განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Final Report of Authorisation Evaluation of Petre Shotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy

Expert Panel Members
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Tbilisi

2018

Authorisation Report Resume

General information on the educational institution

Petre Shotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy (TMA) is a private self-governing Teaching University, established in 1992 by a Georgian doctor, Prof Peter Shotadze. TMA aspires to implement and exercise international standards within processes of teaching, learning and research.

More than 1500 TMA graduates are involved in successful careers at leading hospitals, scientific-research institutions and healthcare organizations on local, as well as international level.

TMA is actively involved in various international exchange programs, which provide students with opportunities to spend part of their studies at various international universities.

Currently, TMA runs two one-step educational programs – (Medicine - taught language Georgian and Medicine – taught language English) as well as residency programs of postgraduate education.

Brief overview of the evaluation procedure for authorisation: SER and site visit

The SER is well written and gives already a reasonable good insight on the position of the institution according to the different standards. The annexes are transparent, high quality, very useful for clarification of the questions of the expert commission while reading the SER.

The mission is new from January 2018. Therefore, the Strategic Development Plan and the Action Plans are formulated but not fully/not yet implemented. There was an active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the creation of the Strategic Development Plan. The involvement of students and employers in the strategic planning process could be better. The action plans contains properly selected performance indicators, actions, and persons responsible for the monitoring on a continuous basis. Some of the action plans could be more specific. Prioritizing will be necessary because there is a huge amount of work to do in the near future. The new organizational structures are created. Some new regulations and new management systems are in the implementation phase and others are still in a planning phase or just installed, as for example the Committee of Bioethics (2 weeks). The SER describes an institution in a transformative process.

In addition, there are several external factors that also are changing namely the authorization procedure (from 3 to 7 standards) and the new benchmark document for medical education in Georgia. All these factors were taken into account during the site visit.

The site visit was performed on 15, 16 and 17th of May. The attitude of the institution was open, kind, honest, respectful, cooperative, and professional.

Very striking was the open culture of the institution, the willingness to work with self-evaluation and peer evaluation to ameliorate the own performance, the attitude by direction and staff to try to turn everything in a positive way. We have seen that quality assurance is embedded in the culture of the institution and is realized in its daily work. In all groups we have seen commitment, motivation, energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to perform better.

The commission has seen that students are approached in a holistic way. The staff is concerned with the well-being of the students; they are stimulating the students to learn in a creative way, in a pleasant learning environment. The commission has seen that the student information system is functioning well, although at the start there were some difficulties according to the students. These problems are resolved and students are positive about the Student Information System.

Some directions in the mission of the institution are very ambitious, for example, to make from a teaching university a research-based university. The commission is convinced that this direction is the way to go for TMA. It will be a long way, but structures are installed, facilities have to be upgraded, especially the library, and proper staff policy has to be developed.

TMA wants to deliver doctors as active members of society. The commission has seen several projects of students in society, but they are not at an academic level. The institution has to install transformative learning activities in the curriculum, so students can indeed be actively involved in realizing positive changes in community and have a contribution to sustainability in society.

The commission has seen that internationalization is taken very seriously by TMA. The structures are in place, professional staff, academic as well as administrative is very motivated, contracts with different countries are signed, contribution in different consortia (teaching, research) is realized.

TMA has not an Alumni network. There is even not a good registration system of the alumni. The potential to care and to work with the Alumni has to be realized in the near future.

One of the most striking points in the site visit was the discussion with employers (CEO's of hospital trust and of out-patient clinic). The commission was already aware of the results (for all universities in Georgia that implement medical programs, not only for TMA) of a survey with 8 employers.

The employers were even more severe than the survey and said that they have to teach the graduates themselves because of lack of communication skills, lack of clinical skills, lack of deep knowledge, lack of critical thinking, lack of skills in differential diagnosis, lack of critical appraisal when the graduates enter into the residency training. The medical doctors lack fitness for the contact with real patients.

The commission has formulated a strong recommendation on this issue: TMA needs a major curriculum innovation in the near future. Curriculum constructors have to look more to the changing environment and they have to define the changes in

society, the changes in the health care sector, and the changes in medical education in the future. They have to work with competencies as it is stipulated in the new benchmark document (2018), and not only with knowledge and skills, but with integration of knowledge, skills, behavior into competences. They have to introduce more skills training (communication as well as procedural) on real patients and combine these trainings with training in differential diagnosis and clinical reasoning (vertical integration and in the meantime horizontal integration with the different modules in the different years. They have to work with teaching and learning activities that are student-centered and more activating students into transformative processes in society. They have to install a research skills learning line (vertical integration) over the 6 years and ending in a master thesis (level 8 Dublin descriptors for a master). Last, but not least they need new assessment methods that are capable to test on a competence level.

The commission recommends that the Faculty Board and the Curriculum Committee should be activated to steer in a proactive way the curriculum innovation process. The commission suggests also to create an inter-university board to stimulate the cooperation between institutions not only in order to have more impact on the political level but also to combining forces.

The commission is of the opinion that with the attitude and the vision of TMA, with their investment in professional staff, they are capable to realize such a curriculum and to deliver medical doctors fit for purpose. To do so, they need professional help in curriculum construction and they have to install a good program for teaching the teachers, especially the young ones, who are eager to learn more about teaching and to perform better within an excellent program. Also, lifelong learning and post-graduate training should be more elaborated and presented to the alumni.

Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards

Summary of Recommendations

1. Define and create social activities in the way students can learn to be social agents, transforming society and to be able to learn to be fit for purpose in the health care sector.

   So more contacts, surveys and collaboration with various employers and scientific and professional organizations of medical doctors and different health care settings are necessary.

2. The comments of the employers (survey and interview) are very seriously. The curricula have to be more innovative. Competence - based learning outcomes have to be defined and especially, deep learning should be encouraged by new didactical methods.

   Curriculum innovation has to focus on integration because complaints of the employers have to do with lack of integration in the curriculum (integration between basic and clinical courses and integration of knowledge, skills and behavior into competences). According to the new benchmark document of 2018 the integration should be better implemented in the curriculum. Try to work with competencies and to follow CanMeds roles for implementation of the new directions in the curriculum.

3. There are not enough contacts with real patients in the current curriculum. Patients often do not want a (foreign) medical student on the bedsite. In addition students may not perform tests on patients so there are not enough possibilities to train skills and competence. There should be more supervised real patient contacts in the hospitals and to outpatient clinics.

4. TMA has also to take into account the changing environment in society, in the health care system and in medical education for innovation of the curricula and in the decisions to start new programs.

5. The didactical concept can be more activating in using modern teaching activities as for example PBL and to ask from students to deliver more products to give more evidence that learning has taken place on the competence level and not only on the knowledge/information level without internalization and deep learning.

6. Strategic planning is a participatory process that actively involves staff, especially administrative staff. Students, employers and other stakeholders of the institution should be more involved in the future.

7. To turn from a teaching university into a teaching and research university is a big challenge. TMA has to elaborate a strategy to choose the different research lines they want to support (financial and staff). Structures are already in place namely the Research Grant Committee and the Bioethics Committee. High qualified staff (academic and administrative) should be attracted to help with writing research proposals, so TMA becomes competitive on the research market.

   In addition to the basic sciences the clinical sciences and in the opinion of the committee especially Public Health and General Practice/Family Medicine should be involved as much as possible in this process.

8. Review the workload of academic and invited staff (education, clinical and research activities).

9. Review the renumeration policy for academic and invited teachers.

10. TMA has to establish a peer reviewed process to judge projects for financing and to make the process of project evaluation transparent.

11. TMA should be more oriented to establish new research collaboration with international universities and research institutions and to exchange more young researchers.

12. Update of the library management system is necessary and installation of a mixed (academic and administrative staff) commission to decide mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services would be very useful.

Summary of Suggestions

- All staff should be capable to explain the mission statement to other people. This is not the case at the moment;
- Define and create social activities in the way students can learn to be social agents, transforming society and to be able to learn to be fit for purpose in the health care sector (integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior in competences needed in the future society);
- There is a need to prioritize the action plans;

- In general more administrative staff is needed and especially for the Quality Assurance Department because of the huge amount of action plans to be realized in the near future;
- Increase of students' involvement in policy making in TMA, and at the national and international level within students organizations;
- To tackle the political problems TMA can take the lead to install an interuniversitary board of rectors for education and research;
- More professional trainings for teachers for raising qualifications in medical teaching skills;
- More trainings for administrative staff; More active contact, communication between academic and administrative staff;
- More exchange programs for academic and invited teachers;
- Recruitment of required staff, especially more young academic staff;
- More clinical practice with contact hours for academic staff;
- More contact hours for research activites for academic staff;
- Full implementation of plagiarism strategy;
- Performance based incentive mechanism and objective system of staff needs evaluation
- Communication with alumni;
- Data base for follow-up of alumni;
- More post graduate training and lifelong learning activities for updating the competences of alumni.

Summary of the Best Practices

1. QA surveys at the end of academic years since 2015; The QA department has been conducting the surveys at the end of each academic year since 2015 and especially the way of working with the results of the surveys and to implement the decision to enhance quality makes a best practice of this endeavor.

2. The efficiency of working with PDCA in restructuring and managing the institution;

3. New system of evaluation for the staff;

4. Up-to-date management system of study process that makes it possible to detect early students at risk;

5. Quality assurance system: quality assurance is embedded in the culture of the institution and is realized in its daily work. In all departments there is commitment, motivation, energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to perform better.

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

Signature of expert panel members

1. Denekens Josette (Chair)
2. Manjavidze Irma (Member)
3. Pantsulaia Ia (Member)
4. Gagua Irakli(Employer Member)
5. Tebidze Vakhtang(Student Member)

I. Manjavidze
I. Pantsulaia
I. Gagua

Compliance of the Applicant HEI with the Authorization Standard Components

1. Mission and strategic development of HEI

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
The mission statement of TMA refers to educational objectives and goals, formulated by the "Law of Georgia on Higher Education" also it was revised by a working group (created in 2016 for strategic development and with following composition: Rector, Deputy Rector for Administrative Affairs, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Head of Financial Department, Dean of the faculty of Medicine, Head of Educational Program Development Department, Head of Legal Department, Head of Analytical Department) in accordance with the updated EU policy for higher education.

The mission statement defines its role locally and internationally and is formulated as follows: «The mission of TMA is to innovate and enrich medical professionals having knowledge and scientific –research skills by providing a student-oriented learning environment and educational program at international level». So the mission statement defines its role locally as well as internationally.

The mission Statement of TMA takes into consideration the role of higher education in developing active members of the society, knowledge creation and dissemination, facilitating students' personal development and ensuring their competitiveness on the labor market.

The way the mission statement has been elaborated gives evidence that the stakeholders are involved in the creating process.

For introduction and dissemination among students, teaching staff and general community of TMA, the mission statement was distributed electronically among the students and the teaching staff through the electronic management system and attractive illustrations are displayed on visible places within the study building. Nevertheless, the commission noticed during the interview with the Board of Faculty that they could not explain the different topics in the mission statement. |

Evidences/indicators
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);   - TMA mission 2018;   - Interview with Board of Partners and Supervisory Board, Self-Evaluation Team, Administrative and Academic Staff, Invited Staff and Students, Employers, QA Department;   - Printed version of mission statement is located on visible places on each floor of the Academy. Also, it is available on Web-site of TMA;   - TMA uses their mission statement in branding and marketing activities.

Recommendations:

Suggestions:
All staff should be capable to explain the mission statement to other people.

Best Practices (if applicable):
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Evaluation
☒ Complies with requirements
☐ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

1.2 Strategic Development

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA's strategic plan is well elaborated and can ensure the achievement of TMA goals. TMA's goals are based on its mission. There is a need to prioritize the goals. They are achievable, time-bound, and indicators are put in place to make them measurable. Some of the goals can be more concrete.

TMA has developed a strategic planning methodology to utilize while drafting its strategic development and action plans. This methodology contains the following steps: revision of previous strategic plan and mission, assessment of then-current situation using SWOT and PESTL analysis, risk assessment and external researches conducted by the hired marketing company. In this way the working group has defined strategic development directions. There is a monitoring system with indicators introduced to monitor progress and to make evaluation in the future possible.

Strategic planning is a participatory process that actively involves staff, especially administrative staff. Students, employers and other stakeholders of the institution should be more involved in the future. The strategic development plan is comprehensive and the action plan covers all aspects which are vital to the operation of the institution, including institutional development (for example. The transformation into a research institution) quality assurance (attraction, retention and care for the academic and the administrative staff), planning and implementation of educational program (new PhD program, continuous refinement of the existing educational programs, student body planning (methodology is developed and implemented), research (attraction of high quality staff, new infrastructure)), human and material resources, student services (SIS is implemented and works well according to the students), infrastructure (new building)etc.

There are defined actions to realize a contribution to the social development of the country. Perhaps, it is possible to choose the new program more in relation to the development of the Georgian society (needs of the patients) and the needed innovations in the Georgian health care sector. To do this a national and international exploration of the developments in the health care sector and in medical education would be of great importance to choose the right directions.

TMA contributes to the development of society and knowledge dissemination by planning and implementing the following activities: social, cultural, economic, environmental and other program and events; activities facilitating lifelong learning; some of TMA's academic and scientific staff participate in the discussion of important social issues, offer expert and consultation services, and conduct research for different institutions.

Most of the academic staff are members of the local and international professional associations. So new knowledge is shared during meetings, conferences. Through participation in mass media events the general public is also involved in the process of sharing new knowledge.

TMA students are involved in several activities within society; for example "AIDs", "Unsolicited Blood Donation", "Gender biased Sex – selection, "Anti-tobacco action", "Children of the Sun", "Friends don't count chromosomes"

These activities should be intensified in the future better planned, and implemented more systematically. Better interaction between students and academic staff has to be realized.

More integration between learning, research and social services should be realized in the future in the curriculum

Evidences/indicators
- Self-evaluation report;
- Interview Results;
- Annex 1.1 Strategic Development Plan;
- Annex 1.2 Action Plan;
- Annex 1.4 Strategic Planning Methodology;

Recommendations:

Define and create social activities in the way students can learn to be social agents, transforming society and to be able to learn to be fit for purpose in the health care sector (integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior in competences needed in the future society).

So more contacts, surveys and collaboration with various employers and scientific and professional organizations of medical doctors and different health care settings are necessary to define the projects together and to make students active members of society

Suggestions:

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2. Organizational Structure and Management of HEI

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

2.1 Organizational Structure and Management

- o Organizational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan
- o Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation
- o HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the

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

The «Regulations» TMA document (annex 2.1) gives an overview of functions, responsibilities, subordinations and accountability of each structural unit and positions inside the departments. Annex 2.2 «Qualifications and job description» stipulates the procedures for appointing proper persons to the positions TMA needed and this procedures are approved, transparent, equitable and in line with legislation. Appointing management bodies – Supervisory Board, Rector and Director, are fulfilled according to the represented vision and developed qualification requirements for each of them (annex 2.1, article 6).

In the management process TMA uses an electronic system of documentation and task management (since July 2017), as well as a study process management system (SPMS, annex 2.3) Although, there were some difficulties by the start of working with these systems, especially with the student progress system, those electronic systems are now working very well according to the staff and the students.

According to the administrative staff members, each member has a development plan with defined goals, and annually or biannually there is a self-evaluation or/and peer-evaluation taking place to evaluate the progress of the developmental plan. In case there is not enough progress the reasons for this delay are searched and discussed at rectors level and supervisory board, root analysis is carried out and the reasons for underperformance are determined. Relevant recommendations and suggestions for improvement and optimization are set up. (Annex 2.7 «Management Efficiency Monitoring Mechanisms and Assessment System»). During the interviews with staff members, we heard that the staff appreciates this culture of self - and peer-evaluation in the process of quality assurance.

Also for the students, the student progress management system is working well and the follow-up of the study progress is documented, and students at risk are seen by the student counselor to search for causes and to find solutions for the problems.

Students are satisfied with the feedback and the possibility to ask in an easy way simple questions. The administrative staff is responding very fast and problems are solved in an easy way according to the students.

The «Procedure for Registry Maintenance» (annex 2.4) regulates the registry for students and teaching staff. TMA has developed a Risk Assessment Methodology (annex 1.4) and a Business Continuity Plan (annex 2.5). The plan takes into account all possible risk, mechanisms for their prevention and in case the prevention is not possible, TMA has a strategy for risk mitigation.

Three new strategic directions are taken in the strategic plan: Enhancement of academic and scientific research potential, transformation of student experience and continuous development and personal growth of academic and administrative staff.

According to the different groups that were interviewed the organizational structures (annex 2.6 that clearly demonstrates the mutual subordination of the structural units) ensures effective implementation of the activities defined in the strategic plan and achievement of its goals. Student organizations could increase students' involvement in policy making in TMA, and at the national and international level.

There is a huge amount of action plans to implement, to monitor and to evaluate. So the capacity of administrative staff should be increased.

Despite of the huge amount of action plans TMA ensures good, non-stressful working atmosphere, and manages educational activities properly in line with the proposed Strategic Development Plan.

TMA has elaborated an internationalization policy with important directions(one of the priorities in the mission statement(annex 2.8):

- Internationalization of the academic program (since 2012 there is an English taught educational program in Medicine);
- Facilitation of the mobility of staff and students (different contracts with universities in Lithuania, Italy, Turkey, Armenia, Spain. Since 2015, there are 45 outgoing students. Academic staff members have outgoing projects in these countries;
- Increasing international cooperation in education (hematology DECERPH Tempus consortium, EU funded);
- Increasing international cooperation in research (consortium)to enhance students and staff knowledge;
- Public lectures were conducted by guest speakers from leading universities in the USA (Tulane, Pennsylvania);
- Staff is attending the AMEE meetings, students are active member of EMSA, IFMSA/GMSA

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Evidence/indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Annex 1.2 Action Plan 2018-2020;
- Annex 1.4 Strategic Planning Methodology;
- Annex 2.1 TMA Regulations;
- Annex 2.2 Qualification and Job Description;
- Annex 2.3 Procedures of correspondence (Georgian version);
- Annex 2.4 Procedure for Registry Maintenance (Georgian version);
- Annex 2.5 Business Continuity Plan;
- Annex 2.6 Organizational Chart of TMA;
- Annex 2.7 Management Efficiency Monitoring Mechanisms and Assessment System;
- Annex 2.8 Internationalization Policy;
- Interviews with Board of Partners and Supervisory Board, Rector, Deputy Rector, Director, Deputy Director, self-evaluation team, QA Department, Human Resources Department, Staff (academic, administrative, and invited) students.

Recommendations

Suggestions:

There is a huge amount of action plans to implement, to monitor and to evaluate. So the capacity of administrative staff should be increased.

Increase of students' involvement in policy making in TMA, and at the national and international level within students organizations.

Best Practices (if applicable):

The efficiency of working with PDCA:

- in restructuring and managing the institution;
- To define and implement a new system of evaluation for the staff and a system for student progress follow-up.

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.2 Internal quality assurance mechanisms

- o Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance mechanisms. Leadership of the institution constantly works to strengthen quality assurance function and promotes establishment of quality culture in the institution.
- o HEI has a mechanism for planning student body, which will give each student an opportunity to get a high quality education.

Every unit of TMA is effectively involved in the implementation of internal quality assurance mechanisms; during the interviews the commission has seen that everybody is working on quality, quality assurance is embedded in daily work.

Very striking was the open culture of the institution, the willingness to work with self-evaluation and peer evaluation to ameliorate the own performance, the attitude by direction and staff to try to turn everything in a positive way.

TMA allocates appropriate human, information and material resources. The quality assurance mechanisms ensure continuous assessment and development of institution's activities and its resources.

TMA has developed mechanisms for evaluation and improvement of educational program. Academic/invited/scientific staff. Students and external stakeholders (employers, alumni, etc.) are involved in the implementation of ameliorations and innovation. The PDCA circle is effectively used in the different units.

Leadership of TMA makes decisions based on the results of quality assurance surveys and of the managing and reporting system for permanent evaluation of the staff and in the student progress information system for student's academic performance. The results are used for the improvement of the educational program and to detect students at risk.

TMA has a mechanism for planning student body as well as Student body planning methodology and relevant indicators and benchmarks approved by the institution.
A huge amount of activities is needed to evaluate the implementation of all action plans. There is a need for more capacity of administrative staff in the QA department.

Evidences/indicators
The expert panel founds evidence in the following documents:
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Interviews with Board of Partners and Supervisory Board, Rector, Deputy Rector, Director, Deputy Director, Self-Evaluation Team, QA Department, Human Resources Department, Staff (academic, administrative, invited),Students;
- Annex 2.1 TMA Regulations;
- Annex 2.7 Management Efficiency Monitoring Mechanisms and Assessment System;
- Annex 2.9 Quality Assurance System and Procedures;
- Annex 2.10 Student Number Planning Committee Decision.

Recommendations

Suggestions:

More staff is needed in the Quality Assurance Department.

Best Practices (if applicable):
Quality assurance is embedded in the culture of the institution and is realized in its daily work. In all departments there is commitment, motivation, energy, enthusiasm, and

willingness to perform better.

The Quality Assurance System is the "best practice"

Evaluation

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

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

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2.3 Observing principles of Ethics and Integrity

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has a contract agreement with licensed LTD Plagiat offered Computerized program for detection the cases of plagiarism is installed.

TMA rules and regulations declare the institution's adherence to the principles of academic freedom. TMA community is familiar with and shares the principles of academic freedom.

TMA has regulations according to quality assurance system and proceeding.

Evidences/indicators

- Code of Conduct and Ethics (annex 2.11)
- "Quality Assurance System and Proceeding"(annex 2.9)
- Contract with LTD "Plagiat "(annex 2.13)
- TMA Regulations (annex 2.1)

Recommendations

Suggestions

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.1   Educational Programmes

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

3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes
HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programs.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has procedures for planning/elaborating/implementing new educational programs, as well as necessary steps to make changes and modifications in existed ones.

TMA sees quality assurance as a cooperative process which requires participation of all stakeholders (academic/invited staff, students, graduates, potential employers, administrative staff, professional associations):

- TMA works constantly on the renewal and development of its programs;
- TMA academic/invited staff, with relevant qualification and background is eligible to propose new educational programs to the Rector, with relevant employment market research;
- A submitted proposal is transferred to the Curriculum Committee for further consideration and resource allocation;
- A new educational program is judged by the QA Department and when positively assessed is finally approved by the Rector.
- At the end of each academic year, the QA Department collects data from the different stakeholders (students, teaching staff, graduates, and employers), analyzes this data and gives recommendations about the areas for improvement to the Deputy Rector and the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee discusses the recommendations, makes corresponding amendments if needed and makes the final draft of the program before it is presented to the Rector for approving.

The Curriculum Committee is represented by permanent and non-permanent members. Initially, the permanent part was represented by members of TMA administrative staff, among them the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, the Head of the Quality Assurance Department, the Head of the Curriculum Development Department, the Head of Clinical Skills and Objectively Structured Exams Centre, as well as 2 representatives from the teaching staff of basic study courses. Other, non-permanent members of Curriculum Committee were invited occasionally, based on nature and specifics of discussed matter. At the beginning of 2017, the composition of the Curriculum Committee was revised and several representatives from clinical departments, as well as active students of current educational programs are also invited.

In the mission statement it is formulated that TMA wants to make student active members of society. In this context there are already projects of students in society (in elderly homes, prevention of cervical cancer, blood donation etc.)These projects, however, have not an academically dimension. TMA has to define and create social activities in the way students can learn to be social agents, transforming society and to be able to learn to be fit for purpose in the health care sector.

So more contacts, surveys and collaboration with various employers and scientific and professional organizations of medical doctors and different health care settings are necessary. Curriculum innovation should be taken in account the evolutions within society, the developments within the health care sector and the innovative approaches of learning within medical education.

Learning outcomes (LO) are defined for each course and described into the syllabi. Most of

the LO are defined on a knowledge level, sometimes on a skills level, but not really on a competence level. The new benchmark document of 2018 asks for LO on competence level as outcome.

An outcome-based curriculum has to be developed. This means that also the teaching and learning activities should be changed into activities for students and the assessment should be aligned to the LO.

The teachers are presenting the LO in the first encounter with the students during their course and are currently working in the different teaching and learning activities to realize the students can reach the LO. The assessment is aligned with the LO. The LO are known by the students and students declare that the LO are steering the learning process and that the LO's are assessed in the different assessment formats although better in the OSCE exams with standardized patients than in the MCQ tests.

Another important direction in the mission statement is to become a research – based institution and to teach students more research skills. There are in this direction different courses in the curricula: for the Georgian-taught educational program: introduction to scientific research, bioethics, epidemiology and biostatistics, scientific research activity. For the English-taught program: introduction to medical research biostatistics, epidemiology, biostatistics, scientific research activity.

Students are mostly very satisfied with the teaching of the academic and invited staff. When there are complaints, TMA is capable to react fast and adequate and to ameliorate the situation immediately. Students are really satisfied with this attitude of TMA and are praising the open and pleasant study environment.

Student's performance is constantly monitored with the electronic system. Students at risk are detected and can have a consultation with the counselor for follow-up.

The survey of the employers should be taken seriously and especially the following findings (for whole Georgia, not only for TMA):

- not enough communication skills;
- not enough clinical skills;
- not enough critical appraisal;
- not enough critical thinking;
- not enough differential diagnosis;
- not enough deep knowledge.

During the interview with the employers the same issues were mentioned.

The curricula have to be more innovative and especially, deep learning, competence - based learning outcomes have to be defined. The didactical concept can be more activating in using modern teaching activities as PBL and to ask from students to deliver more products to give more evidence that learning has taken place on the competence level and not only on the knowledge/information level without internalization and deep learning.

Alumni tracer studies regarding career evolution is not really available. 66,5 % of graduates starts residency training; 14% were out of reach, while the remaining part of graduates are employed beside their qualification.

Alumni are telling that it is often difficult to find an appropriate job because there are too many graduates in the country. So, they have often a job where they underperform as a nurse or they are working in a totally different sector, or they are going abroad to do a residency (Russia, Europe). This is also a nationwide problem and asks for adequate action at the political level;

The dentistry program has been stopped, since 2014 no new students. Mechanisms are in place to provide further educational opportunities to students who are still in the dentistry

program; so they can finish the program and get their graduation.

Conclusion: the running program can be ameliorated in the near future. Therefore, a major curriculum innovation is needed. But structures are in place, motivation, commitment and creativity is present within the institution. Faculty development should be stimulated by the leaders and appreciation and support should be further created within human resources policy.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Annex 2.9 QA system and procedures;
- Annex 3.4 Study Progress Regulations;
- Annex 3.6 Contract with HEI (in Georgian);
- Interviews with academic and administrative staff;
- Interviews with students, graduates, alumni, employers;
- Surveys of students;
- Survey of employers.

Recommendations:

The comments of the employers (survey and interview) are very serious. The curricula have to be more innovative and especially, deep learning, competence - based learning outcomes have to be defined; teaching and learning activities and assessment should be aligned to the new LO (competences).

The institution has to take into account the changing environment in society, in health care system and in medical education for innovation of the curricula and to choose new programmes;

The didactical concept can be more activating in using modern teaching activities as PBL and to ask from students to deliver more products to give more evidence that learning has taken place on the competence level and not only on the knowledge/information level without internalization and deep learning.

Suggestions

To tackle the political problems TMA can take the lead to install an inter-universitary board of rectors for medical education and research.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.2 Structure and Content of Educational Programmes

Currently, TMA is running three one-cycle educational programmes, correspondent to second stage of higher education, (i.e. are equalized to Master's Degree) and designed in accordance to the principles of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). As determined by NQF(National Qualifications Framework), TMA awards degrees of Medical

Doctor (MD) and Doctor of Dental Medicine, (DDM):
• Medical Doctor (MD) – taught language Georgian, - 360 ECTS, (Direction – 09 Healthcare; Field/Specialty – 0901 Medicine; Subspecialty/Specialization – 090101 Medical Doctor) (see Annex 3.1)
• Dentistry (DDM) – taught language Georgian, - 300 ECTS, (Direction – 09 Healthcare; Field/Specialty – 0902 Dentistry; Subspecialty/Specialization – 090201 – Doctor of Dental Medicine) The dentistry program is cancelled by decision made by the leadership of TMA.in 2014. So the last cohort will be graduated in 2019 (n = 13 students)
• Medical Doctor (MD) – taught language English, - 360 ECTS, (Direction – 09 Healthcare; Field/Specialty – 0901 Medicine; Subspecialty/Specialization – 090101 Medical Doctor) (see Annex 3.2)

Both, general and specific learning outcomes for each educational program are outlined into the programs in a detailed manner into each study course syllabus. The academic staff is producing the LOs and the Curriculum Committee is responsible for the curriculum mapping. Yearly, the programs are updated with the changes according to the surveys of the QA Department.

Students have normally +/- 24 hours of contact (lectures and seminars, skills training) and 20-25 hours of study. Workload is to do.

In 2014, TMA decided to terminate admissions for the educational program – Dentistry.

The vertical integration is realized in some courses for example between cardiology and anatomy and physiology (not enough). Horizontal integration is not realized. Quality assurance has to focus on integration because complaints of the employers have to do with the lack of integration in the curriculum (integration between basic and clinical courses and integration of knowledge, skills and behavior into competences). Especially the contact with real patients are a problem. Patients often do not want a medical student on the bedsite. In addition students may not perform tests on patients so there are not enough possibilities to train competences and skills.

Each program has basic and clinical courses, skills (technical and communication), and scientific methods for medical research etc. Educational Programs consist of both obligatory, as well as elective study courses. Ratio of elective subjects makes up 13.2% of total volume of program for Georgian-taught program and 12.9% for English- taught program. Clinical stage of study offers students rather diverse and broader choice of elective subjects, compared to basic stage.

One week before end of semester, students have opportunities to choose one of elective courses for successive semester without any limitations (see Annex 3.4 – Study Process Regulations). Students were happy with these electives and with the procedures to choose and register.

There is a regulation for students with special needs (annex 2.13). This regulation is not used because TMA has no students with special needs according to the Head of the Supervisory Board.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report;
- Interviews with teachers and students, board of the deans, curriculum committee, employers, alumni;
- Annex 3.1 – Educational Programme "Medicine" (taught in Georgian);
- Annex 3.2 – Educational Programme "Medicine" (taught in English);
- Annex 3.3 - Rule of Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Scientific-Research Component;

- Annex 3.4 - Study Process Regulations;
- Annex 3.5 – Academic Calendar;

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standard component

To make students more competent to work with real patients there should be more vertical and horizontal integration in the curriculum, According to the new benchmark document of 2018 the integration should be better implemented in the curriculum. Integration between basic and clinical sciences and integration of knowledge, attitude and behavior into competence – based learning with outcome-based assessment;

There should be more skills training on real patients, there should be more supervised real patient contacts in the hospitals and to outpatient clinics.

-

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

o ☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has elaborated a system for assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes, which is described in detail in TMA Study Process Regulations.

TMA Study Process Regulations are accessible for each interested party from official website of TMA, (www.tma.edu.ge) and is available in both Georgian and English languages.

Students, as well as teaching staff has full access to syllabi of relevant study courses, through TMA Student Management System (www.tma.ini.ge); hence, transparent delivery of study course, as well as communication within teaching staff and students regarding course content is ensured.

The assessment system at TMA is based on and is compatible with the demands of the legislations, according to which, assessment of student performance level for each study course consists of 2components, intermediate assessment and final examination. Each study course is estimated by100 points maximum, of which 60 points are allocated for intermediate assessment, while final examination is assessed by 40 points maximum.

In order to ensure applicable and fair assessment of student performance a wide variety of assessment methods is available but most of the examinations are MCQ tests.

• Theoretical knowledge is widely assessed through test questionnaires (MCQ) during intermediate assessment, as well as final examination;
• Skills are tested in OSCE's which consists of 4 stations;
•OSPE (Objectively Structured Practical Exam);
• Virtual assessment methods;
• Communication skills with SP;
• Presentations for a wider public;
• Development of up-to-date and effective scientific-research skills;
• Scientific skills: written essays based on desk-review of modern data, obtained through electronic resources, provided by TMA library services.

During the whole semester students are getting oral feedbacks from the teaching staff about their progress and the main points for improvement. That is a good practice in the institution.
Whereas, after exams they have little feedback about the mistakes they make into the exam papers (as it was revealed after student survey).That's why during on-going semester 4 additional (paid) hours for each subject were included into the teaching staff workload to meet with students after exams and give feedback about improvement in an individual approach.

There is the necessity for written feedbacks to the students, so a portfolio system will be implemented into the evaluation system from 2019.

The current assessment system of TMA, can be considered as fair and transparent, where each student is equally assessed under the same criteria, based on the following:
• During assessment process, students are given identical questions, or assignments of equal complexity;
• Test-based assignments are evaluated and graded automatically, by electronic system,
based on the number of correct answers given by student (correct answers are determined in advance and reflected to assessing system respectively);
• Special protocols are elaborated for OSCE/OSPE/SP examinations, which are created based on best international practices and introduced to students' prior examinations, during study process. In accordance to the stated protocols are later drawn up task-specific check-lists, which are methodically filled by supervisor/relevant body during examination process.
TMA also operates an efficient system of appeals, in frames of which any student is eligible to appeal and request revision of assessment (both intermediate and final) results. Such practice evokes among students trust towards teaching staff, administration and system of TMA in general, as well as facilitates to development of important qualities, like critical thinking, self-assessment and self-determination. The details about the procedure itself, as well as impact analysis are provided under 'good practice' section of standard 5.

Evidences/indicators

• Self-evaluation Report;
• Interviews with academic staff/ invited staff and students;
• Annex 3.1 Educational Program Medicine (taught in Georgian);
• Annex 3.2 Educational Program Medicine (taught in English);
• Annex 3.4 Study Process Regulations

Recommendations:

Suggestions:
Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

       ☒ Complies with requirements

       ☐ Substantially complies with requirements

       ☐ Partially complies with requirements

o   ☐ Does not comply with requirements

4. Staff of the HEI

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

4.1. Staff Management

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Within TMA is operating Human Resource Management (HRM) Department, which carries out its' activities in accordance to active legislation of Georgia and regulatory documents of TMA. TMA has elaborated "Human Resource Management Policy, General Principles and Rules", which describes in detail rules and procedures, used by TMA management for administering TMA workforce (administrative/supportive, academic/invited personnel).

TMA is motivated to invite talented, qualified, motivated teachers, and administrative and supportive persons with international education backgrounds, especially young persons for keep on serving for administrative staff.

During 2015-2017, 17 members of staff were promoted through the internal recruitment; 11 vacancies were announced in public, through national job search (www.jobs.ge).

In accordance to the estimated procedures, for each case of elections for academic positions, is set a Committee, based on the Order of TMA Rector, which includes at least 3 members of TMA academic personnel. Based on the preliminarily determined criteria, the Committee considers applications and supported documents and exercises decision publicly.

TMA academic personnel is participating within international mobility programs, e.g. Erasmus Mundus: MEDEA 1 person (2015), 1 person (2016), by MEVLANA 3 persons (2015), and according to bilateral agreement 40 persons (2015-2018).

During March 2018, in frames of TMA international week, were invited notable professors and key representatives of administrative staff from leading European and U.S. Universities for knowledge sharing and dissemination of practice in contexts of internationalization,

scientific-research work and leadership, as well as conducted study course specific lectures and workshops for teaching personnel.

Demographic distribution of TMA's current academic staff: by gender is 58,9% females, and 41,1% males, by from 51 until 70 years old are 51,8% . Attracting young academic staff would be an additional contributing factor to development.

In accordance to 2018-2020 action plan, TMA will elaborate principles of remuneration and rewards, which will be based on relevant indicators, necessary for evaluating staff members' performance and efficiency. By the reviews of the personal files, TMA employees (academic/scientific/invited/administrative/support staff) have appropriate qualification to perform their activities.

According to the satisfaction rate survey, what was carried out in 2017 among administrative personnel, highlighted following strengths of the working process at TMA: Working at TMA provides new opportunities and develops skills/abilities (65%), continuous encouragement and growth of motivation is facilitated by TMA management (76%), TMA personnel is included within decision-making process (70%), initiatives of TMA personnel are encouraged and supported by the management (100%). Later in 2018, an anonymous survey was conducted, which addressed wider range of concerns, and included the most part of academic, as well as invited staff. The following concerns were identified by the survey: more exchange programs for staff (67,24%), more training course for staff (37,39%), more contact with administration and teaching staff (8,62%). During the interview with the academic staff, these were defined as the "weaknesses".

The HRM strategy, as part of TMA Strategic Development Plan 2018-2024 considers remodeling and modernization of HRM system through implementing fundamental practices and systems of monitoring.

The QA Department conducted different kind of surveys for clarification of staff problems and last three years teachers' rating.

TMA has elaborated the procedure, which ensures orientation and integration of new members of staff into the community and working environment of the institution

The scope of the working style of QA Department is overloaded, because only two persons are working herein.

Evidences/indicators
- Annex 4.1 - Human Resource Management Policy, General Principles and Rules;
- Annex 4.2 – Standard Labour Agreements;
- Annex 4.3 – Personal Files of Academic Staff;
- Annex 4.4 – Personal Files of Invited Staff;
- Annex 4.5 – Academic Staff Competition Documentation;
- Annex 4.6 – Personal Files of Administrative Staff;
- Contracts with academic, invited and administrative staff;
- Survey results;
- Self-Evaluation;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

Suggestions:

- More administrative staff (especially in QA Department) for sustainability of the management of TMA (probably also allocating the relevant responsible people for each key administrative processes/functions) ;
- More professional trainings for teachers for raising qualifications in medical teaching skills and for administrative management;
- More active contact with administration; More exchange programs for academic and invited teachers;
- Attraction of younger academic staff.

Best Practices (if applicable):

The QA department has been conducting the surveys at the end of each academic year since 2015 and especially the way of working with the results of the surveys and to implement the decision to enhance quality makes the best practice of this endeavor.

Evaluation

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

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has the regulation "Procedure, Terms and Conditions of Affiliation and management of TMA and for study process system administration".

Workload of the Academic Staff ", defines procedures of Affiliation of the Academic Staff. In TMA academic staff consists of 50 persons, except professors for the Faculty of Dentistry (5 persons), 41 are affiliated with TMA (84% affiliated). 12 out of whole academic staff, and 11 out of the invited staff are involved in both programs – delivered in Georgian and English language. ; 67.6%of the invited is PhD. The number of professors and affiliated professors allows implementation of the educational programs at TMA.

From the academic staff (55 persons) only 3 academic staff member have more than 30 hours per week in other HEI. In TMA, an average duration of contact hours in a week for the academic staff is 9 academic hours, and for the invited teachers - 7,39.

The interviews with students revealed that, they are in need of more clinical practice. That could be achievable by increasing the teaching contact hours in hospitals for more clinical practices.

It should be underlined that during the site visit, the commission reviewed contracts with academic staff, where the following was mentioned in case of affiliation the employee is obliged to provide scientific research activities". But, due to the lack of scientific research funding and relevant infrastructure for research (TMA has started to establish research laboratory with proper equipments), research activities are now limited to PPT and writing of summary papers. TMA has to improve these activities in relation to the action plan.

The salary for academic staff is determined by the teaching activities (contact hours). They do not have a fixed salary as well. Only administrative academic staff has monthly fixed salary. The fixed salary in the future will be the basis for better motivation of academic staff for further improvements.

TMA's SER marks actual and target benchmarks for 2020-2021, which demonstrates that educational process is going towards the "student centeredness".

In general, motivation and willingness of academic, invited, administrative and support staff for further development and sustainability are compatible for program development and implementation in TMA.

Evidences/indicators

- Annex 4.7 Workload of Academic Staff;
- Annex 4.8 Workload of Invited Staff;
- Annex 4.1.1 Procedures, Terms and Conditions of Affiliation and Workload of the Academic Staff;
- Annex 4.7. (GEO) Academic staff workload Scheme for 2017-2018 academic year spring semester;
- Annex 4.8. (GEO) Invited staff workload Scheme for 2017-2018 academic year spring semester;
- QA survey results of students, academic, invited   personnel;
- Personal Files of Staff;
- Interview results with students;
- TMA Benchmarks for academic, scientific, and invited staff- program ratio and academic, scientific, and invited staff - student ratio (SER 2018).

Recommendations:

Review the workload of academic and invited staff (education, clinical and research activities)

Review the renumeration policy for academic and invited teachers

Suggestions:
- More clinical practice with contact hours;
- More contact hours for research activities.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

5. Students and Their Support Services

HEI ensures the development of student-centered environment, offers appropriate services, including career support mechanisms; it also ensures maximum awareness of

students, implements diverse activities and promotes student involvement in these activities. HEI utilizes student survey results to improve student support services

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

- For each of the educational levels, HEI has developed regulations for assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting, issuing educational documents as well as recognition of education received during the learning period.
- HEI ensures the protection of student rights and lawful interests.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The rules for obtaining and changing student status, recognition of education, and protection of student rights appear to be properly managed by the teaching university.

The regulations for assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting and recognition of education are described in details by the "TMA Study Process Regulations". The document is publicly available in both Georgian and English on the official website of TMA and is accessible to students and other stakeholders. The suggested rules are fair and based on the "Law of Georgia on Higher Education".

During the site-visit, it has also been confirmed that the above-mentioned procedures are transparent, effective and appropriately implemented.

The contract between TMA and a student protects student rights and lawful interests. During site-visit, it has been confirmed that the students were able to receive more clarifications or additional information regarding any records of the contract in prior to sign it, in order to get acknowledged with terms and conditions of the agreement.

Besides that, in 2016 the university started using attachments of the contract to provide more simplified explanations on active rules and regulations in order to inform and instruct students about their rights and obligations as set in the document.

The university has the regulatory document "Protection Mechanism for Students Rights and Lawful Interests". According to this document, students are able to fill a complaint/claim submission form related to the work of academic and administrative bodies (activities of pedagogical and administrative staff, collegian and management authorities and student associations). This document describes the steps of the discussion of student's appeals and decision-making process.

The students have confirmed that they have used the complaint/claim submission system that has led to the relevant and fair decisions by the institution.

According to the SER, interview results and the regulatory documents assessed, the institution appears to ensure protection of student rights and lawful interests.

Evidences/indicators
- Publicity of information (web-page);
- Annex 5.1 Regulation document „Protection mechanism of students rights and lawful interests";
- Annex 5.2 Copy of student agreement;
- Annex 5.3 Regulations of Examination Centre (in Georgian);
- Samples of contracts between TMA and a student;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

Suggestions:
- Increase of students' involvement in policy making in TMA, and at the national and international level within students organizations.

Best Practices (if applicable):
Evaluation
☒ Complies with requirements ☐ Substantially complies with requirements ☐ Partially complies with requirements ☐ Does not comply with requirements

5.2 Student Support Services

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

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

The university has study process management (SPM) coordinators which are in charge of consulting students regarding educational process and academic performance. There are survey results provided in the SER outlining high level of satisfaction with performance of SMP coordinators and provided consultations. The report also states that accessibility to teaching staff was good/satisfactory for most of the students. Satisfaction rates and effectiveness of the above-mentioned consultations with SMP and teaching staff have been verified during site visit.

The university has the Counseling Service, which was established recently in January 2018, responsible for providing students with information on existing consultation and support services from the onset of the educational process. There are no surveys conducted yet providing satisfaction rates regarding this department, however, positive attitudes towards its performance have been revealed during the site-visit.

The university has the Department for Career Support, Student and Graduate Affairs in charge of providing professional orientation and other information regarding employment and career development.

The university promotes extracurricular activities that have been confirmed by the students. TMA carries out trainings about various topics, ensures students' inclusion in different extracurricular activities, for example, sports and cultural activities, charity events, hiking and field trips etc.

The university regularly conducts surveys of its students regarding their personal, professional and academic development, and the results of these surveys are given in the SER. However, during the site-visit, it has been revealed that the institution do not have a network and a good registration system of the alumni. Therefore, establishing a strong alumni network and conducting regular follow-up will help TMA to have more realistic information regarding the development and the achievements of their students after graduation.

TMA creates opportunities for students` international mobility and participation in various projects, ensures students awareness on various intentional projects and events carried

out outside of the institution. For example, students of TMA have attended the assemblies of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations in 2017 and 2018. The high satisfaction rates of the students who have referred to the administration for getting information about exchange programs have been revealed by the survey conducted in 2017 and have been confirmed during the site-visit.

TMA's supports towards different extracurricular activities, including sports, and educational events has been confirmed by the students. Further information about these activities is given in the report of the Department for Career Support, Student and Graduate Affairs.

The university takes into consideration students` socio-economic status and implements flexible payment mechanisms of tuition fees. According to the SER, during 2014-2017, flexible fee schedules were used by 342 students. In addition to that, university exempts successful students from semester tuition fee according to their academic performance (according to the SER – 9 students in 2017). During the site-visit, it has been confirmed that above-mentioned supporting mechanisms are transparent and objective, and the information about them is accessible for the students.

Evidences/indicators
- Self-Evaluation;
- Annex 5.4 "Report of Students, Graduates and Career Services Department";
- Interview results;
- Survey regarding performance of the Study Process Management coordinators;
- Graduates survey regarding their professional and career development;
- Survey regarding satisfaction from information given by the administration about exchange programs;
- Students employment rates at clinics;
- Data regarding the students who have used flexible payment mechanism;
- Data regarding exemption from tuition fees;

Recommendations:

Suggestions:
- strengthening the communication with alumni
- Creating the data-base for follow-up of alumni
- Offering more activities in lifelong learning for alumni

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6. Research, development and/or other creative work

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

6.1 Research Activities

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA is a teaching university, and as it's mentioned in the self-evaluation report, the research activities were not their first priority during 2015-2017. However, from 2018 TMA has shifted its focus and created the Grant and Research Committee as well as the Bioethics Committee. The main goal of these committees is to help the faculty members and students to do research in TMA, to establish the contacts at international levels and to give financial support for academic staff/student to attend the International conferences, to write articles and make presentations. In the near future TMA team also plans to make regulations and support for students who are preparing a MA thesis or a PhD degree. Currently, TMA includes in the new educational program modified teaching methodologies for courses as research skills as well as bioethics and statistics in order to facilitate better achievement of the learning outcomes. All students have possibilities to work in the lab of immunology.

The Grant and Research Committee has already received a project that is designed in cooperation with students. Unfortunately it was not accepted because the methodology was not correctly applicated and revision of the methodology was asked. The Committee helps also in writing proposals for new research calls nationally and internationally.

The Student Research Conference was organized and conducted by the Department of Scientific Research and Development of TMA. During the project, students had opportunities to work side by side with professors of TMA in the affiliated clinics on interesting projects and involve themselves fully in process of scientific research.

TMA has chosen 3 main research directions: Immunology, Microbiology and Biochemistry. These directions were chosen according to the decision-making in the faculty. However, in annex 6.3, the expert panel has found evidence that the faculty members also have projects in other disciplines. The current research activity is minimal and most of the work is realized in the research centers or institutions that have signed the memorandum with TMA (bacteriophage institute of Microbiology and Virology, Iv. Beritashvili Biomedicine Research Center etc.). However, this memorandum stipulates only the intention to work together, but gives not a detailed plan how the research groups can work together or can help TMA to make progress in their research *activities.*

TMA is planning to do more actions related to research and allocates for this purpose 5% of the budget in 2018, which will be increased until 10% in 2019.

In annex 6.1, TMA gives an overview of basic sciences research and clinical research in various fields of medicine. It is noteworthy that all presented projects are not carried out in TMA.

TMA is till now a teaching university and has not a doctoral program and cannot be evaluated in this respect. As shown in annex 6.3, some academic staff members were supervisor for PhD thesis in cooperation with other research centers.

Evidences/indicators

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

- annex 1.1 Strategic development plan 2018-2024;
- annex 1.2 Action plan;
- annex 2.1 Regulations;
- annex 6.1;
- annex 6.3;
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Updated memorandums or agreements;

• Projects received or carried out by academic personnel of TMA;
• Interview results.
I

Recommendations:

High qualified staff (academic and administrative) should be attracted to help with writing research proposals so TMA becomes competitive on the research market.

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6.2. Research Support and Internationalisation

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA supports scientific research/creative activities by increasing the financial support annually and changing the rules of elections of academic personnel. Also, TMA modified the criteria for academic personnel and try to attract new personnel with more scientific activities in the past 5 years (instead of ten years as it was before). However, the integrative approach of research results and learning processes are not clarified. As seen from the interview, the teaching processes are not research-based, but in the near future TMA has planned to resolve this problem.

The Information regarding grant opportunities is publicly available on official web-site (www.tma.edu.ge), and is accessible for each interested party (see Annex 6.1). All research projects should actively involve students of TMA.

TMA has installed the Grant and Research Committee. This Committee receives the project proposals using the web application. The financial support is allocated for academic personnel and students.

The grant project application is considered by the Scientific Research Committee and evaluated in accordance to the pre-determined criteria.

Important factors that should be considered during the evaluation process are: Problem relevance and novelty; Qualification of investigator; Quality of student involvement in research; Relevance of human, technical and financial resource distribution. However, it is not clear if the evaluation is a peer-reviewed process or not.

According to the self-evaluation report in 2018, this grant research funding project was used only partially and academic personnel has low interest towards scientific activities, and is more interested in teaching, taking into consideration the remunerations.

The Committee discussed only 1 project in 2017, but the design of the project and the technical requirements were not eligible and the project was rejected by the Committee. Other projects are in progress (annex 6.2)

In the nearest future TMA plans to realize several main tasks in order to solve the shortcomings:
- Modernization and re-equipment of existing research laboratory in accordance to international standards;
- Increasing access to electronic research journals by elevated accessibility to electronic library resources and periodicals;
- Increasing the financial resources;
- Elaborating appropriate schemes for remunerations, which will provide researchers with competitive salary for existing market and encouragement of scientific activities, with periodical assessment of scientific-research activities;
- install a proper distribution of workload between teaching and research;
- stimulation of internationally joint research activities and external funding opportunities;
- Being part of ERASMUS+ and MEVLANA exchange programs, TMA has bilateral agreements with international universities, covering not only educational process, but also research activities. Current TMA does not have such research project, but plans to take part in the upcoming calls in frames of Horizon2020.

Evidences/indicators

- Annex 6.1 Rule of Grant Proposal;
- Annex 6.2 Planned Research Projects by TMA academic staff;

Recommendations:

- TMA has to establish peer-reviewed process to judge projects for financing and to make the process of project evaluation transparent.
- TMA should be more oriented to establish new research collaboration with European or International universities or centers and exchange of young researchers

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☐ Complies with requirements

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☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has elaborated several rules and criteria for assessment of research activities. The main issues which will be evaluated are:
- Number of published articles
- Citation index
- Presentations at conferences or meetings;
- Supervision of student research
- Grant projects

TMA authorities plan the periodical assessment of scientific-research activities, carried out by administrative staff using above-mentioned criteria. They will elaborate the relevant patterns for remuneration that, in their opinion, will provide a researcher with competitive salary for the existing market. Thus play a major role in the enhancement of scientific-research activities.

Based on the status of the teaching university, from 2015 educational process is mainly emphasized and a number of research articles was reduced. Thus, TMA conducts strategic plans and focuses on 2 main directions:
- Discover new potential researchers inside TMA academic personnel and,
- Elaborate and implement mentor system between honorary professors.

Evidences/indicators
- Annex 2.9 Quality Assurance System and Procedures;
- Annex 6.3 list of research projects conducted by academic staff;
- Interview results;
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);

Recommendations:
Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standard component

TMA has to implement an efficient methodology (with international benchmark) to evaluate the research activities of the academic staff.

Suggestions:
Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):
Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

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

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7. Material, Information and Financial Resources

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has an own 2070 sq.m building. 932 sq.meters are allocated for studies, while 708.51 sq.meters. In addition, A 7-storey building is under construction and will be finished by the end of September 2018.

Nowadays, TMA has all necessary area: lecture and conference halls, classrooms for theoretical teaching, virtual teaching laboratory, clinical skills center, OSCE rooms, space for group work, sanitary/hygienic units, library, laboratory appropriate to the specifics of the field, learning classrooms, archive.

Temporarily, TMA possesses parts of Cardiology clinic "Guli", as well as LLC New Maternity center.

TMA educational space is equipped with necessary facilities for educational program, including teaching/scientific-research laboratories, inventory needed for implementing practical component, IT equipment or agreements with relevant entities for the use of such resources, relevant stock (reagents, teaching materials, etc.) that ensures achieving program objectives and learning outcomes.

TMA has an electrical generator (see Annex 7.17), in order to ensure undisrupted operational capacities. However, it is planned during Fall of 2018, to acquire a new device with higher capacity and technical specifications; which will ensure continuous power supply of the building on each floor, TMA has sanitary units that are cleaned and organized in accordance with the requirements.

Each classroom has natural as well as artificial light possibilities. In the main building is installed a central heating system.

The first aid facility for staff and students is organized at the first floor. It includes first aid kits, necessary medications and other medical supplies. For the proper functioning of first aid room, TMA has a qualified doctor, who has obtained necessary life sustaining skills.

- Fire equipment is located on each floor of the building, in a visible area, with detailed instruction of use, and evacuation plans approved by competent agencies are in place. Since 2018 annual fire and emergency evacuation drills will be held.

For safety of infrastructure and academic/administrative personnel, monitoring of full perimeter video control system is used. Additionally, member of security service is appointed to each floor from 9:00 to 21:00 during whole week.

TMA has set an adapted space for people with special needs, in terms of removable ramp for wheelchair access. Additionally, within infrastructure of the new building, is considered an elevator, as well as adjustable height platform, for easier access to elevator and related facilities.

Evidences/indicators

- Annex 7.1 Extract from Public Registry;
- Annex 7.2 Construction Permit;
- Annex 7.3 Rental agreement with LLC Cardiology Clinic "Guli";
- Annex 7.4 Rental agreement with LLC New Maternity Center;
- Annex 7.5 Inventory records;
- Annex 7.6 Document certifying orderly operation of ventilation systems;
- Annex 7.7 Document certifying orderly operation of heating systems;
- Annex 7.8 Document certifying compliance with sanitary rooms;
- Annex 7.9 Document certifying safety of building;
- Annex 7.10 Service agreement with LLC "Napertskali";
- Annex 7.11 Agreement of fire alarm system with LLC "Napertskali"; =
- Annex 7.12 Document certifying compliance with fire safety norms;
- Annex7.13 Evacuation plan ;
- Annex 7.14 Order for providing first aid;
- Annex 7.15 Agreement with LLC "Algani";
- Annex 7.16 Project of the building (including adapted environment);
- Annex 7.17 Document of possession of electrical generator;

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standard component

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

☒ Complies with requirements

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☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

7.2. Library Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA has library that includes reading hall, IT equipment-space, group workrooms, staff workspace and book vault.

Library stock includes textbooks (most of them very old, some of recent publication date), scientific-research papers, as well as other sources of literature and information, suggested as core, additional and methodical literature by syllabi.

New books are added in stock regularly, in accordance to requirements of students and

teaching staff.

TMA has 10 computers connected to internet as well as Wi-Fi.
According from surveys students are not using the library frequently, moreover, the majority of the students possesses incomplete information regarding availability of electronic resources and existing operational rules.

As seen from the self-evaluation, TMA needs an update of the library management system; further facilitation of internationalization and development of international partnership networks is needed; identification of necessary resources, both in printed and electronic forms, (among them: periodical printed journals, electronic databases etc.) in accordance to the needs of TMA.

Evidences/indicators
- Statistics for use of electronic library databases;
- Mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services;
- Meetings, consultations, and other events held;
- Student survey results;
- Annex 7.18 Library inventory book;
- Annex 7.19 Agreement of electronic library databases
- Annex 7.20 Library rules;
- Self-evaluation Report;
- Interview results;

Recommendations:
- Update the library management system and install the Commission to decide the mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services.
- Informing the students and staff regarding the available library resources (international scientific library databases)

Suggestions:
Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):
Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

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

TMA has information technology infrastructure, which is administered by IT department.
TMA classrooms are equipped with relevant technological equipment, (projector, computer, printer, scanner etc.) which are revised and renewed periodically. Each computer is connected to high-speed internet and equipped with relevant software.
High-speed wireless bandwidth (Wi-Fi) is available within the entire building. Additionally, personal computers (PCs) with unlimited and free of charge internet access are available at TMA library.

Currently, TMA uses following electronic systems and services:
- o Library Administration System – OpenBiblio
- o Open-Source Learning Platform – MOODLE
- o Financial Accounting and Reporting System – ORIS,
- o Study Process Administration System - www.tma.ini.ge
- o Electronic Document Preparation and Management System (see Annex 7.24) – eDocument.

In order to reduce risks, related to network infrastructure security, full network and equipment monitoring is carried out by end of each week. Additionally, access to internal electronic systems, available at TMA, is restricted from external networks, which ensures protection of personal data.

TMA has an official web-page, which serves communication and information functions, contains contact and other useful information in Georgian and English languages, including mission of TMA, its activities, structure, catalogue of educational program, program and enrolment criteria, expected learning outcomes and qualifications to be granted, procedures for teaching-learning and assessment, administrative/academic/scientific staff, library electronic catalogue, regulation documents, strategic development plans, annual reports, financial reports, ongoing and implemented research (results), basic statistics, accessible services, employment opportunities, etc.;

Evidences/indicators

- Annex 7.21 IT policy and Procedures;
- Annex 7.22 Agreement with internet provider;
- Annex 7.23 Agreement with study process management system provider;
- Annex 7.24 Agreement with electronic documentation system provider;
- Annex 7.25 Agreement of web hosting;
- Annex 7.26 Domain document;
- Datasafetyregulations.

Recommendations:

Recommendation/or proposal, which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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7.4 Financial Resources

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

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Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

TMA is a private higher education institution – teaching university, whose main source of income is tuition fee paid by local and international students (among them governmental teaching, social and other grants). Management of financial resources according to the policy represents Director's main function. Deputy Director and Financial Department are support units for management of the financial resources. Before 2018, TMA prepared only a 1-year budget. By the end of 2017, the 3-year budget was prepared according to the 2018-2020 year Action Plan.

TMA's financial resources provide for sustainable and further development of learning/research and human resources/infrastructure, especially the funds required for attracting and developing of human resources (including research staff), financing of research activities, financing of students' support activities, developing of infrastructure (including the development of scientific research laboratories and the library) are in place.

TMA budget allocates adequate financial means for funding activities of students, academic and   scientific staff, post-doctorate students, such as participation in conferences, publishing articles in international journals, etc.

TMA's financial control and managerial accountability system operates in accordance with the institution's structure. Immediate responsible parties for the TMA's internal financial management and control system implementation and assessment are: Supervisory Board, Director and Deputy Director, who oversees/supervises financial management and control procedures in the institution.

Evidences/indicators

- Annex 27 Budget and report for previous accounting periods;
- Annex 28 Audit Decision;
- Expenditures incurred and planned for research activities and functioning and development of the library;
- Ratios between expenditures;
- Regulations financial support attend to conference, publish of articles, etc.;
- Document assessing functioning of financial management and control system;
- Financial reports elaborated by eligible auditor/audit company and relevant financial statements.

Recommendations:
Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standard component

Suggestions:
Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):
Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

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

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements