

Approved:

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# Tbilisi Humanitarian Educational University

## Quality Assurance Policy

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## **General Provisions**

Quality assurance at Tbilisi Humanities University (hereinafter referred to as the University) is a necessary and priority area based on promoting the formation of a quality culture, protecting academic freedom and creating a student-centered environment.

The quality assurance policy aims to define the main mechanisms and approaches to ensure the improvement of the quality of teaching, learning and research.

The University is committed to fostering and developing a quality culture. This policy is an integral part of the University's mission, vision, and strategic goals and is based on close cooperation, transparency, and continuous development. The legal basis for the University's quality assurance policy at the international level is the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG), international quality management practices in educational institutions (IQM Guidelines "Internal Quality Management in Competency-Based Education"), and the framework documents of the European Higher Education Area. At the national level, it is based on the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education," the Law of Georgia "On Development of Quality in Education," the University Charter, Mission, Vision, Strategic Development Plan, and other approaches to fostering a quality culture in higher education at the international and national levels. Quality assurance is an integral part of management and extends to all areas of the University's activities, while the Quality Assurance Policy is a guiding document for quality assurance and continuous development and applies to all processes at the University related to teaching and learning, research, internationalization, resource assessment, and effective management.

### **Chapter I. Objectives, principles and directions of quality assurance policy**

#### **1. Objectives of the quality assurance policy**

- Ensuring compliance of educational programs with national and international standards;
- Promoting a student-centered, inclusive and accessible learning environment;
- Creation of reliable mechanisms for internal and external evaluation;
- Increasing the engagement, competence and professional development of the teaching staff;
- Development of internal monitoring and improvement systems;
- Support the program accreditation process and ongoing compliance with regulatory requirements.

#### **2. Principles of quality assurance policy**

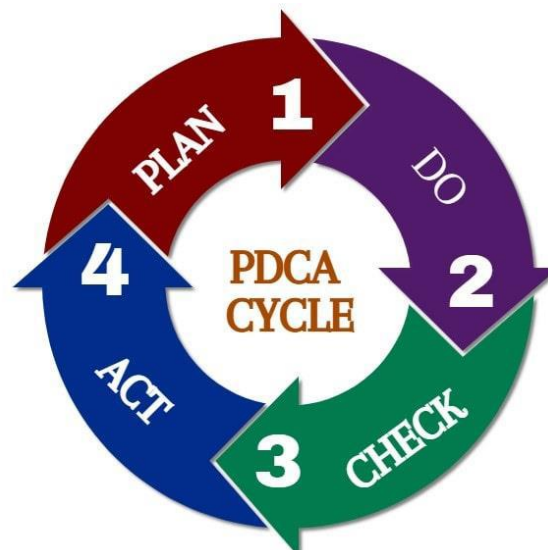
- Student-focused – all decisions and processes are aimed at the needs and development of the student.

- Participatory process – all stakeholders, namely faculty, students, alumni, employers and administration, are involved in decision making.
- Transparency and accountability – the quality assurance policy and procedures for its implementation are open and accessible to all stakeholders;
- Evidence-based approach – quality assessment and improvement are based on ethically collected data, research-based analysis and recommendations.
- Inclusion and equality – the university provides equal access to education and opportunities for all students, regardless of their social, cultural and other characteristics.
- Continuous improvement – quality assurance is seen as a continuous process that is carried out using the method “PLAN – plan, DO – implement, CHECK – check, ACT – act”.
- Academic integrity – it is important to avoid discriminatory approaches in the assessment process, to observe academic honesty and ethical standards.

### 3. Continuity and directions of quality assurance

The university's quality assurance policy is based on the principle of continuous development, or the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle. At the university, PDCA is a cycle of planning activities in accordance with agreed-upon goals, implementing those plans, measuring success based on key performance indicators, and evaluating and adjusting activities based on feedback.

PDCA



PLAN – To Plan

DO – Implement

CHECK – To check

ACT – To Act

Plan – Planning means planning the assessment and response processes before they begin, which means identifying the necessary steps, properly scheduling the process, and anticipating courses of action based on the results obtained.

Do – means putting planned evaluation processes into practice. During this stage, information is collected, important issues are identified, and, if necessary, measures are taken to improve results.

Check – means monitoring the results achieved by the steps taken. This evaluates the effectiveness of the implemented changes and determines how sufficient and effective the methods and mechanisms used were.

Act – means implementing new, additional or corrected changes based on the needs identified as a result of the assessment, which serves to improve the process and move on to the next stage of development.

Quality assurance and assessment extend to all areas of the university's activities and include the following:

- Development of educational programs .
- Development of academic/visiting and administrative support staff.
- Development of scientific research activities.
- Development of internationalization.
- Development of student services and support mechanisms.
- Development of material, informational and financial base.
- Development of an effective management system.
- Effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms.

Development of educational programs.

For the development of educational programs it is important:

- Compliance with national qualifications and industry specifics
- Compliance with the mission and strategic goals of the university
- Compliance with the results of labor market research
- Exchange of best international and national practices
- Taking into account the latest advances in this field
- Ensuring stakeholder engagement

- Formulation of learning outcomes that correspond to the objectives of the programme, the qualification awarded and the level of training
- Implementation of modern teaching/learning methods

### **Development of teaching/visiting and administrative support staff.**

For the development of teaching/visiting and administrative support staff it is important:

- Selection, hiring, compensation, promotion, incentives and other personnel decisions regarding teaching/visiting and administrative support staff in accordance with professional competencies, responsibilities and merits.
- Create a free academic space.
- Adhere to the principles of academic honesty .
- Ensure equal opportunities for employees.
- Creating favorable conditions for the activities of personnel and providing an appropriate environment
- Dissemination of advanced international and national experience
- Taking into account the latest advances in this field
- Ensuring stakeholder engagement
- Availability of modern educational materials corresponding to the programs
- Establishing qualification requirements for personnel in accordance with the strategic goals of the university
- Involvement of staff in events planned by the university and financial support for extracurricular activities
- Introduction/implementation of personnel incentive mechanisms.

### **Development of scientific research activities .**

For the development of scientific research activities it is important:

- Creation of a research environment
- Support for research activities of staff
- Identification and support of young researchers
- Cooperation with international and domestic research organizations

Developing internationalization. To develop internationalization, it is important to:

- Develop an internationalization strategy consistent with the university's mission;
  - Sign memoranda of understanding with international partners in accordance with the stated goals of the university and implement cooperation in practice;
  - Ensure participation of employees in international exchange programs;
  - Ensure the participation of students in international exchange programs;
- Develop support services and mechanisms for students.

To develop support services and mechanisms for students, it is important to:

- Implement individualized learning programs and hybrid learning;
- Implement student-centered approaches.
- Opportunity to receive adequate information and advice from employees
- Providing a reliable, credible, transparent and objective assessment system
- Opportunity to receive feedback on assessment issues
- Support for student initiatives
- Providing flexible services for students
- Promoting career growth and professional development of students
- Organizing/encouraging extracurricular activities for students
- Creation of appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of different categories of students.

### **Development of material, informational and financial base**

To develop the material, informational and financial base, it is important:

- Compliance of the institution's property with the educational goals of the institution;
- Compliance of the institution's property with the requirements for the implementation of scientific research activities;
- Correspondence of the institution's property with the available material, information and financial resources to the existing and/or planned number of students;
- Equipping classrooms/laboratories for the educational and practical component with appropriate equipment, etc.;
- Implementation/ development of information technologies and systems;
- Availability and constant updating of the book fund necessary for the implementation of the program;
- Providing access to international electronic library databases;

□ Ensuring accessibility of educational and scientific activities.

### **Development of a management efficiency system.**

Management effectiveness directly impacts the results and quality of a university's operations. It should be a multi-component, stakeholder-focused system whose effective functioning facilitates the implementation of high-quality educational and scientific processes. To enhance management effectiveness, the university's management relies on process-based approaches based on the continuous planning, action, evaluation, and improvement cycle (PDCA).

To develop an effective management system it is important:

- Availability of an effective management system;
- Implementation of effective educational and scientific processes;
- Ensuring broad stakeholder participation;
- Ensuring the collection and analysis of relevant information;

Effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms. To improve the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms, it is important to:

- Ensuring the participation of stakeholders in the formation of a quality culture;
- Planning events that benefit society;
- Informing stakeholders about planned activities to develop a quality culture.

## **Chapter II. Internal Quality Assessment**

An integral part of quality assurance is the evaluation of quality assurance mechanisms. Internal quality assessment is one of the university's key responsibilities and includes the evaluation and development of the university's educational programs, academic/visiting and administrative support staff, research activities, internationalization, student services and support mechanisms, material, informational, and financial resources, and the performance management system. Internal quality assessment is carried out with the active participation of all stakeholders: students, staff, employers, alumni, and internal and external experts, and ongoing interaction with them.

The University uses the following internal quality assessment mechanisms:

Evaluation of the development of educational  
programs

Personnel development assessment



Assessment of the development of scientific  
research  
internationalization activities

Assessing the development of  
internationalization

Evaluation of the development of student  
services and support mechanisms.

Assessment of the development of material,  
information and financial resources.

Evaluation of the development of the  
management efficiency system.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of quality  
assurance mechanisms.

## **2.1 Evaluation of the development of educational programs**

1. Internal and external evaluation of educational program implementation is a mechanism for ensuring the quality of educational activities at the University and is essential for maintaining and improving the quality of the educational process. The results of the quality assessment are used to improve educational programs. Program staff collaborate with the internal quality assurance service in planning the program quality assessment process, developing assessment tools, and implementing the assessment. They also use the results of the quality assessment for program improvement. Programs operating at the University regularly utilize the results of external quality assessment.

- a) Development of evaluation forms, evaluation tools, indicators and criteria, forms of surveys for stakeholders participating in the program, conducting internal and external evaluation;
- b) Periodic monitoring and evaluation of programs to collect and analyze relevant information with the involvement of faculty, visiting staff, administrative and support staff, students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders for appropriate decision-making and development.
- c) Interaction of the staff involved in the program with the internal quality assurance service in planning the program quality assessment process, developing assessment tools and implementing the assessment.
- d) Evaluation of the adequacy of the material and technical base, human, financial and technical resources, as well as services for students in order to improve the program.
- d) Using quality assessment results to improve programs.
- e) Regular use of external quality assessment results.

## Participants involved in the evaluation of educational programs



2. To evaluate the implementation of the educational program, the Quality Assurance Service develops the following evaluation and survey forms:

- a) Evaluation of the program by students (Appendix No. 1).
- b) Evaluation of the program by employees (Appendix No. 2).
- c) Evaluation of the program by graduates (Appendix No. 3).
- d) Evaluation of the program by employers (Appendix No. 4).
- d) Survey on employment of graduates (Appendix No. 5).
- e) Student's assessment of the internship location and supervisor (Appendix No. 6).
- g) Student's assessment of research work (Appendix No. 7).

### 3. Technical monitoring of educational programs

To conduct technical monitoring of educational programs, the formal compliance of the programs with current legislative and regulatory acts, as well as the university's internal regulations in the field of higher education in Georgia, is assessed. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the program's substantive aspects to determine their compliance with the requirements established by the university's external and internal regulations. The evaluation process examines:

- Compliance of the educational program with the Law of Georgia “On Higher Education”;
- Compliance of the educational program with the rules of authorization and accreditation and the standards established by them;
- Compliance of the academic degree awarded upon completion of the programme with the National Qualifications Framework;
- Compliance of the student knowledge assessment system with the requirements of the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 3 of January 5, 2007 ;
- Compliance of the program with the recommendations of the National Center for Development of Education Quality of a legal entity under public law.

4. To determine the formal compliance of the program, the assessment is also carried out using the following assessment forms developed by the Quality Assurance Service:

- a) Internal and external expert evaluation of the bachelor’s degree program (Appendix No. 8).
- b) Internal and external expert evaluation of the master's program (Appendix No. 9).
- c) Guidelines for the educational program for internal and external evaluators (Appendix No. 10).
- d) Curriculum evaluation form (Appendix No. 11).

5. The evaluation of programs and curricula is carried out by an internal evaluator who completes the evaluation form and submits a conclusion.

6. The Quality Assurance Service, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, selects an internal evaluator for educational programs and, if necessary, trains an evaluator from among the University's faculty members. The internal evaluator (expert) is not a representative of the program being evaluated, adheres to ethical standards during evaluation, and, if necessary, possesses both general knowledge and relevant industry competencies.

7. At the beginning of the academic year, if necessary, the Quality Assurance Service, based on an analysis of program evaluation results, prepares proposals for adjusting educational programs in consultation with the Faculty Council and develops appropriate recommendations. 8. The primary indicator for evaluating the educational process is the academic performance of students.

As a result of the analysis of students’ academic performance, the following are determined:

- a) the quality and level of complexity of the educational program and individual disciplines;
- b) the adequacy of the teaching/testing/assessment methods used in the assessment;
- c) teaching and research skills of the staff;
- d) the level of preparation of students.

The results of the general analysis of students' academic performance are published in the public domain on the TU website in the form of diagrams by faculties, educational programs and/or academic courses.

After assessing and analyzing the results of academic performance, the Quality Assurance Service develops recommendations aimed at reducing and eliminating existing deficiencies in the educational process.

9. The evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical/involved personnel implementing the educational program is carried out both for the teaching and research components and includes the following assessments:

- a) Assessment of pedagogical competence. b) Assessment of scientific research competence.
- c) Monitoring the learning process through review procedures and joint discussion of notes.

Peer review is an effective means of stimulating meaningful discussions among faculty; it is important to share relevant references through peer communication. Current global developments require constant updating of educational literature, teaching methods, and learning; it is important to heed the recommendations of program staff regarding the acquisition and implementation of new industry-specific literature. Self-assessment is a necessary component of personal growth; to improve lectures, it is advisable for faculty to conduct a short survey among students at the end of each course, and to consider any noted suggestions and shortcomings when planning subsequent semesters. To enhance the effectiveness of the program, it is necessary to focus on those issues that the employer considers problematic; therefore, it is advisable to have a continuous communication mechanism between the quality assurance service, the employer, and the program. The following criteria are used when assessing the teaching competence of staff:

- a) Developing a curriculum using sound teaching and assessment methods;
- b) Participation in the development of programs;
- c) Testing the ability to transfer knowledge;
- d) Fair assessment of the student;
- d) Knowledge of industry competencies;
- e) Management of the process of implementing the training course;
- g) Conducting consultations.

The following methods are used to assess the pedagogical competence of employees:

- a) Self-assessment of teaching staff;
- b) Mutual attendance of lectures and working groups/practical classes conducted by the teaching staff;

- c) Assessment carried out by the student;
- d) Analysis of students' academic performance;
- d) Verification of the curriculum.

To assess the research competence of university staff at the end of the academic year, annual research activity reports are compiled, for which the Quality Assurance Service develops special forms. Student evaluations of faculty and course performance are an important method for assessing faculty performance, for which the Quality Assurance Service is developing the following student survey forms:

- Evaluation of the teacher by students<sup>1</sup> ( Appendix No. 12)
- Evaluation of courses by students (Appendix No. 13)
- To evaluate lectures and group/practical classes conducted by teachers, observation of the educational process (interview) is conducted (Appendix No. 14).

The Quality Assurance Service has developed criteria, regulations, and procedures for systematic student surveys. Student surveys are conducted at the end of each academic year/semester. The surveys are anonymous, and confidentiality is guaranteed.

Based on the results of the student survey, quantitative and qualitative analysis is conducted, the data is published, and recommendations are provided for further adjustment and development of programs.

Based on the analysis of the faculty self-assessment report, the Quality Assurance Service submits recommendations to the Academic Council for further improvement of educational and research activities.

10. The participation of graduates and employers in the improvement and development of the educational program is substantiated by a study of the requirements and needs of the state, the labor market, society, and employers; the study is conducted using a questionnaire. 11. Monitoring and periodic evaluation of educational programs are carried out with the involvement of faculty, invited administrative and support staff, students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders through the systematic collection, processing, and analysis of information. The evaluation results are used to improve the program.

12. The overall picture formed on the basis of the research results provides program managers with appropriate guidelines for more effective planning of the educational process, taking into account market needs and the attitude of graduates and employers towards the development of the given program.

13. The Quality Assurance Service periodically conducts surveys of stakeholders, for which it prepares various types of questionnaires;

14. Surveys are conducted with organizations and internship centers with which the University has concluded agreements (memorandums) for the implementation of the practical component of programs, internships, and subsequent employment.

15. Based on the results of the internal assessment, the Quality Assurance Service develops recommendations and criteria for improving the quality of educational programs and their further development.

## **2.2 Assessment of learning outcomes in the educational program**

Learning outcomes in the educational program are assessed using direct and indirect methods. Direct assessment includes an analysis of academic performance, the curriculum, and coursework, while indirect assessment is based on an analysis of a questionnaire developed by the Quality Assurance Service. Direct assessment is conducted by the program director in consultation with the Quality Assurance Department, while indirect assessment is conducted by the Quality Assurance Department.

The assessment involves collecting and processing data through the university's electronic management system to determine the percentage of the total number of students studying in the program who have achieved each learning outcome in the programme and compare it with target indicators.

### **Direct assessment of learning outcomes in an educational program**

#### **1. Analysis of academic performance**

At a university, academic performance analysis determines student achievement of learning outcomes, which requires processing data at the program and curriculum level and studying the dynamics of percentage distribution. Academic performance analysis determines the difficulty or ease of a course program, the appropriateness of the selection of topics covered, the adequacy of the assessment forms used by the faculty, and the level of student preparation. One of the most commonly used and widespread approaches to academic performance analysis at a university is the normal distribution (also known as the Gaussian distribution), which states that the arithmetic mean of independent and uniformly distributed random variables of a certain type tends toward a standard normal distribution. In practice, this means that the distribution of academic performance, influenced by many approximately equal factors, can be considered a standard normal distribution. Based on the above, the ranges of the standard normal distribution are as follows:

10% "A" - Excellent  
25% "B" - Very good  
30% "C" - Good  
25% "D" - Satisfactory  
10% "E" - Enough

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) has developed a student ranking scale that, in principle, follows a Gaussian normal distribution: the number of top students (those with the highest scores) should not exceed 10% of the total number of students, and then in stages from 25% to 30% to 25% to 10%. According to the ranking scale, the majority of students should have average academic performance, while very high and low scores should represent 10% to 10% of students, respectively.

In case of deviation from the specified range by 20%, the learning outcomes and methods of achieving them will be revised, for example:

- Distribution of credits/hours over time;
- Teaching and learning methods;
- Topics;
- Volume;
- Forms and methods of assessment;
- Number of students in a group;
- Features of the organization of the educational process, etc.

## 2. Learning Outcomes Map (Curriculum)

One of the indicators of achievement of the educational program's learning outcomes is a learning outcomes map, which allows for comparison of the program's learning outcomes and those of its courses/modules. The curriculum map clearly shows which courses ensure the achievement of the educational program's learning outcomes.

## 3. Headings

A rubric is a tool for assessing the achievement of learning outcomes within a program, used for both formative and summative assessment. Holistic and/or analytical rubrics are used for various analytical purposes. Each rubric includes criteria and a corresponding assessment, for example:

A – Exemplary use of the skill defined by the indicator demonstrates excellent ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions.

B – Very good use of the skill measured by the indicator, demonstrating a high ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions.

C – Good use of the skill measured by the indicator demonstrates a good ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions.

D – Satisfactory use of the skill measured by the indicator demonstrates satisfactory ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions.

E – Sufficient use of the skill measured by the indicator demonstrates sufficient ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions.

F – Poor performance of the skill measured by the indicator demonstrates a lack of ability to analytically synthesize data to form clear conclusions. Indirect assessment of learning outcomes in the educational program

1. Indirect assessment of learning outcomes in the educational program is carried out using questionnaires developed by the Quality Assurance Service, which are completed by the following stakeholders: students, graduates, and employers. Indirect assessment of learning outcomes in the educational program involves analysis of the following indicators:



2. Learning outcomes for an educational program describe the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes that graduates will be able to demonstrate upon completion of the program. Learning



outcomes for an educational program are measurable; meaning the results achieved by the student can be verified.

3. In order for a student to achieve the desired result in a sufficiently effective manner, the main task of the teacher is to engage the student in learning activities that will lead him to this result.

4. The educational program must have some kind of assessment tool or methodology to determine the student's achievement of the program's learning outcomes. There are direct and indirect assessment methods and mechanisms. Direct assessment methods include the completion of a thesis/project and the resulting grade, the average grade point average (GPA), the award of a diploma with honors or with distinction, the student's portfolio, etc. Indirect assessment methods include employer surveys, comparisons with similar educational institutions, graduate surveys, curriculum analysis, etc.

5. Evaluation of learning outcomes under the program is an important part of the overall evaluation of the program and its further development/modification and includes:

- ☐ Quantitative indicators of program graduates

- ☐ Qualitative indicators of program graduates

- ☐ Scientific employment of program graduates (continuation of education in a similar specialty at subsequent levels of education in the same or another higher education institution).

- ☐ Employment rate of program graduates in accordance with the assigned qualifications.

6. During the first year following program completion, quantitative and qualitative indicators for program graduates may be determined, as well as a periodic analysis of the graduates' academic employment status (continuation of education in a similar specialty at subsequent levels of education). The evaluation of program learning outcomes is carried out jointly by the University's Quality Assurance Service, the program director(s), and the Student and Career Support Service:

7. The assessment of quantitative indicators of graduates implies the level of "seeding" from the program, i.e. the progress/regression of students from enrollment to graduation, the number, change, decrease or, conversely, increase of this number according to indicators of external and internal mobility, based on the restoration of student status or due to the enrollment of a foreign citizen, namely:

- ☐ The transfer rate of students participating in the program to another program; ☐ The number of registered applications from students wishing to transfer to the program from other programs of the university;

- ☐ Number of registered applications from students wishing to transfer to the programme from other higher education institutions;

- ☐ Number of registered applications from students wishing to study on the programme;

- ☐ The ratio of students enrolled in a program to those graduating from that program.

All this can be reflected in the form of a diagram by academic year and as a percentage.

Evaluation of the quality indicators of graduates involves:

□ Indicator of high, average or low academic performance of graduates;

□ The final grade (up to 51–100 points) when assigning a qualification; The number of diplomas issued with and without distinction, as well as the average grade.

□ All of this is reflected in the form of a diagram and as a percentage. 8. The indicator of scientific employment of program graduates (continuation of education in a similar specialty at the next level of education) is also an important indicator of the program's achievement and testifies to the program's strengths. If a graduate continues education in a similar specialty at the same university (if such a program exists) or continues education at another higher education institution under a similar program, this is an indicator of increased graduate motivation, an indicator of educational continuity, and is considered a strength of the program. All of this is reflected in the form of a diagram and as a percentage.

9. The employment rate of program graduates in the labor market, consistent with the qualifications they have earned, is a key indicator in assessing the program's results. This process is continuously monitored by the University's Career Development and Student Support Department and the Quality Assurance Service. This department closely and systematically collaborates with potential employers with the direct participation of students. It identifies the target audience, segments potential employers, provides information on career prospects, selects suitable candidates based on information provided by employers, schedules appointments, and facilitates direct contact between students and employers. The University creates a unified alumni database, conducts systematic surveys, provides information on existing vacancies, and receives information on employed graduates. All of this is reflected in a chart and as a percentage.

10. The employment rate of program graduates in the labor market in non-core/other specialties. 11. Indirect assessment of the learning outcomes of the educational program is carried out using the following tools developed by the Quality Assurance Service:

a) Questionnaire for assessing the learning outcomes of the program for students (Appendix No. 15).

b) Questionnaire for assessing the learning outcomes of the graduate program (Appendix No. 15).

Target indicators – the target indicator for each learning outcome in the program is a normal distribution of academic performance. If the distribution deviates from the normal distribution by more than 20%, the learning outcomes and the path to achieving them are analyzed. Monitoring results are compared with the target indicators, and a diagram is created for clarity, allowing for the observation of progress or regression in achieving the learning outcomes.

Frequency of assessment of learning outcomes – each learning outcome under the program is assessed on the basis of the semester plan for assessing learning outcomes provided in the program, according to which the assessment is carried out at the end of the semester in which the specified learning outcome was achieved; on the basis of the curriculum map and the plan for assessing learning outcomes developed on its basis; student achievements; survey results; compliance of the results with target indicators.

Discussion and response to results: If monitoring of dynamics reveals regression compared to target indicators, the learning outcomes and methods for achieving them will be reviewed and the program will be adjusted accordingly.

### **2.3. Personnel assessment**

The evaluation of teaching/visiting staff implementing the educational program is carried out by the Quality Assurance Service, and the evaluation of administrative/support staff is carried out by the Human Resources Service in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Service.

#### **2.3.1. Rules for the evaluation of scientific and pedagogical/invited personnel**

1. The purpose of the evaluation of research and teaching/visiting staff is to facilitate the effective performance of their duties, as well as to ensure the ongoing assessment of the performance of the University's research and teaching and visiting staff. The main objectives of the evaluation of the performance of research and teaching/visiting staff are:

- ☐ Identifying the potential of personnel and promoting its further development.
- ☐ Identification of strengths and weaknesses .
- ☐ Promoting the improvement of the quality of scientific research activities.
- ☐ Definition of scientific and research priorities.

#### **2. Methods and procedures of evaluation**

☐ The performance evaluation of scientific and teaching/visiting staff at the University is carried out formally, at established intervals, using a pre-selected tool.

The assessment tool is a systematic assessment questionnaire aimed at improving the quality of work performed and research activities, as well as identifying personnel potential and supporting its further development.

☐ Evaluation of teaching staff/visiting personnel is carried out using the following methods:

- a) Annual report (self-assessment) of the teaching staff (Appendix No. 16);
- b) Evaluation of the assigned teaching staff by the dean of the relevant faculty (Appendix No. 17);

- c) Evaluation of the teaching staff by the dean of the relevant faculty (Appendix No. 17);
- d) Evaluation of invited personnel by the dean of the relevant faculty (Appendix No. 17);
- e) Evaluation of the performance of academic/visiting staff by the program manager (Appendix No. 17);
- f) Evaluation of the activities of academic/visiting staff by students<sup>2</sup> (Appendix No. 18).

3. The Human Resources Service administers the process of performance evaluation of academic/visiting/invited staff by the dean of the relevant faculty, the program director and the student, who submits the processed results to the Quality Assurance Service for final analysis of the evaluation results and development of appropriate recommendations.

4. The annual process of preparing reports (self-assessments) of academic staff is administered by the Research and Development Centre, which, in turn, analyses the assessment results and submits them to the Quality Assurance Service.

5. Semester and annual performance results of academic/visiting/visiting staff are sent by the Quality Assurance Service to the relevant faculties, program directors, the Human Resources Service and the Research and Development Center. 6. Target indicators for assessing the performance of academic/visiting staff.

The research and teaching staff/visiting personnel of the educational university (including the invited research and teaching staff) must carry out the research activities established by this rule and score a minimum number of points throughout the academic year:

□ Annual report (self-assessment) of scientific and teaching staff –

For a professor – no less than 80 points in total;

For an associate professor – no less than 75 points in total;

For an assistant – at least 60 points in total;

For an assistant – at least 45 points in total;

□ Evaluation of the activities of the involved scientific and teaching staff by the dean – not less than 60% of the maximum score;

□ Evaluation of the activities of the scientific and teaching staff by the dean – not less than 55% of the maximum score;

□ Evaluation of the performance of invited staff by the dean – not less than 50% of the maximum score;

□ Evaluation of academic/visiting staff by the program director – not less than 60% of the maximum score;

□ Assessment of academic/visiting staff by students – not less than 70% of the maximum score.

## **7. Frequency of assessment**

- The self-assessment report on the activities of the teaching staff is completed once at the end of each academic year.
- Evaluation of the performance of the faculty/visiting lecturers/visiting staff is carried out by the dean of the faculty and the head of the program every semester.
- Evaluation of the performance of the teaching staff/visiting lecturers/visiting employees is carried out by students every semester.

## **8. Managing performance evaluation results**

The purpose of managing the results of performance assessment and providing feedback on them is to improve the quality of teaching and research at the university with the participation of the faculty, to facilitate the development process in this area and, as a result, to successfully achieve the strategic goals and objectives of the university.

The Quality Assurance Service processes the results of the performance evaluation of the teaching staff/visiting staff and communicates them to the faculties and to each individual staff member.

The quality assurance service of the educational university interacts with the relevant structural unit(s) to eliminate the deficiencies identified as a result of the analysis of the assessment results and to plan the necessary actions.

To respond to the assessment results, an action plan for planned activities is developed by the university's Human Resources Service, and an action plan for staff research activities is developed by the Research Center. The university's Quality Assurance Service oversees this process.

Based on the performance evaluation of research and teaching staff/visiting staff, the educational university may apply various forms of incentives, including one-time financial incentives, salary increases, funding for training, participation in conferences, etc.

In the event of failure to fulfill the research component(s), the seconded research and teaching staff(s) will issue a corresponding notification. In the event of failure to fulfill the above-mentioned measures twice in a row, the educational university reserves the right to terminate the employee's employment contract.

### **2.3.2. Procedure for evaluation of administrative/support staff**

The purpose of the evaluation of administrative staff is to facilitate the effective performance of their duties, identify needs for professional development, and ensure continuous assessment of the performance of the university's administrative staff.

#### **1. Methods and procedures of evaluation**

The evaluation of the university's administrative staff is carried out in two directions: an assessment of the results of their work and an analysis of self-assessment.

The first area is the assessment of the work of administrative/support staff, aimed at improving the quality of work performed, as well as identifying the potential of employees and supporting their further development.

The second area is the assessment of administrative/support staff using 1800 points. Employees self-assess on a 5-point scale. The assessment is also conducted on the same scale through an external assessment (by the immediate supervisor). Deviation indicators are then determined by comparing them to a 3% threshold.

Accordingly, the target is a deviation rate of 3%.

Target indicator: administrative and support staff.

The process of evaluating the performance of administrative personnel is administered by the Human Resources Service in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Service.

The Human Resources Service, together with the Quality Assurance Service, ensures the targeted and comprehensive implementation of the assessment process:

- Definition of evaluation methods and tools;
- Determination of terms and procedures for evaluation;
- Analysis of assessment results;
- Responding to assessment results through feedback;
- Control of work performance by personnel;

Submission of a report to the Quality Assurance Service on the results of the administrative personnel assessment and the measures taken/planned for their improvement.

2. The tool for assessing administrative/support staff is a systematic assessment questionnaire, namely:

- Self-assessment questionnaire for administrative/support staff (Appendix No. 19)
- Personnel evaluation form (Appendix No. 20) □ Administrative/support staff satisfaction questionnaire (Appendix No. 29)

The process of performance appraisal of administrative/support staff is administered by the Human Resources Service in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Service.

The Human Resources Service, together with the Quality Assurance Service, ensures that the assessment process is carried out in a targeted and comprehensive manner:

- Definition of evaluation methods and tools;
- Determination of terms and procedures for evaluation;
- Analysis of assessment results;
- Responding to assessment results through feedback;
- Monitoring the performance of personnel;
- Submitting a report to the Quality Assurance Service on the results of the administrative personnel assessment and the measures taken/planned for their improvement.

The Human Resources Management Service administers the process of assessing the performance of personnel, processes the information received for the final analysis of the assessment results and the development of appropriate recommendations, and also transfers it to the Quality Assurance Service.

### 3. Frequency of assessment

The self-assessment form for administrative/managerial personnel and the assessment questionnaire for employees subordinate to them are completed by managers once a year, at the end of the academic year.

### 4. Managing performance evaluation results

After analyzing the assessment results, the Human Resources Management Service has the right to individually communicate the summarized information to employees with the involvement of their immediate supervisor (if available).

Employees have the right to request additional arguments/clarifications on specific issues through feedback.

The results of the personnel performance assessment can be used for:

- For staff promotion
- For material incentives for staff
- To support the professional development of staff, which includes training, advanced training/certification courses, professional retraining and other activities determined by the immediate supervisor.
- To apply disciplinary measures to staff

5. Based on the analysis of the performance appraisal results, the HR Department, in collaboration with the departments involved, develops a personnel development plan, which is an integral part of the appraisal system. The plan summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the personnel and outlines paths for further development.

The personnel development plan includes:

- Focus of knowledge, skills, competencies;
  - Duration of the personnel development plan;
  - Various events that promote professional development;
  - Performance indicators;
  - Necessary resources.
6. Monitoring of the implementation of the personnel development plan is carried out by the University's Human Resources Service jointly with the Quality Assurance Service and with the involvement of the immediate supervisor of the employee being assessed.
7. In the event of failure by personnel to fulfill their assigned rights and obligations twice in a row, the University reserves the right to terminate the employment contract with the employee.
8. Personnel are required to participate in the assessment, both as the subject and the object of assessment. Refusal to participate in the assessment is considered a serious violation of the University's internal regulations and will result in appropriate liability.

#### **2.4. Assessment of the development of scientific research activities**

1. The rules for assessing scientific activities developed by the university comply with the approaches of ESQR and other international organizations to determining research quality standards, university assessment and rankings, as well as the requirements established by the authorization and accreditation standards developed by the National Center for Education Quality in Georgia.

2. Objectives and tasks of the evaluation of scientific research activities:

The main objective of assessing the scientific activity of a university is to determine the contribution of educational areas and scientific and pedagogical (invited) staff to the scientific activity of the university, which contributes to improving the quality of scientific research.

The main structural divisions implementing scientific research activities are faculties/educational programs (with their scientific and pedagogical (invited) staff).

The objectives of scientific activity assessment are:

- a. Identification of strengths and weaknesses and their prevention;
- b. Planning of research activities taking into account priority research areas;
- c. Management of internal financing of the university.



### 3. Indicators and criteria for assessing the research activities of research and teaching staff. Management of assessment results

The research activities of academic staff are assessed based on quantitative and qualitative indicators and criteria. Prior to the assessment, academic staff prepare a research self-assessment report and submit it to the university's Quality Management Service no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the academic year. Points are awarded only for activities that are documented and submitted electronically upon submission. The process for assessing the research activities of academic staff, as stipulated by these Regulations, is coordinated by the university's Quality Assurance Service in conjunction with the Research and Development Center.

The following indicators have been established within the framework of assessing the research activities of research and teaching staff:

- a. The annual threshold score for a professor must be at least 80 points;
- b. The annual threshold score for an associate professor must be at least 70 points;
- c. The annual threshold score for an assistant must be at least 60 points;

The annual minimum score for an assistant must be at least 50 points. The Quality Management Service analyzes the documents submitted by academic staff.

4. The following questionnaire, prepared by the Quality Assurance Service, is used for evaluation:

Self-assessment report on the scientific activities of scientific and pedagogical (invited) staff (Appendix No. 21)

Annual report on research activities in the educational field (Appendix No. 22)

5. The Quality Assurance Service, in agreement with the Scientific Service, evaluates annual reports in accordance with the criteria for evaluating research activities and informs the Academic Council and the deans of faculties of the results of the evaluation of research activities.

6. In the event of failure by research and teaching staff to complete two consecutive tasks, the rector may issue a written warning or terminate their employment contract.

7. The evaluation of the research activities of the faculty/educational area is carried out on the basis of the implementation of the annual action plan for research activities and the prepared report.

8. To evaluate scientific research activities, the Rector of the University annually creates an evaluation committee for scientific research activities, which includes: the head of the University Quality Assurance Service; the head of the research center; heads of educational programs and an invited specialist holding a doctoral degree.

9. The committee's final assessment is sent to the faculty deans, who prepare a response to the study results, outlining the significant findings and the measures planned or implemented to address the response. The Head of the Quality Development Service oversees the implementation of the review.

10. The indicators, criteria and procedures for managing the results of the evaluation of intra-university grant projects are defined in the document on the intra-university grants system.

## **2.5 Assessment of the development of internationalization**

The University is conducting a survey of students and faculty/visiting staff to ensure the development of internationalization.

The following questionnaire, prepared by the Quality Assurance Service, is used for the assessment:

Internationalization Questionnaire – for students and staff (Appendix No. 23). Questionnaires are compiled by departments responsible for internationalization. The Quality Assurance Service discusses and responds to the survey results. An analysis of the survey results and recommendations are submitted to the Faculty Council for further consideration.

## **2.6. Evaluation of the development of student services and support mechanisms**

1. The Quality Assurance Service develops questionnaires to assess the organization and support mechanisms for student-centered learning. It plans the assessment process, defines the questions to be assessed, and assembles a team of internal assessors with the participation of all stakeholders.

2. The evaluation is conducted by the Quality Assurance Service, which analyzes the results and prepares conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation results are presented to the Academic Council for further consideration.

3. The following are used in the assessment:

Individualized educational plans.

Service report.

Survey of students' satisfaction with the organization of the educational process (Appendix No. 24).

Involvement of students in research/professional and extracurricular activities and support for relevant initiatives (Appendix No. 25).

4. Based on the results of the internal evaluation, the Quality Assurance Service develops conclusions and recommendations for improving student-centered teaching and learning, as

well as student support mechanisms. If deficiencies are identified, changes are made to the teaching and learning mechanisms, as well as student support mechanisms.

## **2.7. Assessment of the development of the material, information and financial base**

1. In order to ensure high quality education, the University evaluates the educational process, material and technical resources, information base and services.

The evaluation of the educational process, material and technical resources, information base and services is carried out using questionnaires developed by the quality assurance department.

Students, faculty/visiting staff, and administration participate in the evaluation.

3. The following questionnaire forms will be used to conduct the survey:

Questionnaire for assessing the material and technical base for faculty, students and administration (Appendix No. 26)

Library Evaluation Questionnaire (Appendix No. 27)

Faculty Satisfaction Survey (Appendix No. 28)

Administration/Support Staff Satisfaction Survey (Appendix No. 29)

Graduate Satisfaction Survey (Appendix No. 30)

Employer Satisfaction Survey (Appendix No. 31)

Office Evaluation Questionnaire (Appendix No. 32)

Online Training Questionnaire for Teachers (Appendix No. 33)

4. The university's structural divisions participate in developing the questionnaire content. The Quality Assurance Service reviews and responds to the survey results within its purview. Analysis and recommendations based on the results of its research are presented to the Academic Council for further consideration.

## **2.8. Evaluation of the development of the performance management system**

1. Quality management at the university is carried out in accordance with the organizational structure of the university; the university strives to effectively use quality assurance mechanisms and best practices in the educational space in the management process.

2. Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating management effectiveness

The following mechanisms are used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of management at the university:

□ Annual monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness;

- Comprehensive planned assessment of management effectiveness;
- Comprehensive unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness.

For annual monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness, approaches to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan and the University Action Plan are used.

A comprehensive scheduled assessment of management effectiveness is conducted once every three years and coincides with the implementation period of the three-year action plan. A comprehensive unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness may be initiated

□ Meeting of founders

□ Academic Council

□ Rector

□ Head of the Quality Assurance Service.

The decision to conduct a comprehensive unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness is made by the Meeting of Founders and/or the Academic Council.

To conduct a comprehensive scheduled/unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness, a Management Effectiveness Assessment Working Group (hereinafter referred to as the Working Group) is established by order of the University Rector. In addition to University staff, external specialists may be included in the Working Group to provide qualified assistance.

The Rector of the University appoints a group leader who decides on the distribution of functions among its members and the deadlines for completing the work.

### 3. General principles of management effectiveness assessment

Performance evaluation should be:

Relevant – the assessment should reflect what the university strives to achieve, not what is easily measured.

Characteristic feature: The assessment of the effectiveness of university management should take into account national standards in the field of education, the structure of the university and the accountability of structural divisions.

Comparative characteristics: Achievement of objectives planned in the strategic development and action plan, by year.

Clarity: A clear and unambiguous definition ensures easy understanding of the data and criteria being collected, with minimal explanation. Documentation of the assessment process should be clearly presented.

Timeliness: Documentation of management process assessments should be produced regularly enough to allow progress to be seen, and promptly enough to ensure the data remains valuable for decision making.

Reliability and verifiability – the evaluation must use accurate data for the relevant needs. Measurement must be systematic and responsive to change. Time-bound – the implementation timeline for the activity must be clearly defined.

The following methods are used to evaluate management effectiveness:

- Analysis of regulatory documentation;
- Results and analysis of monitoring the implementation of strategic development and action plans;
- Analysis of annual reports and self-assessment of the university administration and structural divisions;
- Questioning and interviewing university staff;
- Questioning and interviewing students and graduates;
- Conducting financial audit.

To assess management effectiveness, survey forms developed by the Quality Assurance Service are used.

Administration; Academic/Visiting Staff; Students

The following questionnaire forms will be used to conduct the survey:

- Questionnaire for assessing the effectiveness of the management system (Appendix No. 34)

Based on the results, appropriate changes are made.

#### 4. Presentation and discussion of a comprehensive planned/unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness

The working group presents a comprehensive planned/unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness to the Rector of the University, the general meeting of founders and the Academic Council.

The General Meeting of Founders and the Academic Council review a comprehensive planned/unscheduled assessment of management effectiveness and make an appropriate decision.

## 2.9. Evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms

To assess the effectiveness of the university's quality assurance mechanisms, appropriate assessment mechanisms have been developed. The effectiveness of these quality assurance mechanisms is assessed once per academic year.

Based on the results of the assessment of the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms, the Academic Council is authorized to plan and implement measures to develop quality assurance mechanisms.

To assess the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms, survey forms developed by the Quality Assurance Service are used.

The following survey forms are used in the evaluation process:

□ Evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms (Appendix No. 35)

Based on the results, appropriate changes are made.

## Chapter III. External evaluation mechanisms, indicators and implementation rules



1. In order to obtain the status of an educational institution for a new term, the university is obliged to submit an application once every 6 years to the legal entity of public law - the National Center for Education Development in the manner prescribed by the legislation of

Georgia, fill out a self-assessment questionnaire for an applicant for the status of a higher educational institution and, after completing the procedures established by law, invite experts on authorization of the legal entity of public law - the National Center for Education Development to determine compliance;

2. The University is obliged to submit to the legal entity of public law – the National Center for Education Development – a report on the self-assessment of the higher educational institution and a report on the self-assessment of the accreditation of the educational programs of the higher educational institution within the timeframes established by the Center.

3. In accordance with the long-term action plan for the strategic development of the university and the requirements of the labor market, within the framework of the self-assessment report of the higher education institution, the university is authorized to submit an application for the addition of a new educational program/programs in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of Georgia and to invite experts from the legal entity under public law - the National Center for Education Quality Development to undergo the relevant procedures;

4. Selects an external evaluator (assessor) of the educational programs from another local higher education institution. The external evaluator (assessor) is not a representative of the program being assessed or a stakeholder, adheres to ethical standards during evaluation, and possesses both general knowledge and relevant industry competencies, if necessary. The University will use the findings, evaluation results, and recommendations of the external evaluator to improve the quality of the educational programs and enhance their competitiveness. 5. In order to determine the compliance of educational programs in Georgian and foreign languages with international standards, as well as to strengthen the internationalization of the programs, the University voluntarily and at its own discretion invites a foreign expert and uses the findings, evaluation results, and recommendations of the foreign expert and/or external evaluator to improve the ranking of the educational programs, enhance their quality, increase their competitiveness, and attract international students.

6. For the purposes of external evaluation of educational programs (during the process of adding new programs and reaccrediting existing ones), the University commissions a specialized research company to conduct an analysis of the labor market and employer requirements for the educational program areas. The company's document, based on the accumulation and analysis of relevant information, uses the results of the external evaluation to inform decision-making and development with the involvement of stakeholders.

7. Based on the results of the external evaluation, the Quality Assurance Department develops recommendations and criteria for improving the quality of academic programs and their further development.

**Final Provisions**

1. The quality assurance policy is approved by the Academic Council of the University and comes into force from the moment of approval by the Academic Council;
2. Changes to the Quality Assurance Policy are approved by the Academic Council of the University.