

# Decision of the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee



5<sup>th</sup> Meeting on March 23, 2022

## PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

<b>Project Number:</b>	20/100
<b>Higher Education Institution (HEI):</b>	Higher Education Institution Nehemiah Gateway ( <i>former name: Nehemiah Gateway University / Shkolla e Lartë "Nehemiah"</i> )
<b>Location:</b>	Buçimas, Albania
<b>Study Programme:</b>	Management M.Sc. with Specialization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in Education (<i>not offered by the HEI – see Ministry order below</i>)</li><li>• in Business</li></ul>
<b>Type of Accreditation:</b>	re-accreditation

The FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee has taken the following decision:

According to § 7 (6) in conjunction with § 9 (1) of the FIBAA General Terms and Conditions within the framework of procedures for the award of the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programmes from May 1, 2020 the study programme is re-accredited under one condition.

**Period of Accreditation: summer semester 2021 - end of winter semester 2027/28**

### **Condition:**

The University provides the Grade Distribution Table (ECTS Grading Table) as an integral part of the diploma supplement.

Proof of meeting this condition is to be supplied by December 22, 2022.

**The condition is fulfilled**

**(FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee on March 22, 2023)**

The FIBAA Quality Seal is awarded.

### **Procedural Notes (March 27, 2023):**

*In the framework of the initial accreditation, the study programme was accredited under the title "Leadership and Assessment in Education (M.Sc.)" starting from November 27th, 2015 till the end of winter semester 2020/21 (plus one year provisional extension due to COVID-19).*

*In 2021, the HEI re-organised its programme and applied for an extension accreditation of the "Leadership and Assessment in Education (M.Sc.)". On May 28, 2021, the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee has taken the following decisions:*

*The existing accreditation of the study programme “Leadership and Assessment in Education (M.Sc.)” is extended by*

- *the new programme title “Management M.Sc.”, “with Specialization in Education” and “with Specialization in Business” and*
- *the adjustment of the curriculum content with regard to core subjects of the business field and to two new specializations*

*in accordance with § 7 (2) in conjunction with § 10 (1) of the “Special Conditions for awarding the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programme Accreditation “FIBAA Programme Accreditation””.*

*On March 23, 2022, the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee re-accredited the re-organised programme “Leadership and Assessment in Education (M.Sc.)” with the new title Management M.Sc. with Specialization in Education and in Business.*

*According to the Order No. 573, dated 03.10.2022 of the Ministry of Education and Sport, Higher Education Institution Nehemiah Gateway, starting from the academic year 2022-2023, is not allowed to offer the Specialization in Education.*

**Thus, the current accreditation decision is valid for the Management M.Sc. with Specialization in Business only. Referring to the Order No. 573, dated 03.10.2022 of the Ministry of Education and Sport, the programme can start enrolling students from the academic year 2022-2023.**



## Assessment Report

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**Higher Education Institution (HEI):**

Nehemiah Gateway University/ Shkolla e Lartë „Nehemiah“, Buçimas, Albania

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**Master programme:**

Management with Specialization

- in Education
- in Business

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**Qualification awarded on completion:**

Master of Science (M.Sc.)

# General Information on the study programme

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**Brief description of the study programme:**

The aim of the Master programme “Management” (M.Sc.) with Specialization in Education / in Business is to empower future leaders, school principals of Nehemiah Gateway partner schools as well as business leaders (StartUps, Small Medium Enterprises and/or big companies) and to enable graduates to deal with open and complex business/education situations that provide space for self-organised and confident acting.

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**Type of study programme:**

Master programme

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**Projected study time and number of ECTS credits assigned to the study programme:**

2,5 years, 120 ECTS credits

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**Mode of study:**

full-time / extra-professional<sup>1</sup>

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**Didactic approach:**

Study programme with obligatory class attendance

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**Double/Joint Degree programme:**

no

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**Scope (planned number of parallel classes) and enrolment capacity:**

15 students per year

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**Programme cycle starts in:**

winter semester

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**Initial start of the programme:**

Summer semester 2012

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**Type of accreditation:**

Re-Accreditation

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**For re-accreditation: last accreditation period:**

- November 27th, 2015 – winter semester 2021/22 (1 year extended due to COVID-19)
  - Programme title: Leadership and Assessment in Education (M.Sc.)
- June 9th, 2021: Extension accreditation
  - New programme title “Management M.Sc.”, “with Specialization in Education” and “with Specialization in Business”
  - Adjustment of the curriculum content with regard to core subjects of the business field and two new specializations

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<sup>1</sup> Studying alongside a job

## Procedure

A contract for the initial accreditation of the programme “Leadership and Assessment in Education” (M.Sc.) was made between FIBAA and Nehemiah Gateway University on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The programme was accredited with two conditions by the FIBAA Accreditation Commission for Programmes starting on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 until the end of winter semester 2020/21. The accreditation period has been extended for one year until winter semester 2021/2022. The conditions have been met.

A contract for the extension accreditation (1. New programme title “Management M.Sc.”, “with Specialization in Education” and “with Specialization in Business”; 2. Adjustment of the curriculum content with regard to core subjects of the business field and to two new specializations) was made between FIBAA and Nehemiah Gateway University on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. On February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the HEI submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme’s changes and further documents in order to prove that the criteria for accreditation are met.

A contract for the re-accreditation of the programme title “Management M.Sc.”, “with Specialization in Education” and “with Specialization in Business” was made between FIBAA and Nehemiah Gateway University on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. On July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the HEI submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme and further documents in order to prove that the criteria for re-accreditation are met. Furthermore, the HEI on September 10, 2021, provided an internal Program Review MSc Management as part of the HEI’s quality management process describing ongoing evaluation and reflection on further development to be implemented by October 2022.

At the same time, FIBAA appointed a review panel. The HEI has agreed with the chosen experts. The panel consisted of:

**Prof. Dr. Vlado Dimovski**

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia  
Professor for Management and Organizational Theory

**Prof. Dr. Karin Halbritter**

IU Internationale Hochschule, Erfurt, Germany  
Professor of Business Education, especially Competence Development and Aptitude Diagnostics

**Professor PhD Olgun Cicek**

Executive Board Member of YODAK (Higher Education Council), Nicosia, Cyprus, Experience in the East European Region and Albania as former reviewer for QAAHE/ASCAL, Albania and as Vice President of CEENQA, Germany

**Dr. Manfred Schmidt**

Sikos GmbH, St. Ingbert, Germany  
Managing Partner

**Constantin Elias Konradi**

Hochschule Wismar, University of Applied Sciences, Germany  
Student of Business Administration & Human Resource Management

FIBAA project manager:  
Michael Stephan

The assessment is based on the self-evaluation report, amended by further documents, as requested by the panel, and an online assessment conference. The online assessment conference took place on October 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> 2021 via the video conferencing tool "Zoom". At the end of the conference the panel gave a short feedback on its first impressions to representatives of the HEI.

The assessment report based on this was delivered to the HEI for comment on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The statement on the report was given up on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2022; it has been taken into account in the report at hand.

The panel team member Olgun Cicek joined the panel team after the online conference in December 2021 as a substitute for the primal country expert. He was fully integrated in the written procedure by reviewing the assessment report draft and delivering feedback to the HEI's statement.

## Summary

The Master programme “Management M.Sc.” “with Specialization in Education” and “with Specialization in Business” offered by Nehemiah Gateway University fulfils without exceptions the FIBAA quality requirements for master programmes and can be reaccredited by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) under one condition for seven years starting from summer semester 2021 and finishing at the end of winter semester 2027/28. The programme is in accordance with the national and the European Qualification Frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines in their applicable version valid as of the time of the opening of the procedure, and with the Bologna Declaration.

The panel members identified need for improvement regarding the aspect Diploma Supplement and Grade Distribution Table (GDT). They recommend the accreditation on condition of meeting the following requirement:

- Condition (see chapter 3.2):  
The University provides the Grade Distribution Table (ECTS Grading Table) as an integral part of the diploma supplement.

Proof of meeting these conditions is to be submitted by December 22, 2022.

The panel members identified some areas where the programme could be further developed:

- by increasing its international activities in the Master programme by using the excellent international network of N.G. Group, see chapter 1.2;
- by integrating cooperations and collaborations into the marketing strategy and ensure effective communication about the many projects the HEI conducts in order to attract more students, see chapter 1.3;
- by making the modules "Research Methods" and "Critical Thinking" a mandatory pre-condition for the majority of the other modules, see chapter 3.1;
- by introducing a programme variant with an extended period of study, see chapter 3.2;
- by intensifying cooperations with municipalities, business and universities, public and private institutions and NGOs, see chapter 4.3
- by continuing taking measures to provide barrier-free access in all the HEI's facilities, see chapter 4.4;
- by increasing alumni activities, see chapter 4.5;
- by supplementing the evaluation of the study programme with external, independent third party audits, see chapter 5;
- by using consistent terminology in relevant documents that provide information for students, see chapter 5;
- by ensuring that all important documents for applicants and students are also available via website, see chapter 5.

The measures that the HEI takes in order to implement the recommendations of the panel members are to be considered during the next re-accreditation.

There are many criteria in which the programme exceeds the quality requirements:

- Ethical aspects, see chapter 3.1;
- Guest Lecturers, see chapter 3.3;

- Foreign language contents, see chapter 3.4;
- Student support by the faculty, see chapter 4.1;
- Evaluation by students, see chapter 5.2.

The panel members would also like to point out that many other criteria, although they do not formally exceed FIBAA quality requirements, do show a remarkable standard. During the interviews with the N.G. University representatives, the panel learned that the University operates in a difficult and turbulent environment with low ethical standards where government is continuously working on new regulations and controls to ensure European standards. In this ever evolving regulatory environment, achievements of N.G. University in recent years include:

- Increase of internationalisation of teaching staff, see chapter 3.3. and 4.1;
- Improvement of methods and scientific practice by establishing and staffing Research Center, see chapter 3.1;
- Increase of professionalism and level of expertise of the staff, see chapter 4.2;
- Overall quality of staff, facilities and care of students, see chapter 4;
- Operation on high level of adaption and proactivity; see chapter 1.3;
- Overall high quality assurance and maintaining quality standards as to the outcome of the programme, see chapter 5;
- Consistent support of vision, mission statement and maintaining the standards of social and ethical responsibility, see chapters 1.3 and 3.1;
- Showing high level of employability so far, see chapters 1.3. and 3.6.

If the HEI successfully increases the number of students the panel sees the potential of N.G. University to have a lot of impact on environment and society and become one of the premier places in Albania in terms of operations, culture and ethics, hospitality, level of cohesion and internal cooperation. Creativity and enthusiasm of the staff are an asset N.G. University can rely upon to achieve this target.

For the overall assessment of the programme, please refer to the quality profile at the end of this report.



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## 0.1 Information on the Institution

Nehemiah Gateway University (hereinafter “N.G. University”) is a private institution of higher education located in Bucimas, in the District of Pogradec, Albania. N.G. University was licensed pursuant in 2008 by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania in accordance with the Albanian Constitution and Law “On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania”.

N.G. University forms part of the global work of Nehemiah Gateway Team (“N.G. Team”) with its offices in Nuremberg and Berlin, Germany. In Albania, N.G. Team is represented by the Nehemiah Gateway Albania Foundation (“N.G. Albania”), which has been operational in Albania since 1992. Thus, N.G. University is financed by the N.G. Team through the operations of N.G. Albania. N.G. University is part of the N.G. Albania campus in Progradec and also uses facilities and resources of N.G. Albania.

The *raison d’être* of the N.G. University is the fulfilment of the strategy, aims and objectives of the N.G. Albania Group in the field of education through the experience gained in its elementary and secondary schools, a long-term investment in qualitative education in a holistic concept based on values. Therefore, the purpose of N.G. University was not only to replicate the success achieved in the Nehemia Schools, but was also to offer an opportunity to the graduating pupils for further education on the level of higher education. Hence, N.G. University closes the cycle of education from Kindergarten to University but also opens possibilities for the pupils and students to achieve their full potential.

The focus of the N.G. University is the development of the local region from which the students come. This shall be achieved through the exposure of students to international business practices and experience; i.e. the qualification of leaders according to the example of West Europe, particularly Germany, the possibility of research and multiplication of education results.

It is the ambition of the founders of N.G. University to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the Ohrid Lake Region of Albania. N.G. University benefits from the global operations and networks of N.G. Team in Europe, Africa and Latin America, in addition to the pool of local and international scholars for the development of a middle and long-term research work both nationally and internationally.

N.G. University has developed its programmes alongside the Albanian development to an emerging economy with European Union (EU) Membership ambitions. Taking advantage of the Bologna Process within the European Union, N.G. University has strived to include European standards in its educational programmes. N.G. University was the first HEI in Albania opening its doors for international students. International students come from South America (Cuba, Mexico and Guatemala), East Africa (Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan), and Europe (Greece, Germany and Albania). In the global strategy of N.G. Team N.G. University will be the training ground for Nehemiah Gateway Partner organisations in Africa, South America and Europe.

N.G. University at present has one faculty „Business and Management“ with three departments. Currently N.G. University is offering two study programmes. The Bachelor programme in "Economy and Businesses" is offered by the Department for Business Administration (BUE),

whilst the Master of Science in “Management, with Specialization in Business or in Education” is offered by the Department of Management.

## 0.2 Further development of the programme and implementation of recommendations from previous accreditation

The Master programme was initiated as Master of Science in “Leadership and Assessment in Education”. The initial goals and structure of the programme have been described and assessed in the FIBAA report 14/117 and accredited by FIBAA Accreditation and Certification committee on November 27th, 2015 along with several recommendations.

However, the educational environment, structural and institutional frame conditions in Albania have changed rapidly in recent years. In order to adapt to these developments in Albania as well as to ensure the further development of the study programme, some changes have been implemented in the Master's programme. The programme was renamed and restructured into a Master of Science Management “with specialization in Education” or “with specialization in Business”. These changes have been described in and assessed by the FIBAA report 20/101 and received accreditation without conditions or further recommendations by FIBAA Accreditation and Certification committee on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

In accordance with the recommendations of the FIBAA panel in the first accreditation, N.G. University has worked on these recommendations, although some of the measures have been affected or postponed by the change of the programme

- **Employability** - Recommendation to ask the graduates for information if their working position has changed: The revised Alumni Survey (exhibit 20, pages 15 ff.) includes this question, due to the programme change relevant results are not available yet
- **Internationality** - Recommendation to increase internationality of student body: The Master programme is predominantly designed for Albanian students to develop the region, but student exchange programmes have been brought on the way. However, priority is to attract more Albanian students
- **Internationality** - Recommendation to increase its international activities in the Master programme by using the excellent international network of N.G. Group: A network of cooperations with international HEIs does exist and is nurtured, see chapter 3.4 and 4.3
- **International study programme standards** – Recommendation to focus the wording of the module descriptions as to learning outcomes: This has been implemented with the new module structure, see chapter 3.1
- **Faculty** - Recommendation to place strong emphasis on ensuring the necessary flow of information between the HEI and the part-time lecturers: The panel has noted an increase in full-time lecturers and an improvement in guest lecturers operations, see chapters 3.3. and 4.1
- **Quality management** – Recommendation to increase the transparency of the quality assurance measures: N.G. University has introduced a system of time cycles and responsibilities (see chapter 5. and exhibit 19 “Assessment Plan”, page 9)

As already summarised (page 4) the panel still sees development potential in the following fields:

- **Equal opportunities** – Recommendation to continue taking measures to provide barrier-free access in all the HEI's facilities: no further evidence has been delivered by N.G. University (see chapter 4.4)
- **Quality management** - Recommendation to use consistent terminology in relevant documents that provide information for students (see chapter 5)

Other recommendations as to module names and consistent terminology on documents providing information for students have become obsolete due to the changes in the programme.

The enrollment of students over the past years is shown in the chart below. The decreasing numbers reflect the development towards the necessary change of the programme aims and structure.

**Table 1: Enrollment and Retention Rate, MSc**

Entering Date	Head-count full-time students	Continued to 2nd year	Graduated within 2,5 years
October 2013	17	94%	81%
October 2015	13	85%	85%
October 2017	14	85%	85%
October 2018	5	60%	
October 2019	6	83%	
October 2020	5		

**Table 2: Study programme Statistics, MSc**

		1. Cohort (2013)	2. Cohort (2015)	3. Cohort (2017)	4. Cohort (2018)	5. Cohort (2019)	6. Cohort(2020)
# Study Places offered by HEI		20	20	20	15	15	15
# Applicants	∑	20	18	16	11	6	4
	f	18	15	12	6	3	3
	m	2	3	4	5	3	1
Application rate		100,00%	90,00%	80,00%	73,33%	40,00%	26,67%
# First-Year Students (accepted applicants)	∑	17	13	14	5	5	3
	f	15	11	10	3	2	2
	m	2	2	4	2	2	1
Rate of female students		0,882352941	0,846153846	0,714285714	0,6	0,4	0,666666667
# Foreign Students	∑	0	0	0	0	0	0
	f						
	m						
Rate of foreign students		0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of occupied study places		85,00%	65,00%	70,00%	33,33%	33,33%	20,00%
# Graduates	∑	16	11	9	0	0	
	f	14			0		
	m	2			0		
Success rate (students who finished their studies)		94,12%	84,62%	85,71%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Dropout rate (students who dropped their studies)		5,88%	15,38%	14,29%			
Average duration of study		2 years	2,5 years	2,5 years	2,5 years	2,5 years	2,5 years
Average grade of final degree		8	8	6,9			

# Programme Description and Appraisal in Detail

## 1. Objectives

### 1.1 Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk-Criterion)

The aim of the modified study programme “Management, with Specialization in Education or Business” is to empower future leaders, school principals of N.G. partner schools as well as business leaders (StartUps, Small or Medium Sized Enterprises and/or big companies) and to enable graduates to deal with complex situations that provide space for self-organised and confident acting.

The reason for the current targeting and structure of the study programme is the further development of the public educational institutions. New Public Management Reforms in public administration and especially in educational institutions have now also arrived in Albania. In this context, these reforms have radically contributed to the redefinition of organisations in the public sector. Knowledge of organisational development, change management, but also the handling of human resources play an important role in the area of responsibility of a principal or head of department. The market developments of recent years have been taken into account in the further development of the study programme (cf. self-evaluation report p. 32).

The study programme “Management, with Specialization in Education or Business” supports the interface between a higher scientific educational approach and a practical experience. The cooperation of N.G. University with international partner schools, universities and other institutions guarantees the direct implementation under local conditions (cf. self-evaluation report p. 12).

The programme objectives (PO) of the study programme are as follows (cf. self-evaluation report pp. 14-15):

- PO 1 To lead staff toward a value-based vision & mission of the organisation/institution and its implementation
- PO 2 To integrate leadership strategies in team development
- PO 3 To manage an effective and efficient organisation/institution
- PO 4 To support and facilitate an atmosphere of trust and professionalism within the organisation/institution at all dimensions
- PO 5 To acknowledge students with different evaluation approaches and methods
- PO 6 To support them to effectively manage the financial resources of the institution
- PO 7 To enable them to organize structures and procedures of organisations/institutions according to the available resources and abilities
- PO 8 To sensitize them for the legal obligations of organisations/institutions

#### **Specialization in Education**

- PO 9 To develop effective skills for communicating with and nurturing good relationships between the school, administrators, teachers, parents, communities, and authorities

- PO 10 To acquire professional skills in curriculum development and assessment
- PO 11 To communicate professional teaching and learning methods that support and challenge children and encourage their individual potential.

### **Specialization in Business**

- PO 9 To develop quality leadership skills, in order to influence change
- PO 10 To gain valuable insight on how effective leaders motivate their teams
- PO 11 To develop an understanding of the complexity of the business world as well as of internal and external factors, which influence a business
- PO 12 To become skilled in leading different parts of a business to work effectively together.

As part of the changes intended for October 2022 (cf. Program Review MSc Management) the HEI intends to formulate the objectives (programme learning objectives, PLO) in a more outcome-oriented way:

- PLO 1 To lead staff toward a value-based vision & mission of the organization/institution and its implementation
- PLO 2 To integrate leadership strategies targeting team development
- PLO 3 To manage an effective and efficient organization/institution
- PLO 4 To support and facilitate an atmosphere of trust and professionalism within the organization at all dimensions
- PLO 5 To acknowledge students with different evaluation approaches and methods
- PLO 6 To support them to effectively manage the financial resources of the institution
- PLO 7 To enable them to organize structures and procedures of organizations/institutions according to the available resources & abilities
- PLO 8 To sensitize them for the legal obligations of organizations/institutions

### **Appraisal:**

The panel understands that environmental changes can provoke the review and redevelopment of study programmes as life cycles of study programmes get shorter. The permanent effort for a competitive advantage gets more important in a constantly changing environment. Therefore, the panel welcomes the HEI's efforts to continuously develop the programme and formed the view that the objectives of the study programme are comprehensive and thoroughly reflected. The qualification objectives of the programme are clearly formulated and both specialisations fit well into the overall objectives of the study programme.

The qualification objectives of the programme are explained and convincingly presented in relation to the target group of professionals in educational organisations, enterprises, public institutions as well as NGOs and the targeted professional field of management of businesses and educational institutions. The qualification objectives embrace academic proficiency at Master level as well as comprehensive employability.

The linking of theory and practice is clearly visible in the programme objectives. Although work experience is not required for the Master programme, until now all students enrolled in the



programme have been in working relationships besides their studies. The panel is convinced that the programme is appropriate for both students groups (working or not working). In addition, the training of various social skills promotes clearly the development of the individual student's personality.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.1*	Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 1.2 International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)

The international nature of the institution is given by its integration into N.G. Team and is part of the institution's identity. As an international aid organisation N.G. Team has partner organisations in Europe, Africa and South America. N.G. University therefore strives to expand its international network between institutions of higher education, especially in countries where the projects of N.G. Team are focused on. N.G. University has been working to open its doors for international students by offering exchange possibilities of students and lecturers as well as short time study trips to partner organisations in other countries. The HEI states that the fact that the institution strives for accreditation in European (FIBAA – programme accreditation) and U.S.A. (TRACS – institutional accreditation) accreditation agencies will support international students in their decision to study in Albania.

The current study programme is held half in English and half in Albanian. As a small institution N.G. University is practising the functional concept of having guest lecturers. 70 % of the guest lecturers are from outside Albania (see chapter 3.4). The lecturers from Albania have graduated abroad or have experiences at HEIs outside Albania. There are no international students enrolled in the study programme.

### Appraisal:

According to the HEI's position within the internationally oriented N.G. Group the programme design takes international aspects into account appropriately. Besides international content (see also chapter 3.4), study trips and exchange possibilities, the fact that the programme is held in Albanian as well as in English language promote the students' abilities to work with international partners in an international context. Nonetheless, the panel recommends increasing its international activities in the Master programme by using the excellent international network of N.G. Group (see also chapter 4.3).

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.2*	International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

### 1.3 Positioning of the study programme

Until the early 90s, the Albanian education system has been politicized in the service of the former communist ideology. During the transition, the educational market was liberalized and now several private universities have emerged. Till August 2014 there were 59 HEIs in Albania. Among them there were universities offering qualitative educational programmes, but many of them suffer under the bad reputation of corruption and lack of professionalism and quality. In 2014 the Ministry of Education and Sports in collaboration with other supervisory authorities undertook an evaluation process for all HEIs in Albania. As a result of this process the licence for 18 HEIs was revoked and 13 HEIs were suspended. N.G. University was not affected by these decisions (cf. self-evaluation report p. 18). Within its region, N.G. University is the only university besides the University of Korca which N.G. University positions itself against as a complement rather than a competitor.

Since the academic year 2015-2016 there has been a decrease in the number of students in higher education in Albania. Thus, the number of students in 2015-2016 was 148,277 and in 2019-2020 130,264. Albania has 26 private higher education institutions and 15 public institutions. In this context, however, despite the declining number of students in higher education, an inflation of university degrees can be observed at the same time. Many students complete two or three Masters degrees in order to increase their chances on the job market. Even though the number of students is generally declining in Albania, the business administration subjects do not seem to be affected. The number of students in these subjects has increased slightly (cf. self-evaluation report p. 32).

The Master programme “Leadership and Assessment in Education” started for the first time in 2012 as a pilot course, where 16 students were enrolled. At this time the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a Regulation for the further qualification of Albanian teachers, where they obliged teachers to consider further qualification e.g. master studies. Many HEIs who offer such further education for teachers are located in Tirana. The study programme at hand was thought to fill this gap in the market of higher education in Albania, especially for the region of Elbasan, Korça and Pogradec.

The new Law on Higher Education in Albania, which came into force with in 2015, has changed the higher education landscape in Albania. Changes have been made in the types of higher education institutions, the forms of study and the internal organisational structures of the institutions as well as the HEI committees. The new Law on Higher Education establishes different types of HEIs, such as Universities, University Colleges, Academies and Higher Vocational Colleges. Currently, there are 41 public and private HEIs in Albania, 22 of which fall under the category “University” (twelve public and ten private universities). Furthermore, there are twelve private “University Colleges”, and seven “Academies” (three public, four private, cf. self-evaluation report p.19). Among the HEIs left there are several opportunities for teachers to qualify further according to the regulation mentioned above, however the responsibility for the education and training of teachers is to remain in state hands. This trend, although not legally regulated in Albania, has increased in recent years. The need to restructure N.G. University according to the new Law on Higher Education in Albania was accompanied by the need to adapt the Master's programme to the new legal and market requirements.

The study programme was revised taking in consideration the changes in the environment which was then used to review the strategic profile of the HEI. One of the goals of the HEI is

to promote and support regional development. For the strategic orientation of the HEI it was important to consider not only educational organisations as relevant actors in social development - coinciding with the introduction of New Public Management reforms for the public sector in Albania. Today, the employment sector in Albania has a growing demand for well-trained management staff, particularly men and women trained with professionalism and hands-on practice. The current Albanian Government has defined the reform of the educational and training system addressing labor market needs as one of its priorities, the (re)training of jobseekers in order to get people into jobs and the modernisation of the public employment services and programmes. One of the goals in the national educational strategy is to improve the employability of study programmes.

Programme objectives and curriculum have been revised in such a way that the degree programme also allows training according to focus areas (Specialization) in addition to its core content. The curriculum is structured to lead the student step by step from the simple to the complex, from the general to the specific subjects.

The changes and repositioning initially lead to a decrease in student numbers (see table 1, chapter 0.2). In order to attract more students within the next five years N.G. University is developing a marketing strategy that focuses on Albanian students from the region of Pogradec, Korça and Elbasan on the one hand and more international students on the other hand.

Within the curriculum, two modules are offered which are intended to establish a practical reference and a connection to (later) professional practice: "Professional & Research Orientation" and "Internship". The application orientation of the course content is also given in modules such as Managing and Leading. In the courses on Strategic Management, Financial Planning, Change Management, Organizational Communication & Conflict Resolution etc. work is done specifically and additionally with portfolios, self-reflection and approaches to solutions for real organisational challenges. The focus of the programme is not only to impart knowledge and skills, but also to create a learning environment where students can develop their skills and competences. N.G. University has also implemented instruments to ensure employability for the Master graduates as part of the quality assurance (see chapter 5.) The job placement rate of graduates of the master study programme is shown in the chart below:

**Table 3: Job Placement Rate, MSc**

Entering Date	Head-count full-time students	Graduated	Job Placement Rate
October 2013	17	16	100%
October 2015	13	11	100%
October 2017	14	12	100%

As stated in the N.G. University's Strategic Plan the HEI aims to achieve the following educational goals:

- To educate and empower local and international learners through academic excellence, theory and practice, to discover, develop and realize their potential as individuals and responsible members of society, contributing to the sustainable economic growth.

- To equip learners at a level commensurate with their ability, to foster success in life, business, social sciences, education and entrepreneurial spirit leading to sustainable business ideas.
- To provide high quality training that meets national and international academic standards as well as professional competency standards, based on a broad range of transferable skills and knowledge, further enhanced through cooperation with partner firms and institution.
- To function in a learning environment with a global perspective where students develop their academic, research and social skills and apply critical thinking to broaden their worldview and life perspectives.

In this context the Master Programme is geared toward students desiring to start their profession in management in various disciplines. The study programme provides the student with a foundation in the fundamentals of managing people and organisations within the real-world context of business today. In addition to the foundational fundamental knowledge and essential managerial skills, students also have the opportunity to specialize and apply their acquired knowledge in practice.

### Appraisal:

In the view of the panel the study programme's position within the Albanian education market is plausible. The HEI focusses on attracting students who already work in educational organisations and enterprises and live in the region. Due to its quality standards N.G. University clearly sets itself apart from HEIs with low standards or those who suffer from corruption. The internationality and the orientation of N.G. University towards the western European education systems are aspects that foster the attractiveness of the institution and the programme within Albania.

The HEI has thoroughly analysed the job market and the conditions for education and enterprise managers in Albania. In the view of the panel the practice oriented study programme is comprehensively offering competencies that ensure employability. Altogether, the future fields of employment for graduates are plausibly set forth.

The study programme's qualification goals are in line with the HEI's mission of educating potential leaders who consider the N.G. values. The study programme is convincingly integrated into the HEI's overall strategic concept.

In a turbulent and changing environment where qualification is often based on relationship and bribing, the Albanian government tries to fight abberation in the HEI landscape by implementing more control. The panel acknowledges that sustainably establishing N.G. University by keeping up with Albanian regulations and increasing the number of students at the same time is challenging. The panel welcomes that nevertheless, N.G. University is determined to maintain its level of qualitative and ethical education according to European and international standards.

In this context the panel welcomes resources in marketing personnel provided by N.G. Albania. The panel also welcomes that the HEI is currently developing a marketing strategy and supports the positioning of the HEI regionally (also cross-border) with an international orientation

without competing internationally. The panel would like to emphasize the creativity and determination of the HEI leadership and staff to develop ideas for cooperations and collaborations. The HEI already has a broad network of local, regional and international cooperations and collaborations including NGOs, educational institutions, public institutions, businesses, enterprises and municipalities. However, the panel did not have the impression that all of these activities are appropriately communicated. Therefore – and in order to attract more students - the panel recommends integrating cooperations and collaborations into the marketing strategy and ensure effective communication about the many projects the HEI conducts. The panel also suggests including specific Albanian and regional assets into the communication and ensure that partners and prospective students also notice the accreditation reports published on fibaa.org and deqar.eu. The panel emphasizes the fact that N.G. University has the potential to make a local and regional impact on environment and society and become one of the primer places in Albania in terms of operations, culture and ethics, hospitality, level of cohesion and internal cooperation.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.3	Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1	Positioning of the study programme in the educational market			X		
1.3.2	Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“)			X		
1.3.3	Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		

## 2. Admission

The admission to the study program is possible for each candidate who has successfully completed the secondary education cycle and meets the average grade requirement defined yearly by Decision of Council of Ministers (DCM). HEIs can decide additional admission criteria for the selection of the candidates, which are publicly announced by HEI and are made available to the Center for Educational Services (CES) and to the ministry responsible for education.

The application and enrolment process at N.G. University is included in the University Catalog, which is published on the website of N.G. University<sup>2</sup>. The Admission Procedure at the N.G. University includes three steps:

- Step 1: submission of a valid application
- Step 2: personal interview
- Step 3: enrolment (registration)

### **Step 1: submission of a valid application:**

Applications for admission to N.G. University shall be submitted via the online system of the HEI. An application contains the following documents:

- letter of motivation explaining why the applicant wishes to study the Master programme at N.G. University;
- Curriculum Vitae;
- Photo
- Certified (notarised) copies of the following personal documents:
  - a copy of the Bachelor degree (diploma and transcript of grades); international applicants must submit notarised translations of their certificates; Average grade of previously earned bachelors degree: at least 7
  - proof of English language proficiency on level B2 (e.g. TOEFL or IELTS or other certification)
  - two letters of recommendation concerning the personal character and academic potential of the prospective student. The letters of recommendation have to be written by pedagogic or academic personnel of the school last visited and/or by the last employer;
  - a confirmation from a recognised doctor that the applicant does not suffer from infectious (transmittable) diseases at the time of application;
  - a personal written statement where the applicant agrees to abide by the N.G. University standards concerning academic honesty and personal conduct;
  - the proof of payment for the application fee.

### **Step 2: personal interview:**

After the application phase is closed, the Admission Commission reviews the documentation submitted and makes a preliminary decision with regard to the application. If positive, the Admission Commission arranges an interview for these applicants. The interview enables the Commission to evaluate qualities that cannot be assessed in the application documents, such as personality, personal opinions, specific knowledge, motivation, language and communication skills of the applicant. It may last between 30 – 45 minutes and will be conducted in English

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ng-university.org/application/files/8516/2132/3106/Catalog\\_NG\\_University\\_fi-nal202010.pdf](https://www.ng-university.org/application/files/8516/2132/3106/Catalog_NG_University_fi-nal202010.pdf)

language. The HEI has provided interview guidelines together with exemplary interview minutes (cf. Minutes Admission Interview). The aim is to ensure that the study programme chosen by the applicant is suitable and that the applicant will be able to meet the language proficiency required to successfully accomplish the programme. The admission interview carries a weight of 100 % of the admission result.

After the interview the members of the Admission Commission discuss the performance of the applicant and each member gives a written assessment. Based on the written assessment the chair of the Admission Commission takes a final decision. The combined results of the evaluation of the admission interview will determine the ranking of the applicants for the master study programme. The position of an applicant in the ranking list and the overall number of students that can be admitted (based on the students' quotas as approved by the Albanian Ministry of Education) will determine whether or not an applicant can be admitted.

### **Step 3: enrolment (registration):**

The Admission Commission will inform the applicant about the final admission results. One copy of each written notification sent to the applicants is filed in the applicant's folder. Admission can also be conditional subject to the applicant submitting further documents or meeting additional requirements as specified by the Admission Commission. Successfully admitted applicants complete the enrollment process by signing the Study Contract and paying, when applicable, the enrolment and tuition fee(s).

According to the Statutes of Nehemiah Gateway University (Version Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, cf. exhibit 1) it is the responsibility of the Programme Director to advise interested students on the procedural and academic requirements for the Master programme. The assistant of the master study programme is the first contact to prospective students. Additionally, N.G. University has employed a Recruitment & Enrolment Manager and the Student Service Centre is available any time during the opening hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm) for prospective students and guests. The information related to the application procedure and the academic requirements to study at the Master programme is included in the catalogue of the institution. In addition, N.G. University provides applicants with printed documents needed for the application process.

In the first weeks of studies advisory meetings with the HEI staff and N.G. Albania are offered for different issues such as: information about the N.G. University and N.G. Albania, statutes and catalogue of the HEI, module description, exam and practical time regulation and instructions, etc. Furthermore, each student receives an individual email address which gives them the possibility to enter the intranet and find there relevant information for different modules or to communicate with academic staff and other students. A group email address is usually used by academic staff to send information to the whole course.

### **Appraisal:**

The admission requirements are defined and comprehensible. They are fully in line with formal Albanian regulations for the entrance to Master programmes. Moreover, the admission requirements and the interview covering pre-university level of knowledge as well as the personality of the applicants guarantee that qualified students are admitted. Hence, the admission requirements are oriented towards the strategic goals of the study programme.

The level of English language skills, which is needed to participate successfully in the English language courses on an advanced level and to work with English literature and course materials, is checked through the need of a certificate as well as during the interview by the faculty members. During the online assessment conference N.G. University pointed out that in some cases applicants are accepted to the programme if the required language proficiency is not documented, but the applicant shows the motivation to reach that proficiency during the programme. In some cases students are accepted to the study programme under the condition to submit a B2 certificate within a given time. However, N.G. University attributes drop-outs in some cases to difficulties with English language (cf. Program review p. 5, exhibit 21). Language courses offered by the HEI did meet no demand by the students and were cancelled again. The panel suggests reintroducing the language courses by N.G. University together with the introduction of a programme variant with an extended period of study as suggested in chapter 3.2.

Although all students have so far pursued a career parallel to their Master studies there is no obligation of work experience.

Applicants can directly turn to the Student Service Center for clarification of specific questions. A personal dialogue with applicants is also provided by the Programme Director. The opening hours of the Student Service Center and the availability of the HEI's staff by telephone and via e-mail are aligned with the needs of prospective students.

The admission procedure is described and documented in binding regulations. Thus, admission requirements are also transparent to potential students.

The admission decision is based on transparent criteria and the applicants are informed personally after taking the interview.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
2.1*	Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.2	Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3*	Selection procedure (if relevant)			X		
2.4(*)	Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5*	Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6*	Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		



### 3. Contents, structure and didactical concept of the programme

#### 3.1 Contents

The curriculum of the study programme includes five fields of study which are also called modules by N.G. University. Three modules are related to the core curriculum, one of the five modules serves for the specialization on the appropriate field (Education or Business) and the last module contains the internship and the master thesis as final requirements. The current curriculum for the study programme is shown in the following illustration:

**Table 4: Curriculum of the study programme**

Sample Curriculum Overview Master's Programme, 5 Semesters											
Modul No.	Title of Module / Course Unit	Credit Points per Semester					Workload		Method of Teaching i.e. lecture course, seminar	Form and Duration of Examinations	weight of exam related to final grade
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	Hours in Class	Hours Self-Study			
<b>M1 Professional and Research Orientation</b>											
M 1.1	Academic Writing & Rhetoric		5				50	100	S	Presentation & Assignment	
M 1.2	Research Methods	5					50	100	S		
M 1.3	Critical Thinking		5				50	100	S		
M 1.4	Introduction to Leadership & Management	5					50	100	L		
M 1.5	Governance & Organizational Development	5					50	100	L		
<b>M2 Leading and Managing</b>											
M 2.1	Organizational Communication & Conflict Resolution	5					50	100	S	Assignment	
M 2.2	Professional Ethics			5			50	100	L/S	Presentation & Simulation game	
M 2.3	Human Resources				5		50	100	S	Presentation & Written Exam	
M 2.4	Change Management		5				50	100	L/S	Assignment	
M 2.5	Strategic Management			5			50	100	L/S	Group Presentation & Assignmen	
M 2.6	Organizational Behavior & Planning				5		50	100	S	Quiz & Exam	
<b>M3 Performance Management</b>											
M 3.1	Organizational / Institutional Performance		5				50	100	L/S	Group presentation & Assign.	
M 3.2	Performance Management			5			50	100	S	Quiz & Exam	
M 3.3	Planning & Finance				5		50	100	S	Quiz & Exam	
<b>M4a Specialization in Business</b>											
M 4.1	International Business				4		35	65	S	Written Exam	
M 4.2	Controlling & Accounting			4			35	65	S	Written Exam	
M 4.3	Entrepreneurship			4			35	65	L/S	Assignment	
M 4.4	Marketing				4		35	65	S	Assignment	
M 4.5	Legal Issues			4			35	65	L/S	Written Exam	
M 4.6	Operations Management				5		50	100	L/S	Written Exam	
<b>M4b Specialization in Education</b>											
M 4.1	Curriculum Development				4		35	65	S	Assignment	
M 4.2	Educational Psychology			4			35	65	S	Assignment	
M 4.3	Student's Assessment				4		35	65	S	Assignment	
M 4.4	Teaching and Learning				4		35	65	S	Assignment	
M 4.5	Legal Issues			4			35	65	L/S	Assignment	
M 4.6	Pedagogical Inclusion				5		50	100	L/S	Assignment	
<b>M5 Closing Requirements</b>											
M 5.1	Internship			2	3						
M 5.2	Master Thesis					20					
<b>total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1150</b>	<b>2250</b>			

- L: Lecture
- S: Seminar
- T: Tutorial
- ...

Each of the three core modules consists of subjects/courses credited with five ECTS credits. Within the modules for specialisation (Modules 4a and 4b), most courses are credited with four ECTS credits. In order to further harmonize the crediting and the workload N.G. University is

preparing further adjustments (see Table 6). The module structure of the study programme is shown in the following illustration:

**Table 5: Module structure of the study programme**

<b>Module A: Professional and Research Orientation - 25 ECTS</b>	
Introduction to Leadership (5 ECTS)	
Governance & Organizational Development (5 ECTS)	
Academic Writing & Rhetoric (5 ECTS)	
Research Methods (5 ECTS)	
Critical Thinking (5 ECTS)	
<b>Module B: Leading and Managing – 35 ECTS</b>	
Organizational Communication & Conflict Resolution (5 ECTS)	
Professional Ethics (5 ECTS)	
Human Resources (5 ECTS)	
Change Management (5 ECTS)	
Strategic Management (5 ECTS)	
Organizational Behavior & Planning (5 ECTS)	
Planning & Finance (5 ECTS)	
<b>Module C: Organizational Effectiveness – 10 ECTS</b>	
Organizational / Institutional Performance (5 ECTS)	
Performance Management (5 ECTS)	
<b>Module D: Specialization – 25 ECTS</b>	
Education	Business
Curriculum Development (4 ECTS)	International Business (4 ECTS)
Educational Psychology (4 ECTS)	Controlling & Accounting (4 ECTS)
Students Assessment (4 ECTS)	Entrepreneurship (4 ECTS)
Teaching & Learning (4 ECTS)	Marketing (4 ECTS)
Legal environment of EDU institutions (4 ECTS)	Legal environment of businesses (4 ECTS)
Pedagogical Inclusion (5 ECTS)	Operations Management (5 ECTS)
Internship (5 ECTS)	
Master Thesis (20 ECTS)	
<b>TOTAL ECTS 120</b>	

The three core modules are called “Professional and Research Orientation”, “Leading and Managing” and “Organisational Effectiveness”. Within these modules there are courses (also called “modules” in the HEI’s terminology, for consistent terminology see recommendation in chapter 5) covering the aspects of Strategic Management, Human Resources, Organizational Behaviour & Planning, Leadership, Governance & Organizational Development, Accounting, Finance, Planning and Control, Entrepreneurship, Change Management and Operations Management, completed by Ethics. The modules (courses/subjects) Critical Thinking, Research Methods and Academic Writing and Rhetoric are implemented to develop the ability of critical and abstract thinking and provide students with the methodological skills to do scientific work (see also chapter 3.3.).

Additionally, students can choose between two specializations: Education and Business (each 25 ECTS credits). If students choose the specialization of Business, they have to take the

following modules (courses/subjects) with a total of 25 ECTS credits: International Management, Controlling & Accounting, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Legal Environment of businesses and Operations Management.

If students choose the specialization of Education, they have to take the following modules (courses/subjects) with a total of 25 ECTS credits: Curriculum development, Educational Psychology, Students Assessment, Teaching & Learning, Legal Environment of education institutions and Pedagogical Inclusion.

The Albanian system of higher education offers study programs of the second cycle “Master of Science”, “Master of Arts” and “Professional Master”. The admission in the second cycle of studies is possible for the candidates who have finished a first cycle study program and meet the admission criteria defined by the HEI. The study programs “Master of Science” or “Master of arts” according to 8.5.4.1 of the Law On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania provide the graduates, respectively, with indepth theoretical knowledge as well as with scientific research skills in a given field or indepth theoretical and practical knowledge in the fields of arts. They are offered following first cycle studies with not less than 120 ECTS credits, normal duration of two academic years and belong to 7th AQF (Albanian Qualification Framework) level.

Second cycle integrated study programs are offered with 300 or 360 ECTS credits, normal duration of studies of five or six academic years, belong to 7th AQF level and are offered in the fields of law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary and architecture. The Council of Ministers may define other fields where integrated study programs with thesis may be offered. This is so called integrated “Master of Science” Program (8.5.3-8.5.4 of the Law On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania)

The study programme „Management with Specialization in Education or Business“ aims to enable students in addition to a professional career also for an academic career. After finishing the programme, the students are awarded with the degree Master of Science (M.Sc.).

There are three modules included in the master programme related to scientific practice. The module “Research Methods” is held in order to transmit the basics of scientific work for their further studies. The module provides an introduction to a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods and outlines the different epistemological and ideological foundations of contrasting research paradigms. During the entire study programme the students are challenged to apply their knowledge in research methodology through all the other modules. Written papers and essays as well as presentations are part of the final assessment of most modules. The modules Critical Thinking and Academic Writing & Rhetoric provide students with the basics of scientific theory and an insight in the nature of enquiry. Knowing the effects that ontological assumptions have upon epistemological assumptions and vice versa, and, in turn, on how those affects the selection of methodological tools will give them the opportunity to distinguish between different approaches in their own scientific work.

The practical part of the study programme benefits from the fact that until now all the students are in a working relationship in schools (*regarding the connection of studying and working see also chapter 1.1*). As mentioned above, education in Albania traditionally includes a very strong theoretical orientation and frontal teaching style. N.G. University aims to break with this tradition and to offer practical and interactive orientation within the modules. Each module contains reflecting sessions and group work. In the modules of the core curriculum the students get to

know a variety of interactive teaching and learning methods. They have the possibility to apply the new concepts and methods in their daily work. The topics of assignments mostly require application of the gained knowledge in the respective field of work.

In addition to that, an internship is included in the curriculum of the MSc study programme and credited with five ECTS credits. Students who study the master programme while working have the opportunity to have their work experience recognized as an internship. In both scenarios, an internship report must be submitted in addition to the internship. The report consists of 10 - 15 pages (cf. Internship Regulation, pp. 1-3).

Subjects of interculturalism, intercultural communication and conflict resolution or professional ethics are included in different subjects. The fact that the academic supervisors, mentors and lecturers come from the area of public services, various universities or companies, help the institution to ensure interdisciplinary thinking within the study programme. The lecturers emphasise in their lectures their respective skills and academic backgrounds. Governance and Organizational Development, Human Resources Management, Strategic Planning and Organizational Effectiveness are subjects included in the curriculum.

Ethical aspects are key aspects for the Albanian context – especially in business and educational context. N.G. University is committed to be a living example regarding the ethical and moral standard for life. As stated in the HEI statute, students and professors are encouraged to follow the ethical values of N.G. University which are also communicated in the students' handbook, in the catalogue and on the website<sup>3</sup>. The values of the institution are as follows:

- Forgiveness;
- Respect;
- Integrity;
- Honesty;
- Compassion;
- Inspiration.

The Core Values are implemented in the educational programmes in specific modules, where the exploration / analysis of values is not only theoretical, but where the consequences of ethical or unethical behavior from the personal to the organisational and societal level are discussed and reflected upon. In addition to that the module “Professional Ethics” is included in the curriculum and credited with five ECTS credits. Furthermore, N.G. University has issued a Code of Honor for students which the students are encouraged to sign at the beginning of their studies.

In Spring 2021, the Head of the Research Center of N.G. University took over his task. The Research Center of N.G. University is not only in charge of the three modules related to scientific practice, but also to coordinate the research activities, identify suitable research areas and propose and formulate research projects that are of importance for N.G.'s international work. N.G. University will select and invest in distinctive research themes that are built on the individual academic focus and experience of the academic staff, but at the same time reflect the specific regional needs and demands. Students are encouraged to choose and include those research themes provided by the Research Center in their master studies and theses.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ng-university.org/en/about-us>

Following a practice-oriented approach, the nature and profile of research activities are supposed to be of high practical relevance and orientation. This implies an emphasis of knowledge and skills that are directed towards professional practice and research priorities that aim at practical applications of knowledge.

In addition to the research modules N.G. University tries through individual coaching between students and guest lecturers or its staff to catch the students where they come from and to accompany them on their way to achieve the learning outcomes. Therefore, the HEI offers extracurricular workshops in order to teach students how to write, to cite and to research. Currently N.G. University is working on the improvement of the document “How to write your thesis”, which shall give a guideline for students in their writing process. In addition to that, NG University has increased the number of books related to the topic of research methods, in providing the framework conditions for the students to develop their scientific skills.

The students in the Master programme are tested on whether or not they achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme through examinations during the programme. The used formats of the examinations are among others: written exams (including computer-based exams), oral exam, seminar papers, oral presentations, term papers, quizzes (examination performance not graded), and project work and presentations.

The Master thesis is a separate, individual and independent scientific work and it includes the written thesis and its final oral examination. It is aimed at assessing the ability of the student to address independently and according to scientifically accepted methods a given topic or problem in a subject area within a specified period of time. N.G. University offers a list of possible thesis topics for each cohort. These topics are coherent with the expertise of the faculty and the research fields of the HEI. It is possible for the student to choose a different topic that covers the expertise of the faculty. If students wish to choose a topic for the thesis that cannot be curated by a faculty member of the HEI, the student has to cover potential additional expenditures for external curation by himself.

In order to follow the long-term aim of N.G. University to harmonize the workload and the crediting for each module (see accreditation procedure as accredited by FIBAA on November 2015 (97th Meeting of the Accreditation Committee, Project Number 14/117), N.G. University is planning further adjustments in the curriculum to apply at the next start of the study programme in October 2022. These adjustments credit each single module (called course/subject by the HEI) in the specialisation module with five ECTS credits and also consistently assign a workload of 30 hours to each ECTS. All subjects (except from Critical Thinking & Logic and the Master Thesis) will then uniformly include five ECTS credits each (table 6, marked in blue) instead of four or five (see table 5).

With the adjustment of five ECTS credits for each subject of the specialisation modules, additional five ECTS credits could be gained in the specialization modules. As a compensation, no ECTS credits will be attributed to the course Critical Thinking & Logic. The edited version of the curriculum would look as follows:

**Table 6: Planned module structure of the study programme from Oct 2022**

Module changes	Current NGU Subjects / Courses	ECTS	Changes in ECTS	Changes in Subjects / Courses
<b>Career &amp; Research Orientation (15 ECTS)</b>	Introduction to Leadership	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Leadership & Management
	Academic Writing & Rhetoric	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Research & Academic Writing
	Research Methods	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Research Methods
	Critical Thinking	5 ECTS	P/F	Critical Thinking & Logic (No ECTS)
<b>Leading and Managing (40 ECTS)</b>	Organizational Communication & Conflict Resolution	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Organizational Communication
	Organizational Behavior	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Organizational Behavior
	Professional Ethics	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Professional Ethics
	Human Resources	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	HR Management
	Change Management	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Change Management
	Strategic Management	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Strategic Management
	Planning & Finance	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Planning & Finance
<b>Organizational Effectiveness (10 ECTS)</b>	Governance & Org. Development	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Governance & Org. Development
	Org. / Inst. Performance	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Quality Management
<b>Specialization in Business (25 ECTS)</b>	Performance Management	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Performance Management
	International Business	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Risk Management
	Controlling & Accounting	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Controlling & Accounting
	Entrepreneurship	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Entrepreneurship
	Marketing	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Marketing
	Legal environment of businesses	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Legal Environment of businesses
<b>Specialization in Education (25 ECTS)</b>	Operations Management	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Operations Management
	Curriculum Development	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Curriculum Development
	Educational Psychology	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Educational Psychology
	Students Assessment	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Students Assessment
	Teaching & Learning	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Teaching & Learning
	Legal environment of EDU institutions	4 ECTS	5 ECTS	Legal environment of EDU institutions
<b>Closing Requirements (25 ECTS)</b>	Pedagogical Inclusion	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Pedagogical Inclusion
	Internship	5 ECTS	5 ECTS	Internship
	Master Thesis	20 ECTS	20 ECTS	Master Thesis

### Appraisal:

In the opinion of the panel members, the content of the study programme with two specialisations is comprehensible and plausible. The content fits coherently into the overall curriculum which reflects the qualification objectives of the study programme. The contents of the modules are well reflected, composed and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. The main areas of business studies or educational management (depending on the specialisation) are covered. The areas of specialisation enable students to acquire additional competencies and

skills. Also, the requirements of academic abilities and research skills on Master level are fulfilled in the view of the panel.

The panel has taken in consideration that the HEI plans to further harmonize the ECTS credits and adjust the curriculum accordingly. The HEI informed the panel that the re-arrangement of ECTS credits is planned to be implemented after formal approval by the Supervisory Board. The panel welcomes the plan of harmonization of the ECTS credits. However, according to the ESG and the ECTS User's Guide 2015 it is not allowed that no ECTS credits will be attributed to the course Critical Thinking & Logic since the workload of the students must be credited. Therefore, the panel strongly recommends to ensure that credits be attributed to the course Critical Thinking & Logic and that the curriculum be adjusted accordingly before the new curriculum will be implemented.

The panel appreciates the implementation of courses that are related to Scientific Practice such as "Academic Writing & Rhetoric", "Research Methods" and "Critical Thinking". These courses help students to develop the mandatory skills of academic work. Modules to strengthen academic skills of students are vital to help writing adequate papers and the thesis. Therefore, the offering of these modules is reasoned.

However, the panel observes inconsistencies in the self-documentation, the curriculum and the module handbook as to *when* these modules are recommended to be taken. The panel not only suggests to have these inconsistencies aligned but also recommends to make the modules "Research Methods" and "Critical Thinking" a mandatory precondition for the majority of the other modules. In this context the panel also notes that the course "Planning & Finance" is attributed to the module Performance Management in the curriculum and attributed to the module "Leading and Managing" in the Module Description Catalog.

Overall, the composition of modules is justified and takes into account the most important aspects of management studies. Surrounding aspects like ethical and legal issues are integrated.

The degree and programme name correspond to the contents of the curriculum and the programme objectives. The degree "Master of Science" is in line with the length of the programme and, therefore, got the approval of the responsible Albanian ministry.

The curriculum adequately reflects the programme's objectives of further qualification through the achievement of competencies and skills in the field of leadership and assessment. The contents of the modules are well-balanced, logically connected and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes.

Theoretical instruction and components related to the practical application in the field of education and business are clearly employed in combination to develop the students' skills. During the online assessment conference, lecturers pointed out how theory and practice are linked in their courses, e.g. by mirroring micro- and macroeconomical aspects in regional real live activities, by analysing ethical challenges the students face in their working experience or by translating case studies into local knowledge. The panel concludes that the link between theory and practice is an emphasis of the programme. The programme also promotes interdisciplinary thinking in an appropriate way.

Ethical aspects are not only included in various subjects in the study programme. The identification and reflection of ethical aspects are strongly promoted and considered key competences and an integral part of the study programme's qualification objectives. Furthermore, in the view of the panel, N.G.'s vision and values, which strongly consider ethical behaviour, are visible within every part of the HEI and are actively lived by all university members.

Through modules like Research Methods and Critical Thinking the students acquire additional methodological competences and are enabled to do scientific work on the required Master level. The level of performance in examinations and the thesis are aligned with the learning outcomes of the module in terms of form and content. In preparation of the online assessment conference, the panel had the opportunity to look at theses and examinations written by the students. The students have provided evidence that they are capable of doing academic work and that the learning outcomes are achieved in the programme.

The exams are defined for the modules and are suited in format and content to ascertain the learning outcomes. The requirements are in accordance with the desired qualification level. The exams are characterised by a wide variety of test formats. The final theses are evaluated based on previously published and coherently applied criteria, rules and procedures. The students prove, especially in their thesis, their ability to do scientific work and the achievement of the study programme's qualification objectives.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.1	Contents				
3.1.1*	Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)		X		
3.1.2*	Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)		X		
3.1.3*	Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)		X		
3.1.4	Interdisciplinary thinking		X		
3.1.5	Ethical aspects		X		
3.1.6*	Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)		X		
3.1.7*	Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)		X		



## 3.2 Structure

Projected study time	2,5 years
Number of Credit Points (CP)	120 ECTS credits
Workload per CP	25-30
Number of modules	5 (20 courses) + Internship
Time required for processing the final thesis and awarded CP	4 months, 20 ECTS credits
Number of contact hours	1150

Although Albania is not a member of the European Union, it ratified the Bologna Reform in 2003. N.G. University's academic system is based on the Bologna Agreement and the HEI utilizes the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) in describing the course-work.

The modules (called courses/subjects by the HEI) in the programme are credited with five or four ECTS credits. Each of the three core fields of study (called modules by the HEI) consists of subjects/courses credited with five ECTS credits. Within the specialisation (modules 4a and 4b) most courses are credited with four ECTS credits. In order to further harmonize the crediting and the workload N.G. University is preparing a revised curriculum (see Chapter 3.1) where all modules are credited with five ECTS and a workload of 30 hours will be consistently assigned per ECTS. These changes will also be valid from October 2022.

A course with five ECTS credits equates to approximately 150 work hours, which break down as follows:

- 50 "contact" or "classroom" hours. No distinction is made between lectures, seminars, etc. since any classroom session (under the N.G. teaching philosophy) can and will be a combination of these elements.
- 100 "self-study" or "outside-the classroom" work hours. Under N.G. teaching philosophy, each classroom session will end with the student being assigned "homework" (reading, projects, papers, presentations, etc.) that must be completed by the next class session, by the end of the week, or by an exact date.

A course with four ECTS credits equates to approximately 100 work hours, which break down as follows:

- 40 classroom hours
- 60 outside-the-classroom work hours

An internship, which carries five ECTS credits, is included in the curriculum of the study programme. As the study programme is designed to be studied extra-professional, the professional activity can be recognized as an internship.

The modules are structured in teaching blocks in the afternoon and during the weekends. The ECTS credits are spread over the semesters as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	4 <sup>th</sup> semester	5 <sup>th</sup> semester
20 ECTS	20 ECTS	25 ECTS	26 ECTS	29 ECTS

With the revised curriculum, the ECTS credits will be spread over the semesters as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	4 <sup>th</sup> semester	5 <sup>th</sup> semester
25 ECTS	20 ECTS	21 ECTS	26 ECTS	28 ECTS

During the last semester the students have the opportunity to write their master thesis as well as to attend only two modules. At the end of the studies the master programme is awarded with 120 ECTS credits. The calculation of the workload is made by considering the availability of the students, who are all working at different organisations/institutions around Pogradec. During the summer semester the students have four to six weeks holidays between the modules. Students have time till the end of each semester to submit their assignments. Other deadlines can be negotiated in case of illness and by providing a medical certificate.

All modules are described in module descriptions in a catalogue for the Master programme. The descriptions contain information on the following:

- the ECTS credits;
- the contact hours and self study hours;
- the lecturer(s);
- the teaching language;
- the objectives;
- the learning outcomes;
- information about the teaching methodology;
- the assessment of the module; and
- literature recommendations.

Extracurricular opportunities are offered at N.G. Albania in the field of intercultural communication, team building, presentation skills and research methods. The activities are offered in various ways like team or online trainings, but there are no ECTS credits awarded for these extracurricular offers.

N.G. University has developed an Exam Regulation (exhibit 14), where the procedure including the regulation of the study is described comprehensively for the students. The Exam Regulation includes the grading policy of the institution. Some parts of the regulation are included in the Catalog and the Student's Handbook of N.G. University.

HEIs are organized as public, non-public and independent public institutions, as by provisions of the aforementioned law. They offer licensed study programs, organized in modules and graded in credits ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System), for which degrees are issued after the accreditation of the institution and of the study program. The normal quantity of credits accumulated by a student during an academic year is 60 credits ECTS.

Albania has ratified and abides by the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. HEI in Albania must respect the requirements of this Convention in their decisions for the recognition of ECTS credits earned abroad by students. In Article 8, the Exam Regulation of N.G. University contains concrete instructions regarding the recognition of qualifications of higher education (incl. ECTS credits) obtained by applicants at another institution of higher education, based on the instructions of the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sports as well as on the requirements of the Lisbon Convention. Applicants who want transfer courses must submit the necessary information for the assessment of the application. The N.G. University

will recognise courses (including examinations) completed at another institution of higher education when there are no substantial differences between the courses conducted at the other institution of higher education and the study programme of the N.G. University for which recognition is sought. In the event of refusal of the recognition, the N.G. University has the burden of proof to show that the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for the recognition.

Each module description includes the information of the mode of assessment, which usually is a combination of assignments. Assignments can be exams, tests, case-studies, essays, project works, term papers, (group) presentations.

The grading system for rewarding and evaluating academic progress was reviewed and updated in 2018. After the first phase of assessment the HEI has noticed that the grading policy did not include a fair sharing of the points and did not refer to student's achievements, respectively to already defined learning outcomes (cf. self-evaluation report p. 28). The updated grading policy is published in the Exam Regulation and is designed to provide incentives, to reward achievement and to assist in identifying student problems (cf. Exam Regulation p. 23). The grading system of the institution is included in the Catalog and Student Handbook and is in compliance with the Albanian norms on Higher Education (cf. Catalog of NG University p. 25).

**Table 7: Grading System**

Description	American system (Intermediate grades included)	German System (Intermediate grades included)	Albanian Grading system	Percentage 100-point-scale
A (EXCELLENT - outstanding performance with only minor errors)	A (Excellent)	1 (Sehr Gut) (1.0 – 1.3)	10	100 – 94
B (VERY GOOD - above the average standard but with some errors)	B (Very Good)	2 (Gut) (1.4 – 2.4)	9	93 – 85
C (GOOD - generally sound work with a number of notable errors)	C (Good Average)	3 (Befriedigend) (2.5 – 3.0)	8	84 – 76
C (GOOD - generally sound work with a number of notable errors)	C (Good Average)	3 (Befriedigend) (3.0 – 3.4)	7	75 – 67
D (SATISFACTORY - fair but with significant shortcomings)	D (Satisfactory)	4 (Ausreichend) (3.5 – 4.0)	6	66 – 58
D (SATISFACTORY - fair but with significant shortcomings)	D (Sufficient)	4 (Ausreichend) (4.1 – 4.4)	5	57 – 51
FX (FAIL - Some more work required before credit can be awarded)	F (Insufficient, Fail)	5 (Mangelhaft) (4.5 – 6.0)	4	≤ 50

Upon request, NG University provides a statistical Grade Distribution Table (“GDT”) of the passing grades awarded in the programme or field of study attended by the student. This table shows how the grading scale is used in the programme. The GDT is done in compliance with the ECTS Users’ Guide, in order to facilitate the transfer of grades between institutions of

higher education who use different grading systems and to ensure a fair treatment and transparency of grades for students who transfer from one institution to another. The GDT will be based on the required classes for students from the same study programme of the last three years.

The curriculum and the duration of the study programme are included in the Catalog of N.G. University. At each orientation week before the students start with their studies, the students are informed that the study programme is designed for a duration of five semesters.

**Table 8: Study course plan**

1st academic year				
Core Curriculum	1st Semester	ECTS	2nd Semester	ECTS
	Introduction to Leadership & Assessment	5	Academic Writing & Rhetoric	5
	Governance & Organizational Development	5	Critical Thinking	5
	Organizational Communication	5	Change Management	5
	Research Methods	5	Organizational / Institutional Performance	5
Total	20	Total	20	
2nd academic year				
Core Curriculum	3rd Semester	ECTS	4th Semester	ECTS
	Professional Ethics	5	Human Resources	5
	Strategic Management	5	Organizational Behavior & Planning	5
	Performance Management	5	Planning & Finance	5
	Internship	2	Internship	3
Specialization	Educational Psychology / Controlling & Accounting	4	Curriculum Development / Intern. Business	4
	Legal Environment (EDU / BUS)	4	Students Assessment / Entrepreneurship	4
Total	25	Total	26	
3rd academic year				
Core Curriculum	5th Semester			ECTS
	Master Thesis			20
Specialization	Pedagogical Inclusion / Operation Management			5
	Teaching and Learning / Marketing			4
Total				29

**Table 9: Study course plan from October 2022**

1st academic year				
Core Curriculum	1st Semester	ECTS	2nd Semester	ECTS
		Leadership & Management	5	Research & Academic Writing
	Governance & Organizational Development	5	Critical Thinking & Logic	P/F
	Organizational Communication	5	Change Management	5
	Research Methods	5	Quality Management	5
Specialization	Teaching and Learning / Marketing	5	Legal Environment (EDU / BUS)	5
	Total	25	Total	20
2nd academic year				
Core Curriculum	3rd Semester	ECTS	4th Semester	ECTS
	Professional Ethics	5	Human Resources	5
	Strategic Management	5	Organizational Behavior & Planning	5
	Performance Management	5	Planning & Finance	5
	Internship	1	Internship	1
Specialization	Educational Psychology / Controlling & Accounting	5	Curriculum Development / Risk Management	5
			Students Assessment / Entrepreneurship	5
	Total	21	Total	26
3rd academic year				
Core Curriculum	5th Semester			ECTS
	Master Thesis			20
Specialization	Pedagogical Inclusion / Operation Management			5
	Internship			3
	Total			28

N.G. Albania has been working in Albania for almost 30 years. What started as a small project, now has 140 employees. N.G. Albania pays attention to gender equality and equal opportunities for employees. At N.G. Albania there are also no gender differences in pay. Women are strongly represented, both in management positions as well as among students (cf. table 2). Currently there are four women and six men enrolled in the study programme Master of Science in Management.

The study programme is open to students with special needs. The Exam Regulations consider students with special needs (§ 9: "Compensation of disadvantages for students with specific learning difficulties"). Most buildings on the HEI's campus are designed to be accessible to disabled people.

According to the Nehemiah Gateway philosophy, orphans and especially girls in the partner schools, for example Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, etc. should be given the opportunity to education. Based on this approach, there are many talented pupils of Nehemia and Amaro Tan School (a special school for Roma - and street children and children from poor family backgrounds in Albania) being supported. Most of them are from deprived backgrounds and out of education and knowledge.

However, depending on their financial situation, the question of the financial ability to pay tuition fees are being discussed during the admission interview. Students can apply for scholarships at any time at N.G. Albania. Depending on their financial situation, they will be provided a discount of 20 %, 30 %, 40 % or 50 % of the monthly tuition fee.

N.G. University does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex and sexual orientation, disability or age, or on any other grounds as specified in Article 1 of the Albanian Law No.10221 of 04.02.2010 “On Protection against Discrimination” in all the programmes, activities, academic or non-academic services, policies or procedures of the HEI, including employment and admissions. Pursuant to the requirements of the above-cited law, N.G. University takes all necessary measures and actions to ensure elimination and prevention of all discriminatory actions or omissions in all matters pertaining to the programmes, activities, academic or non-academic services, policies or procedures of the HEI, including employment and admissions. Complaints regarding discrimination claims shall be filed with the Office for Complaints Resolution at the Human Resource Manager Office.

## Appraisal:

The programme structure supports the implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of modules (called courses/subjects) and assigns Credit-Points (CP) per module on the basis of the necessary student workload.

The module descriptions provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the ECTS Users’ Guide (e.g. number of ECTS credits, contact hours and self-study time, name of lecturer, assessment methods, etc.).

There are legally binding study and exam regulations which contain all necessary rules and procedures and take into account, where applicable, national requirements

The study programme is designed in a way that students’ mobility is ensured. An internship is part of the programme and integrated in such a way that ECTS credits can be acquired.

The exam regulations and additional executive orders for specific details are legally binding and contain all necessary rules including the admission requirements. They take into account the national Albanian requirements. The recognition of successful study periods at other HEIs is regulated in accordance with the Lisbon Convention. N.G. University has taken preparations to install a relative grading system upon request (cf. 18.2 in Catalog and 25.2.2. in Exam regulation). All information related to the exam procedure is included in the Exam Regulation, which is uploaded in populi, the intranet campus management software (see chapter 3.3), and published on the website of the institution.

However, according to the EHEA principles and guidelines for the diploma supplement an ECTS grading table (N.G. University uses the term Grade Distribution Table (GDT)) should be included in the diploma supplement, if available. Therefore, the panel recommends the following **condition**:

- The University provides the Grade Distribution Table (ECTS Grading Table) as an integral part of the diploma supplement.

The guiding and advising system, from beginning of the studies until finishing by writing the final thesis, as well as the well organised admission procedure has positive impact on the study programme's feasibility. Furthermore, regular module and workload evaluation takes place (see chapter 5). The programme is feasible even under consideration of the double burden of working and studying at the same time. This can also be seen from the statistics on the average duration of studies (cf. table 2, chapter 0.2). However, in order to make the programme more attractive for potential students that shy off the double burden, to increase the number of applicants and to reduce the risk of drop-out the panel suggests to offer the programme in a variant with an extended period of study subject to the provisions of Albanian legislation. Also, more offerings in blended learning may be suitable to lower the strain on the students and make the programme more attractive to potential applicants.

The panel members came to the conclusion that gender equality and the implementation of general bans on discrimination are promoted clearly by the HEI. The aim of the principle is to create a learning and working environment that ensures equal opportunities for all students and employees of N.G. Within the principle one finds formulated social and ethical values regarding relations to fellow students, faculty and staff as well as compliance with established policies and procedures of the institution.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.2 Structure					
3.2.1* Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.2* Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)				condition	
3.2.3* Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.4 Equality of opportunity			X		

### 3.3 Didactical concept

In the master programme, the focus is placed on communicative and interactive-oriented teaching methods and techniques, in which the role of the teacher is transferred. Thus, the learning student with his interests, assets and needs is focussed upon in the instruction (cf. self-evaluation report p. 59).

Course contents are in this programme divided into modules. Each module represents a combination of various teaching methods and techniques, such as:

- Case studies
- Self-study
- Presentation
- Essays and written papers
- Discussion
- Simulations
- Project work
- Group work

- Workshop

The various modules, mostly dynamic organised, encourage and stipulate independent thinking and working, initiative and interactive collaboration. Factors such as small class sizes and practical nature of the course content play a positive role in relation to the learning orientation by using latest technologies and giving personal attention by the teachers throughout the semester. In this way N.G. University provides a framework of learning not only through the theoretical input within the modules, but also by giving the possibility of learning by doing. In addition to that, students are expected to apply in their assignments beside theories and different approaches the practical elements e.g. to prepare a teaching session for their pupils in written form, or to develop marketing strategies or business models, where they consider different tools of teaching (cf. self-evaluation report p. 59).

Since education in Albania traditionally has a more theoretical orientation and frontal teaching style, there is a great need for practical and interactive orientation within study programmes. Furthermore, during and after communism learning was and still is a process of reproducing knowledge, even at higher education level. Aspects of critical and abstract thinking were excluded from the curricula. This is a tradition under which the educational system in Albania is still suffering (cf. self-evaluation report p. 58/59).. This gap between Albanian educational system and European educational standards is being addressed through the MSc study programme.

The mode of distance learning is not foreseen in the Albanian Law on Education, therefore this topic is not applicable for N.G. University. However, due to the pandemic situation worldwide, some scope for actions opened up. N.G. University is organising teaching sessions mostly online via zoom. Learning materials are available for students on populi, the campus management software. Blended learning serves as an appropriate tool to combine international knowledge and experience with self-motivation, self-responsibility and self-exploration. An individual support by coaching the students helps them with the implementation especially when they are not attending university.

Populi is a web-based management software for HEIs used by the whole university. It includes and integrates academics, admissions, billing, people, reporting, library and databases access, and many other options. Integrated email function and an academic calendar provide students and staff with an easy tool to communicate. Furthermore, in populi all the tools are integrated in one and connected to each other.

Each student and faculty receive access to populi upon enrolment or employment. The application of populi facilitates sharing of learning materials, submission of assignments etc. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to contact lecturers and share questions or case studies with each other.

Course materials are available to students in various forms. Books are assembled at an assigned place in the library (Semesterapparat) before the start of the module. Course materials (working papers and/or slides) are compiled by the lecturer in cooperation with the programme director and uploaded to populi. Each module description is uploaded on populi to enable the students to find the literature needed on time. Literature as well as slides are also accessible to students through the upload function on populi.



N.G. University is actively practicing the functional concept of having guest lecturers. NG University has developed a list of 15 guest lecturers for the master programme. They have university assignments in Germany or UK or hold management positions within the Nehemiah Gateway organisation and network. Guest lecturers are appointed in order to give students a broader perspective of financial, law, administrative or managerial aspects and to give them the opportunity to compare the status quo of the Albanian frame conditions and organisational developments to European ones. Furthermore, guest lecturers provide students with the current state of research, and make sure that scientific input is given to the students. Two thirds of the guest lecturers originate from outside Albania, the majority of Albanian guest lectures has long-term teaching or working experience from outside Albania (cf. self-evaluation report p. 63).

## Appraisal:

The logic of the didactical concept is adequate to lead students to the final qualifications; it is described and explained in a logical and transparent manner. A diverse range of methods is used on the programme and tailored to the specific modules. What is more, the combination of theory and practice, especially in project work, is used in many modules and is aimed at developing the students' practical skills. The panel appreciates these efforts of the HEI.

The panel members assessed the accompanying course materials before and during the online assessment conference. The materials are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes and correspond to the required qualification level. They are up to date and digitally accessible for the students via the HEI's intranet. They are user-friendly and encourage students to engage in further independent studies.

The panel acknowledges the investment of the HEI in populi and recommends to further utilizing populi to make the study programme more attractive to potential students. This could be done by reducing or individualizing the workload through offering more digital learning materials and literature, (e.g. for English courses or in Business English), to provide glossaries, text translations and learning nuggets and to include campus life activities in populi.

Guest lecturers are regularly invited, their contribution forms an integral part of the study programme's didactical concept. The guest lecturers add a broad variety of professional experience and internationality, which enhances students' chances of employment thanks to the profound insights they gain.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.3 Didactical concept					
3.3.1* Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.2* Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.3 Guest lecturers		X			
3.3.4 Lecturing tutors					X

### 3.4 Internationality

The focus of the N.G. University is the economic development of the local region through the exposure of students to international business practices and experience; i.e. the qualification of leaders according to the example of West Europe, particularly Germany, the possibility of research and multiplication of education results. Courses like Leadership, Change Management, Ethics, Organisational communication and development are studied with profound input from international perspectives and literature.

The network of the N.G. Group in Europe, Africa and Latin America is a source for part-time and guest lecturers from other countries as well as guests for the “under the tree-meetings” in Buçimas. They provide additional input from various areas and backgrounds. Two thirds of the guest lecturers originate from outside Albania and the majority of Albanian guest lectures has long-term teaching or working experience from outside Albania (see also chapter 3.3). The Research Center (see also chapter 3.1) is to formulate research projects that are of importance for NG's international work and can be chosen for the master thesis.

In addition to that, students are being offered a study trip to Germany with the possibility to visit different educational organisations and enterprises from the list of cooperation-partners in Germany. The trips are organized and paid for by N.G. Services, due to the costs it will be an offer for the best students in future cohorts of the Master programme. This opportunity will provide students the ground for their theoretical understanding as well as for international practices. During the study trips students have the opportunity to discuss critical issues they recognized in the Albanian context including the comparison of proposed solutions with representatives from the hosting organisation.

The students currently enrolled in the Master study programme as well as the alumni are all Albanian, since the programme is specifically designed according to the educational system requirements of Albania. Furthermore, the fact that half of the programme is held in Albanian language limits the number of potential students from other countries.

The teaching language of ten core modules is English. The other four core modules are partly held in English and partly in Albanian. The six modules of the specialisations also have a considerable part of English as teaching language (Education: one Module in English, three in Albanian and English; Business: three in English, one in English and Albanian).

Enhancing their English skill is very useful for the students. Master students in Albania will only receive a universities' degree when they prove their English proficiency at C1 level. This has to be done by a test in one of the independent agencies approved by the Albanian government. As Albanian legislation does not allow English courses to achieve the level C1 to be part of Master courses, the HEI offers extra-curricular English language courses for those students who are unsure about the sufficiency of their language skills.

#### Appraisal:

The international orientation of the programme is shown in the curriculum of the programme. The students benefit in their daily work from knowledge and skills they achieve via the comparison of different systems and methods in Albania and abroad. Internationality in the programme is supported by the international teaching/working background of the lecturers who

incorporate their experiences into the courses. Furthermore, in the view of the panel the international composition of the faculty is a fundamental element shaping the profile of the study programme and is promoted by the N.G. University.

Currently, there are no foreign students enrolled in the programme. This results from the character of the programme which is addressed to regional Albanian residents with a job in educational, public or business institutions. Another obstacle for international students might be the teaching of some modules in Albanian language.

The proportion of English language modules is high (more than 50 % of the curriculum) and the required English language materials correspond with the qualification objectives of the study programme. The panel appreciates that N.G. University clearly promotes the English language skills of its students which enable the students to prove the language level C1 after their studies at the external agencies. The panel likes to mention that it does not understand the purpose of the Albanian regulation to expect a language level as a requirement to receive a universities' degree, especially if the exam is not a university exam but operated by external agencies which must be paid by the students.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.4	Internationality					
3.4.1*	International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.4.2	Internationality of the student body			X		
3.4.3	Internationality of faculty			X		
3.4.4	Foreign language contents		X			

### 3.5 Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)

It is the aim of the leadership of N.G. University to ensure educational opportunities where students can enhance their perspectives. In addition to that, the HEI strives to enable students to critical thinking, which is only possible when students are able to reflect and consider situations and issues from different points of view. Courses like Organisational Communication, Organisational Behavior, Professional Ethics and Change Management help to understand aspects of complexity and variety as well as cultural implications and associated challenges for management and leadership. In addition to that, students have the opportunities to try and implement different presentation techniques adapted to the audience group.

#### Appraisal:

Through various methods the students acquire communication and public-speaking skills as well as cooperation and conflict handling skills in the study programme. In the view of the panel these skills are key elements of the study programme's profile. This is documented in the module descriptions and corresponds with the didactical concept of N.G. University (see chapter 3.3). The acquisition of further multidisciplinary competences, such as leadership skills and broad contextual knowledge, is ensured.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.5* Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

### 3.6 Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

As already mentioned the Master programme “Management, with Specialization in Education or in Business” was developed inter alia to respond to the requirements of the job market for managers at educational institutions, business and public organisations. These requirements, e.g. leadership and managerial skills for public and private institutions, ethical aspects, communicative skills are considered and included in the curriculum. Through the multidisciplinary competencies, which the students gain during their studies, the graduates are enabled with the needed skills for the Albanian job market. In addition to that, the didactical concept gives the students the opportunity to transform classes in real learning session, where they can apply the knowledge they gain during teaching sessions into practice. The process of learning by doing and the inclusion of the practical training in the curriculum aims to ensure the graduates’ professional qualification.

#### Appraisal:

All students in the Master programme already work and have shown their employability in their work. The programme’s aim is to increase the student’s skills of their respective professional field. To reach this aim the programme has combined theoretical knowledge with practical application. Altogether, in the view of the panel the study programme enables the students to take a broader view and to use the skills acquired actively in new areas of work and develop them further. During the discussion rounds in the online assessment conference, especially with students and alumni, the panel formed the view that N.G. University’s master programme fulfils all criteria to ensure employability of its graduates.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.6* Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 4. Academic environment and framework conditions

### 4.1 Faculty

Currently, there are eight full-time lecturers and one part-time lecturer at N.G. University. Additional guest lecturers are also an integral part of N.G. University's lecturing staff (see Chapter 3.3.) All lecturers meet the requirements set by the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sports. Eligibility Criteria for Applicants for the position of (guest) lecturers are (cf. exhibit 23)

- Master's degree from a recognised institution of higher education in the subject area where the applicant might teach (a PhD or Doctoral degree is strongly preferred);
- at least one year of teaching and research experience;
- for candidates holding PhD or Doctoral degree the teaching and research experience criterion is not applicable;
- publications in scientific journals, posters, speeches in conferences and suchlike; (at least two for candidates with Master's degree and at least four for candidates with Doctoral degree);
- academic and scientific awards (if applicable).

Furthermore, lecturers must agree to respect and follow the mission statement of N.G. University and the Code of Conduct of for academic personnel of the N.G. University.

All employed lecturers hold PhD degrees (four of them are professors). The faculty, both full-time teachers and part-time lecturers, have almost invariably many years of teaching experience. Many faculty members have practical business experience allowing for the synthesis of theory and practice (cf. exhibits 15).

In addition, N.G. University has a tool of national and international guest lecturers, who are invited to teach on a regular basis. The requirements on the qualifications of teaching are the same as for full-time and part-time lecturers at N.G. University (cf. exhibit 23)

The faculty members cooperate with each other and with the dean in the implementation of the programme as they coordinate the contents and learning targets. There are four faculty meetings every year aimed at evaluation of the teaching process, students' performance and further improvement of the programme. In addition, there is an annual two-day event for all lecturers of the HEI. The discussion results are developed and approved by the Faculty. As a result module descriptions are adjusted, new teaching methods are discussed and introduced and problems in cooperation between the students and faculty are solved. The lecturers are offered possibilities of further education (e.g. improve their didactical skills, participate in conferences, exchange possibilities, etc.). N.G. University provides sessions to introduce blended learning for professors and to develop teaching skills of the lecturers. Using the HEI's network (especially with HEIs in Germany) the lecturers with Master degrees are promoted to participate in PhD programmes.

The ratio instructor - student in the two specializations at N.G. University is currently 1:7 and 1:10. This is according to the requirements of the Albanian Ministry of Education, which expects a correlation of 1:20. In addition to that, each student receives a supervisor (for technical support) in the last academic year and a mentor (for scientific support) at the beginning of studying. Supervisor and mentor are employees of N.G. University and are able to advise and help in all the theoretical and professional issues.

N.G. University has a framework for guiding and advising based on a system of coaching and mentoring. An academic advisor is assigned to the student, which must be consulted at least once a quarter. Usually, this academic advisor will at the same time be the mentor of the student and will also be available for the student during the practical training. This advisor will lead the subject-related preparation and implementation in applied science and during the thesis. In addition to that, with the small number of students enrolled in the Master's course there are opportunities for individual meetings.

## Appraisal:

The structure and number of teaching staff correspond with the programme requirements and ensure that the students reach the intended qualification objectives. A list of all lecturers and of the HEI's full-time staff in general shows the availability of the required capacity to implement the programme. The faculty's composition, consisting of full-time and part-time lecturers, guarantees that both the academic standards and the requirements of professional practice are fully satisfied.

According to the CVs the academic ability of the teaching staff is in line with the requirements of the Master programme. Besides, a high number of lecturers have long-year experience in teaching. The staff's pedagogical/didactical qualifications are in line with their tasks and have been verified. Measures for the further qualification of the faculty members are implemented. The panel ascertains that the size of the HEI facilitates regular informal exchange and the newly staffed position of the Head of Research Center will also contribute to further internal cooperation.

The practical business experience of the faculty corresponds to the requirement of the programme too. In particular, the lecturers are closely linked with in the N.G. Group network and thereby with internationally acting companies.

As affirmed by students of the Master programme during the online assessment conference, the counselling of students by teaching staff is intensive. Student support is an integral part of the services provided by the full-time and part-time faculty. The lecturers are available for the students outside specified office hours as well and e-mails are answered fairly quickly. Hence, the students are "fully content" with the support they receive by the faculty.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.1 Faculty					
4.1.1* Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.2* Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.3* Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.4 Practical business experience of faculty			X		
4.1.5* Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.6* Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.7(*) Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes)					X

## 4.2 Programme management

The function of the programme director, referred to as Head of Department (HoD), is included in the Statute of the institution. The Job Description for the position of the HoD is also included in the Albanian Law on Higher Education. The main tasks of the HoD are as follows:

- to lead and represent the Department with regard to all academic affairs;
- to ensure that the operations of the Department comply with the applicable legislation on higher education and all internal regulations;
- to direct and monitor all teaching, educational and academic processes in the Department;
- to identify the needs for fulltime, parttime and visiting academic staff for each semester and academic year according to the legal criteria and to submit such needs to the Head of Faculty to anticipate the recruitment of academic staff;
- to take needed organisational and/or other measures to ensure the normal development of teaching and research processes by the employees of the Department;
- to propose the members of the examination commissions for the study programme to the Head of Faculty;
- to encourage and motivate department employees to perform their duties and responsibilities efficiently;
- to maintain a regular and professional communication with visiting academic staff teaching and to organize their engagement within the department;
- to require revisions and improvements of the study programme and curriculum based on institutional objectives, labor market needs and academic indicators;
- to cooperate with other units of the HEI to enable professional internships for students;
- to propose the criteria for student admission in the study programme to the Head of Faculty.

The processes and procedures within the administration of N.G. University are described in the annually updated Catalogue, the Student Handbook and the Faculty Handbook of the institution. These documents are also uploaded on the website of the HEI. Services at N.G. University include:

- Registrar and Students Service Center;
- Welcoming Service;
- Advising Service;
- Computer Services;
- Library Services;
- Examination Office;
- Counselling Service;
- Medical Service (In-house clinic; medical care, first aid, massage and physiotherapy).

The students have the possibility to access important documents through the website of the institution. The students receive a comprehensive and detailed introduction to administrative structure, services, and academic issues during an orientation week. For counselling and support, students can also make use of the Student Service Centre.

All publications of the institution are reviewed annually by the Quality Assurance Commission, consisting of the Head of Quality Management, the Rector, the Executive Director and a student representative. Each updated publication is uploaded in the Intranet in the folder "NEW" and on the HEI management system populi. The users are informed by an eMail when new documents were uploaded.

All administrative personnel has annual talks with the responsible person for HR. Aim of the meeting is defining current needs of the staff members to enhance their performances. If necessary N.G. University offers opportunities for participating in events (seminars, conferences) and for professional development (e.g.: IT or language courses). All staff members of the HEI are also invited to attend the lectures e.g. in Leadership or Academic Writing, and also collect the respective credits. Staff members also receive regular updates on forming and requirements by the Ministry of Education.

## Appraisal:

The Programme Director coordinates the activities of everyone involved in the Master programme and ensures that everything runs smoothly. Lecturers and students are supported by the administration during the entire study programme. Sufficient administrative staff is available and opportunities for continuous professional development of the administration staff are assured.

In the view of the panel, the administrative staff acts as a service provider for students and faculty and the students appreciate excellent guiding, advising and mentoring. The opportunities of electronic service-support via populi are used and supplement personal one-to-one counselling.

Decision-making processes and responsibilities of the programme management and the administration staff are defined. The panel welcomes the HEI members' access to the free health care services of N.G. Albania on the campus and the possibility of the employees to join the lectures and gain credits.



		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.2	Programme management					
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty			X		

### 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships

N.G. University cooperates with the following institutions:

- Europäische Akademie Berlin, Germany – The negotiations with the European Academy Berlin started in 2010. After a few common events, such as a EURO Symposium in 2011, where the development, importance and the strategic role of the Euro, especially for potential member countries in the EU, was the main topic, the agreement on cooperation has been signed in 2012.
- IT & Business School Oldenburg (former Berufsakademie Oldenburg) – The agreement of cooperation was signed in 2013 and is still valid. The first common summer school took place in August 2015. Since then, students of the HEI attend selected modules or courses at N.G. University and the ECTS credits are recognized.
- SRH Berlin University of Applied Sciences (SRH) – The cooperation agreement with SRH was signed in January 2013.
- University of Light, Bujumbura, Burundi – This cooperation agreement was signed in October 2013.
- Aleksander Xhuvani University of Elbasan, Albania – The cooperation agreement was signed in July 2012.
- Fan S. Noli University of Korca. The cooperation agreement was signed in July 2016.

N.G. University benefits from the cooperation agreements of N.G. Team. With some of the business partners N.G. University has a close collaboration, where students are welcome for the purpose of an internship. These are amongst others:

- Adidas AG, Herzogenaurach, Germany
- Cip GmbH, Herzogenaurach, Germany
- Dija Print Shop, Pogradec, Albania
- Fani Construction, Pogradec, Albania
- Herm. Fichtner Hof GmbH, Hof, Germany
- Jomos Schuhe GmbH, Selbitz, Germany
- Müller Fotosatz & Druck, Selbitz, Deutschland
- Tempus Consulting, Giengen, Germany
- Tirana Business Park, Albania
- Ramboll Group A/S, Switzerland
- Market Garden van Oordt, Stäfa, Switzerland
- German-Albanian Business Association, Berlin, Germany

## Appraisal:

Cooperation with HEI and business partners with effects on the programme are described and actively pursued. Results are, among others, activities such as internships, lecturer and student exchanges and invitations of guest lecturers. Overall, the cooperations have impact on the programme and are able to promote the development of the students' skills regularly.

The panel recommends to intensify cooperations with municipalities, business and universities, public and private institutions and NGOs. In accordance with chapter 1.3 the cooperations should be focussed on supporting the two-pronged marketing strategy to attract more students regionally and internationally and the communication about cooperations should be bundled into a communication concept with the same focus.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.3 Cooperation and partnerships					
4.3.1(*) Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)			X		
4.3.2(*) Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes)			X		

## 4.4 Facilities and equipment

Several classrooms are in the educational institutions of the N.G. Albania. There are classrooms, auditoriums and meeting halls on 333,52 m<sup>2</sup>. All buildings are planned according to European standards by a German Architect. The bright classrooms are technologically equipped with wireless and LAN, whiteboard, projector, Smart Board equipment and wireless transmission system. The material used for the walls is gypsum, which reduces the noise. The building is all covered with Styrofoam and there are vacuum windows in order to prevent the temperature fluctuations.

The equipment and technology made available to staff and students is as follows:

- Number of PC per students: 10
- Number of PC furnished labs per students: 7
- Number of PC for faculty: 1:1
- Number of PC for administration: 1:1
- Number of printers for faculty: 3:5
- Number of photocopying machines students: 3:50
- Number of video-projectors: 4
- Number of scanners: 3

The Media Office is available to students and faculty from Monday to Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Free WiFi is available to the students in classrooms, university building, and on campus.

The HEI promotes the expansion of the library with the latest titles and presents an annual budget of 3,000 euros. Currently, 11,000 physical books from different areas are available. The library is open all year round from Monday to Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and is managed by one full-time employee. Outside opening hours learning resources available at the library can be checked through the website of N.G. University. The library is located in the middle of the campus and also accessible for physically handicapped people.

It is a central concern of the HEI to offer quality and not only quantity. Therefore, the HEI seeks to build a broad and purchase a range of traditional and digital collections. For each module the required literature is uploaded under the respective module in populi if available in digital. The module description is sent to the guest lecturer, who has the opportunity to add/propose new literature to the existing one. Online resources and databases for the study programme are also available to the students, among others JSTOR, SSRN, EUFAJ and (since 2021) the Bavarian State Library in Munich, Germany.

### Appraisal:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the panel was not able to visit the N.G. University on-site. Therefore, the panel was provided with a virtual tour through the Univeristy's facilities. In the view of the panel, the quantity, quality, media and IT facilities of the teaching rooms meet the standards required for the Master programme, even taking into account the resource needs of other study programmes. The buildings of the HEI are fully equipped with modern information technology. Access to the internet through laptops via wireless LAN is provided free of charge. The panel would like to point out that although the facilities are appropriate by international standards, they may exceed average Albanian standards. The area of N.G. in Buçimas is almost barrier free. In one of the HEI's buildings an elevator does not yet exist. Although the HEI is aware of this, the panel recommends continuing taking measures to provide barrier free access in all the HEI's facilities.

The opening hours of the library take students' needs sufficiently into account. Access to the literature and journals as well as to digital media (e.g. electronic media, databases) is ensured. The literature expressly required for the study programme is available in the library and also kept up to date. The panel suggests acquiring further high level database access for the students, e.g. based on donations or sponsoring from HEI cooperation partners.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.4	Facilities and equipment					
4.4.1*	Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.4.2*	Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 4.5 Additional services

N.G. University does not run a specific Career Service Unit. Most of the students work during the study programme and as the panel came to know during the online assessment conference, the students and graduates experience excellent job opportunities with their degree. Career counselling workshops are offered regularly for all students, career consulting is currently under revision by the Student Service Center. N.G. University has the structure and data on employment of the graduates. There are 39 graduates of the master study programme at N.G. University so far which are organized in the HEI's overall Alumni Association. The Alumni Association and the Students Service Centre cooperate in planning and organising common activities. These activities provide contact between enrolled students and graduates with the opportunity for the students to benefit from the experience of the alumni.

If necessary, the Student Services Center assists students to find housing in the vicinity of the HEI. A medical service is part of N.G. Albania's compound and offers first-aid facilities and medical treatment for all staff and students. For the international students the HEI ensures travel and health insurances.

### Appraisal:

Career counselling is offered to the students and graduates to promote their employability. Sufficient resources are provided by N.G. Albania. The HEI's alumni organisation has more than 100 registered graduates so far, which mostly live abroad. Alumni are regularly informed about the activities at N.G. University and take part in the alumni survey (see chapter 5). The panel suggests increasing alumni activities in order to strengthen the bonds and to use their networks to attract potential students (see also recommendation in chapter 1.3).

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.5	Additional services					
4.5.1	Career counselling and placement service			X		
4.5.2	Alumni Activities			X		

## 4.6 Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

The N.G. University forms part of the global work of Nehemiah Gateway Team. In Albania, N.G. Team is represented by the Nehemiah Gateway Albania Foundation, which has been operational in Albania since 1992. Thus, the N.G. University is financed through the operations of the N.G. Albania.

The N.G. Group has a long time strategic plan where it has formulated its aims, including the offer of education from Kindergarten until higher education on university level. Each year, the HEI budget is proposed by the N.G. Senior Management Team, which must be approved by the Supervisory Board of N.G. University. All projects of N.G. Albania, including N.G. University, receive their own approved budget and during the year they monitor the income and expenditures. In any time they receive budget reports, for example planned budget vs. actual

budget, in order to monitor and analyse the financial position. In this way projects can control and improve their implementation.

The Chief Financial Officer is an employee of N.G. Albania. The financial services as well as the human resources management are provided by N.G. Albania. Further financial and personnel support for N.G. University is mainly provided by the network of the non-profit organisation N.G. Group. Tuition fee payments must be made prior to the beginning of each quarter. Currently, the income generated by student contributions is insignificant, since the number of students is small. Furthermore, a majority of the students are supported by the scholarship programme of N.G. Albania.

**Appraisal:**

The programme finances itself through tuition fees and an annual budget provided by N.G. Group, which cover the running costs of all activities. N.G. Group guarantees the financing of the HEI in its strategic plan and bears for the financial risks. Within the limits of a review process and with regard to financial stability of the HEI in recent years and the existing reserve fund by N.G. Group, the panel concludes that financial stability is ensured for the current programme cycle and the entire accreditation period.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.6*	Financing of the study programme (Asterrisk Criterion)			X		

## 5. Quality assurance and documentation

N.G. University has prepared an assessment plan in 2014 which has been continuously developed and expanded in recent years (Exhibit 19 Assessment Plan). Regular evaluation at N.G. University by means of standardized internal and external procedures and instruments pursues the goals:

- to identify examples of successful structures, processes and outcomes;
- to identify optimisation potentials of all existing structures, processes and outcomes in a timely manner;
- to consider and ensure the continuous development of all evaluation objects;
- to create a long-run culture of quality at N.G. University.

In internal evaluation, both direct and non-direct measurement instruments as well as qualitative and quantitative data collection methods are implemented. Direct evidence of student learning includes the analysis of student behaviours or products, in which they demonstrate how well they have mastered learning outcomes at institutional, programme and course level. Indirect evidence of student learning includes the analysis of reported perceptions about student mastery of learning outcomes at institutional, programme and course level. Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods may include the following:

- Standardized surveys of students as part of student teaching evaluations
- Surveys of N.G. University staff who participate in professional development opportunities offered by the N.G. team as part of teaching evaluations
- Standardized surveys of first-year students and alumni, as well as interviews with drop-outs on quality of service, support and advising in academic teaching, services offered to students, quality of resources to support learning
- Evaluative interviews with employees at N.G. University
- Document analysis and content analysis

External procedures of evaluation are accreditation procedures for study programmes and external audits in the context of financial stability and maintenance of facilities. Evaluation objects for the purposes of these evaluation statutes are as follows:

- Programmes of study and programme offerings for the purpose of learning
- Academic teaching
- Learning success of the students
- Ethical behavior of all members at N.G. University
- Procedures and work processes
- All Services for Students, Faculty and Staff
- Publications of the N.G. University
- Facilities at N.G. University
- Financial Operations
- Members of N.G. University (Supervisory Board (SuBo), CEO and CAO, faculty, staff and students).

The students are involved in the evaluation process in different stages of the process (freshmen, students, alumni). All lectures at N.G. University are evaluated via a standardized online

survey by the students. Lecture evaluations are conducted after every course. The Head of Quality Management at N.G. University collects the data for further analysis. The results of the surveys will be sent to the Programme Director and to the teachers if requested by them. The survey consists of the following elements:

- Organisation and Instruction of the module
- Lecturer and Student engagement
- Module requirements and workload
- Student's work on this module
- University facilities
- Learning achievement and overall satisfaction
- Commendations and Recommendations

Additionally, the guest lecturers are invited annually by the CAO to participate in a focus group. The CAO together with the HoD use the critical incidents as an instrument to identify challenges and/or improvement potentials to the teaching process and to any organisational issue, which is related to the academic performance of the GL. In addition to that, the average grade at all courses is calculated. The normal distribution of the grades is analysed according to the Gaussian bell curve and is used as an indicator to determine the learning level of the students. In order to ensure the comparability of the results and to be able to make statements about the learning level, the normal distribution of the same courses is observed over the years. These results, in conjunction with other documents, are used for the evaluation of guest lecturers.

In addition, the students participate in the First-Year Students Surveys. Through this survey the academic and administrative employees of N.G. University will be evaluated. Furthermore, the students have the opportunity to participate at faculty and university level through the Students Council. In this way feedback from the students is ensured. All the data collected from these surveys is being analysed and discussed within the faculty meeting.

Giving feedback to the surrounding conditions of the study programmes as well as reviewing the curricula of the study programmes is part of faculty meetings and will take place every three years.

Evaluation by third parties had been applied in 2015. As a part of the programme evaluation the following tools were designed:

- asking companies to participate in surveys regarding the student's performance during their internship;
- undertaking alumni surveys to evaluate the outcomes of the programmes (alumni surveys will be sent at the latest two years after graduation, which can be repeated every two years). Alumni Surveys will be sent at the latest two years after graduation. The Head of QM is responsible to create, to collect, to analyse and send the results to the Head of Departments and Head of Faculty. The findings will be discussed in the Academic Affairs Meeting / Faculty Meeting and the Curriculum Committee.

As part of the regular programme review every three to five years, programme and curriculum comparisons with similar study contents take place. To ensure employability, national and international job advertisements for the field of management from several organisation types are examined. The results of approximately 200 job advertisements are collected and categorized. These results are evaluated and discussed in interviews with representatives from business,

non-profit organisations and government institutions. Through this investigation, the requested knowledge and skills that students need as preparation for their professional life will be compared with the contents of the curriculum. An additional information source about the employability of the study programme is the Alumni Survey, where graduates have the opportunity to assess the content of the curriculum and how well they were prepared for their professional and/or academic career.

The information on the programme is given primarily in the University Statutes, the University Catalogue, in the Exam Regulation and the Module Description Catalogue, but also documented on the internal management system populi and on the HEI's website. In addition to the programme documentation, students are also provided with the Student Handbook which contains information about the academic and administrative staff of the HEI, the services offered by the HEI and the complaints procedure. The student handbook also includes general information about the social life (religious, cultural and leisure time activities) in Pogradec.

Various leisure activities that take place during the academic year are organised by the Student Service Center. Academic conferences and similar events with guest speakers are key activities on campus. Students are informed and invited by email. An information board is placed at the entry of N.G. University, where flyers for different activities are displayed. The main activities of N.G. University and N.G. Albania are published in the annual report.

## Appraisal:

N.G. University has implemented an Assessment Plan which contains different instruments of quality assurance. Several evaluation processes are carried out by the HEI. Faculty members and students participate in the respective committees (Quality Assurance Commission, Faculty meeting) to plan and assess the quality assurance and development procedures. The collaboration of all participants seems effective, responsibilities and processes are clearly documented. The panel would like to highlight that the HEI has implemented the position of Head of Quality management who reports to the Executive Director and set up a framework of instruments, surveys, commissions, processes and communication channels to ensure quality assurance.

Evaluation by the students is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a described procedure. The questionnaire which is used for evaluation of the modules covers the key aspects of the programme. Detailed questions aim to check if the actual workload of the students corresponds to the estimated workload. Within the framework of controlling the implementation, it is ensured that measures are implemented, reviewed, and evaluated with regard to their quality and faithfulness to the original objective as well as modified and adapted if necessary as well as documented.

Quality control by the faculty is carried out on a regular basis as well and resulting discussions lead to the development of teaching methods and module content.

Up to now and due to the changes in the programme, the HEI lacks the critical mass of stakeholders to really fulfill in full the external evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties. During the online assessment conference the HEI pointed out that third party audits are part of the next update of the assessment plan. The panel welcomes this and recommends that



external, independent third party audits of the study programmes could be performed by co-operation partners like universities, businesses or NGOs. As for employability, the panel recommends to implement third party evaluation among business in the region.

The study programme's content, curriculum and examination scheme have been suitably documented. The panel recommends that documents like the University Statutes and the Student handbook should also be available on the website. At the time of the online assessment conference, up to date information on the current master programme was not accessible on the website. N.G. University pointed out that official communication is not possible before the final approval by the Education Ministry of the programme changes that FIBAA accredited on May 28, 2021 (see chapter 0.2).

The panel also mentions that the wording within the HEI's documents is used mistakable. The expression module is used for a single course as well as a generic term for several courses (e.g. combination of several courses). Hence, the panel recommends revising the wording by using consistent terminology in relevant documents that provide information for students.

N.G. University regularly publishes current news and information – both quantitative and qualitative – about the study programme.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
5.1*	Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.2	Instruments of quality assurance					
5.2.1	Evaluation by students		X			
5.2.2	Evaluation by faculty			X		
5.2.3	External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties			X		
5.3	Programme documentation					
5.3.1*	Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.3.2	Information on activities during the academic year			X		

# Quality profile

**HEI:** Nehemiah Gateway University / Shkolla e Lartë, “Nehemiah”; Buçimas,Alabania (NG)

**Master programme:** Master of Science in Management with Specialization in Education / with Specialization in Business (M.Sc.)

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
<b>1</b>	<b>Objectives</b>					
1.1*	Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
1.2*	International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
1.3	Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1	Positioning of the study programme in the educational market			X		
1.3.2	Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“)			X		
1.3.3	Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		
<b>2</b>	<b>Admission</b>					
2.1*	Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.2	Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3*	Selection procedure (if relevant)			X		
2.4(*)	Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5*	Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6*	Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
<b>3.</b>	<b>Contents, structure and didactical concept</b>					
3.1	Contents					
3.1.1*	Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.2*	Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.3*	Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.4	Interdisciplinary thinking			X		
3.1.5	Ethical aspects		X			

3.1.6*	Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.1.7*	Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.2	Structure		
3.2.1*	Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.2.2*	Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)		<b>condition</b>
3.2.3*	Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.2.4	Equality of opportunity		X
3.3	Didactical concept		
3.3.1*	Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.3.2*	Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.3.3	Guest lecturers	X	
3.3.4	Lecturing tutors		X
3.4	Internationality		
3.4.1*	International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.4.2	Internationality of the student body		X
3.4.3	Internationality of faculty		X
3.4.4	Foreign language contents	X	
3.5*	Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)		X
3.6*	Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)		X
<b>4.</b>	<b>Academic environment and framework conditions</b>		
4.1	Faculty		
4.1.1*	Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)		X
4.1.2*	Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X
4.1.3*	Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X
4.1.4	Practical business experience of faculty		X
4.1.5*	Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)		X
4.1.6*	Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)	X	

4.1.7(*)	Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes)			X
4.2	Programme management			
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty		X	
4.3	Cooperation and partnerships			
4.3.1(*)	Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)		X	
4.3.2(*)	Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes)		X	
4.4	Facilities and equipment			
4.4.1*	Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
4.4.2*	Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
4.5	Additional services			
4.5.1	Career counselling and placement service		X	
4.5.2	Alumni Activities		X	
4.6*	Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
<b>5</b>	<b>Quality assurance and documentation</b>			
5.1*	Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
5.2	Instruments of quality assurance			
5.2.1	Evaluation by students	X		
5.2.2	Evaluation by faculty		X	
5.2.3	External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties		X	
5.3	Programme documentation			
5.3.1*	Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)		X	
5.3.2	Information on activities during the academic year		X	