

**Methodology for planning, designing and developing educational programmes,
procedures for approving the programme, making amendments or annulling it
(in case of changing/annulling the educational programme,
mechanisms for providing students with further education in the relevant
programme)**

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**Methodology for planning, designing and developing educational programmes,
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mechanisms for providing students with further education in the relevant programme)**

The purpose of the mentioned document is to ensure the quality of the processes of development, implementation and improvement of educational programmes, which is one of the mechanisms of internal quality assurance and plays an important role in ensuring the quality of education.

Article 1. Programme planning

In order to plan programmes, the university analyzes the existing educational programmes, for this purpose, it determines new directions that appear in various fields, evaluates the expectations and needs of the interested parties, takes into account the feedback of the graduates and employers' representatives on the areas to be developed within the frameworks of the programmes. Where necessary, cooperates with quality assurance agency(ies) to consider their requirements, which may be relevant at the planning stage of the programmes.

At the programme planning stage, the compatibility of the programme goals with the university's mission, vision, and strategic development goals is also taken into account, as well as the extent to which the proposed programme responds to the needs of society in general.

The last stage of programme planning is to determine the compatibility of the existing human and material resources of the school and, if possible, provide them with appropriate resources.

Article 2. Programme development

The development of the higher education programme is carried out according to the following conditions:

- The programme should be developed according to the classifier of the fields of study, taking into account the content of the particular field of study, its development trends, the characteristics of the qualifications to be awarded within this field, and international best practices.
- Internal stakeholders participate in the development of the programme - academic staff of the field, invited staff with appropriate qualifications, dean of the relevant school, students, administration representatives and external stakeholders - employers (organizations), graduates (if any), professional organizations. Each party contributes to the decision on which general and sectoral competencies should be emphasized and how they should be achieved.
- The profile of each educational programme is unique and is based on the conclusions and decisions of the parties involved in the development of the programme. The guiding documents in the development are guidelines/instructions developed by the quality assurance department, taking into account domestic and international experience, and forms for submitting programmes/study courses, etc.
- The programme must be consistent with the mission of the university, and the mission of the school and must take into account the requirements of interested parties (students, labor

market, employment (demand-supply) analysis, graduates, employers and other parties). The programme should also consider international experience. The various aspects included in the programme should be described in clear and understandable language.

- Educational programmes shall be developed and implemented by the relevant main educational unit - the school. The head of the programme is involved in the programme development process together with all interested parties. Ensures compatibility of the programme with established external and internal standards, and timely submission of the educational programme (with appropriate attachments) to the quality assurance department.
- The quality assurance department provides methodical instructions regarding the preparation of the programme/syllabus, monitors the programme/components and identifies formal compliance with the requirements, cooperates with the programme implementers/head(s), conducts intensive meetings/trainings with the persons involved in the programme. Based on the processes, determines the period of the final development of the programme and monitors the performance.
- The president, vice president and school dean can initiate the creation of a new educational programme. The president approves the head of the programme by order, creates a programme committee based on the relevant school, whose work is coordinated by the dean of the school and the head of the programme, taking into account the deadlines set by the president or vice president. Information on the composition and activities of the Programme Committee is provided in Appendix #1.
- The head of the programme organizes the process of developing the programme, ensures the involvement of academic/guest staff, students, graduates, potential employers, external collegial evaluators and other interested parties in the process of developing the programme, and submits the draft of the programme to the school board for consideration.
- The draft of the educational programme/programme changes reviewed by the school board, with the relevant annexes of the educational programme and programmes of the training courses (syllabi) is sent to the quality assurance department in order to study and determine compliance with the standards in force in Georgia.
- The quality assurance department prepares an expert report on the programme and its annexes. In case of negative assessment, the conclusion will be presented to the school board for consideration.
- In case of a positive conclusion, the school board makes a decision to present the educational programme to the Academic Council. In case of deficiencies/inconsistencies noted in the report, the council returns the programme package to the programme committee for making changes or submits it to the academic council for consideration with appropriate argumentation.
- The academic council examines the educational programme, issues recommendations for updating the programme and relevant annexes, approves it as presented, or refuses to approve it.
- Based on the recommendations issued by the Academic Council, the package of changes to the updated programme is considered with the same procedure as when it was presented to the Academic Council at the first stage. The Academic Council reviews the educational programme, approves it as presented, or refuses its approval.

Article 3. Programme development methodology

The following procedures are used for programme development:

1. **Continuous assessment of teaching and learning within the programme**, which includes:

- a) Evaluation of each training course by students at the end of each semester. With this assessment, students' opinions are determined regarding the achievement of learning outcomes provided by the course, the difficulty of the course, satisfaction with learning resources and other aspects necessary for the improvement of the teaching-learning process;
- b) At the end of each semester, the analysis of the students' learning outcomes assessment, which is carried out by the Department of Learning Process Management and Student Experience. The purpose of this assessment is to analyze the evaluation of the learning outcomes by students in order to determine the needs for students' academic support;
- c) Annual evaluation of the programme's student satisfaction with academic support services.

2. **Mid-term evaluation of programmes**, which means mid-term evaluation of programmes 3 years after receiving accreditation(after 2 years in terms of MD and Dentistry programmes), following the standards provided for in Annex 2. A self-evaluation document is prepared for the evaluation of the programme, which uses feedback from students, graduates and other interested parties. External experts of the field, representatives of students, graduates and employers participate in the interim evaluation process.

3. **External evaluation of programmes**, which is carried out by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, another quality assurance agency or an external expert, for which the university, with the involvement of interested parties, prepares a self-evaluation report and/or relevant documentation in accordance with the standards of the quality assurance agency, which envisages the results of internal quality assurance during the reporting period.

Article 4. Programme approval procedure

In the first stage, the draft project of the programme will be submitted to the school board for consideration. The educational programme reviewed by the school board with relevant attachments is sent to the quality assurance service in order to study the programme and determine its compliance with the standards in force in Georgia. The Quality Assurance Department prepares an expert report on the programme (appendices), which it presents to the School Board for consideration. In case of a positive conclusion, the School Board makes a decision to submit the educational programme to the Academic Council. If any deficiencies/inconsistencies are noted in the report, the council returns the programme package to the programme committee, to amend it. The Academic Council reviews and approves the educational programme as it is presented, develops recommendations or refuses to approve it.

Article 5. Procedure for making amendments to the programme

The educational programme is subject to renewal. If necessary, the head of the programme initiates changes to be made to it. The head of the programme shall submit the draft project of amendments to the school board for consideration. The draft of changes to the educational programme reviewed by the school board, along with the relevant annexes of the educational programme and programmes

of training courses (syllabi) is sent to the quality assurance department for determining compliance with the standards in force in Georgia. The Quality Assurance Department prepares an expert report on the programme (appendices), which is presented to the President and Vice President for studying in terms of academic and research affairs, and to the School Board for review. The school board makes a decision to submit the educational programme to the academic board. In case of deficiencies/inconsistencies noted in the report, the council returns the programme package to the programme committee, to amend it. Making changes (modifications) in the educational programme is performed upon the submission of the School Board, with the decision of the Academic Council. The Academic Council reviews and approves the educational programme as presented or refuses to approve it.

Procedure for annulling the programme. Mechanisms for providing further education to the students of the relevant programme.

Article 6. Programme annulling procedure

The decision to cancel the programme is made by the Academic Council, which is preceded by a complex evaluation of the implementation of the programme. Students of the programme, persons involved in the implementation of the programme and other interested parties will be notified in advance in writing about the possible decision to cancel the programme. Before deciding on the annulment of the programme, students have adequate time to complete all requirements defined by the programme or continue their studies in another programme.

Grounds for decision-making on canceling the programme.

The basis for the decision to cancel the programme may be:

- Low number of students enrolled in the programme during the last 3 years
- Financial profitability of the programme
- A change in the strategic priorities of the university, which causes deviation of the programme goals from the strategic goals of the university
- Lack of programme quality, relevance and competitiveness
- Accreditation requirements that call the programme's compliance with quality standards into question
- Lack of personnel with appropriate qualifications and experience to continue the implementation of the programme

Article 7. Mechanisms for providing students with further education

Before deciding to annul a programme, the University consults with students and considers the possibility of students fulfilling the requirements of the given programme and continuing their studies in another programme.

Article 8. Protection of students' rights in case of annulment of programmes

In case of annulling the programme, the students of the programme have the right to appeal the decision about the cancellation of the programme following the relevant procedure established by the University. The basis of the complaint may be a procedural error related to the annulment of the programme, or any mitigating circumstances, which should be attached as evidence to the letter of

complaint. The complaint is reviewed by a specially created commission consisting of independent members. A student who writes a complaint has the right to receive assistance from a lawyer in the process of reviewing the complaint. The decision of the committee and the available support services will be communicated to the student in writing.

Annex № 1

Composition and activity of the programme committee

In order to ensure the maximum involvement of academic/visiting staff in the development of the educational programme and to exercise effective control over the process:

1. The number of academic/visiting staff members of the programme committee shall be determined according to the main directions of the programme, which the Dean will present to the President of the University for approval.
2. The programme Committee includes at least one potential employer (representative of a company, institution, etc. of relevant profile to the programme);
3. The programme Committee shall include at least: 4 students in the case of a bachelor's programme, 2 students in the case of a master's programme, and 4-6 students in the case of a single-level programme (preferably, students from different years of study). If there is no active student on the programme (in the case of a new programme), then at least 2 students from the adjacent/other programmes will be included in the programme committee;
4. The programme committee includes at least 1 graduate (the above does not apply to a new programme if the university does not implement programmes in the relevant field of study);
5. In order to ensure continuous involvement of students/alumni in the programme committee, the head of the programme, with the involvement of the relevant school administration, creates an active student/alumni base;
6. Involvement of students/alumni/employers in the work of the programme committee is ensured by providing them with relevant information.
7. The work of the programme committee will be conducted in the format of joint sessions and, if necessary, working meetings in small groups;
8. The prerogative of the joint sessions is to establish the goals of the programme, the learning outcomes, the study plan (curriculum) and the map of the learning outcomes of the programme, as well as the evaluation plan of the learning outcomes of the programme, development of the text of the programme document;
9. The formation of small groups can take place on a sectoral or other basis, considering the specifics of the programme;
10. Discussion of each training course of the programme (its content, teaching-learning and assessment methods, literature and other aspects) will be conducted during working meetings, and if necessary - during joint sessions, with the presentation of the author of the syllabus;
11. The work of the programme committee is led by the head of the programme, who convenes the meetings and prepares its minutes;

12. The head of the programme forms the groups, determines their work schedule in agreement with the members and attends the work meetings;
13. An external collegial evaluation will be conducted in the programme with the involvement of a foreign and Georgian expert;
14. The programme will be compared with Georgian and foreign counterparts to share best practices;
15. The programme will be shared with interested parties and the feedback received from them will be reflected in the programme;
16. Programme profitability, SWOT, and other analyses will be carried out with the involvement of all stakeholders, and identified deficiencies (if any) will be eliminated or an elimination plan will be developed;
17. The work of the Programme Committee is based on the principles of cooperation and collegiality;
18. Decisions are made on the basis of mutual agreement;
19. The quality assurance service will carry out technical monitoring and academic expertise of the programme with internal (possibly external) resources.
20. Before formulating the conclusion, the representative of the department will, if necessary, use the interviewing mechanism to verify the actual involvement of the staff in the development of the programme.