Higher Education Institution Authorisation Experts' Report
British Teaching University in Georgia, LLC

Expert Panel Members

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Tbilisi

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Authorisation Report Resume

General information on the educational institution

LLC British Teaching University in Georgia (hereinafter British University/University) was founded in 2019 by LLC "English Book Education", who has many years of experience in the field of education and, importantly, a high level of familiarity with and support for internationalization and has a good practice of teaching English in Georgia since 2011.

University has selected Buckingham University as a foreign partner by its Gold ranking in the Teaching Excellence Framework which it has enjoyed since the inception of this framework, and its recognition as the number one British university in the same category according to the 2017 Times ranking.

In joint collaboration with the University of Buckingham two undergraduate programs have been developed - Political Science and Business and Management and also MA program in British Studies.

According to the University's strategic development plan by 2024 all three Bachelor study programs and the validation mechanism, which involves monitoring and quality control of the educational process by the partner university, will be successfully implemented and have more than 400 students.

Brief overview of the evaluation process for authorisation: SER and Site visit

The accreditation visit took place on September 22-23, 2020. Before the visit, the experts panel received a well-prepared Self Evaluation Report (SER), and the additional documents including Strategic Development Plan, Action Plan, detailed syllabi of all programme elements, Regulation of the Learning Process, CVs of academic staff, data on budget, and the information of planned research projects.

During the visit, the panel had the chance to meet and interview representatives of the University stakeholders including administration, programme management team, SER work group and Quality Assurance Service, Representatives of International Relations Service, teaching staff (academic staff and invited teachers), representatives of various departments including Financial Department, Document processing department, information technology and software provision department, logistics and security department, HR department, Legal Service Department, Department of Learning Process Management, Department of Marketing and PR, department of Student Service development and alumni relations, scientific research department, Examination centre and Library as well as representatives of employers. All participants were very cooperative and willing to participate in discussion in an open and fair way. Requests from the panel regarding the provision of additional information and additional interviews were handled professionally and efficiently during the visit. The experts' panel would like to express sincere thanks for the cooperation of all participants, readiness to provide additional information and comments, friendly and healthy working environment and hospitality during the visit. Special appreciation to the whole university team for taking good care of safety and health measures and restriction related to preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus.

As the university have not started study process yet, the experts panel had no chance to meet students and alumni the report cannot reflect on the opinion of students and graduates of the specific programme as well as best practices related to the implementation of the study programs.

Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards

According to its mission the British Teaching University seeks to "adapt the British academic model to the academic environment in Georgia to become a modern platform for educating future leaders and contributing to community transformation" and makes it clear that the purpose of the institution is to implement the British academic model and adapt it to the Georgian academic environment. The institution understands the introduction of the British model as follows: The University of Buckingham monitors and evaluates the implementation of undergraduate programs and, after verification, will recognize the diploma awarded by the university to the successful graduate of the program. During the visit, questions were raised with different groups of stakeholders on how they presented the mechanism for implementing this mission and goals, but unfortunately, it was not possible to get unambiguous and well-reasoned answers.

Clear explanation of the basics of the mission statement and the reason of considering itself as a British university is strongly recommended. A single reference to the partnership agreement is not enough, since this agreement, taken separately, does not allow such a conclusion. The implementation of the requirements of the agreement depends on the goodwill of the parties, and therefore, if this agreement is terminated, it turns out that there will not be a British university in Georgia, but an ordinary university.

British Teaching University in Georgia developed its strategic development plan for seven years identifying six main goals, objectives and activities, which are in line with the mission and vision of the institution. The HEI has a 3-year action plan in place, to clearly describe future activities, sets timeframes for their implementation together with performance criteria and recourses needed for implementation. In order to achieve the goals defined by the strategic plan, HEI has defined 27 tasks to be implemented during the following 7 years.

The methodological framework HEI includes five stages, such as environmental analysis, mission and vision verification, strategic goals and objectives formation, action plan formation, implementation and monitoring.

The structure of the British University basically provides for the University goals and strategic development plans. However, despite the fact that, according to the Regulation of the university, The Rector is appointed and dismissed by the Assembly of Partners, rector is the main figure who manages both academic and administrative activities, although the regulation does not explicitly state his accountability. It is unclear who evaluates the rector's work. Therefore, it is recommended to increase the independence of collegial bodies and limit the powers of the rector with regard to academic decisions.

According to the Regulation of Representative Council (Senate), the Senate's functions include administrative and academic activities. Five members of the Senate are administrative officials. Consequently, the existing structure does not allow the administrative functions to be distinguished from academic functions. This means that people without appropriate competence will participate in academic decision making. Therefore, it is recommended to improve the effectiveness of academic, scientific, and administrative decisions, the British University into the organizational structure has to divide academic and administrative functions.

The University has developed the quality assurance system and mechanisms to ensure the quality of the University's activities in all areas - teaching, research, management, internationalization, services, resources, public contributions, adequate Internal Quality Assurance Guide. Quality Assurance System is designed to ensure constant and systematic assurance of quality and that all processes are based on a continuous development PDCA cycle. The quality assurance of the British University is ensured by the Quality Assurance Department, which is part of the Higher Managerial Administrative Level of the University.

British University uses modern technologies in management, including the electronic system. The University also has a continuity plan for business processes. It should be noted that the Internal Quality Assurance Manual is essentially an original document, although it does contain some passages taken from a similar Manual at one of the other universities without reference.

Personnel activities at the British University are regulated by the Code of Ethics of British University and Labor Code and Disciplinary Responsibility Regulations based on Georgian legislation, including the Georgian Law on Higher Education, the Georgian Labour Code. The Code of Ethics of the British University is publicly available. The principles of academic freedom and the basic conditions for its protection were envisaged in the internal regulation of the University.

The interviews with the academic, invited and administrative staff, as well as international staff member and potential employers revealed that the BUG did not follow neither the national, nor the institutional regulations on involvement of external stakeholders and considering labour market research in program planning and designing. The survey of potential students included low number of participants and it would have been beneficial to check the number of vacancies and enrolled national and international students in the similar profile curricula of other Authorized HEIs in Georgia which might give insight on educational market of Georgia (with the exception of the Master Program in British Studies).

The BUG has developed regulations and procedures to protect student rights and give them possibility to complete the studies in cases of amending/annulling of educational programmes. There are the relevant rules for approval or amendments of the curricula as well.

The expert panel is of the opinion that despite the fact, that the BUG has signed the Academic Affiliation Agreement with the University of Buckingham, despite the statements by the international personnel, international advisory board members, representatives of the academic staff and the programme directors, that the Institution has adopted the curricula of the Buckingham University to the needs of Georgian market and authorization standards (this was underlined several times during the first day of the site-visit), the best international practices have not been taken into consideration while developing the study programs.

The learning outcomes of Bachelor level study programs are in line with higher education level, qualification to be granted and the National Qualification Framework, but too general without giving a clear picture about the real outcomes of the study programmes.

While creating study programmes University has followed current legislation on European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), but in some cases the students estimated workload doesn't correspond to the number of contact and independent hours (for the teaching material and other activities, e.g. essays and other assignments) and is either too high for 5 ECTS or too low for 10 ECTS assigned to the courses (see the syllabi for "History of Diplomacy", "Global Security").

The educational programmes of the BUG provide students with opportunities to elect non-compulsory components, but it is suggested to increase the number of the elective courses after starting functioning in order to meet the various expectations and academic interests of the prospective students.

The BUG has developed the "Methodology for Creating Individual Teaching Plan", which considers the different requirements, needs and academic readiness of students, and has all prerequisites to ensure their smooth involvement into the educational process.

While analysing the content and structure of the educational programmes, the confusion, misunderstanding and miscommunication between different internal and external stakeholders concerning the academic degree provided by the Institution should be mentioned. The inconsistent communication, such misunderstanding and irrelevant marketing strategy, gap between the mission and the educational programmes may create false expectations in prospective national and international students (they may expect British staff and "content", British academic degree and teaching methodology, which are not provided by the BUG) and their frustration may have negative impact on the prestige and trust towards the Georgian Higher Education System. Therefore, the expert panel recommends improving the communication strategy concerning the educational programmes (content, degree awarded, teaching methodology), to adjust the educational programmes to the University mission and to assure realistic expectations in prospective national and international students.

University has the learning outcomes assessment system, which is transparent and fair and fully complies with the legislative requirements, which in theory should promote improvement, assessment appellation system is also introduced and even indicated in the syllabi. Currently it is not possible to assess how this assessment system will be implemented as the University is not functioning yet.

The programs will be started and continuously delivered by an experienced and professionally competent academic staff, having passion and a strong desire to share their knowledge and skills with students. Currently several members of academic staff are employed in other companies and organizations, it will be vital for the university to ensure that their workload is not too heavy and enables full contribution to the job in British Teaching University. Teaching staff has contributed to the development of programs by individually making modifications of course syllabus and collectively discussing with administration every aspect of study program. However, participation of the employers in the review, evaluation and future development of the programme as a whole will be extremely beneficial. With beginning and further development of study programs foreign lecturers from Buckingham University are going to actively participate in study process but also employers should be actively to deliver lectures and seminars.

The importance of research component is recognized and highly valued by the university. There is Research Strategy developed and a Scientific Research Department established, and in joint cooperation with the academic staff there have been determined four research topics in politics, business and management and British studies area. There is also a plan to establish more research centres / laboratories shortly after the authorization is granted. However, being materially justified and quite ambitious these plans seem to have unclear vision of what role will the research component play in the whole activity of the British University and it is still unclear what will be the main research priorities. During the visit it was mentioned that various types of research will be implemented: joint projects with Buckingham University, foreign partners and employers, students, groups of researchers, with no clear focus on the concrete direction.

The University is planning to issue scientific-research grants in order to enhance the research potential of the university. Also, the joint cooperation with Buckingham University will be an inevitable part of the research activities in general and participation in various projects in particular. According to The Contract between British University and The University of Buckingham there will be provided full support in joint research projects. The university is also planning to attract external researchers by approaching them as the projects will be originated. The internationalization of the scientific research will be ensured by the cooperation with UK partners, Buckingham University and others and implementation of joint international research projects, participation in international conferences and workshops.

The University has a Rule for evaluation of scientific-research and academic activities of the staff, which stipulates that the self-assessment report of the scientific-research activity will has to be submitted by each member of academic staff to the Scientific-Research Department by the end of the academic year. As the University has not started its activities yet it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of the developed mechanism, therefore it is recommended to ensure that all the related parts are well aware of it and all the activities are performed on time.

The university has invested a lot in providing proper premises and facilities for the delivery of its programme. With the exception of the parking place that is currently limited and needs to be modified to be accessible for people with disabilities, all other facilities are in excellent condition. IT technologies including Moodle learning platform, distance learning platforms, electronic access to library catalogue, access to scientific databases and journals are available to students on and off campus. New auditoriums and scientific research centres are planned to be built once the study process is started.

The University has relatively stable financial situation having a good support from its Founder has developed a budget in accordance with the goals of the action and it is notable that the budget also includes resources allocated for various types scientific activities. However, Funds are allocated according to the objectives of the action plan, but it is unclear what and how these funds will be spent and whether they will be sufficient to achieve these goals. University has also developed a policy for the introduction of a financial management and control system at the university to ensure rational, fair and transparent allocation and usage of financial resources to achieve the university goals and improve the quality of management services.

Summary of Recommendations
- To provide clear explanation why it considers itself a British university and what is the meant by the basics of the mission statement.
- The strategy and action plan require significant revision to ensure that the desired outcomes may be achieved within the set time limits.
- The institution should develop a realistic and measurable plan for diversifying funding sources.
- The university has to reflect in its strategic plan what contribution it will make to the development of society (social, cultural, environmental programs and activities or the promotion of lifelong learning).
- To improve the effectiveness of academic, scientific, and administrative decisions, the British University into the organizational structure has to divide academic and administrative functions.
- Increase the independence of collegial bodies and limit the powers of the rector with regard to academic decisions.
- Rules and procedures for election to collegial bodies (Senate, Faculty Council) - registration of candidates, election campaign, the secrecy of voting, etc. Must be transparent and fair.
- The institution should develop the original document or, if other sources are used, should honestly indicate the sources used.
- Involve external stakeholders (potential employers, professional bodies etc.) in planning, designing and development of the study programs;
- To consider best international practices in in planning, design and development of study programs;
- To improve management of academic affairs to assure timely fulfillment of legislative requirements and business continuity, to deal effectively with force majeure caused by pandemic or any other circumstances;

- To assure effective use of ICT for timely and functional communication with the external stakeholders and for conducting market research (especially in the Pandemic times).
- To reformulate and make the learning outcomes more subject specific and reflect the specificities of the study fields, using best international practices and especially the Subject Benchmark Statements of QAA.
- To adjust the ECTS to the estimated workload of the students, considering the volume of the compulsory teaching material, as well as the time the students need to prepare the essays, quizzes, presentations and other planned assignments.
- To improve the communication strategy concerning the educational programmes (content, degree awarded, teaching methodology) and to assure realistic expectations in prospective national and international students.
- To adjust the educational programmes to the University mission.
- To implement students' assessment and its appellation systems consistently and effectively.
- Ensure the clear understanding of the affiliation meaning by all members of the teaching staff.
- Ensure that the academic staff is not overloaded with other activities related to various employment contracts outside the BU.
- Cooperate with national and international universities in order to offer wide range of national and international opportunities to the students and staff by signing memorandums of cooperation.
- Elaborate short and long-term international projects for the students.
- Provide real information on psychologist in the regulatory documents.
- Increase the number of employers, create a structured database and make memorandums functional.
- Provide a wider spectrum of cultural and sports activities for the students (with their involvement).
- Provide the information on scholarships and financial support accessible on university web page, diversify them for wider number of students and ensure to be well disseminated.
- Develop a clear understanding of research obligations of the academic staff.
- Develop a clear vision of research priorities and its place in the activity of the British University.
- Develop a clear strategy of involvement of external researchers and students in the research activities.
- Develop an individual plan and a budget for each staff member related to participation in conferences and workshops.
- To ensure that all the related parts are well aware of the mechanism of scientific-research activities and all the activities are performed on time.
- Arrange a parking lot for people with disabilities.
- Ensure that all reading material is available in the library.
- Ensure that the library services are available to all future students, including international, by aligning the language capabilities of the library staff.
- Ensure proper functioning of financial management and control system.
- Develop a realistic and measurable plan for diversifying funding sources.

Summary of Suggestions
- Mission of the HEI shall be consistent with its offered programs and real possibilities of action;
- To classify the learning outcomes in the program descriptions/specifications using the criteria of EQF and NQF "Knowledge and Understanding", "Skills", "Responsibility and Autonomy".

- To increase the number of the elective courses after starting functioning in order to meet the various expectations and academic interests of the prospective students. Attract employers to deliver lectures and seminars under current programs.
- To improve the formulation of learning outcomes from technical and linguistical/syntactical points of view (e. g. in the syllabi "Interpersonal and Communication Skills", "Contemporary Issues of Business and Management", "Introduction to the World of Business", "Key Foundation Skills" etc.), to correct typos while indicating contact and independent hours of ECTS (e. g. in the syllabi "Political Communication", "Introduction to Financial Studies", "Key Foundation Skills", "Political Psychology", "Adaptations – Text, Image, Culture", "Translation Theory" etc.).
- To diversify the teaching and learning methods reflecting the specifics of the level of studies and the specifics of the fields.
- To enrich and diversify students' assessment methods reflecting and the specifics of the fields.
- Keep students constantly well informed on all their academic rights.
- Elaborate effective encouragement procedures for the students with distinctive achievements (scholarships, finance their activities or provide them with appropriate facilities, awards etc.).
- Ensure that teaching staff provides feedback to students on their assessment results.
- Ensure active involvement of students in all activities and initiatives in the university (governance, students self-government, associations and more).
- Define consultancy hours and location for each course, and share it with the students and lecturers before the beginning of the study process
- Ensure that student self-government has clearly defined action plan and the plan is well disseminated.

Summary of the Best Practices

Not applicable

Summary Table of Compliance of HEI with Standards and Standard Components

	Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
1.	**Mission and strategic development of HEI**	☐	☒	☐	☐
1.1	Mission of HEI	☐	☒	☐	☐
1.2	Strategic development	☐	☒	☐	☐
2.	**Organisational structure and management of HEI**	☐	☒	☐	☐
2.1	Organisational structure and management	☐	☐	☒	☐
2.2	Internal quality assurance mechanisms	☐	☒	☐	☐
2.3	Observing principles of ethics and integrity	☒	☐	☐	☐
3.	**Educational Programmes**	☐	☐	☒	☐
3.1	Design and development of educational programmes	☐	☐	☒	☐
3.2	Structure and content of educational programmes	☐	☐	☒	☐
3.3	Assessment of learning outcomes	☐	☒	☐	☐
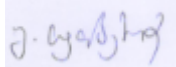
4	**Staff of the HEI**	☐	☒	☐	☐
4.1	Staff management	☐	☒	☐	☐
4.2	Academic/Scientific and invited Staff workload	☐	☒	☐	☐
5	**Students and their support services**	☐	☒	☐	☐
5.1	The Rule for obtaining and changing student status, the recognition of education, and student rights	☒	☐	☐	☐
5.2	Student support services	☐	☒	☐	☐
6	**Research, development and/or other creative work**	☐	☒	☐	☐
6.1	Research activities	☐	☐	☒	☐
6.2	Research support and internationalisation	☐	☒	☐	☐
6.3	Evaluation of research activities	☐	☒	☐	☐
7	**Material, information and financial resources**	☐	☒	☐	☐
7.1	Material resources	☐	☒	☐	☐
7.2	Library resources	☐	☒	☐	☐
7.3	Information resources	☒	☐	☐	☐
7.4	Financial resources	☐	☒	☐	☐

Signature of expert panel members

1. Natalie Aleksandra Gurvitš-Suits (Chair)

2. Gocha Tutberidze (Member)

3. Irine Darchia (Member)

4. Maka Gvelesiani (Member)

5. Nino Alavidze (Member)

Compliance of the Applicant HEI with the Authorisation Standard Components

1. Mission and strategic development of HEI

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The self-assessment emphasizes that British Teaching University Ltd. was founded in Georgia in 2019 by English Book Education Ltd. The latter has been teaching English in Georgia since 2011. The founder's long-term cooperation with British partners, in particular with Buckingham University, convinced him to decide to create a higher educational institution. However, in order to carve out a niche in the local education market, it was decided to introduce the British educational and research model in this institution. In 2019, a Working Group on the Implementation of Authorization Standards was created, consisting of representatives of the University's structural units and invited persons, which was tasked with developing a strategic action plan and a business plan for the University. This group has developed the mission, motto, values, and goals of the university. As a result of the discussions, the group developed a mission according to which British Teaching University Georgia Ltd. seeks to "adapt the British academic model to the academic environment in Georgia to become a modern platform for educating future leaders and contributing to community transformation".

The mission statement clearly states that the purpose of the institution is to implement the British academic model and adapt it to the Georgian academic environment. During the visit, questions were raised with the administration of the university, as well as with academics, invited staff, and representatives of Buckingham University, how they presented the mechanism for implementing this mission and goals. Unfortunately, it was not possible to get unambiguous and well-reasoned answers to these questions. Therefore, the institution has to clearly explain the basics of the mission statement and why it takes itself as a British university. A single reference to the partnership agreement is not enough, since this agreement, taken separately, does not allow such a conclusion. The implementation of the requirements of the agreement depends on the goodwill of the parties, and therefore, if this agreement is terminated, it turns out that there will not be a British university in Georgia, but an ordinary university.

Currently, the documentation submitted by the University for authorization: charter, regulations, educational programs, quality assurance documents, employment contracts, administrative, support, academic, and visiting personnel is Georgian.

The institution understands the introduction of the British model as follows: The University of Buckingham monitors and evaluates the implementation of undergraduate programs and, after verification, will recognize the diploma awarded by the university to the successful graduate of the program. However, why this means introducing a British educational and research model, or why the institution should be called "British University in Georgia," which is somewhat misleading to stakeholders, remains unclear to the group.

According to the mission statement, the institution sees its role locally and internationally as a modern platform for educating future leaders and contributing to transforming society. Thus, the mission emphasizes the institution's role in educating active community members, and the adaptation of the British academic model to the Georgian realities emphasizes the institution's uniqueness for the Georgian educational space. In the stated form, the mission is clear, and in line with the goals of higher education in Georgia.

During the interview, it emerged that the mission statement had been circulated to the institution's stakeholders, posted on the institution's website, and made publicly available.

Evidences/indicators
- SER
- General Regulation of British University;
- The Contract between British University and The University of Buckingham;
- Strategic Development Plan 2020-2026;
- 2020-2023 Action plan
- Interviews during the Site visit

Recommendations:
- To provide clear explanation why it considers itself a British university and what is the meant by the basics of the mission statement.

Suggestions:
• Mission of the HEI shall be consistent with its offered programs and real possibilities of action.

Best Practices (if applicable):
Not applicable

Evaluation
☐ Complies with requirements
☒ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

1.2 Strategic Development

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

British Teaching University in Georgia assumed its strategic development plan. Strategic Development Plan was elaborated based on the Georgian Legislation, Statute of HEI, "Methodology of Strategic Management" of Internal Normative Document, and other normative documents. The development plan was assumed for the period of 2020-2026 and was Approved by the decree of rector N01/06, 14 February, 2020.

The process of developing the strategy involved the University's administration, staff, as well as invited students, employers and education experts. The strategy consists of the following parts: methodology, strategic overview (includes the mission, the motto, vision and values), challenge analysis, SWOT analysis, strategic framework (strategic goals and objectives overview) and appendixes.

Strategic Development Plan includes six strategic goals for the next seven years:
1. Program Development
2. Organizational Development
3. Developing Research Activities
4. Developing Quality
5. Internationalization of Teaching, Research and Management
6. Collaboration with the Community, Creating and Developing Awareness
The goals, objectives and activities of the strategic plan are in line with the mission and vision of the institution.
The HEI has a 3-year action plan in place, to clearly describe future activities, sets timeframes for their implementation together with performance criteria and recourses needed for implementation. In order to achieve the goals defined by the strategic plan, HEI has defined 27 tasks to be implemented during the following 7 years.

Assessing the achievement of the goals set out in the strategic plan is difficult at this stage, since the institution is not yet operational, and the action plan developed on the basis of the strategic plan is based on general forecasts. Funds are allocated according to the objectives of the action plan, but it is unclear what and how these funds will be spent and whether they will be sufficient to achieve these goals. Financial resources, which are assigned to the realization of a certain task, do not look real. E.g. The university wants to internationalize its academic and administrative staff, but it is not clear how it will do it, with what resources. The funding is not reflected in the action plan. The institution says for conducting research, research centers and laboratories will be created, for which the institution plans to spend 860 thousand GEL. However, it is not clear what the research priorities of the institutes are, as well as what research centers and laboratories will be created.

The capitalization of the university is low, and additional sources of funding are unclear. One of the alternatives, such as "Income from training and certification programs," is highly unjustified. Also, given the current tuition fees, it is unlikely that the university will be able to assume 450 students. Meanwhile the whole budget, income, and expenses are based only on student contributions.

The methodological framework HEI includes five stages, such as environmental analysis, mission and vision verification, strategic goals and objectives formation, action plan formation, implementation and monitoring. To monitor the implementation of the strategic plan has been set up a permanent

strategic management group at the university under the direction of the Rector, which is an important support unit in strategic management together with the Board of Advisors. In order to monitor the implementation of the current strategy and action plan, the Strategic Management Group meets at least once every two months and hears the performance report from the responsible structures and develops relevant recommendations.

The University believes that it is its social responsibility to constantly provide the public with information about ongoing research or other activities at the University. To this end: a communication strategy and action plan will be developed and an online communication channel will be created. The university's strategic plan does not specifically indicate how the institution will contribute to the development of society. It does not reflect the University's contribution to areas such as social, cultural, environmental programs and activities, or the promotion of lifelong learning

Evidences/indicators
• SER;
• Methodology of Strategic Management of British University;
• 7-year strategic development plan of the British University;
• Three-year action plan of the British University;
• 7-Year business plan of British University;
• Internal Quality Assurance Guide of British University;
• Interviews during the Site visit.

Recommendations:
• The strategy and action plan require significant revision to ensure that the desired outcomes may be achieved within the set time limits;
• The institution should develop a realistic and measurable plan for diversifying funding sources.
• The university has to reflect in its strategic plan what contribution it will make to the development of society (social, cultural, environmental programs and activities or the promotion of lifelong learning).

Suggestions:
None.

Best Practices (if applicable):
Not applicable

Evaluation
☐ Complies with requirements
☒ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.   Organisational Structure and Management of HEI

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

2.1 Organisational Structure and Management
o Organisational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan
o Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation
o HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the institution
o Considering the mission and goals of HEI, leadership of the HEI supports international cooperation of the institution and the process of internationalisation.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
The structure of the British University basically provides for the University goals and strategic development plans. Academic managers are: academy rector, senate, academy quality assurance service. The Rector is also the chairman of the Senate. Rector's position in the University is not elective. He/She is appointed and dismissed by the Assembly of Partners of University. The Rector is the Chairman

of the Representative Council (Senate), convenes and chairs its meetings and signs the minutes of the Senate meeting. The functions and powers of the Rector are defined by the University Statute and the job description and qualification requirements.

The Senate is a collegial representative and management body of the British University, which is the highest representative collegial body. The Senate determines the policy of the university's strategic, educational, scientific, administrative and financial activities and assists the Rector in the management of the University. The functions and powers of the Senate are determined by the University's General Regulation and its own Regulation. The Senate consists of 11 members: 1. The Rector; 2. Head of the Administration / Deputy Rector; 3. Dean of the Faculty; 4. Head of Quality Assurance Department; 5. Head of Human Resources Management Department; 6. Affiliated academic staff (limited to 3 members); 7. The students (determined by 3 members).

Affiliated academic staff in the Senate are elected on the recommendation of the relevant faculty council. The Faculty Council reviews the applications of the affiliated academic staff that includes – the vision and concept on how one sees the development of the British University and hears their views on their role as the agents of this development in case there are chosen. The Faculty council chooses the candidates that it deemed their role as productive as the members of the Senate and sends the selected applications to the Senate.

Students will be elected as members of the Senate if they have top academic achievements and are active in extracurricular activities, such as – attending conferences and participating/heading students activities/unions/societies. The students who are interested in becoming members of the Senate should send their letter of motivation describing why it will be productive if they become members. Only those students are eligible for applying for the membership, who have continuously had a student status (without suspension or termination) and have been a student of the University for at least a year. Faculty Council sends student's application who fulfil the requirements to the Senate for choosing the member. The members of Senate who are not elected, the duration of their membership to the Senate continues as long as they occupy that position. Elected members of the Senate – students and affiliated academic staff, are members of the Senate for two years.

Of the Regulation of Representative Council (Senate), the Senate's functions include administrative and academic activities. 5 members of the Senate are administrative officials. Consequently, the existing structure does not allow the administrative functions to be distinguished from academic functions. This means that people without appropriate competence will participate in academic decision making. As described in the current version of documents rules and procedures for election to collegial bodies (Senate, Faculty Council) - registration of candidates, election campaign, the secrecy of voting, etc. and not transparent, clear to everyone and unbiased. Therefore, the expert panel would recommend to change them to make them transparent and fair.

Despite the fact that, according to the Regulation of the university, The Rector is appointed and dismissed by the Assembly of Partners. This paragraph of the regulation is very formal. Because the Assembly of Partners is one person who is also the rector. (The founder of the British University in Georgia English Book Education LTD is 100% owned by one person, Mrs. Maya Gurgenidze.). The rector appoints the head of all administrative units, the dean, members of the Senate and heads the Senate and is the main figure managing both academic and administrative activities, although the regulation does not explicitly state his accountability. It is unclear who evaluates the rector's work.

The governing bodies of the main educational unit – Faculty, are Dean of the Faculty and Faculty Council. Faculty Council - is a faculty management body that provides planning for the academic activities of the faculty, supports the educational and scientific-research process, grants qualifications for the graduates of the educational program, discusses the development of educational faculties, changes and developments in it, as well as addressing the issue of program cancellation, approving students' individual learning plans. It develops the action plan of the faculty and the budget required for the implementation of the relevant goals and objectives.

Since the university is not yet fully operational, it is difficult for us to assess how well its individual structures, including collegial bodies: The Senate and the Faculty Council, are working.
The university has developed an ambitious internationalization policy, for the implementation of which an independent department (International Relations Department) has been created, the goals of which are: "promote the process of internationalization by strengthening the role of the university in the international educational space. Development and deepening of international relations in various directions of the University's activities, internationalization of the educational process and research activities, and integration of the University into the international space. Increase participation in university staff and student exchange projects and strengthen the role of the university in international

networks". The internationalization policy has the following tasks, which are grouped according to the main target audience: **Students**: Diversity of student contingent, International student mobility; **Academic Staff**: Diverse academic composition, International academic mobility, International collaboration in research, International collaboration in teaching; **Administrative Staff:** A diversity of administrative staff, International administrative mobility, Introducing international experience in management and services. However, it should also be noted that the resources foreseen in the Action Plan to achieve these goals do not look impressive. It is expected that the institution will have to revise its budget to implement these plans.

British University uses modern technologies in management, including the electronic system. The University also has a continuity plan for business processes.

Evidences/indicators

- SER;
- The organizational structure of the British University;
- Statute of British University;
- Job descriptions and qualification requirements of the British University;
- Regulation of the Representative Council (Senate);
- Regulations of the Faculty Council of British University;
- The Monitoring Mechanisms and Evaluation System of Management Effectiveness of British University;
- General Regulation of British University;
- Interviews during the Site visit.

Recommendations:

- To improve the effectiveness of academic, scientific, and administrative decisions, the British University into the organizational structure has to divide academic and administrative functions;
- Increase the independence of collegial bodies and limit the powers of the rector with regard to academic decisions;
- Rules and procedures for election to collegial bodies (Senate, Faculty Council) - registration of candidates, election campaign, the secrecy of voting, etc. Must be transparent and fair.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☐ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☒ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

British University develops and implements the quality assurance system and mechanisms to ensure the quality of the University's activities in all areas - teaching, research, management, internationalization, services, resources, public contributions. The quality assurance system helps the university to fulfill its mission and achieve its strategic goals, for which the implementation of national and international standards at the British University is ensured.

British University has developed an adequate Internal Quality Assurance Guide. Quality Assurance System is designed to ensure constant and systematic assurance of quality and that all processes are based on a continuous development PDCA cycle.

The quality assurance of the British University is ensured by the Quality Assurance Department, which is part of the Higher Managerial Administrative Level of the University.

The Internal Quality Assurance Guide is a fairly large document that includes: "Evaluation of the quality of educational programs and teaching-learning; Evaluation of the implementation of strategic and action plans; Evaluation of international cooperation and internationalization; Evaluation of the academic and invited (involved in the program), as well as administrative / support staff; Evaluation of the use of material and information resources, electronic services; Evaluation of the involvement of all stakeholders in educational programs and development; Evaluation of economic efficiency; Financial performance Evaluation; Evaluation of the quality of research activities and scientific productivity of academic staff; Evaluation of the library environment, resources, services, library staff activities and the use of international scientific databases; Evaluation of the efficiency of reviewing and responding to documents at the University; External audit, etc. The above-mentioned British University Quality Assurance Mechanisms are presented in the form of internal and external evaluation ".

Given that the British University is not yet carrying out its educational activities, the University's quality assurance mechanisms are mainly presented in the form of university rules, and their full implementation has not yet been implemented. Consequently, a number of its mechanisms are not yet fully operational, it is therefore impossible to assess its effectiveness. Given the above, it is also difficult for a group of experts to assess the level of quality culture development in an institution.

It should be noted that the Internal Quality Assurance Manual is essentially an original document, although it does contain some passages taken from a similar Manual   of one of the other universities ("Quality Assurance Guide" from Eastern European University) without reference.
British University has developed a Student body planning mechanism. When planning a student body, a full threshold of students is determined across the University, taking into account material, information, and human resources. Once the total number of students that the university can provide the educational service to is determined, the acceptable contingency for each educational program is determined.

Evidences/indicators

- Internal Quality Assurance Guide of British University;
- Methodology for Determining Student Body of British University;
- The organizational structure of the British University;
- Job Descriptions and Qualification Requirements of British University;
- The Monitoring Mechanisms and Evaluation System of Management Effectiveness of British University;
- General Regulation of British University;
  - Interviews during the Site visit.

Recommendations:

The institution should develop the original document or, if other sources are used, should honestly indicate the sources used.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Personnel activities at the British University are regulated by the Code of Ethics of British University and Labor Code and Disciplinary Responsibility Regulations. The presented regulations define the rules of adequate behavior for the staff and students' educational institutions, to facilitate the University's activities and effective management of the learning process. Ethics and behavioral standards set by the British University are based on Georgian legislation, including the Georgian Law on Higher Education, the Georgian Labor Code. The Code of Ethics of the British University is public (posted on the University website) and is available to any interested party. In addition, the Code is an integral part of the University Labor Code, which in turn is an integral part of staff contracts and Student Contract and its norms apply to university administration, academic and invited staff, as well as to students.

The British University has developed anti-plagiarism mechanisms "Procedure and mechanisms for detecting, preventing, and responding to plagiarism", which provides rules and procedures for the detection, prevention, and response to plagiarism.

The University will use an anti-plagiarism electronic program Turnitin, which the University has a legal relationship and it provides for full use of the program by the University from September 1, 2020.

The principles of academic freedom and the basic conditions for its protection were envisaged in the internal regulation of the University.

Evidences/indicators
- Code of Ethics of British University;
- University Labor Code
- Samples of the contract with the staff of British University;
- Sample of British University student contract;
- Procedure and mechanisms for detecting, preventing and responding to plagiarism;
- British University Agreement with Turnitin on using the plagiarism detector electronic program;
- Job Descriptions and Qualification Requirements of British University;
- Interviews during the Site visit.

Recommendations:

None

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation
- ☒ Complies with requirements
- ☐ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

3. **Educational Programmes**

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

3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes

HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programmes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programs, which is regulated by the "RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING, DESIGNING, APPROVING, DEVELOPING AND ANNULLINGAN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM" (hereafter: "Rules for Programme Planning"), approved by the Senate. According to this document, the BUG HEI has a methodology in

place for planning, designing and development of educational programs, which should be a participatory process and except of the academic and administrative staff, all other stakeholders private / public sector (employer), student (s), graduate (s) should be involved ("Rules for Programme Planning". 3.4). The same regulation requires consideration of market research results and / or innovations in the field, university research priorities, and collaboration with foreign and local universities ("Rules for Programme Planning", 3.2.).

There are also developed regulations and procedures to protect student rights and give them possibility to complete the studies in cases of amending/annulling of educational programs. There are the relevant rules for approval or amendments of the curricula as well.

As the BUG is a new Institution, the experts' panel is not able to reflect on if and how the University will work on the renewal and development of its programs and ensure their relevance with constantly changing environment.

The interviews with the academic, invited and administrative staff, as well as international staff member and potential employers revealed that the BUG did not follow neither the national, nor the institutional regulations on involvement of external stakeholders and considering labor market research in program planning and designing. According to the SER, "The university conducted a survey among the individuals studying on different courses of English Book Education, according to which all of them would like to study on English-language programs without leaving Georgia, if the learning outcomes were recognized in the UK. Of these, 51% want to study business and management, and 39% want to study political science" (SER, p. 64). This survey can't be considered as relevant and sufficient for strategic decisions on curricula profile, as only 64 respondents took part in it while there were more than 30 000 applicants for enter Georgian HEIs in 2020. While deciding on the academic profile of the Institution, the University Administration could check the number of vacancies and enrolled national and international students in the similar profile curricula of other Authorized HEIs in Georgia which might give insight on educational market of Georgia (with the exception of the Master Program in British Studies).

The expert panel doesn't agree with the argument that the Pandemic did not allow the University to communicate with the external stakeholders and to carry out the labour /educational market research, as both activities could be done virtually, through interviews and focus groups conducted via online platforms (ZOOM, skype, TEAMS, WebEx etc.) using email, virtual or telephone surveys etc., based on the methodology outlined in the internal regulations ("Rules for Programme Planning", 3.2.). Already existing statistical data and the labour market research results could be used as well (E. g. https://www.tsu.ge/data/file_db/PR/kvleva.pdf etc.). Therefore, the Institution did not use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to fulfill the requirements of the authorization standards, that is, to assure timely and effective communication with the external stakeholders and to make market research, which are the pillars of curricula development according to the national legislation and best international practices.

While getting prepared for authorization the Institution failed to involve the external stakeholders in curricula development, to assure the business continuity and effective management using informational technologies (It should be mentioned as well that the BUG asked the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport for the permission of teaching in English (as required by the Georgian legislation) relatively late, after getting the decree of the head of the NCEQE on authorization visit and the experts panel got this document in the end of the site-visit).

Despite the fact, that the BUG has signed the Academic Affiliation Agreement with the University of Buckingham, despite the statements by the international personnel, international advisory board members, representatives of the academic staff and the programme directors, that the Institution has adopted the curricula of the Buckingham University to the needs of Georgian market and authorization standards (this was underlined several times during the first day of the site-visit), the best international practices have not been taken into consideration while developing the study programs (for details see the following part of the report: 3.2).

Evidences/indicators
• RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING, DESIGNING, APPROVING, DEVELOPING AND ANNULLINGAN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM;
• Self-Evaluation Report; Interviews with the academic, invited and administrative staff, as well as international staff member and potential employers.

Recommendations:

- Involve external stakeholders (potential employers, professional bodies etc.) in planning, designing and development of the study programs;
- To consider best international practices in in planning, design and development of study programs;
- To improve management of academic affairs to assure timely fulfillment of legislative requirements and business continuity, to deal effectively with force majeure caused by pandemic or any other circumstances;
- To assure effective use of ICT for timely and functional communication with the external stakeholders and for conducting market research (especially in the Pandemic times).

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Non-applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.2 Structure and Content of Educational Programmes

- Program learning outcomes are clearly stated and are in line with higher education level and qualification to be granted
- With the help of individualized education programmes, HEI takes into consideration various requirements, needs and academic readiness of students, and ensures their unhindered involvement into the educational process.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Learning outcomes of BUG study programs are in line with higher education level, qualification to be granted and the National Qualification Framework, but they are too general, not really subject specific and do not give clear picture about the real and tangible outcomes of the study programs, with the exception of the Master Programme in British Studies. The term "business and management" or "political science" can be replaced by any field of studies and the learning outcomes could be applicable, which is more technical, superficial and formal approach to curricula design/development, understanding and formulation of learning outcomes. Therefore, it is recommended to reformulate and make the learning outcomes clearly subject specific and reflect the specificities of the study fields, as formulated in the Subject Benchmark Statement of Business and Management and Politics and International Relations of Quality Assurance Agency of UK and/or as formulated in the programme description of the University of Buckingham (see: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-business-and-management.pdf?sfvrsn=db39c881_5, https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-politics-and-international-relations.pdf?sfvrsn=73e2cb81_5, https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2.3-BSc-Business-Management.pdf).

One may ask whether the use of QAA Subject Benchmark Statements should be suggested or recommended? As the University's mission is to adopt British Academic Model and the BUG claims to have a unique niche of "meeting British Standards" and "introduction of the British model of teaching" (SER, p. 4), one of the most effective instruments (and maybe the best way) to achieve these goals is to rely on the benchmarking document, which is used by the British HEIs (including the BUG's Partner University of Buckingham) in curricula design/development and which is also used by the Quality Assurance Agency of UK for external assessment of the study programmes (See: https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2.3-BSc-Business-Management.pdf, p. 5; https://www.buckingham.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/4.1-BA-International-Relations-Flexible-Honours.pdf, p. 1). It should be mentioned as well, that taking into account of QAA Benchmarks could be regarded as a way to consider the best international practice, required by the Authorization Standard 3.1.

The expert panel suggests to classify the learning outcomes in the program descriptions/specifications using the criteria of EQF and NQF "Knowledge and Understanding", "Skills", "Responsibility and Autonomy", which helps to create clearer and more comprehensive picture of the range of subject specific knowledge and general/transferable skills to be gained and achieved by the graduates. For benchmarking (how to formulate the learning outcomes) the British Subject Benchmark Statements

mentioned above or even the program specifications/program descriptions of the partner Institution, the University of Buckingham can be used. For detailed info see: https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2.3-BSc-Business-Management.pdf, https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/4.1-BA-International-Relations-Flexible-Honours.pdf.   In several syllabi some technical and syntactical issues of formulating learning outcomes have been identified (E. g. see the syllabi "Interpersonal and Communication Skills", "Contemporary Issues of Business and Management", "Introduction to the World of Business", "Key Foundation Skills" etc.) and the experts panel suggests their correction.

While creating the study programs University followed current legislation on European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), but in some cases the students estimated workload doesn't correspond to the number of contact and independent hours (for the teaching material and other activities, e.g. essays and other assignments) is too high for 5 ECTS or too low for 10 ECTS assigned to the courses (see the syllabi for "Business Startup", "Contemporary Issues of Business and Management", "Creativity and Innovation Management", "Legal Aspects of Business", "Principles of Management", "Democracies and Party Politics", "History of Diplomacy", "Global Security" etc.). Two courses could be compared and analyzed as an example. The course "International Studies" (10 ECTS) envisages 159 independent hours and according to the syllabus the students should pass the handbook of 616 pages, make the group presentation, write an individual essay (2000 words) and get prepared for the midterm and final exams with close and open ended questions. While the course "Democracies and Party Politics" (5 ECTS) envisages 91 independent hours and according to the syllabus the students should pass more than 2200 pages (from 35 different sources - books and articles), write a midterm essay, get prepared for two quizzes and final exam with close and open ended questions and essay.   Therefore, it is recommended to adjust the ECTS to the estimated workload of the students, considering the volume of the compulsory teaching material, as well as the time the students need to prepare the essays, presentations, reports and other planned assignments. It should be mentioned that there are typos in some syllabi as well (Different number of contact and independent work hours indicated in different parts of the syllabi. E. g. "Political Communication": 45/80 vs 49/76; "Introduction to Financial Studies": 47/78 vs 50/75; "Key Foundation Skills": 46/79 vs 46/104; "Political Psychology": 33/92 vs 30/92; "Adaptations – Text, Image, Culture": 15/135 vs 48/102; "Translation Theory": 48/102 vs 48.5/100).

The educational programs of the BUG provide students with opportunities to elect non-compulsory components, but it is suggested to increase the number of the elective courses after starting functioning in order to meet the various expectations and academic interests of the prospective students.

As already mentioned above, the BUG offers two Bachelor and one Master Programmes in three different fields. As indicated in the programme specifications/programme descriptions, there are the same teaching and learning methods used both on Bachelor and Master level, as well as in three different fields of studies. Namely, verbal method, brain storming, discussion-debate, case study, group (collaborative) work, explanation method.). All these teaching and learning methods are applicable and widely used in teaching of the educational programmes provided by the BUG, but they don't reflect the specifics of the level of studies and they could be more diversified, reflecting the specifics of the fields, which can be identified in the Subject Benchmark Statements of QAA (see: https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2.3-BSc-Business-Management.pdf, https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/4.1-BA-International-Relations-Flexible-Honours.pdf). It should be mentioned that there are some teaching and learning methods pointed out in the syllabus "English for Academic Purposes 1" and closely connected to the specifics of the subject taught, but these methods are not reflected in the programme description/specification.

The electronical catalogue of educational programs is published on the website of the institution, it is easily accessible and provides the students with information on the duration, qualification, aims, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, assessment system etc. The experts' panel was not able to reflect on timely updating of the program catalogue, according to the changes in the program, as the Institution is not authorized and doesn't function yet.

The BUG has developed the "Methodology for Creating Individual Teaching Plan", which considers the different requirements, needs and academic readiness of students, and has all prerequisites to ensure their smooth involvement into the educational process. . "An individual curriculum can be developed for a student, in particular for people with special educational needs, for students enrolled in the transfer education program, as well as for students participating in the exchange program, for students with particular health condition, for students during pregnancy and with child care responsibilities and for students of an educational program modified or canceled by the University" (SER, p. 41).

While analyzing the content and structure of the educational programs, the confusion, misunderstanding and miscommunication between different internal and external stakeholders concerning the academic degree provided by the Institution should be mentioned. In the interviews conduct https://fb77c667c4d6e21c1e06.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/4.1-BA-International-Relations-Flexible-Honours.pdf ed on the first day and partly on the second day of the site-visit, different stakeholders (academic staff members, representative of the University of Buckingham and the personnel of the BUG Marketing Department, as well as potential employers) mentioned that the BUG provides not only Georgian, but also British Degree (that is, in fact double degree) in collaboration with the University of Buckingham (which, of course, could be in line with the Georgian legislation and best national and international practices). While the Academic Affiliation Agreement envisages only the possibility of "British Award" to successful students only after the validation process, described in detail in the mentioned document. The representatives of the Quality Assurance Department, as well as the dean of the Faculty and the program directors underlined on the second day of the site-visit that the academic degree will be awarded only by the BUG and that the other stakeholders did not provide us with correct information. Here is the summary of some statements by different stakeholders on the academic degree and other specifics of the educational programs: the marketing strategy of the BUG will consist of collaboration with the University of Buckingham, double degree, British teaching methodology; the University of Buckingham will certify that the diploma awarded by the BUG will be compatible with the degree of the University of Buckingham; the BUG gives certified diploma of the University of Buckingham („იღ\ევიან სერტიფიცირებულ ბუკინგემის დიპლომს"); the programmes of the University of Buckingham will make this University special („ბუკინგემის პროგრამა გახდის განსაკუთრებულს"); the degree/quality of the English University will be different („ინგლისური უნივერსიტეტის ხარისხი იქნება სხვა").

There are also some ambitious statements in the SER on "meeting British Standards" and "introduction of the British model of teaching". Here are some extracts from the SER: "The two undergraduate programs (Political Science, Business and Management) will be fully implemented in collaboration with the University of Buckingham. Moreover, the validation mechanism, which involves monitoring and quality control of the educational process by the partner university, also ensures the recognition of the British University diploma by the University of Buckingham in case of successful completion of the program"; "However, the university has a unique niche – programs meeting British standards, with explicit recognition of the diploma in the UK. Thus, the target of the British University is future students who seek an international education". "The British University in Georgia is not going to be limited to the introduction of the British model of teaching" (SER, p. 4). Adapting of British Academic Model to Georgia's academic environment is the core of the University Mission as well.

The analysis of the educational programs of the BUG (especially their learning outcomes, teaching and learning methodology) revealed that neither the British Subject Benchmark Statements (as an exemplary document for British Academic and Quality Assurance Standards) nor the study programs of the University of Buckingham have been used as benchmark in the curricula development. The structure, learning outcomes, teaching and learning, as well as assessment methodology of the BUG study programs are designed mainly according to the established practices in Georgian HEIs. Only two British professors are involved in teaching process, that can't make the University British. Therefore, it is doubtful that the BUG – at this stage of its development - is introducing "British Academic Model and British Standards". The expert panel disagrees with the statements, arguments and explanations provided by the BUG academic and administrative staff that the academic values and academic integrity shared by the BUG community, or 10 ECTS assigned to the courses, or student-centered education, or estimated validation (to be performed in the future) by the University of Buckingham could be regarded as indicators of British Model and Standards.

As the interviews revealed the University programs and academic degree are not perceived by some internal and external stakeholders in an appropriate, adequate way. Besides there are some misleading and ambitious statements in the SER which are not proved by the current state of arts and the educational programs are not in line with the University mission.

The inconsistent communication, such misunderstanding and irrelevant marketing strategy, gap between the mission and the educational programs may create false expectations in prospective national and international students (they may expect British staff and "content", British academic degree and teaching methodology, which are not provided by the BUG) and their frustration may have negative impact on the prestige and trust towards the Georgian Higher Education System. Therefore, the expert panel recommends improving the communication strategy concerning the educational programs (content, degree awarded, teaching methodology), to adjust the educational programs to the University mission and to assure realistic expectations in prospective national and international students.

Evidences/indicators
- Descriptions/Specifications of the BUG Educational Programmes;

- Syllabi of the educational programs;
- Mission of BUG;
- Self-Evaluation Report;
- Academic Affiliation Agreement between the University of Buckingham and British Teaching University in Georgia Trading as British University in Georgia;
- Regulation on Learning Process;
- Methodology for Creating Individual Teaching Plan;
- Interviews with academic and invited staff, program directors, Quality Assurance Department;
- Electronical Catalogue of the Educational Programmes: https://www.britishuni.ge/en/blog/view/92/electronic-catalogue-of-teaching-programmes-at-faculty-of-social-sciences;

Recommendations:

- To reformulate and make the learning outcomes more subject specific and reflect the specificities of the study fields, using best international practices and especially the Subject Benchmark Statements of QAA.
- To adjust the ECTS to the estimated workload of the students, considering the volume of the compulsory teaching material, as well as the time the students need to prepare the essays, quizzes, presentations and other planned assignments.
- To improve the communication strategy concerning the educational programmes (content, degree awarded, teaching methodology) and to assure realistic expectations in prospective national and international students.
- To adjust the educational programmes to the University mission.

Suggestions:

- To classify the learning outcomes in the programme descriptions/specifications using the criteria of EQF and NQF "Knowledge and Understanding", "Skills", "Responsibility and Autonomy".
- To increase the number of the elective courses after starting functioning in order to meet the various expectations and academic interests of the prospective students.
- To improve the formulation of learning outcomes from technical and linguistical/syntactical points of view (e. g. in the syllabi "Interpersonal and Communication Skills", "Contemporary Issues of Business and Management", "Introduction to the World of Business", "Key Foundation Skills" etc.), to correct typos while indicating contact and independent hours of ECTS (e. g. in the syllabi "Political Communication", "Introduction to Financial Studies", "Key Foundation Skills", "Political Psychology", "Adaptations – Text, Image, Culture", "Translation Theory" etc.).
- To diversify the teaching and learning methods reflecting the specifics of the level of studies and the specifics of the fields.
-

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

○ ☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The BUG has the learning outcomes assessment system, which is transparent and fair and fully complies with the legislative requirements. Theoretically the provided assessment system should promote improvement of students' academic performance. The Learning outcomes assessment system as presented in the programs specifications/descriptions and the syllabi takes into consideration specifics of the field and uses adequate assessment formats, components and methods and is a good prerequisite for identifying whether students have achieved learning outcomes.

Assessment system and related regulations are clearly described and are in line with legal acts of Georgia. Transparent criteria are used and the assessment system as presented in the syllabi ensures equal and fair approaches. The BUG has an assessment appellation system in place, which is indicated even in the syllabi.

It should be mentioned that the assessment methods and criteria are more diversified and much more envisages the specifics of the courses, than the teaching and learning methods presented in the syllabi, but still there is a room for further improvement. The experts' panel suggests enrichment of assessment methods based on Subject Benchmark Statements of QAA (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-business-and-management.pdf?sfvrsn=db39c881_5, pp.8-9; https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-politics-and-international-relations.pdf?sfvrsn=73e2cb81_5, pp. 10-11).

The experts' panel was not able to assess how this assessment system will be implemented (if and how the students will be informed about the assessment methods and how fairly the assessment system will be implemented), as the University is not functioning yet. Therefore the experts' panel recommends consistent and effective implementation of the students assessment and its appellation systems.

Evidences/indicators

- Programme Specifications/Programme Descriptions;
- Syllabi;
- Regulation on Learning Process;
- Document on Planning, Implementing and Assessing a Research Component in Academic Programs.

Recommendations:

To implement students' assessment and its appellation systems consistently and effectively.

Suggestions:

To enrich and diversify students' assessment methods reflecting and the specifics of the fields.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Non-applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

o ☐ Does not comply with requirements

4. **Staff of the HEI**

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

4.1. Staff Management
o HEI has staff management policy and procedures that ensure the implementation of educational process and other activities defined in its strategic plan.   o HEI ensures the employment of qualified academic/scientific/invited/administrative/ support staff.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements   The university has developed a Staff management policy, which properly defines the main regulations and principles of staff management including the rules and principles of the recruitment of employees, their professional development and administrative performance evaluation. There are also developed regulations on the selection/appointment of staff, as well as affiliations with academic staff stated in Rules for Selection/Appointment of Academic and Invited Personnel and in Terms and Conditions for Academic Staff Affiliation to British University. The procedure of the staff selection incudes the primary selection, professional testing and an interview. Qualification requirements are well defined and clearly explained. During the visit it was observed that the staff of the university has proper qualifications in line with the HEI requirements, is highly professional and dedicated to teaching. The staff is well involved in the curriculum development and discussed with the administration every aspect of teaching as mentioned during the meetings with the expert group. During the interviews it

also became obvious that the university has developed very good procedure of smooth integration of academic and non-academic staff to the new working environment, which was outlined by the representatives of both groups.

The university has also developed a system of internal and external evaluation, performed once a year - so called the 360-degree circular assessment system, which allows a person to receive feedback simultaneously from all groups of stakeholders – teachers, students, employer's administration etc. enabling to get a full overview of the performance. The procedure of the assessment of staff, criteria and guidelines are defined in the Rules for the evaluation of scientific-research and academic activities of the academic staff of British University). During the visit the members of the academic staff seemed well aware of evaluation procedure and requirements,
There was provided a link to the specific document which proves consideration of employee's performance evaluation results in that process remuneration and specifies the remuneration mechanism. However, the reward and remuneration system is not implemented so far as the teaching activity has not started yet and no evaluations were performed.
The university has also properly defined the rules and conditions of affiliation and already has employed 13 affiliated staff, however, during the visit the expert panel observed different understanding of what is meant by the term "affiliation" in context of the university and would recommend to the teaching staff to become familiar with existing regulations on the staff management.
The university also plans to actively engage their partner - Buckingham University in the training of academic staff with several visit to UK planned as soon as the Covid-19 situation enables travel between countries. It will be also beneficial to attract social partners like employers to the study process buy delivering lectures and seminars on relevant topics. This in turn will add value to the program and strengthen it's practical aspect.

Evidences/indicators
- Interview with administration
- Interview with Academic staff
- Interview with Teaching staff
- Examination and analysis of teachers' CVs and related material

Recommendations:

Ensure the clear understanding of the affiliation meaning by all members of the teaching staff.

Suggestions:

Attract employers to deliver lectures and seminars under current programs

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The workload of the academic staff both elected and invited is determined by the regulation issued by the University (Rules for Selection / Appointment of Academic and Invited Personnel, the methodology for determining the number of academic and invited staff at British University). The workload of academic staff is properly defined and explained in the Terms and Conditions of Academic Staff Affiliation. The workload consists of both teaching and research component, with the number of hours allocated to teaching (contact and preparatory) and to the research. At the time of site-visit the university had 26 Academic staff members (including 13 affiliated staff and 5 Invited staff members) affiliated staff members, is entitled to hold a permanent administrative position at the British University, with a part-time workload not exceeding 20 hours per week. The academic workload of academic staff is limited to a maximum number of hours depending on the position within the university and is applicable to both affiliated and non-affiliated staff.Workload for the academic staff seems reasonable as according to the SER the target ratio of the number of

academic/invited staff to the number of students is 10:1. This makes it possible to ensure that the study programs will be implemented and the students will get enough time and attention from the teaching staff. Scientific activities are expected to be carried out by all members of academic personnel by having publication in academic journals, participating in conferences, joint project with students and other institution. Taking into consideration the amount of teaching workload active involvement of academic staff into scientific research activities seems quite reasonable.

During the interviews it became evident that after the authorization is granted the University plans to attract more academic staff from Georgia and abroad to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the program. During the meeting with academic staff the experts panel also observed that several representatives were also working in other universities and companies, which they claimed was due to the fact that university has not started it's teaching activities yet. They also stated that once the authorization is granted and the studies begin they will dedicate their full time to the British Teaching University, however, that is a matter

Evidences/indicators
- Interview with administration
- Interview with Academic staff
- Interview with Teaching staff
- Examination and analysis of teachers' CVs and related material

Recommendations:

Ensure that the academic staff is not overloaded with other activities related to various employment contracts outside the BU.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation
- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☒ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

5. Students and Their Support Services

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

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

As the study process have not started yet there are no students in the university, therefore the experts' panel was not able to see how all the pre-defined regulations are conducted in practice, what the outcomes are, how the students experience them and what their opinions are. Evaluation is made according to the documentation provided and the interviews held at the university.

There is elaborated a regulatory document "Regulation on Learning Process", which clearly defines acceptance, suspension and termination procedures of student status, assessment of student achievement, procedure for awarding qualification and recognition of education, student's rights and responsibilities, terms and conditions of mobility and other issues related to the educational process.

According to the strategic plan, the university aims at enrolling international students. Therefore, all the crucial internal regulatory documents are accessible on the web page in English language as well.

The university has elaborated a form of mutual contract that will be signed between the university and the student.

Students of BUG have right to be transferred to another university in case the university is being suspended authorization or if a given educational program is no more functioning (according to the regulatory document - "Rule of Regulation of Study Process").

Students have right to be represented at high-level governing bodies – at the Faculty Council and at the Representative Council. It is recommended to engage students at different administrative departments temporarily by offering them internships in order to have their say in relation to the quality of processes and procedures taking place at the university. Thus, enabling them to get real working experience and an insight view of administrative work on the example of the higher education institution.

There is a note on the student's right of creating student's self-government in the General Regulation of the University. Currently there is no regulatory document for the functions and activities of student's self-government. It will be necessary to support students on the first phase of conducting free and fair elections, creating regulation of their work, planning future activities and consulting them on budget issues.

Representatives of staff are aware of their rights and university code of ethics. The last one is accessible on the web page and there is a lawyer who can defend students' rights. Students should be informed on this before the study process takes place.

Evidences/indicators
- Interviews
- University web and Facebook pages
- "Regulation on Learning Process"
- Job descriptions and qualification requirements
- General regulation of the university

Recommendations:

None.

Suggestions:

Keep students constantly well informed on all their academic rights.

Ensure active involvement of students in all activities and initiatives in the university (governance, students self-government, associations and more).

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

5.2 Student Support Services

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The university offers different kinds of student services that are summarized at internally elaborated document – "Rule on Student Service Provision". According to the mentioned document, self-evaluation report and interviews - students will be able to get information on their study performance from the faculty managers and private tutor. There is no pre-defined time, form or place for providing consultations to the students. It is recommended to create a document, where the information about consultancy hours will be indicated and shared among the teaching staff and students (via all

informational platforms) before the beginning of the study process. According to the interviews, some of the members of the teaching staff were not aware about their responsibilities as tutors. Additionally, there is no pre-defined regulation on these functions and responsibilities, which should be clearly defined by the appropriate document.

Information on the assessment system is provided in the syllabi of each course, as well as in program catalogue located on the university official websitePanel interviews confirmed that students would be familiarized with the assessment system at the beginning of their studies. It is crucial to provide feedback on their study performance. Currently there is no pre-defined regulation on making the feedback from the teaching staff compulsory.

Most of the services that will be offered by the university are summarized and represented within one document – "Rule on Student Service Provision" and the information on these services are accessible on the university web page.

Some counselling services seem not to be easily available to the future students of BUG (like - psychological counselling). Currently there is no special unit or staff where students will be able to refer to in case of certain risks arising during studies (depression, personality disorder, stress etc. for individual psychological consultations and/or interference. However, the university understands this need (according to the self-evaluation report and interviews) and it is stated in "Student Service Provision" (Chapter V. Article 9.1.) that students already have opportunity to consult with a psychologist. The information stated in the regulatory document must comply with the real conditions.

It is recommended to create the space where students, alumni and employers will have opportunity to connect easily. Meaning the university could inform students and alumni on employment opportunities in a fast and convenient way. The university should cooperate and sign memorandums of cooperation with more state and private sector representatives that will become potential employers of BUG students and graduates. So that university administration and program committees will have opportunity to do better market research, will involve more employers within the creation, development and assessment of the educational programs, the students and graduates of BUG will have more opportunity to get information on currents trends and necessities of labor market, will have more opportunities to do internships or get employed. The university should have a structured database of employers in accordance to each educational program, they should create internal space, either on their web page, on internal study process management system or on social media, to give the students and employers opportunity to get in touch with each other in a convenient and fast way It should also be noted underline that memorandums already signed with employers and potential practice providers lack information on number of students they accept and time the student will spend in case conducting practical course within certain institution.

In terms of cooperating with international universities, BUG has very few memorandums of cooperation. Students´ chances to get involved in mobility and international projects are very low.

The university has elaborated a document - "Financial Aid for Students", which includes regulations on issuing financial support to students with low SES. Information about the scholarships and financial support should be well disseminated and easily accessible via webpage.

The university should do it's best to engage students in government scholarship program. It is also recommended to provide more encouragement to students with high academic performance.

In case the student does not have highest scores but other distinctive achievements the encouragement should also be provided. Scholarships must be allocated for more than one student. It is recommended to offer them for second, third- and fourth-year students as well, which would increase their support and motivation.

Evidences/indicators
- Interviews
- University webpage
- Rule of regulation of study process
- "Regulation on Learning Process"
- "Financial Aid for Students"

Recommendations:
- Cooperate with national and international universities in order to offer wide range of national and international opportunities to the students and staff by signing memorandums of cooperation.
- Elaborate short and long-term international projects for the students.
- Provide real information on psychologist in the regulatory documents.

- Increase the number of employers, create a structured database and make memorandums functional.
- Provide a wider spectrum of cultural and sports activities for the students (with their involvement).
- Provide the information on scholarships and financial support accessible on university web page, diversify them for wider number of students and ensure to be well disseminated.

Suggestions:

• Elaborate effective encouragement procedures for the students with distinctive achievements (scholarships, finance their activities or provide them with appropriate facilities, awards etc.).

• Define consultancy hours and location for each course, and share it with the students and lecturers before the beginning of the study process.

• Ensure that teaching staff provides feedback to students on their assessment results.

• Ensure that student self-government has clearly defined action plan and the plan is well disseminated.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6. Research, development and/or other creative work

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

6.1 Research Activities

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

According to the SER, the University is „well aware of the importance of scientific research to ensure the quality of the learning process ", which is also reflected in the strategic plan as well as in the activity plan. At the moment the University has not started study process yet, therefore there are no ongoing research projects, however the University has developed Research Strategy and created established a Scientific Research Department and in joint cooperation with the academic staff there have been determined four research topics in politics, business and management and British studies area. According to SER shortly after the start of study process the University as the university starts its activities, profile research centres / laboratories will be established in accordance with the academic programs (step by step, according to the action plan, three centres / laboratories should be established three years later. During the site visit the expert panel had possibility to observe the facilities and was ensured that there are enough steps for these projects. However, being materially justified and quite ambitious these plans seem to have unclear vision of what role will the research component play in the whole activity of the British University and it is still unclear what will be the main research priorities. During the visit it was mentioned that various types of research will be implemented: joint projects with Buckingham University, foreign partners and employers, students, groups of researchers, with no clear focus on the concrete destination.

It should also be mentioned that some members of the teaching staff are already involved in various research activities and have a strong desire to start research in the British University. During the visit it became evident that staff is excited about the research projects, passionate to participate and according to the provided CVs is well qualified for such activities, but there is no clear understanding of what the research obligations of the academic staff in regard to teaching in the British University.

The institution has signed cooperation agreements with Buckingham University and is planning to gain their full support and assistance, but is also planning to actively attract students and foreign researchers.

The budget of the university is sufficient to implement their research strategy and develop a good cooperation with various institutions and originations.

Evidences/indicators
- Strategic development plan of British University;
- Action plan of British University;
- Business plan of British University;
- Budget of the British University;
- Planned research projects at British University;
- The organizational structure of the British University;
- Research Strategy;
- Research profiles of British University academic staff;
- Memorandums of cooperation with Buckingham University;
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit.

Recommendations:
- Develop a clear understanding of research obligations of the academic staff.
- Develop a clear vision of research priorities and its place in the activity of the British University.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6.2. Research Support and Internationalisation

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

According to SER the university has set clear goals for the research implementation and further development, this is also explained in details in the Research Strategy. As the first step there has been already established the Department of Scientific Research and during the meeting with the Head of this Department it became obvious that he has a good idea and understanding of the importance of the research activities and their interrelation with the study process.

The University is planning to issue scientific-research grants in order to enhance the research potential of the university. Also, the joint cooperation with Buckingham University will be an inevitable part of the research activities in general and participation in various projects in particular. According to The Contract between British University and The University of Buckingham there will be provided full support in joint research projects. Currently as the study process has not started yet no students are attracted to research projects, however, it would be beneficial to ensure their participation in research activities after the start of the study process. This would add value to the joint cooperation of various stakeholders and increase the efficiency of the study process.

After the start of the study process University is planning to start opening research laboratories (up to three) in order to actively promote research and attract students to participate in joint research projects with academic staff. According to the SER data and the CVs of the teaching staff it can be concluded that they have full potential to be actively engaged in research projects and a strong desire to be involved, which became obvious during the site visit.

The University has established a separate budget allocated to different types of research activities and even plans to start generating income by research activities at some stage, however, this seems a little bit too ambitious and unjustified. It should also be mentioned that at the current stage no separate academic staff budget for participation in conferences, trainees and workshops is developed.

The university is also planning to attract external researchers by approaching them as the projects will be originated. The internationalization of the scientific research will be ensured by the cooperation with UK partners, Buckingham University and others and implementation of joint international research projects, participation in international conferences and workshops.

Evidences/indicators

- Strategic development plan of British University;
- Action plan of British University;
- Business plan of British University;
- Budget of the British University;
- Planned research projects at British University;
- The organizational structure of the British University;
- Research Strategy;
- Research profiles of British University academic staff;
- Memorandums of cooperation with Buckingham University;
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit.

Recommendations:

Develop a clear strategy of involvement of external researchers and students in the research activities

Develop an individual plan and a budget for each staff member related to participation in conferences and workshops

Suggestions:

Not applicable

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has a Rule for evaluation of scientific-research and academic activities of the staff, which stipulates that the self-assessment report of the scientific-research activity will has to be submitted by each member of academic staff to the Scientific-Research Department by the end of the academic year. This document also clearly defines certain number of points to be required by the members of the academic staff depending on their position. Annex 1 to Rule for evaluation of scientific-research and academic activities of the staff clearly defines how many points are granted for each type of activity. Reports will be s reviewed by the Scientific Research Department and the results are provided by the Quality Assurance Department for use in the annual evaluation, these results will be forwarded to the Dean of the Faculty, the Head of the Program, the Human Resources Management and Scientific Research Departments on the recommendation of the Scientific Research Department. As the University has not started its activities yet it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of the developed mechanism, therefore it is recommended to ensure that all the related parts are well aware of it and all the activities are performed on time.

Evidences/indicators

- Rule for evaluation of scientific-research and academic activities of the staff
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit

Recommendations:

To ensure that all the related parts are well aware of the mechanism of scientific-research activities and all the activities are performed on time.

Suggestions:

Not applicable

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation
☐ Complies with requirements
☒ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

7. Material, Information and Financial Resources

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

7.1 Material Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

According to the Lease Agreement (signed on 6th April, 2020) the Landlord – LLC Unique Learning agrees that the tenant (LLC British University) has the right to occupy the residential premises of 2200 square meters. Under paragraph 1.4 of cause of 1, the lease object is carrying out educational activities. According to the paragraph 2.4 of clause of 2, the agreement will last till 6th April, 2040.

After visiting the infrastructure, the panel considers that material resources (fixed and liquid assets) serve educational purposes of the institution and correspond to the requirements for implementing educational programmes, namely, HEI building has the following compulsory sections: the foyer, recreation spaces, classrooms for teaching, administrative offices, space for group work, sanitary/hygienic units, the library. Distribution of various units supports effective implementation of educational and administrative processes.

During the tour of the facilities, the panel observed that the institution has uninterruptible power supply system, the building has divided sanitary units, which have continuous water supply, sanitary units observe sanitary-hygienic conditions and they have uninterruptible artificial lights and ventilation, the building has the central heating system and classrooms have natural as well as artificial light possibilities.

To provide the first aid, institution has a medical cabinet equipped with first aid tools, both natural and artificial lights, natural ventilation, and constant supply of cold and hot water. In addition, the person with an appropriate qualification is appointed as a doctor.

During its visit of the infrastructure and based on the presented documents, the panel considers that building provides students and staff with safe environment that is appropriate for education purposes: the fire equipment is located on each floor of the building, in a visible area, with detailed instruction of use (in both Georgian and English languages), and evacuation plans approved by competent agencies, security staff is allocated to timely and effectively protect material values of the institution. In addition, institution has the security video recording and storing facilities installed both inside and outside the buildings, throughout the premises.

People with special needs are able to freely navigate and move around the building (including, ramps, elevators, etc.), however, at the time of the site-visit, parking lot was not arranged for people with disabilities. As the representatives mentioned, they contacted the city hall regarding this issue. As a result, they were informed that after authorization they will be able to arrange these facilities.

Evidences/indicators

- Lease Agreement;
- Extract from the public registry;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit;
- Visiting tour of the institutional facilities

Recommendations:

Arrange a parking lot for people with disabilities.

Suggestions:	
None	

Best Practices (if applicable):
Not applicable

Evaluation
☐ Complies with requirements
☒ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

7.2. Library Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

During the site visit, the panel has also visited the library spaces, which include the reading hall, library staff office space, meeting and group workspace, IT equipment space (Total area is 413.9 square meters). The institution has developed regulations for the usage of the library. The reading hall is equipped with the appropriate inventory, including the printer, copy machines, scanners and computers connected to internet.

The part of the main literature mentioned in the syllabi is available at the library, specifically, at the moment of the visit, the following amount of books was available: Business and Management-25, Political Science- 9, British Studies-21. The institution provided the panel with the contract (09.09.2020) signed by the institution and the English Book Education in Georgia, which confirms the purchase of the additional books and ensures its delivery due to the 30th of November, 2020.

The books are processed according to the library rules and are based on the need for academic personnel and students. The library personnel are certified and can provide information on the library resources and services for students and personnel. The library is available for students and staff six days per week for 60 hours, however, considering the fact that one of the librarians does not have the English language competencies to accommodate international staff and students, it is not an ensured service for the English staff for six days per week for 60 hours.

The institution has access to electronic library network, specifically, a contract signed between the Institution and the Association for Science (Contact #2019-11/5) with the Agreement of the 7th of September, 2020, which enables the applicant the accompanying service-staff and students have access to the following electronic resources: Questia, Education Resources Information Center, Social Science Research Network, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, JURN.

Evidences/indicators

- Library regulation;
- Electronic library catalogue;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit;
- Visit to the library.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that all reading material is available in the library.
- Ensure that the library services are available to all future students, including international, by aligning the language capabilities of the library staff.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):
Not applicable

Evaluation
☐ Complies with requirements
☒ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

7.3 Information Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The institution has the developed "IT system and development policy of British University", which is a combination of IT management procedures, IT infrastructure and development mechanisms, which will ensure the protection of users' rights and obligations, classification of the electronic data of the university and information security. The institution has introduced the electronic services and electronic management systems, which ensure effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility of management of services and processes.

The university's IT infrastructure provides the university staff and students with the computer equipment, software, and electronic communications. The digital equipment in the infrastructure are computers, projectors, scanner / printer, monitors, phones and the server. After visiting the infrastructure, the panel considers that IT infrastructure (computer equipment, software provision, internet) is constantly and continuously accessible for students and staff.

IT risk management is adequate and effective, data protection (including personal data) is ensured, namely, the university's entire IT system is protected by Sisko's Firewall, which protects against attacks and system crashes.

The website (www.britishuni.ge) of the Institution serves the communication and information functions, contains the contact and other useful information in the Georgian and English languages including: strategic plan, organizational structure, procedures of teaching, learning and assessment, staff, annual reports, research strategy and research evaluation framework, employment opportunities and other available services.

Evidences/indicators

- Receipts and invoices for IT resources;
- IT system and development policy of British University
- Official website www.britishuni.ge;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Meetings conducted by the panel during the site visit;
- Visiting tour of the facilities.

Evaluation

☒ Fully complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

Recommendations:

None

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

7.4 Financial Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The main source of funding for British University is the funding from the University's Founder and the revenue from its activities, which is taking into consideration while preparing the budget for the period of 2020/2026. The budget also is prepared in accordance with the successful implementation of Strategic plan and the Action plan and is based on relevant assumptions and requisites.

However, at the current stage it is unclear what and how these funds will be spent and whether they will be sufficient to achieve the stated goals. Financial resources, which are assigned to the realization of some goals seems unreal: the university is willing to achieve high wants to internationalization of its academic and administrative staff, but the funding for this activity is not reflected in the action plan. The university has defined a budget for various research activities in the amount of 860 thousand GEL. However, it is not clear what the research priorities of the institutes are, as well as what research centers and laboratories will be created.

The capitalization of the university is low, and additional sources of funding are unclear. One of the alternatives, such as "Income from training and certification programs," is highly unjustified. Also, given the current tuition fees, it is unlikely that the university will be able to assume 450 students. Meanwhile the whole budget, income, and expenses are based only on student contributions.

The budget provided by the Institution allocates the adequate financial means for funding activities of students, academic and scientific staff, such as participation in conferences, publishing articles in international journals, etc. The institution has adequate and sufficient financial resources for a continuous implementation of a scientific research, equally available to all individuals.

Therefore, at the current stage based on the documentations the institution submitted and considering interviews conducted during the site-visit it is not possible to assess whether the allocation of financial resources described in the budget is, in general, economically achievable.

The University has also developed a policy for the introduction of a financial management and control system at the university to ensure rational, fair and transparent allocation and usage of financial resources to achieve the university goals and improve the quality of management services. In order to achieve these goals, there is a management accountability system established in the University clearly identifying responsibilities of related parties and the functioning mechanism. The system is supposed to ensure the achievement of the financial goals taking into consideration all possible risks, changes in revenues and expenses and prevent financial losses.

Evidences/indicators

- Strategic development plan of British University
- Action Plan of British University
- Budget of the British University
- Internal Quality Assurance Guide of British University;
- Regulation of the British University;
- The Introduction of the Financial Management and Control Policy at the University;
- Site visits
- Interviews

Recommendations:

Ensure proper functioning of financial management and control system.

Develop a realistic and measurable plan for diversifying funding sources.

Suggestions:

None

Best Practices (if applicable):

Not applicable

Evaluation

- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☒ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements