

Analysis of Development and Implementation of the Authorization Mechanism for Higher Education Institutions

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Research Objectives

- ❑ To evaluate the process of implementation the updated system of External Quality Assurance (QA) of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Georgia;
- ❑ To measure the impact of implementation of updated QA system on institutional, national, international level.



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Research Methodology

- ❑ Desk study: legislation, self-evaluation reports (20 HEIs), expert panel reports (27);
- ❑ 6 focus group and 10 in depth interviews with different stakeholders - Policy Decision Makers, experts, leaders, QA office representatives of HEIs, and self-evaluation teams of HEIs (state and private HEIs located both in the capital and in different regions of Georgia), NCEQE authorization division representatives, and authorization council members.



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Key Dimensions of the Research

- ❑ Analysis policy and legislation;
- ❑ Expectations and preparation of stakeholders;
- ❑ Analysis of the implementation process;
- ❑ Analysis of the main outcomes of the QA system reforms;
- ❑ Analysis of stakeholders' views on to what extent the updated QA mechanisms met their expectations.



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Policy and Legislative Base Supporting QA System:

- ❑ History of Development of HE QA System;
- ❑ Overview the Implemented Amendments to the Legislative and Sub-Legislative Acts;
- ❑ Analysis of the SERs of the HEIs;
- ❑ Analysis of the Authorization Reports by the Experts;
- ❑ Compliance of the HEIs with Authorization Standards.



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Main Findings:

- ❑ Not the Authorization Standards, but other regulations should be changed (e.g. state procurement, property management, taxation etc.);
- ❑ Extension of evaluation timeline needed (from 6 months to one year);
- ❑ Additional Guidelines for authorization, capacity building for experts;
- ❑ The Main Threat: frequent changes of decision/policy makers, inconsistent policy.



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28 Recommendations of the Research

- ❑ On Improvement of HEIs Self-evaluation Process (4);
- ❑ On Planning and Organization of Authorization Process (6);
- ❑ On Experts Activities (6);
- ❑ On Evaluation Procedure (6);
- ❑ Related to the Outcomes of Implementation of Authorization Mechanisms (2);
- ❑ On Sustainability of Implementation of Authorization Mechanism and Further Enhancement of Educational Quality.



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**□ Main Outcomes of the Higher Education
Quality Assurance System
Reforms and Challenges**



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Meeting the Expectations from the Stakeholders Viewpoint

- ❑ Authorization process met their expectations;
- ❑ Respondents challenge the evaluation outcomes;
- ❑ **Suggestion:** Significance of the strong and continuous support from different stakeholders, including the political support has been stressed for consistent and rigorous implementation of the QA mechanisms, to eventually translate it into enhancement of higher education quality in the country.



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PDCA Cycle Completion Levels

- ❑ PDCA cycles in most cases were not closed and results were not sufficiently addressed, thus
- ❑ The first cycle demonstrated a baseline picture of HEIs' performance.
- ❑ **Suggestion:** It is essential that the follow up mechanisms are also implemented in a rigorous and consistent manner.



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Outcomes on Institutional Level

- ❑ Preparation for the authorization process has been an important trigger to initiate various changes at HEIs resulting in implementing material revisions on strategic and operation levels;
- ❑ Development of student services;
- ❑ Improving the performance or creating new units for students' support;
- ❑ career development and student counseling services;
- ❑ Increasing the internal research budget;
- ❑ Developing internal research funding mechanisms;
- ❑ Creating research support units;
- ❑ Initiation or speeding up the infrastructure maintenance;



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Outcomes on Institutional Level

- ❑ Maintenance of the internal QA mechanisms included revision of the programs;
- ❑ 24 HEIs that were authorized during the 2018 cancelled 253 programs prior to authorization;
- ❑ After establishing the new authorization mechanism, the number of HEIs has also decreased by 12.



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Outcomes on System Level

- ❑ System level changes were based on the Standards and Guidelines of Quality Assurance in EHEA (ESG 2015);
- ❑ Georgia moved towards harmonization of the QA system with the European requirements;
- ❑ NCEQE has gained the recognition of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME);
- ❑ NCEQE has become the member of the ENQA;
- ❑ Georgia has addressed the commitments towards the EHEA and Georgia-EU Association Agreement.



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Thanks for Your Attention!

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