to improving the quality of the educational process. Stakeholders were involved in the preparation of the educational program and the self-assessment report for accreditation, together with the working group. It is clear that the work directions of the Quality Assurance Department are student-oriented and serve to improve the quality of teaching and research. The institution properly ensures the high quality of the educational resources and services provided.

Internationalization of teaching and research; periodic and effective monitoring, evaluation, and appropriate response.

The educational program uses internal quality assessment mechanisms, which are implemented in accordance with the quality policy developed and in force at the university. It is based on internal mechanisms for ensuring the relevant principles of quality planning, assessment, monitoring, and improvement. The study of documents and the results of interviews show that the internal quality assurance mechanisms of the program – the rules for the development, assessment, and improvement of educational programs; the procedure for evaluating the activities of scientific personnel; monitoring student academic performance, graduate employment, employer attitudes, and labor market research tools – are focused on the assessment and promotion of the development of the educational program, the learning process, and academic personnel. The Quality Assurance Department takes care of improving the quality of the educational process, develops the necessary tools and methods for assessing the quality of the educational process, plans the assessment frequency, conducts assessments, and, based on the data obtained, provides recommendations for improving the quality of the educational process.

Academic/visiting staff take into account the results of quality assessments when making decisions related to the program, as they are aware of and use the results of surveys. Surveys of students, graduates, and employers are systematically conducted, and the results of these studies are taken into account to improve the achievement of the program's learning outcomes, to update the program, and to better plan the work of professors. Also, when preparing the program, labor market requirements are taken into account, and the labor market is studied.

The interviews revealed that the presented bachelor's program was developed based on the analysis of all relevant documentation and the recommendations of the program director, co-director, self-assessment group, personnel involved in the program, employers, external evaluators, school and university quality assurance departments, and the review of sectoral documents, which is very relevant today, with modern visions and approaches.

Evidences/Indicators

- Regulation of the Quality Assurance Service
- Internal quality assurance mechanisms
- Regulation of the Quality Assurance Department
- Rules for the implementation of educational programs
- Student satisfaction survey (results)
- Student survey form (results)
- Statistical data related to the program

Recommendations:

/

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- It is suggested to establish a student governance body that will be actively involved both in communication

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
5.1 Internal quality evaluation	Complying with requirements
	Complies with requirements
	☒

5.2 External Quality Evaluation

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of				
the	Component	of	the	Standard

Based on the presented documentation and interviews conducted in the format of active interviews, it was revealed that the program uses various tools for external quality assessment: external expert assessment and research of employers, graduates, and students.

According to the program leaders, “the presented program includes courses that are based on the results of market research. The presented program places great emphasis on practice – leading medical institutions such as Avers Clinic, Medclub, and others have been selected as practice sites.”

Also, according to the program creators, the program takes external assessments into account as much as possible, and international evaluators are involved.

According to the assessment of one of the external international experts, a professor at the Department of Nursing of the International University of Greece, “the presented program is innovative and fully meets all the conditions necessary for the training of a modern nurse. The teaching methodology and the practical and scientific research components fully meet the modern requirements that the labor market dictates to us today.”

Also, according to the assessment of another foreign expert, V.T., “the structure of the program, the methodology of student assessment, and the knowledge and transferable skills acquired as a result of completing the courses ensure the training of nurses equipped with modern standards.”

According to the program leaders, the recommendations of the external evaluation were taken into account as much as possible. For example, “We have removed the issues of research and health economics. In addition to the fact that we have a separate subject in the curriculum – ‘Research Methods’ – in the optional module ‘Academic Writing’, we have also included other subjects and focused on this direction. For example, we have added the topic of community involvement in nursing: research, evidence-based practice.”

According to one of the employers, “The emergence of such a program is very important because we have a huge shortage of nurses in clinics.”

According to another employer: “The program is unique because it is tailored to the market and maximally meets the modern requirements of the market. We think that the graduates of this program will truly be multifunctional personnel.”

The program also takes into account the findings of the graduates. According to one of the graduates, his suggestion was to strengthen the practice component, which is included in the presented program.

As for the relevant analogies of the presented program, the program managers prepared and then discussed programs similar to the presented program. According to them, “the educational programs of one Turkish and four Georgian universities have been studied.”

The comparative analysis revealed both similarities and differences in the programs. According to the representatives of the program, “they were analyzed, and certain changes were reflected in the process of developing the program – in terms of the distribution of credits, implementation of the practice component, assessment system, learning outcomes and

teaching methodology, clinical training, research, and internationalization. Also, in relation to the directions of internship and the qualifications to be awarded, the learning outcomes of the presented program and their compliance with the learning outcomes of similar programs have been analyzed.”

The information received is confirmed by the submitted documentation and interviews with the program manager, the self-assessment group, representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, and employers.

Evidences/Indicators

- Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- Quality Assurance Department Charter;
- External Expert Assessment;
- Comparative Analysis Document.

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- /

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	Complying with requirements
	Complies with requirements
	☒

5.3 Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Based on the interviews and analysis of the submitted documentation, it can be seen that the preparation of an internal self-assessment report is underway, based on the internal self-assessment of the English-language educational program presented by Caucasus University, the identification of strengths and areas for improvement as a result of the assessment, and the planning of targeted interventions for further improvement based on the processing and analysis of the data obtained.

According to representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, the following studies are periodically conducted: analysis of students' academic performance and a semester-long survey of students in relation to courses. A survey of graduates and the evaluation of invited and academic personnel involved in the program are conducted based on student surveys. According to the heads of the Quality Assurance Department, analysis and monitoring of the program's target indicators are constantly underway, based on the semester-long processing of students' academic performance, as well as assessments from employers and external experts.

In order to monitor the dynamics of the program development, the self-assessment report submitted in each subsequent reporting period will include an analysis of the results compared to the data of the previous reporting period. According to the representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, the internal evaluation mechanism for the program implementation is being continuously improved, additional tools are being developed, and the capabilities of the quality assurance system are being increased. Also, intensive working meetings are being held with the Dean of the Medical School and representatives of the Quality Assurance Service. A series of trainings for the employees of the Quality Assurance Service will ensure the improvement of the specifics of internal mechanisms, the use of self-assessment tools, and the effective use of data analysis.

According to the representatives of the Quality Assurance Service, there are various types of incentive measures for staff to encourage and develop their professional skills, such as ensuring staff participation in trainings, international conferences, publishing articles in international journals, various publications, etc. According to the personnel, various grant and university projects are constantly announced to the personnel employed in the program. The institution maximally promotes the involvement of personnel in international grant projects; the personnel are involved in many Erasmus+ and other diverse projects, which ensures their professional growth and development on a continuous basis. The program is also compared with similar programs of foreign universities, which contributes

to bringing the educational program into line with modern requirements and introducing best international practices.

In conclusion, it can be noted that the analysis of the presented documentation and a series of interviews demonstrate that the mechanisms for monitoring and periodic evaluation of the program have been developed and are understood at the university, which contributes to the continuous development of the program.

Evidences/Indicators

- Rules for implementing educational programs;
- Student survey form and results;
- Graduate survey form and results;
- Employer survey form and results;
- Minutes of self-assessment working group meetings.

Recommendations:

- /

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- /

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review	Complying with requirements

Attached documentation (if applicable): ▪ [Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI](#)

Signatures:

Chair of Accreditation Expert Panel

Ivana Carev



Accreditation Expert Panel Members

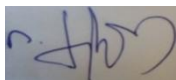
Davit Tophuria ,



Nato Durglishvili



Irma Kurdadze



Melita Melikishvili



The University's General Position on the Evaluation

- The expert panel's assessment has not fully taken into consideration the specific context of the programme namely that the Bachelor's Programme in Nursing is newly established, has not yet enrolled any students and therefore the factual evaluation of its implementation outcomes, as well as any response based on such evaluation, is objectively impossible at this stage.
- In a number of instances, the report conflates the following:
 - the assessment of compliance at the time of accreditation;
 - monitoring following the implementation of the programme;
 - desirable directions for long-term development and enhancement.
- Substantively identical issues are presented repeatedly across different components, which artificially increases the number of recommendations.
- Certain recommendations are based not on identified non-compliance but on hypothetical risks, such as "may have an impact," "will be required in the future," "in the event of an increase in the number of students," and similar assumptions.
- The evaluation of the laboratory infrastructure has not taken into consideration the laboratories, clinical skills facilities, simulation resources available at the university, or the procurement documentation for additional equipment presented during the site visit.
- Research-related expectations for a Bachelor's programme should be interpreted in a manner proportionate to the programme's Level 6 qualification and disciplinary profile. At the bachelor's level, the emphasis should be on developing students' ability to apply evidence-based practice, locate and critically analyse information, interpret data and understand fundamental research methods, rather than requiring the systematic production of independent scientific outputs, regular participation in scientific conferences, or the implementation of independent research projects.
- The expert panel's report itself describes the programme as relevant, well-structured and characterised by a strong clinical component, practical training in small groups, diverse assessment methods and a functional quality assurance system. Nevertheless, Standard 2 was assessed as not meeting the accreditation requirements, with the assessment focusing primarily on laboratory and research infrastructure.
- The University respects the opinions presented by the expert panel and is prepared to consider recommendations aimed at quality enhancement during the implementation of the programme. At the same time, it is important to distinguish between:
 - with the requirements of the accreditation standards;
 - opportunities for the further enhancement of an already established mechanism;
 - outcomes that can only be assessed after the programme has commenced;
 - long-term institutional development objectives

We expect that a recommendation should relate to a specific accreditation standard requirement that has not been substantially met, be based on clearly identified factual circumstances, and provide an implementation timeframe that is realistically proportionate to the nature of the issue identified.

A significant proportion of the recommendations contained in the report:

- concerns monitoring to be conducted after the completion of one or more student cohorts;
- relates to a possible future increase in student enrolment;
- addresses continuing professional development;

- calls for the future expansion of international partnerships;
- concerns long-term trends related to staff satisfaction, staff turnover, and workload;
- reflects desirable future development rather than non-compliance identified at the time of accreditation.

Such issues cannot serve as grounds for a negative evaluation of the programme's current status, particularly when the programme has not yet enrolled any students.

In Response to the University's General Position on the Evaluation

The Expert Panel has thoroughly reviewed the University's formal position paper regarding the accreditation evaluation of the newly established Bachelor's Program in Nursing. The Panel respects the University's dedication to developing nursing education and acknowledges the strengths identified in the report. However, after careful deliberation, the Panel maintains most of its core findings and conclusions. Below, the Panel addresses the primary methodological and substantive points raised in the University's position statement.

The University argues that because the program has not yet enrolled students, evaluating factual implementation outcomes is "objectively impossible," and that certain requirements should be deferred to post-launch monitoring. Accreditation is a gateway process designed to ensure **ex-ante operational readiness** before students are admitted.

While certain operational metrics (e.g., live student satisfaction or graduate tracer studies) can only be evaluated post-launch, fundamental structural requirements, such as physical teaching facilities, clinical simulation labs, qualified faculty, language readiness, and clinical mentor alignment, must be fully functional **at the time of the site visit**.

Accreditation standards do not permit conditional approval based on future promises or post-enrollment corrections, as doing so would expose the initial cohort of students to unverified educational environments.

International quality assurance standards strictly differentiate between **contracts/invoices** for pending equipment and **installed, certified, operational facilities**. Compliance cannot be granted based on equipment stored in packaging, pending installation, or post-visit purchase agreements (such as invoices dated May 2026). Furthermore, the site visit verified that spaces presented as "laboratories" consisted of general lecture classrooms equipped with standard visual aids (a single microscope, anatomical moulages, histology slides, and a display screen). Under international standards, visual teaching aids in a general classroom do not constitute a functional **Teaching Laboratory** (where every student actively executes hands-on

scientific protocols) or a **Research Laboratory** (equipped with operational BSL containment, biosafety cabinets, and utility lines).

A foundational resource deficit, specifically the absence of operational scientific and clinical pre-clinical laboratories, naturally impacts multiple distinct standards across higher education frameworks. The lack of physical labs impacts **Infrastructure**, impairs **Curriculum Delivery**, and prevents the verified achievement of **Practical Learning Outcomes**. This is not artificial duplication; it represents a systemic issue affecting the entire educational continuum. However, in the interest of report clarity, the Panel has consolidated the core structural requirements while maintaining relevant contextual findings.

The Panel fully agrees that a Bachelor's degree in Nursing does not require postgraduate scientific research outputs from students. However, Level 6 competencies explicitly require students to understand basic research methodology, analyze biological data, and apply evidence-based principles to clinical reasoning. To teach these competencies, **academic staff must maintain documented research expertise (reflected in their CVs) and have access to basic institutional research infrastructure**. Expecting faculty to deliver research-informed teaching without workload time, international conference support, or basic laboratory facilities undermines the academic integrity of the program.

The Panel's findings were grounded in direct, empirical evidence gathered during the site visit. Staff designated to teach and supervise in an English-language program were unable to communicate in English during site interviews, relying on Georgian. Non-English-speaking clinical supervisors in hospital settings create an immediate, non-hypothetical safety and educational barrier for international students. Key staff disclosed current affiliations across few separate institutions and clinical settings, creating a structural risk to student availability and instructional consistency. Designated clinical mentors across partner healthcare facilities exhibited no operational familiarity with the Nursing curriculum or its assessment forms, proving that formal partner MOUs have not yet translated into practical readiness on the ward.

The Expert Panel has acted with complete objectivity, balancing constructive support with strict adherence to national accreditation standards and international best practice. Where the University's arguments were methodologically justified regarding pre-enrollment status, the Panel has softened tones, reclassified items to *Suggestions*, or accepted consolidation.

However, on core structural requirements the Panel maintains its findings to ensure a safe and compliant Bachelor's Program in Nursing. Should accreditation be granted, all recommendations made by the Panel are reasonably expected to be fully implemented within the designated accreditation timeframe, allowing the institution sufficient opportunity to systematically resolve these identified gaps.

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

1.2. Programme Learning Outcomes

Recommendation 1: Ensure that learning outcomes are clearly defined and achievable, with a focus on aligning them with specific teaching methods (seminars, lab work, etc.). Provide students with a detailed outline of how each method contributes to the development of knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Answer:

The University does not share the opinion that the programme learning outcomes are unclear or unattainable. The programme specifies learning outcomes that are appropriate to the awarded qualification and their achievement is ensured through a combination of theoretical, practical, clinical and simulation-based teaching.

Teaching methods do not constitute a component of the learning outcomes themselves. A learning outcome defines what a student is expected to know and be able to do, whereas a teaching method represents the means by which that outcome is achieved. Accordingly, the requirement to establish an explicit textual link between each programme learning outcome and every individual teaching method does not derive from the essence of the accreditation standard, provided that such alignment is substantively identifiable through the curriculum and the course syllabi.

The programme already incorporates teaching methods designed to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Interactive lectures and seminars support the development of theoretical knowledge. The programme also includes Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Case-Based Learning (CBL), Case-Based Clinical Reasoning (CBCR), role-play, clinical case discussions, case-based activities, the development of analytical and clinical reasoning and simulation-based learning. Achievement of the learning outcomes is assessed through appropriate assessment methods, including OSCE/OSPE, case analysis (used both as a teaching and an assessment method), presentations, written and oral assessments, as well as assessment conducted within practical training. The programme documentation also emphasises the intensive development, demonstration, and assessment of practical skills.

Accordingly, any additional technical clarification may be considered an opportunity for further enhancement; however, it does not demonstrate material non-compliance with the requirements of this component.

Reply: The Panel maintains its position. Detailed review confirms that the Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) fail to adhere to Bloom's Taxonomy. The recommendation is revised to be more clear.

Recommendation 2: Clearly communicate the teaching methods and learning expectations for each course in detailed syllabi. Ensure students understand how these methods will help them achieve the desired learning outcomes and connect to real-life applications.

Answer:

The course syllabi define the objectives, learning outcomes, course content, teaching and learning methods and assessment methods of each course. At the beginning of each course, students will be introduced to the course syllabus, including the course objectives, learning outcomes, teaching and assessment methods and assessment criteria. The week-by-week course schedule further demonstrates the logical alignment between course topics, teaching formats and the intended learning outcomes. Therefore, the general recommendation that all syllabi should be developed “in greater detail” requires further specification, including:

- which specific syllabus lacks sufficient information;
- which teaching method is considered insufficiently described;
- with which learning outcome the alignment cannot be established;
- how this circumstance prevents the achievement of the intended learning outcome.

The report does not provide any such specific examples. A recommendation of a general nature cannot justify a lower evaluation of all course syllabi or even particular components thereof, in this respect.

Furthermore, since the programme has not yet enrolled any students, it cannot be concluded that students are not provided with adequate information. The effectiveness of student information provision should be evaluated after the programme has commenced, based on student surveys, access to course syllabi and observation of the teaching and learning process.

Accordingly, this recommendation may be reclassified as a suggestion for enhancement or specified only to those specific syllabi in which the experts have identified an actual deficiency.

Reply: The Panel maintains its position. Detailed review confirms that the Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) fail to adhere to Bloom’s Taxonomy. The recommendation is revised to be more clear.

1.3. Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

Recommendation 3: Given that the nursing programme is new, it is recommended to conduct targeted evaluations and site visits once the programme has been fully implemented for at least one cohort. These evaluations should specifically focus on the unique aspects of the nursing programme, including student performance, clinical placements, and the alignment of learning outcomes with real-world practice.

Answer:

The content of this recommendation itself confirms that it concerns a future evaluation, the implementation of which is objectively impossible at the current stage of the programme.

The programme does not yet have enrolled students. Consequently:

- there are no students' academic performance results;
- no clinical practice has yet been undertaken;
- students' or graduates' achievements cannot be assessed;

- no outcome-based analysis of graduate employment or alignment with professional practice can be conducted.

In accordance with the University's established practice, the implementation of this programme will likewise be subject to regular evaluation, including the assessment of students' academic progress, the quality of clinical practice, the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, and compliance with relevant professional standards.

The implementation of monitoring after the completion of one cohort constitutes a natural element of the quality assurance process rather than a deficiency existing at the time of accreditation. The activity recommended by the experts can only be implemented several years later and therefore cannot justify a "substantial compliance" assessment of this component at the current stage.

Accordingly, this recommendation should be regarded as suggestion for future monitoring rather than as a corrective recommendation addressing the programme's current compliance.

Reply: The Panel accepts the University's explanation. Moved to a Suggestion.

Recommendation 4: To ensure the new nursing programme is on track to meet its learning outcomes and professional standards, it is recommended that the university integrates regular monitoring and observation of the programme's progress into its broader institutional assessment system.

Answer:

The University already operates an institutional system for programme monitoring and periodic evaluation. The Self-Evaluation Report also provides for semester-based monitoring, analysis of results and periodic review.

Accordingly, the recommendation is formulated as though the programme operates outside the University's institutional quality assurance system, which is not supported either by the submitted documentation or by the University's established practice.

As noted above, programme monitoring is already integrated into the University's institutional quality assurance framework. Furthermore, it will be strengthened by nursing-specific indicators, including the assessment of clinical and practical competencies, mentoring supervision, clinical placement outcomes, and graduates' professional preparedness.

Accordingly, the recommendation should either be removed or reformulated as suggestion for the future implementation of programme monitoring within the already existing institutional quality assurance system.

Reply: The Panel accepts the University's explanation. Moved to a Suggestion for Continuous Development.

1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme

Recommendation 5: To enhance students' readiness for clinical practice and ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes, it is recommended to integrate adequate level of practical preclinical skills training into foundational courses. This could involve incorporating practical laboratory sessions, hands-on activities, and simulations to help students apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings early in their studies.

Answer:

This recommendation does not fully reflect the existing structure of the programme.

The programme and the course syllabi already provide, from the very first academic year, for:

- practical skills training;
- simulation-based activities;
- virtual simulations;
- laboratory work;
- OSCE and OSPE;
- case-based and problem-based learning;
- practical and clinical components;
- the use of clinical skills centers

The University's main campus includes four clinical skills centres, a histology/pathology laboratory and anatomy teaching facilities. In addition, the development of two further Clinical Skills Centres, an additional Anatomy teaching room and BSL-2 research laboratories in Biochemistry, Immunology, Bacteriology and Molecular Biology is envisaged as part of the University's infrastructure development plan.

Accordingly, the requirement to integrate practical and pre-clinical teaching has already been fulfilled. The experts could have identified a specific course or practical skill for which practical training was considered insufficient; however, a general recommendation without such specific analysis cannot substantiate non-compliance.

Reply: The recommendations remain in full effect. The University's claim that practical pre-clinical training is already fully integrated across the board is inconsistent with the evidence provided in the course syllabi and observed during the site visit. While several course syllabi explicitly list "laboratory work" alongside lectures and seminars, site visit observations confirmed that dedicated laboratory facilities for these foundational courses were essentially non-existent.

Under international accreditation frameworks (such as the World Federation for Medical Education [WFME] and European Quality Assurance standards [ENQA]), there is a strict functional and structural distinction between a Classroom with Visual Aids, a Teaching Laboratory, and a Research Laboratory. Presenting a standard lecture classroom equipped with visual demonstration aids does not constitute a Teaching Laboratory or a Research Laboratory under international accreditation standards. The institution cannot claim that practical, pre-clinical, or research competencies are fulfilled when students are merely observing demonstration tools in a general classroom rather than executing hands-on protocols in dedicated, operational laboratory facilities. Promising planned future infrastructure does not compensate for current resource deficits for arriving students.

Recommendation 6: To avoid confusion and ensure alignment with actual programme delivery, it is recommended to clarify the terminology in course descriptions and syllabi, particularly regarding

laboratory work. Some syllabi mention lectures, seminars, and laboratory work, but due to the lack of laboratory facilities, this terminology may be misleading. If laboratory work is not feasible, the programme should revise the course descriptions to accurately reflect the available resources and explore alternative ways to provide practical learning experiences, such as simulations or virtual labs.

Answer:

The premise underlying this recommendation - namely, the "absence of laboratory infrastructure", does not correspond to the actual circumstances of the University.

The University already has:

- four clinical skills centres;
- a histology/pathology laboratory;
- anatomy teaching facilities.

At the time of the expert panel's site visit, the development and installation of the new laboratories had not yet been completed. The enclosed documentation presents the newly developed research laboratory facilities.

The new spaces are currently being fitted out:

- two clinical skills centres;
- a biochemistry laboratory;
- an immunology laboratory;
- a bacteriology laboratory;
- a molecular laboratory;
- microscopes, digital microscopes, and facilities for demonstrating both real and virtual specimens.

By the commencement of the programme, all of the above-mentioned laboratory, simulation and research facilities required for programme implementation will be fully operational, including a dedicated independent simulation room for students. Accordingly, the term "laboratory work" used in the syllabi accurately reflects the actual educational process and the resources available for programme implementation.

During the site visit, the expert panel inspected the existing facilities and was additionally provided with information regarding the purchased and planned simulation equipment. The University also submitted the relevant invoices and procurement documentation.

Accordingly, the use of the term "laboratory work" in the syllabi cannot be considered misleading where genuine laboratory infrastructure is available.

Therefore, this recommendation should be removed unless the experts are able to identify a specific course and a specific laboratory activity that cannot be implemented using the University's existing resources.

Reply: The recommendations remain in full effect. The University's claim that practical pre-clinical training is already fully integrated across the board is inconsistent with the evidence provided in the course syllabi and observed during the site visit. While several course syllabi explicitly list "laboratory work" and "practical work" alongside lectures and seminars, site visit observations confirmed that dedicated laboratory facilities for these foundational courses were essentially non-existent. Promising planned future

infrastructure does not compensate for current resource deficits for arriving students. Audit and clarify all course syllabi to explicitly define whether a "practical" component is a physical wet-lab, a clinical skill simulation, or a classroom seminar.

1.5. Academic Course/Subject

Recommendation 7: Review and adjust the content of academic courses to ensure that it comprehensively covers the necessary knowledge and skills required to achieve the defined learning outcomes. Ensure that the course content is sufficiently detailed and aligned with the overall program objectives, providing a cohesive learning journey for students.

Answer:

This recommendation is general in nature and does not specify:

- which course is being referred to;
- which subject matter is missing from the course content;
- which learning outcome cannot be achieved;
- what specific amendments are required;
- on the basis of which evidence the deficiency was identified.

The programme curriculum and course syllabi clearly define the course objectives, intended learning outcomes, weekly topics, teaching and assessment methods and the relevant learning resources.

The course content is designed in a coherent and sequential manner, respecting prerequisite requirements and ensuring the gradual development of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, clinical reasoning and professional responsibility. Achievement of the learning outcomes is assessed through appropriate methods, including case analysis, written and oral examinations, OSCE, OSPE, and practical assignments.

A recommendation that could potentially apply to any educational programme cannot, in itself, constitute evidence of non-compliance with the accreditation standards for this particular programme.

The programme is a regulated 240-ECTS Bachelor's programme developed in accordance with the relevant sectoral benchmark document and professional requirements. Furthermore, the experts themselves described the programme structure as having a "sound structure." This assessment is inconsistent with a general recommendation calling for a broad review of the course content.

Accordingly, the recommendation should either be specified in greater detail or reclassified as advice rather than a corrective recommendation.

Reply: Recommendation 7 remains in full effect as a corrective requirement. It is in accordance with previous recommendations. Rather than prescribing a rigid, line-by-line rewrite of individual syllabi, the Panel intentionally framed the recommendation to provide the University with the academic autonomy to audit its course content, align weekly topics with the higher-order cognitive demands of Level 6 evidence-based

practice, and explicitly link theoretical modules to practical clinical competencies. To help out, some examples of courses are mentioned in the analysis.

Standard 2 - Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering

The experts assessed Standard 2 as non-compliant with the requirements. In the University's view, this assessment is disproportionate both to the substance of the recommendations and to the timeframes within which they could realistically be implemented.

Furthermore, the majority of the recommendations concern:

- the further enhancement of the existing infrastructure;
- the development of research facilities;
- future student research activities;
- annual monitoring processes;
- the further strengthening of simulation-based learning, which is already integrated into the programme.

These issues may represent areas for future development; however, assessing the entire standard as "non-compliant" would require demonstrating that the programme cannot be implemented using the existing resources and teaching methods. No such justification is provided in the experts' report.

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

Recommendation 8: Allocate funding to upgrade existing classrooms into nursing skills laboratories, equipped with professional-grade mannequins, essential medical supplies, and basic simulation technology. This will ensure a safe and structured environment for students to begin practicing fundamental nursing procedures from the first year, bridging the gap between theory and clinical practice.

Answer:

This recommendation should effectively be regarded as already fulfilled, since the University already has four clinical skills centres, two of which are currently being finalized and the necessary equipment has already been procured.

The University fully recognises the importance of continuously developing simulation-based education. Nevertheless, the wording of this recommendation creates the impression that, at the time of the accreditation visit, the programme lacked the simulation environment and equipment necessary for nursing education.

At the time of the accreditation visit, the University had already established clinical skills teaching facilities, while all mannequins and simulation equipment required for the nursing programme had already been purchased and were available on site. Some of the equipment had already been installed in the simulation rooms, while the remaining items were stored in designated facilities awaiting placement.

The expert panel was provided with procurement documentation as well as a detailed inventory of the equipment.

Taking into account the specific nature of nursing education, the University had procured modern simulation equipment before the accreditation visit, including Kyoto Kagaku, 3b scientific and et.c professional teaching mannequins, procedural simulators, adult and paediatric patient care models and simulation devices designed for training in injections, venepuncture, catheterisation, airway management and other nursing procedures. This equipment was specifically selected to ensure achievement of the practical learning outcomes defined by the programme.

In addition, on 8 September 2025, the University concluded a procurement agreement for biomedical laboratory equipment, including a biological safety cabinet, PCR cabinet, incubators, laboratory refrigerators and other specialized equipment.

Furthermore, infrastructure development did not end with the accreditation visit. The University has continued investing in the development of teaching and research infrastructure, including the acquisition of Carl Zeiss microscopes and the establishment of additional laboratory facilities in June.

The Self-Evaluation Report also states that additional anatomical models mannequins, and simulators have been procured for the programme, that the design of the OSCE facilities has been completed and that additional independent practice spaces have been allocated for students. This information is supported both by documentary evidence and by the physical availability of the equipment.

During the site visit, invoices confirming these procurements were also presented to the expert panel.

Resources that are still undergoing procurement should be assessed in light of the implementation timeline of the programme. Since the programme does not yet have enrolled students, it is sufficient that the required equipment be available before the semester in which it is needed, rather than requiring the complete four-year infrastructure to be fully operational on the day of the accreditation visit.

Accordingly, this recommendation should either be removed or reformulated as suggestion for the phased development of existing laboratory facilities in accordance with the University's approved development plan.

Reply: The Panel acknowledges that basic mannequins were present on site; however, the presence of isolated training equipment does not constitute an operational, compliant learning environment. Accreditation decisions are based on verified, operational capacity observed during the site visit, not on procurement invoices or infrastructure development plans.

Recommendation 9: Establish dedicated nursing and clinical research spaces that support evidence-based practice. These labs should be equipped for data collection, patient assessment simulations, and basic clinical investigations. Collaboration with local hospitals, healthcare institutions, and external funding bodies can strengthen resources and provide opportunities for student-led research projects.

Answer:

The University considers that this recommendation goes beyond the minimum requirements of the respective component necessary for the implementation of a Bachelor's Program in Nursing.

The University fully acknowledges the importance of evidence-based practice and the continuous development of students' research skills.

The program aims to prepare nurses with professional competencies. At Level 6 of the Bachelor's degree, students are expected to be able to:

- apply evidence-based information;
- retrieve and analyze data;
- understand the basic principles of research;
- engage in evidence-informed professional reasoning and discussion.

Prior to the accreditation visit, the University had already initiated the process of developing biomedical research infrastructure.

Before the expert visit, the University had established the practical learning environment required for the implementation of the Nursing Program, including four Clinical Skills Centers, two anatomy teaching facilities, a biochemistry teaching laboratory and modern nursing simulation equipment and mannequins specifically selected to ensure the development of clinical competencies defined by the program. Furthermore, the University is currently in the final phase of developing laboratory infrastructure, including the establishment of BSL-2 level laboratories. Relevant modern laboratory equipment has already been purchased and the University plans to continue further investments in this direction as part of its long-term development strategy.

The University also considers that, in accordance with the regulatory requirements, the research component of a Bachelor's Nursing Program primarily aims to develop students' research competencies, evidence-based decision-making skills, the ability to critically analyze scientific literature and the capacity to apply research findings in professional practice. This stage represents a foundation for further academic and research activities.

Students' research activities are not limited solely to the internal infrastructure of the University. The program is implemented in cooperation with clinical partners, providing students with opportunities to participate in quality improvement initiatives, evidence-based practice activities and applied research conducted within clinical environments. The University also ensures access to electronic scientific databases, institutional support for research activities, and opportunities to participate in international projects, which fully correspond to the objectives of the program's research component.

The University recognizes the importance of further development of clinical research and simulation-based environments and is already implementing phased investments in this direction, which are supported by existing procurement documentation.

However, systematic implementation of independent clinical research, initiation of research projects by students, and the existence of specialized research laboratories should not be considered mandatory prerequisites for accreditation of a Bachelor's Program in Nursing.

The University already has histology/pathology and other biomedical laboratories. Further development of laboratory infrastructure may continue within the framework of the institutional strategy; however, the

desirable expansion of such infrastructure does not imply that students' practical, transferable, or evidence-based practice skills cannot be developed.

Reply: The Panel appreciates the University's perspective regarding Level 6 Bachelor standards and agrees that the primary focus of a Bachelor's in Nursing is foundational evidence-based practice rather than high-level research. However, developing these core competencies effectively relies on dedicated, practical spaces rather than standard lecture rooms equipped with visual aids—such as histology slides, anatomical models, or digital displays. While these resources are useful classroom teaching tools, international standards distinguish them from fully operational laboratory environments

Recommendation 10: Integrate simulation-based learning and research activities into core nursing competencies, including teamwork, leadership, communication, and ethical decision-making. Provide structured mentorship for students to engage in research dissemination (e.g., conferences, posters), and implement annual reviews to monitor progress in clinical skills development and scientific inquiry.

Answer:

This recommendation combines several distinct issues:

- simulation-based learning;
- teamwork and communication;
- research activities;
- participation in conferences;
- poster presentations;
- annual monitoring.

Simulation-based learning, teamwork, communication, leadership and ethical decision-making are already integrated into the program.

Simulation-based education and research-related activities are also incorporated into the curriculum. Learning based on clinical cases and scenarios, as well as teamwork and practical activities, support the development of clinical reasoning, communication, collaboration, leadership, ethical decision-making and professional judgment skills. These competencies are also reflected in the assessment mechanisms, including the evaluation criteria for clinical practice, OSCE/OSPE assessments and case analysis activities.

Students' research activities and support for dissemination of research outcomes are already considered within the program.

Regarding student participation in conferences and poster presentations, these may represent additional opportunities for academic and professional development; however, they cannot be considered mandatory prerequisites for the compliance of a newly established Bachelor's Program, particularly before the program has commenced.

The University fully recognizes the importance of further strengthening and systematizing mentoring support in this area. Within the framework of program monitoring, the progress of students' clinical skills and research

competencies development will be periodically evaluated and the obtained results will be used for improvement of relevant educational activities and further enhancement of the program. These processes will be implemented following the commencement of the program.

The inclusion of the term “scientific/research” within the title of the standard component does not mean that every program is required to ensure the production of scientific outputs by students or systematic participation in conferences. Such requirements should be interpreted in accordance with the level, type, field and qualification framework of the specific program.

Accordingly, the simulation-based learning component of the recommendation has already been addressed, while the elements related to conference participation and dissemination of research outcomes should be considered as areas for further development.

Reply: Accepted.

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

Recommendation 11: To ensure that students develop essential technical skills and achieve key learning outcomes, it is recommended to better align and integrate preclinical practical laboratory training into foundational courses. This will allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in a hands-on environment, enhancing their clinical reasoning and biochemical data analysis capabilities, which are critical for nursing practice.

Answer:

This recommendation substantially overlaps with:

1.4 Recommendation under Component 1.4 regarding the integration of pre-clinical practical skills;

2.2 Recommendation under Component 2.2 regarding nursing skills laboratories;

4.4 Recommendations under Component 4.4 regarding expansion of laboratory infrastructure.

Presenting the same issue as several independent recommendations creates the impression that the program has multiple separate deficiencies, whereas all of these recommendations relate to one common aspect — the scale of laboratory resources.

The program incorporates laboratory and practical activities, simulation-based learning, case-based learning and objective assessment of practical skills through OSPE/OSCE from the first year of study.

These activities enable students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical and clinical contexts, develop technical skills, clinical reasoning and the ability to interpret physiological and laboratory data.

Within the framework of continuous quality improvement, the University will continue strengthening the integration between basic sciences and nursing practice, including broader use of clinical cases, simulation-based assignments, and laboratory data analysis activities.

At the same time, the University already has four Clinical Skills Centers, two anatomy teaching facilities, a biochemistry teaching laboratory and modern nursing simulation equipment and mannequins. Research laboratories in Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Immunology and Bacteriology are scheduled to become operational in the near period and the required laboratory equipment has already been procured.

Accordingly, the evaluation should focus not on whether the infrastructure could be further expanded or enhanced, but on whether the existing resources are adequate for the implementation of the programme as designed.

Accordingly, this recommendation should be consolidated with one specific recommendation related to material resources and should not be used as a basis for lowering the evaluation of multiple components.

Reply: The Panel acknowledges the University's point regarding the structural overlap of these findings. However, in higher education accreditation, a foundational resource deficit—such as the absence of operational scientific and pre-clinical laboratories, naturally impacts multiple distinct standards. While the University highlights its planned future infrastructure and clinical skills centers, accreditation standards evaluate current operational reality.

2.4. Student Evaluation

Recommendation 12: Caucasus University should establish and formally document a clear mapping of learning outcomes to specific assessment components and responsible evaluators within combined modules, ensuring transparency, accountability, and consistency in student evaluation.

Answer:

The programme has a clearly defined learning outcomes assessment mechanism, both in documented form and as an integral part of the University's dedicated software system. The relevant documentation was included in the accreditation package, while the software was demonstrated and explained during the site visit.

Accordingly, the purpose of this recommendation is unclear to the University.

Furthermore, as the programme has not yet enrolled any students, there is no evidence of inconsistency or deficiencies in the practical implementation of the assessment process.

Reply: Accepted.

Standard 3 - Student Achievements and Individual Work with Them

3.1. Student Consulting and Support Services

Recommendation 13: Caucasus University is encouraged to further formalize and clearly communicate the structure and functioning of student self-governance, ensuring inclusive representation of both Georgian and international students

Answer:

The Bachelor's Program in Nursing has not yet admitted students; therefore, establishing a separate student representation structure specifically within this program is not possible at this stage.

At the same time, the University already has an established student self-governance system functioning through student clubs. Its operation does not begin with the establishment of each individual new program. Following enrollment, students of the Nursing Program will have equal opportunities to participate in the University-wide student governance system.

The expert report does not specify which legal or organizational element of the existing student self-governance structure is insufficiently formalized. It also does not provide evidence that the representation of international students is restricted.

The University emphasizes that all students, both local and international, have equal opportunities to participate in university governance, join independent student clubs, and engage in extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, this recommendation is not directly related either to accreditation standards or to a specific deficiency of the Bachelor's Program in Nursing. Therefore, it may be more appropriately considered as a general suggestion for further enhancement of student engagement at the institutional level.

Reply: Accepted.

Standard 4 - Providing Teaching Resources

4.1. Human Resources

Recommendation 14: It is recommended to reevaluate the workload distribution of academic staff who also hold positions in clinics and at multiple universities. Given their multiple professional commitments, this could affect their availability for student engagement, mentorship, and high-quality instruction. The university should ensure that staff members have the appropriate time to dedicate to the programme and its students, preventing any negative impact on the quality of education and student support.

Answer:

Employment of academic or clinical staff in other organizations does not, by itself, demonstrate excessive workload or insufficient availability for the implementation of the program.

For such an assessment, it would have been necessary to identify specifically:

- which individual's workload is considered inappropriate;
- which educational activity cannot be adequately provided by that individual;
- how this situation affects student support and educational quality.

The conclusion is based on the assumption that multiple professional responsibilities "may potentially" affect availability. However, a hypothetical possibility does not constitute evidence of an existing non-compliance, particularly considering that the program is new and has not yet commenced implementation.

The personnel involved in the program may currently hold positions at other higher education institutions; however, upon the commencement of the program, they have confirmed their readiness to allocate the required time and engagement for the effective implementation of this program.

In addition, the University has established mechanisms for monitoring staff workload, including consideration of responsibilities undertaken at other higher education institutions during semester planning. These mechanisms will also be applied to the Nursing Program.

Where necessary, more than one qualified lecturer is involved in the delivery of courses, ensuring balanced workload distribution, continuity of teaching and availability of academic support for students.

The quantitative and qualitative needs of academic personnel are assessed prior to the beginning of each semester. If additional needs are identified, the University ensures timely recruitment of appropriately qualified personnel according to established procedures.

An increase in the number of personnel should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of existing deficiency; rather, it represents a natural mechanism responding to program development, changes in student enrollment and evolving educational needs.

It should also be noted that clinical practice within nursing and medical education is often a source of professional relevance and practical expertise rather than a risk factor for program implementation.

Therefore, this recommendation is not sufficiently substantiated.

Reply: The Panel acknowledges the University's response and agrees that active clinical practice brings essential real-world expertise to nursing education. Furthermore, the Panel recognizes that prior to student enrollment, a concrete assessment of staff availability or student mentorship deficits cannot be empirically measured. However, during the site visit, the Panel noted that several key academic staff members reported commitments across several separate institutions and clinical sites. While dual practitioner-academic roles are beneficial, managing commitments across several commitments presents a structural risk to student accessibility, timely feedback, and continuous program development once the program is active. In a spirit of constructive collaboration, the Panel reclassifies Recommendation 14 as a Suggestion for Continuous Development.

Recommendation 15: It is recommended to increase the availability of staff for direct student mentorship and support. To maintain the quality of clinical training, individual consultations, and personalized academic guidance, it would be beneficial to adjust staffing levels and consider hiring additional faculty members or administrative support to ensure that students receive the attention they need to succeed.

Answer:

The program has not yet admitted students; therefore, there is no evidence demonstrating that:

- students are unable to receive adequate academic advising and support;
- staff availability is insufficient;
- the mentoring system cannot function effectively;
- the number of personnel is inconsistent with the actual student cohort.

The adequacy of human resources should be assessed based on the planned student intake, group sizes, practical teaching formats and contact hours. The expert report does not identify any specific quantitative shortage of personnel.

Therefore, this recommendation is premature and should instead be addressed through monitoring after the commencement of the program.

Reply: Accepted.

Recommendation 16: To address challenges with language barriers in clinical settings, it is recommended to provide language training focused on medical English for both clinical staff and teaching staff who interact with international students.

Answer:

The personnel involved in the English-language program have been selected considering their ability to teach in English and their extensive professional experience. The linguistic competence of clinical and academic staff is an essential prerequisite for effective program implementation and the University places significant emphasis on this aspect.

The expert report does not specify any particular issue identified during the visit regarding language competency, nor does it provide evidence requiring corrective action.

Regarding the provision of training opportunities, such activities are already planned within the framework of continuous professional development. However, the availability of additional training opportunities does not indicate inadequacy of the existing human resources; rather, it represents the University's commitment to continuous professional improvement.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation. Because the program is delivered entirely in English, the linguistic proficiency of all instructional and clinical personnel is vital to educational quality and student safety. During the site visit interviews, key teaching and hospital clinical staff designated to supervise students were unable to communicate fluently in English and conducted discussions in Georgian, revealing a clear language barrier that directly affects clinical instruction, supervision, and student evaluation. While the Panel acknowledges planned continuous professional development, this observed gap represents an immediate operational issue rather than a prospective enhancement; accordingly, Recommendation remains in full effect, requiring the University to provide structured Medical English training and verify functional language proficiency for all academic and clinical staff.

Recommendation 17: It is recommended to organize regular training sessions on teaching methods for academic staff, particularly those involved in the nursing programme. As teaching practices evolve and new instructional technologies emerge, providing staff with up-to-date pedagogical training will enhance the quality of education and ensure staff are equipped with the most effective methods for delivering both theoretical and practical content.

Answer:

Regular professional development is an ongoing process and its continuation is desirable for every educational program. However, the existence of such a recommendation should be based on an identified specific deficiency.

The expert report itself identifies the use of diverse teaching and assessment methods as a strength of the program, including OSCE/OSPE, case-based learning (CBL), small-group practical teaching and a mentoring model. This demonstrates that the academic staff already possess experience with contemporary educational approaches.

The School of Medicine regularly implements training activities focused on modern and interactive teaching methods. This practice will continue and will be further expanded considering the specific requirements of nursing education. For both newly involved and existing academic staff, targeted training sessions will be planned in the following areas:

- clinical mentoring;
- teaching of the nursing process;
- methods of practical and clinical assessment of students;
- OSCE/OSPE methodology;
- provision of constructive feedback;
- effective communication within clinical environments.

Such training activities are important not only for further strengthening the competencies of existing academic staff but also for ensuring effective integration of new personnel into the program, establishing unified teaching approaches, enhancing professional confidence and supporting effective communication with students and colleagues.

The topics and focus areas of these trainings will be periodically updated according to program needs, results of staff evaluations and contemporary approaches in nursing education.

Accordingly, continuation and further expansion of regular training activities may be considered as an area for further development, but not as evidence of deficiencies in staff qualifications or program implementation.

Reply: Accepted. The recommendation is moved to Suggestions.

Recommendation 18: Given the diverse and complex nature of nursing education, it is recommended to recruit more full-time faculty members who can dedicate more time to the programme. This will alleviate the strain on current staff members who hold multiple roles and improve the consistency of instruction, research support, and student interaction. This will also help in managing the student-to-staff ratio more effectively, ensuring adequate supervision and mentorship in both academic and clinical settings.

Answer:

The recommendation does not provide a quantitative analysis regarding:

- how many additional full-time staff members are required at this stage;

- where the University fails to meet its established student-to-staff planning ratio;
- which courses lack appropriately qualified personnel;
- which functions remain unfulfilled.

For a newly established program, human resource capacity should be assessed according to the planned initial student intake and the phased implementation of the curriculum.

Recruiting the maximum number of full-time academic staff for all four years of the program before its commencement is not a requirement of accreditation standards, provided that the University has effective mechanisms for attracting and retaining qualified personnel and sufficient resources to ensure the implementation of the currently planned stages of the program.

Therefore, this recommendation should be based on demonstrated quantitative deficiency; otherwise, it represents a suggestion for future development rather than an identified non-compliance.

The Panel maintains Recommendation. As observed during the site visit, Georgia faces a well-documented systemic shortage of qualified nursing professionals, which directly restricts the pool of available, fully dedicated teaching and clinical supervisory staff. For a newly established nursing program this creates a significant risk to instructional consistency, clinical mentorship, and long-term program stability. The Panel intentionally refrained from setting rigid numerical quotas to allow the University the flexibility to fulfill this staffing need at its own pace as student enrollment scales. However, establishing a core, dedicated full-time nursing faculty remains essential to mitigate national workforce constraints and safeguard educational quality; accordingly, Recommendation 18 stands as an active requirement for programmatic development.

Recommendation 19: It is recommended to increase support for academic staff involvement in research and scientific activities by allocating time and resources to engage in research projects. This will not only enhance their professional development but also ensure that research-based learning is embedded throughout the curriculum. This could involve adjusting workloads to allow staff members to balance teaching duties with research activities.

Answer:

Research activity of academic personnel is important for the University. However, when assessing the compliance of a specific Bachelor's Program, the primary consideration should be whether the academic and professional experience of the personnel ensures:

- effective delivery of the courses included in the curriculum;
- provision of up-to-date knowledge to students;
- achievement of the program learning outcomes.

The expert report does not demonstrate that the level of research activity of the academic staff negatively affects the achievement of any program learning outcome.

It should be emphasized that, according to the University's existing mechanisms, the distribution of educational and research workload is determined at the beginning of each academic year in consultation with academic personnel, within the workload requirements established for their respective positions.

This mechanism will also be applied to the personnel involved in the Nursing Program following its commencement.

At this stage, it is premature to assess whether sufficient time is allocated for research activities, as the workload of personnel specifically related to this program has not yet been implemented and the University has not yet had the opportunity to monitor its practical application.

Furthermore, this recommendation substantially overlaps with the recommendations provided under Component 4.3 regarding academic and research development.

The Panel maintains Recommendation. Academic personnel must maintain documented scientific qualifications and active research portfolios, as reflected in their CVs, to ensure that instruction is genuinely evidence-based. This requirement is further compounded by the lack of functional scientific research infrastructure and laboratories on campus, which fundamentally impairs the ability of faculty to engage in empirical inquiry or guide student research. Allocating designated workload time, resources, and laboratory access for scholarly activity is not a duplicate requirement, but a core prerequisite for maintaining faculty qualifications and delivering a high-quality nursing curriculum.

Recommendation 20: Develop clear indicators and regularly track staff turnover, workload, and satisfaction to ensure early identification of potential risks and maintain long-term programme stability.

Answer:

This recommendation concerns long-term institutional monitoring and development rather than the current adequacy of human resources for the Nursing Program.

At present, the program does not have:

- program-specific trends regarding staff turnover;
- multi-year workload data;
- dynamics of staff satisfaction within the program.

Accordingly, the recommendation is based on the management of potential future risks and cannot be used to establish the existence of a deficiency at the time of accreditation.

Moreover, the University has already established mechanisms for monitoring staff turnover, workload and satisfaction, including personnel evaluation processes and staff satisfaction surveys. These mechanisms represent an institutional approach and will also be applied to the Nursing Program from the beginning of its implementation. Furthermore, the University has established a dedicated staff monitoring system that continuously records and tracks relevant data against predefined quantitative indicators. Should any indicator fall below the established threshold, the system facilitates prompt identification and immediate institutional response.

Accordingly, this recommendation is not sufficiently substantiated.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestions.

Recommendation 21: Develop a strategic staffing plan that anticipates future needs (e.g., increased student enrollment, expansion of clinical training), ensuring timely recruitment and balanced distribution between academic and invited staff

Answer:

This recommendation directly concerns future growth and development rather than an existing deficiency at the initial stage of program implementation.

Assessing the current component based on a potential future increase in student numbers is disproportionate, particularly considering that the program has not yet admitted students.

At the same time, the University's overall strategic framework and human resource management policies and mechanisms apply to the newly established program as well.

These mechanisms ensure timely identification of additional staffing needs, recruitment of qualified personnel and balanced distribution of workload between academic and invited staff members.

The absence of a separate program-specific document does not mean that personnel development is not planned or that the University lacks relevant mechanisms.

Therefore, this recommendation is premature and is based on a projection of future needs rather than an identified current deficiency.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestions.

4.3. Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

Recommendation 22: To ensure that academic and scientific staff stay current with emerging trends in nursing education and research, it is recommended to offer regular training sessions on research methodologies, funding opportunities, and academic writing.

Answer:

Such training activities represent one of the mechanisms of professional development; however, further strengthening their regularity does not indicate that the existing professional development system is inadequate.

This recommendation substantially overlaps with the requirement under Component 4.1 regarding support for personnel involvement in research activities. Presenting the same issue as separate recommendations under different components artificially increases the number of identified recommendations.

The University has many years of experience in organizing training activities for academic staff, supporting grant applications, financing participation in conferences and promoting academic development opportunities.

This approach will also continue to be applied to the personnel involved in the Nursing Program from the beginning of its implementation.

Accordingly, the recommendation should be considered as an area aimed at further development rather than as evidence of an existing deficiency.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestions.

Recommendation 23: To support the development of junior academic staff and invited lecturers, it is recommended to implement a mentorship program that pairs less experienced faculty members with senior staff or external experts.

Answer:

A formal mentoring program represents one possible mechanism for professional development; however, it is not the only available approach.

The expert report does not identify any specific problem related to the teaching quality of young academic staff that would justify this recommendation or require corrective measures.

Therefore, this recommendation should be interpreted as a development-oriented suggestion rather than as an identified deficiency.

The academic culture established at the University already supports professional guidance of young academic personnel, assistant, and invited lecturers by experienced professors and course coordinators. Academic staff involved in the same course or module collaborate on the planning of the teaching process, the selection of teaching methods, the design of assessment approaches, and matters related to student support and engagement.

Personnel involved in the implementation of the program have been selected based on their qualifications and practical experience. Each candidate has undergone the established selection process and delivered a demonstration lecture.

Following the commencement of the program, relevant processes will be monitored to ensure continuous improvement.

Accordingly, this recommendation is not sufficiently substantiated and may be considered as a future development opportunity.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestions.

Recommendation 24: It is recommended to provide greater institutional support to academic and scientific staff for their participation in international research projects and conferences. This could include providing financial support, adjusting workloads, or offering research leave to allow staff to focus on these opportunities.

Answer:

This recommendation reflects a desire for further internationalization and enhancement of research development.

Expanding and strengthening participation in international conferences is beneficial; however, it cannot serve as a determining factor for assessing the compliance of a Bachelor's Program in Nursing if the qualifications of academic staff and their teaching competencies are adequate.

One of the University's key strategic priorities is the enhancement of the research capacity and potential of academic personnel. The University has developed an institutional research development policy and relevant strategic mechanisms.

These strategies and policies will also be applied to the personnel involved in the Nursing Program following the commencement of its implementation.

Accordingly, this recommendation should be considered as an area for future development rather than an identified deficiency.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation. While institutional policies may exist on paper, international research engagement and conference participation are essential metrics for ensuring that academic staff maintain up-to-date, peer-reviewed expertise in global nursing and biomedical advancements, which directly influences the quality of instruction. This need is particularly acute given the lack of functional scientific research infrastructure on campus, making external international collaborations, joint projects, and conference presentations vital mechanisms for faculty to maintain active research profiles (as required by their academic CVs) and deliver evidence-based teaching.

4.4. Material Resources

Recommendation 25: To enhance the research competencies of both staff and students, it is recommended that the university invest in dedicated biomedical research laboratories.

Answer:

The University already has a Anatomy/histology/pathology teaching laboratory, as well as biochemistry, immunology, bacteriology and molecular research laboratories are in a final process of opening, which will be fully ready before the studying process start on Nursing program.

Therefore, the requirement to “establish” such infrastructure does not accurately reflect the current situation.

At the same time, for a Bachelor's Program in Nursing, the existence of a specialized biomedical research laboratory should not be considered an essential prerequisite for program implementation.

Specialized biomedical research laboratories primarily serve the development of research component of an educational environment, while their complete establishment and advanced development are not prerequisites for delivering the basic educational process during the initial semesters.

The development of this infrastructure had already been planned by the University and was underway at the time of the accreditation visit. Specifically: Based on the agreement concluded with Tbilisi Medic, the University had already acquired equipment intended for a biomedical research laboratory, including a biosafety cabinet, PCR cabinet, laboratory refrigerators, shakers and incubators. At the time of the expert visit, the equipment was in the process of delivery and installation.

Following the expert visit, infrastructure development continued. In May 2026, based on an agreement concluded with AMK Management Services GmbH & Co. KG, the University acquired 50 Carl Zeiss microscopes, including 2 units of Primostar 3 CN and 48 units of Primostar 1 CN.

This acquisition demonstrates the University's continued commitment to the phased development of laboratory infrastructure.

Currently, the final placement, installation and technical testing of the equipment are underway. According to the University's plan, research and teaching laboratories will be fully prepared for program implementation prior to the commencement of the educational process.

The University provides supporting documentation, including relevant agreements, invoices, acceptance certificates and equipment inventories.

Accordingly, the University considers that the expert recommendation should more accurately reflect the phased process of infrastructure development and should not create the impression that the essential clinical and simulation resources required for program implementation were unavailable at the time of accreditation.

The University fully recognizes the importance of continuous renewal and expansion of infrastructure and considers this direction as further development of existing resources rather than a need for their initial establishment.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation. Future procurement contracts, uninstalled stored equipment, and ongoing setup plans do not fulfill accreditation requirements for operational biomedical research laboratories. Under international higher education quality assurance standards, compliance is judged exclusively on physical, fully functional facilities verified during the site visit—not on contractual promises or post-visit invoices for equipment such as microscopes procured in May 2026. Crucially, the Panel's observations revealed a fundamental mischaracterization of facility types: what the University presented as "laboratories" (Anatomy, Histology) were in fact standard lecture classrooms equipped with static visual demonstration aids (such as a single microscope, anatomical moulages, histology slide panels, and a digital display screen), lacking mandatory biosafety protocols, eyewash stations, specialized utility lines, or protective equipment like lab coats (Anatomy, Histology, Biochemistry). International standards strictly distinguish a standard classroom filled with visual teaching tools, where students merely observe demonstrations, from a true Teaching Laboratory where every student actively executes hands-on protocols, and a certified Research Laboratory (BSL-1/2) equipped with operational biosafety cabinets, PCR cyclers, and specialized containment for empirical data collection. Relying on visual tools in general classrooms does not substitute for dedicated, operational wet-lab and research infrastructure required to develop students' practical competencies and support faculty scholarly output. We encourage The University to continue and complete the installation, technical testing,

biosafety certification, and full operationalization of its dedicated biomedical research and teaching laboratories prior to program implementation.

Recommendation 26: While the university has some clinical skills laboratories and medical equipment, it is recommended to upgrade and expand the existing laboratory equipment. Ensuring that the labs are state-of-the-art with the latest technology, such as advanced mannequins, biomedical diagnostic tools, and simulators, will significantly enhance students' learning experiences.

Answer:

The wording of the recommendation itself confirms that the University already has Clinical Skills center and relevant medical equipment. Therefore, the issue concerns further development and enhancement of existing resources rather than the absence of necessary infrastructure.

During the expert visit, the University presented invoices confirming the purchase of additional equipment and simulation devices. This demonstrates:

- the availability of financial resources;
- decisions already taken regarding procurement;
- an ongoing infrastructure development process;
- planning of resources in accordance with the stages of program implementation.

At the time of the expert visit, basic Clinical Skills Centers were operational and mannequins, models and medical equipment required for the program were available.

Some equipment was already placed within simulation-based learning environments, while additional resources were stored in appropriate facilities awaiting further installation.

The expert group was also provided with documentation confirming completed procurement processes and equipment inventories.

For clinical and nursing skills training, the University had already acquired and made available Kyoto Kagaku mannequins, models and procedural simulators, including adult and pediatric care mannequins, injection simulators and other relevant training models.

The accreditation assessment should focus on whether available resources are sufficient for the implementation of the program, rather than on whether more advanced or higher-specification equipment exists on the market.

Therefore, this recommendation may be understood as a recommendation for gradual enhancement of existing resources; however, it does not demonstrate non-compliance under Component 4.4 and, particularly, does not justify concerns regarding the broader requirements of Standard 2, where similar recommendations are substantively repeated.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation.

Recommendation 27: It is crucial that the university library and course syllabi contain the most up-to-date study materials. This includes ensuring that textbooks, journals, and other resources reflect the latest advancements in nursing science, clinical practices, and biomedical research. Regularly updating the

electronic databases and literature resources will ensure that students are exposed to the current best practices and have access to the latest evidence in the field of nursing.

Answer:

The continuous updating of educational resources is a responsibility and a priority of the University. In the summary section of the expert report, it is explicitly acknowledged that the program has updated educational resources and broad access to digital resources.

Under these circumstances, the recommendation appears contradictory, as it does not specify:

- which mandatory textbook is outdated;
- which syllabus contains irrelevant or inappropriate sources or literature.

The core and supplementary literature indicated in the syllabi of the Nursing Bachelor's Program has been published from in great majority 2021/2022/2023/2024 onwards and corresponds to the contemporary requirements of nursing science, clinical practice and biomedical disciplines. The availability of these resources is evidenced by the syllabi, procurement documentation, as well as the resources available in the library during the accreditation visit.

The University Library also provides access to international electronic scientific databases, including EBSCO and Scopus. Furthermore, the periodic review and updating of educational resources is an integral part of the University's quality assurance processes and will continue throughout program implementation in accordance with new editions, current clinical guidelines and the latest scientific evidence.

Therefore, this recommendation should be considered rather as a suggestion for continuation of the ongoing process of continuous improvement and updating of resources.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation.

Recommendation 28: Simulation-based learning is a vital part of the nursing curriculum, and it is recommended to increase the investment in simulation technologies. This could involve expanding the simulation labs with more high-fidelity mannequins, virtual reality (VR) tools, and interactive medical software.

Answer:

The University acknowledges the importance of continuous development of simulation-based learning technologies; however, it does not agree with the implication of the recommendation that the existing simulation resources are insufficient.

As part of the development of material and technical resources, the University has already made significant investments and acquired the required number of manikins, models and procedural simulators necessary for teaching nursing and clinical skills.

The quantity and functional diversity of these resources fully correspond to the simulation-based learning requirements defined by the program, as evidenced by procurement agreements, invoices and equipment inventories. The equipment is placed within appropriate clinical skills and simulation learning environments and is used in accordance with the objectives of relevant courses and practical learning activities.

Manikins and VR technologies may significantly enhance the learning experience; however, the relevant field-specific standards do not require the presence of a specific brand, technology, or the highest-level simulation equipment.

The program already incorporates virtual simulation technologies and additional equipment acquisition is planned. Therefore, further investment represents an opportunity for development and enhancement rather than evidence of an existing deficiency, either quantitative or functional.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestion.

Recommendation 29: To ensure that students receive the most relevant and up-to-date clinical training, it is recommended that the university improve communication and coordination with clinical practice settings. This could involve better alignment of clinical placements with the current curriculum, ensuring that clinical mentors are fully aware of the programme goals and learning outcomes.

Answer:

The University has established cooperation agreements and memoranda with clinical partners and the clinical component has been identified by the experts as one of the strengths of the program.

The program does not yet have enrolled students; therefore, no clinical practice has been conducted through which the following issues could have been identified:

- coordination deficiencies;
- insufficient awareness among mentors;
- clinical activities inconsistent with learning outcomes;
- inconsistency in assessment practices.

The memoranda and agreements concluded with partner clinical institutions define in advance the conditions of cooperation, practical training components, learning environments, student capacity, responsibilities of the parties and key aspects of clinical practice organization.

At the time of the accreditation visit, the program had not yet commenced implementation and students had not started clinical practice at partner institutions. Therefore, questions addressed to mentors regarding their practical experience with the actual implementation of the program may have caused some uncertainty. Nevertheless, relevant syllabi and student assessment forms had already been provided to mentors at all partner clinical institutions, and their active use will begin with the commencement of clinical education.

Prior to the start of each clinical practice component, the University will conduct orientation and information sessions with clinical mentors, during which the program objectives, learning outcomes of the respective courses, expected student activities, assessment criteria and feedback mechanisms will be discussed. This will ensure alignment of clinical practice with the curriculum and promote a consistent assessment approach. The University has established monitoring mechanisms for clinical practice implementation, adequacy of learning environments and support of clinical education. These mechanisms will also be applied within the Nursing Bachelor's Program and where necessary, will support further improvement of cooperation and coordination with clinical partners.

The University confirms that before the commencement of clinical practice, meetings will be planned and conducted with clinical mentors regarding program objectives, learning outcomes, assessment procedures, and feedback mechanisms.

Accordingly, this recommendation should be considered a preventive advice rather than a corrective requirement.

Reply: The Panel maintains Recommendation. While formal memoranda of understanding with clinical partners are in place, accreditation standards require verifiable operational readiness, including effective orientation and alignment of the clinical staff who will supervise student practice. During the site visit, interviews with designated clinical mentors across partner healthcare facilities revealed a lack of familiarity with the Nursing Bachelor's Program, its specific learning outcomes, and its clinical evaluation requirements. This gap in communication, compounded by the Study Programme Director's inability to demonstrate operational pre-clinical laboratories during the visit, indicates that formal agreements have not yet translated into functional institutional coordination. To safeguard study program implementation, clinical instruction and student safety the University must formally establish clear communication protocols with all partner clinical sites prior to program implementation.

Standard 5 - Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation

Recommendation 30: It is recommended to establish a student governance body that will be actively involved both in communication

Answer:

This recommendation substantively repeats the recommendation under Component 3.1 regarding the formalization of student self-governance.

The University already has an established student self-governance system functioning through student clubs. The creation of a separate student self-governance body specifically for the Nursing Bachelor's Program is not envisaged. In general, matters related to student self-governance are not regulated by the accreditation standards for educational programs.

It should be emphasized that, after enrollment, students of the program will have the opportunity to participate both in the University's student clubs and in program evaluation processes through surveys, focus groups, representative structures and quality assurance activities.

Therefore, the above recommendation does not constitute an issue directly related to the criteria of Component 5.1.

Reply: Accepted and moved to suggestion.

In conclusion, the University would like to emphasize the following:

- The University does not agree with the number of recommendations presented in the report or with the proportionality of the evaluations determined on their basis. A significant number of recommendations are substantively repeated across different components; some relate to

monitoring activities that can only be conducted after full implementation of the program and completion of at least one cohort, while others represent desirable directions for continuous institutional development rather than non-compliance identified at the time of accreditation.

- In particular, the University disagrees with the assessment of non-compliance with the requirements of Standard 2. The University possesses the clinical skills centers, histology/pathology teaching laboratory, anatomy teaching facilities and biochemistry teaching laboratory required for the implementation of the practical and preclinical components of the program within the existing campus. Furthermore, clinical skills centers, new biochemistry, immunology, bacteriology and molecular research laboratories will be completed prior to the commencement of the educational process.

During the visit, the expert group inspected the above-mentioned teaching facilities located at the existing campus. At the same time, the University presented invoices confirming the procurement of additional manikins, simulators, and laboratory equipment, demonstrating both the availability of adequate financial resources and the ongoing process of infrastructure development.

The relevant invoices and supporting documentation for the purchased equipment were included in the accreditation package for reference. These documents are attached again as annexes, together with the invoice for the microscopes purchased in June.

- The program is new and does not yet have enrolled students. Therefore, recommendations concerning actual student achievements, outcomes of clinical practice, evaluation after completion of the first cohort, functioning of program-level student representation, personnel turnover trends and future needs related to increasing student numbers cannot be used as a basis for negatively assessing the current status of the program.
- Furthermore, the University considers that the level and disciplinary specifics of the program have not been adequately taken into account in the report. The Nursing Bachelor's Program is a Level 6 undergraduate program. It provides students with an introduction to research methods and develops competencies related to evidence-based practice, professional information retrieval and analysis. At the same time, initiation of independent clinical research projects by students, systematic dissemination of research outcomes through posters and scientific conferences, or the existence of specialized biomedical research infrastructure should not be considered mandatory prerequisites for compliance of a Bachelor's degree program.

Considering the above, the University respectfully requests the experts to reconsider the recommendations, consolidate repetitive recommendations, reclassify issues related to future development as suggestions for further improvement rather than deficiencies and in particular, reconsider the evaluation of Standard 2, as the factual evidence presented does not demonstrate a material non-compliance of the programme with the requirements related to its teaching methodology and organisation.

The Expert Panel acknowledges the University's concluding statement and appreciates its comprehensive engagement throughout the accreditation process, while emphasizing that its evaluation was conducted strictly in accordance with the statutory framework of the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) and international principles of good practice. Because Nursing is a regulated healthcare profession, external accreditation serves as an essential quality assurance mechanism wherein the panel independently verifies the claims made in the self-

evaluation report through physical inspection and live interviews on site. While the information provided in the self-evaluation report is initially assumed to be factually correct, the site visit serves to physically verify operational readiness and explore omissions; thus, when direct observation contradicts written claims—such as identifying key staff unable to communicate in the language of instruction, or observing standard lecture classrooms with visual aids rather than functional wet-labs—the panel is legally and ethically bound to base its evaluation on observed reality rather than future promises or uninstalled equipment invoices. Furthermore, international standards strictly distinguish a classroom filled with visual demonstration tools from an operational Teaching Laboratory where students directly execute protocols, or a certified Biomedical Research Laboratory equipped with functional biosafety containment. The Panel has acted with complete objectivity, consolidating redundant findings where appropriate and reclassifying post-enrollment monitoring items as Suggestions for Continuous Development.

The Panel's findings, whether structured as Recommendations for compliance or Suggestions for development were formulated with genuine academic goodwill. The goal of external accreditation is not merely to audit, but to safeguard institutional integrity and assist the University in establishing a world-class, highly competitive Nursing Bachelor's Program. Should accreditation be granted, all recommendations made by the Panel are reasonably expected to be fully implemented within the designated accreditation timeframe, providing the University a clear, structured roadmap to bridge identified gaps prior to and during initial cohort delivery.

The Panel trusts that the University will receive these final conclusions in the constructive spirit in which they were written, as vital quality safeguards designed to ensure the success of the program, the safety of future patients, and the academic excellence of its graduates.