განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

Higher Education Programme Name

PhD in Business Administration

HEI's Name

Caucasus International University

Date(s) of Evaluation
05.07.2019

Report Submission Date
22.07.2019

Tbilisi

July 2019

HEI's Information Profile

Name of the HEI	Caucasus International University - LLC
Organizational-Legal Form	Limited Liability Company
Type of the Institution	The University
ID number	201951637

Higher Education Programme Information Profile

Name of the Program	PhD Program in Business Administration
Level of Education	Doctoral studies
The Language of Instruction	Georgian
Qualification Granted	Doctor of Business Administration
Direction	Business Administration
Field	
Sub-field	
Qualification Code	02
Number of Credits	180
Location the Program is Carried Out (street, city/ municipality, campus, postal code, country)	# 73, Chargali street, Nadzaladevi district, Tbilisi, teaching block N1 0141 Georgia
Program Status (New/authorized/accredited)	New
In case the program is authorized or accredited, please specify the date and the number of the decision	
Accreditation expiration date	

Ex-pert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Prof. M. Abdul Rauf Wittenborg University, Apeldoorn, the Netherlands
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Prof. Tamar Magalashvili Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Mr. Irakli Gabriadze (student member) PhD Student, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

Accreditation Report Executive Summary

- **General information on the education programme**
  PhD program in Business Administration belongs to the third cycle of higher education system and its aim is to prepare research scientists, who will possess in-depth theoretical knowledge, scientific and methodological skills necessary to conduct research. PhD program is oriented to prepare graduates, who will be able to plan and conduct research independently, to create new knowledge and to develop their best pedagogical and knowledge transfer skills. PhD in Business Administration program consists of 180 ECTS credits and its duration is 3 years. The graduate of the program will receive academic degree of PhD in Business Administration.

- **Brief overview of the accreditation site-visit**

  The selected expert panel for this accreditation assessment visited the CIU on Friday 5th of July 2019 at the campus of CIU located in the North of Tbilisi. Before the site visit, expert panel (Abdul Rauf, Tamar Magalashvili and Irakli Gabriadze) had the meeting at the national center for educational quality enhancement in order to consider SER and to prepare the site visit discussions. Expert panel defined all important and necessary aspects and questions which were asked during the interview and helped us to determine the compliance of the programme with accreditation standards. Necessary information and all relevant documents were prepared by the HEI and available for the panel's perusal before this site visit. The experts' panel received the programme self-evaluation report (SER) translated in English by the EQE center, the Programme Description document accompanied by detailed syllabi of the PhD programme, documents regarding university services, aacademic regulations including QA, and University Statute, etc., Agreements with international partners, academic and non-academic staff CVs and documentation regarding the academic staff, and other relevant documentation were also available for the expert panel's review.

  On July 5, the expert panel started their work early in the morning by 9:00 am. Based on the agreed site visit agenda we had the meeting with the university administration, the self-evaluation development team, the head of the PhD programme, academic/invited Staff, PhD students from the previous programme and alumnus from the previous PhD in Business Administration programme and representatives of prospective employers. We also had a tour through the institution (facilities) library, classrooms, work stations for the PhD students, etc. The site visit completed smoothly as per plans and the agreed agenda. All participants from the HEI were very

cooperative and willing to participate in discussion in an open and fruitful manner. Requests from the panel regarding the provision of additional information were handled professionally during the visit.

The accreditation visit was well organized. The site visit was fruitful and contributed significantly to improve the knowledge of the panel necessary for an effective evaluation of this PhD programme. The experts panel would like to express sincere thanks for the hospitality and cooperation of all participants and their participation in fruitful discussions during the visit.

- **Summary of education programme's compliance with the standards**

The expert panel based on the evolution of doctoral program suggest the following programme's compliance with the standards. The programme's standard 3 and 4 complies with requirements and standards 1, 2, and 5 complies with the requirements substantially.

- **Summary of Recommendations**

Reformulation of the program learning outcomes in order to ensure that these are precise and connects directly with the program learning outcomes;

The panel failed to see if all learning outcome of each course is assessed through a carefully selected assessment methods appropriate for a PhD program. There is only some broad description provided in this regard, but no specific or precise information is given to evaluate this aspect with appropriate reasonings.

The panel was unable to find, necessary details such as mapping of the courses with the program learning outcome, vertical and horizontal cohesion, integration among courses and any rationality or justification of the learning outcome / content of selected courses and the selected assessments. It is important to explain this especially for the program PhD students to understand their progression in the program from the beginning to completion.

Regarding the minimum qualification requirements, it does not clarify, if from national or international institute? It was also unclear during the site visit if a master's degree even executive education or master's in arts with hardly any focus on scientific research or applicants should have achieved a Master of Science in relevant subject areas or an MPhil in relevant fields? It would be better to specify this.

It is suggested that the admission requirements should include a preliminary assessment on the social science research methods skills, especially qualitative and/or quantitative data analysis techniques, which are critical to judge any potential candidate's research capacity for this PhD program.

To ensure linkage of teaching methods to learning outcome.

To ensure achieving the goals stated in the syllabuses by teaching methods.

To measure effectiveness of the trainings and track whether lecturers try to implement knowledge gained during the trainings by quality insurance unit.

To define the meaning of modern methods and reflect it in syllabuses.

To develop a mechanism to measure the overall effectiveness of the program.

To develop a system of giving systematic as negative as positive feedback to the staff involved in the program.

To add analytical part in the document "Quality assurance mechanisms and assessment of their effectiveness".

To develop a system of changing supervisor.

To pay more attention in terms of quality control to administrative staff involved in the program.

To develop a questioner for evaluating a supervisor by a student.

- **Summary of Suggestions**

According to the self-evaluation report "the university has a great potential to become the leader in the country and region in the preparation of qualified strategists in the field of business administration". The panel finds that it is too ambitious without a workable plan to achieve this. It would be better to benchmark with specific prospective international employers and to find a precise criterion for local and international prospective employers in order to better provide/develop the necessary and relevant scientific and research competencies and skills through this programme. It would be wise to clearly explain what are the specific modern/innovative methods which will distinguish this programme from other competitive/similar programmes.

There are no information or aspects related to ethical standards or academic integrity mentioned in the programme objectives which should have been considered as it is near impossible to neglect such aspect in scientific research these days.

Panel finds that the HEI should develop a system to evaluate the learning outcomes in a structured way to make a list of possible future developments for the complete accreditation cycle. A possible evaluation which could be conducted every year (during PhD dissertation defense) to identify to what extent the graduates covered the learning outcomes and what can be done to improve the program. This evaluation process can provide necessary input for the further development of this programme on an on-going basis.

Regarding first learning outcome, "Theoretical and research-based fundamental knowledge of the latest achievements in business administration, which enable the expansion of the existing knowledge and use of innovative methods." It requires more precision for example "fundamental knowledge of the latest achievements in business administration" is too broad and could be interpreted in different ways. The panel failed to find any specific explanation of the innovative methods in the documents provided or during the site visit discussion. The scope of the Business Administration is also not defined for the PhD program to elucidate what it will cover and what it will not. There is a clear need to make the learning outcome more specific and specialized with a clear elaboration of business administration domain.

Regarding the second learning outcome, "Knowledge of scientific research and modern methods of teaching of the field." It would be good to add respective field at the end.

Regarding the third learning outcome, "Theoretical and practical knowledge of managing scientific activity." It would be better to mention, social science or business/management scientific research activity instead of scientific activity.

Regarding the third category of learning outcomes under first point "To develop new research and analytical methods and approaches, which are oriented on the creation of new knowledge and reflected in international peer-reviewed publications". It is unclear what is meant here by the development of new research and analytical approaches as it might not be possible for most of the PhD graduates achieve this learning outcome effectively.

Regarding the third category of learning outcomes under second point, "to plan, to implement and to supervise innovative research independently" it would be better to say scientific instead of innovative unless it is clarified accurately - what is meant by innovative.

It is desirable to set some international benchmark standards for selecting faculty especially for the PhD programme.

A budget should be set for any international faculty exchange programs and it should be promoted to connect the CIU faculty with other well-known comparable research institutions.

- **Summary of best practices (If Applicable)**

- **In case of accredited programme, summary of significant accomplishments and/or progress (If Applicable)**

  N.A.

Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

1. **Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme**

   A programme has clearly established objectives and learning outcomes, which are logically connected to each other. Programme objectives are consistent with the mission, objectives and strategic plan of the institution. Programme learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis in order to improve the programme.

1.1 Programme Objectives
Programme objectives define the set of knowledge, skills and competences the programme aims to develop in graduate students. They also illustrate the contribution to the development of the field and the society.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements The objectives of the PhD program in Business Administration is to prepare researcher, who will possess sound theoretical knowledge and methodological skills necessary to conduct research in the field of business and management. PhD program is designed to prepare future researchers, who will be able to plan and conduct a scientific research independently, to develop new knowledge in the relevant fields and to develop in the admitted doctoral students useful pedagogical and knowledge transfer skills. The objectives of PhD program in Business Administration of CIU appears to be in agreement with university mission which creates modern learning and scientific environment by implementing innovative methods, as well as through intercultural education and diverse university life, loyal towards democratic values on both local and international employment market. Program objectives appears to be explicit and achievable. The program objectives take into consideration requirements of the local and international market. A market research and discussion with the prospective employers demonstrated the need of qualified graduates in this area especially for the growing Georgian economy which was clear from the discussions with prospective employers during the site visit. However, the prospective employers were not sure about any demands of specific set of competencies / skills and jobs in the professional field. Though the need in academia for the Georgian education sector is evident. Programme objectives appears to be realistic and achievable and define the set of knowledge, skills and competences the programme aims to develop in the graduating students. However, it was unclear how this programme will contribute to the development of the field and the society in any unique ways compared to similar programs offered inside and outside Georgia. The programme is consistent with the mission, objectives and strategy of the HEI. They took into consideration local labour market demands and trends of international labour market in science and research.

Evidences/indicators
 	
    o   Caucasus International University Statute;
    o   PhD Program in Business Administration;
    o   PhD Program in Business Administration Syllabi;

○   Component evidences/indicators including relevant documents and interview results.

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:

    ○   According to the self-evaluation report "the university has a great potential to become the leader in the country and region in the preparation of qualified strategists in the field of business administration". The panel finds that it is too ambitious without a workable plan to achieve this. It would better to benchmark with specific prospective international employers and to find a precise criterion for local and international prospective employers in order to better provide/develop the necessary and relevant scientific and research competencies and skills through this programme. It would be wise to clearly explain what are the specific modern/innovative methods which will distinguish this programme from other competitive/similar programmes.

    ○   There are no information or aspects related to ethical standards or academic integrity mentioned in the programme objectives which should have been considered as it is near impossible to neglect such aspect in scientific research these days.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

1.2. Programme Learning Outcomes

➢ Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or the sense of responsibility and autonomy, students gain upon completion of the programme;

➢ Programme learning outcomes assessment cycle consists of defining, collecting and analysing data;

➢ Programme learning outcomes assessment results are utilized for the improvement of the programme.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The HEI has defined the programme learning outcomes in the following three categories:

A graduate of the program will have:

- ➢ Theoretical and research-based fundamental knowledge of the latest achievements in business administration, which enable the expansion of the existing knowledge and use of innovative methods.
- ➢ Knowledge of scientific research and modern methods of teaching of the field.
- ➢ Theoretical and practical knowledge of managing scientific activity.

A graduate acknowledges:
- ➢ Role of critical analysis of research and scientific approaches and its significance in the work of improvement of modern principles and functional models of business administration.

A graduate of the educational program is able:
- ➢ To develop new research and analytical methods and approaches, which are oriented on the creation of new knowledge and reflected in international peer-reviewed publications;
- ➢ To plan, to implement and to supervise innovative research independently;
- ➢ To analyze achievements in the field of business administration and to develop practical events on the establishment of results of the analysis in a company, to offer and to implement new, effective proposals;
- ➢ To engage in ongoing scientific discussions within the field and to conduct theoretical-applied research;
- ➢ To prepare and to teach courses in business administration.

The programme learning outcomes are clearly represented in an intelligible manner in relation to the targeted scientific research field. The panel has studied the matrix and curriculum maps provided in which the programme curriculum and syllabi are linked with the programme learning outcomes and it has also studied and discussed the connection with the final programme objectives. From its discussions with the management, self-evaluation report development team, PhD programme head and academic staff and studying the course materials and all kinds of assessments, the panel concludes that in general the learning outcomes are in reference with the domain specific competency aims and the Dublin Descriptors. However, it is unclear why they have categories into these three categories and the criteria to do and the need to make this division. Although, some of the learning outcomes appear to be not described in a precise way but the panel concludes that the described learning outcomes of the programme meets the academic state of the art and the required level of qualification to be awarded on completion and to perform in the Business Administration.

Programme learning outcomes are consistent with programme objectives and focus on the overarching knowledge, skills and/or the sense of responsibility and autonomy defined by the programme content. Some of them difficult to measure, and/or appear unrealistic because of their phrasing perhaps. It is difficult to established whether they are consistent with the appropriate level of education according to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and with the qualification to be awarded as per the Dublin Descriptors. The programme learning outcomes are based on the sector benchmarks developed based on the NQF. Theses outcomes appear to be consistent with employment demands of programme graduates and consistent with the peculiarities of the field and labour market demands. These learning outcomes are developed by involving a good number of relevant programme stakeholders (academic/scientific/invited staff, students, graduates, employers, etc.).

As per the documents provided and the information mentioned in the self-evaluation report, it is not clear if there is any specific system is in place to evaluate learning outcomes that will directly and indirectly assess the programme learning outcomes except the general quality assurance.

The programme learning outcomes will be assessed consistently on a regular basis to ensure graduates attain the described learning outcomes. Such an assessment system should take into consideration the peculiarities of the proposed field in order to understand to what extent students reached programme learning outcomes. However, panel failed to find any specific information on professional development of the programme staff in establishing, measuring and analysing student learning outcomes. It is also unclear if the graduating students will receive any feedback to know to what extent they achieved programme learning outcomes as it would be useful to know what exact measures will be taken in case of any deficiencies in this regard.

Evidences/indicators

- o PhD Program in Business Administration curriculum;
- o PhD Program in Business Administration Syllabi;
- o Programme learning outcomes;
- o Educational programme;
- o Programme objectives;
- o Labour market research and analysis of employers' demands;
- o Documentation certifying the involvement the programme stakeholders in the establishment of programme learning outcomes;
- o Website;
- o Site visit interview results.

Recommendations:

- o Reformulation of the program learning outcomes in order to ensure that these are precise and connects directly with the student learning outcomes.

Suggestions for programme development:

- o Panel finds that the HEI should develop a system to evaluate the learning outcomes in a structured way to make a list of possible future developments for the complete accreditation cycle. A possible evaluation which could be conducted every year (during PhD dissertation defense) to identify to what extent the graduates covered the learning outcomes and what can be done to improve the program. This evaluation process can provide necessary input for the further development of this programme on an on-going basis.
- o Regarding first learning outcome, "Theoretical and research-based fundamental knowledge of the latest achievements in business administration, which enable the expansion of the existing knowledge and use of innovative methods." It requires more precision for example "fundamental knowledge of the latest achievements in business administration" is too broad and could be interpreted in different

ways. The panel failed to find any specific explanation of the innovative methods in the documents provided or during the site visit discussion. The scope of the Business Administration is also not defined for the PhD program to elucidate what it will cover and what it will not. There is a clear need to make the learning outcome more specific and specialized with a clear elaboration of business administration domain.

o Regarding the second learning outcome, "Knowledge of scientific research and modern methods of teaching of the field." It would be good to add respective field at the end.

o Regarding the third learning outcome, "Theoretical and practical knowledge of managing scientific activity." It would be better to mention, social science or business/management scientific research activity instead of scientific activity.

o Regarding the third category of learning outcomes under first point "To develop new research and analytical methods and approaches, which are oriented on the creation of new knowledge and reflected in international peer-reviewed publications". It is unclear what is meant here by the development of new research and analytical approaches as it might not be possible for most of the PhD graduates achieve this learning outcome effectively.

o Regarding the third category of learning outcomes under second point, "to plan, to implement and to supervise innovative research independently" it would be better to say scientific instead of innovative unless it is clarified accurately - what is meant by innovative.

o There are similar issues in the other learning outcome, for example the third "to analyze achievements in the field of business administration and to develop practical events on the establishment of results of the analysis in a company, to offer and to implement new, effective proposals". Business Administration is not properly define as earlier mentioned, it could cover possibly anything, it is better to provide an outline to have a clear scope of this. Second part of this learning outcome is incomprehensive, it might possibly be because of poor translation in English.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation:

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements

Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme		☒		

2. Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering

Programme admission preconditions, programme structure, content, teaching and learning methods, and student assessment ensure the achievement of programme objectives and intended learning outcomes.

2.1. Programme Admission Preconditions
Higher education institution has relevant, transparent, fair, public and accessible programme admission preconditions.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements   According to the documents and information provided, the main admission requirements for the PhD program are as follows: 1. A person, who holds MA or equal academic degree and meets the requirements set by the statute of the doctoral studies, is authorized to be enrolled in the Doctoral Educational Program in Business Administration.   2. Proof of English language proficiency on B2 level or bachelor or master's degree diploma of a program taught in English Language;   3. In case an applicant does not possess above mentioned documents, a person is obliged to take a test at the university language center at B2 level;   4. Motivation letter stating applicant's research interests;   5. Two letters of recommendation to admission committee;   6. Successful interview with Admission Committee of CIU.   The admission requirements reflect mainly the national legal requirements in Georgia for entry into a PhD programme. For example, regarding the minimum qualification requirements, it does not clarify, if from national or international institute? It was also not clear during the site visit if a master's degree even executive education or master's in arts with hardly any focus on scientific research or applicants should have achieved a master of science in relevant subject areas or an MPhil in relevant fields? Although, only one type of MA is recognised in Georgia, but it would be better to clarify this. Applicants must write a letter of motivation stating applicant's research interest and submit two letters of references. However, it does not specify any details about these two references whether an academic reference and a professional experience reference, from a company or organisation at which they have worked.   Although, motivation letter covers the research interest of an applicant but a draft research proposal on a suggested PhD topic should be a requirement in addition to the motivation letter not as part of

this motivation letter as one of the requirements in the admission criteria. Furthermore, they are interviewed by Doctoral program admission committee for intention, motivation and aptitude.

There is no preliminary assessment planned to judge on the social science research methods skills especially qualitative and/or quantitative data analysis techniques. However, it is unclear if all students submitting an information request to doctoral school are sent an email package of documents that includes information for the application procedure. Additionally, how the final admission decision is communicated to the student whether in writing, through email, with reasons, etc.

Programme admission preconditions and procedures are consistent with existing legislation. Programme admission preconditions and procedures are fair, public and accessible.

Evidences/indicators

- o Educational programme;
- o Programme admission preconditions (criteria and procedures);
- o Information publicity - methods of spreading information about programme admission preconditions;
- o HEI website;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o Applicants must write a draft research proposal separately in addition to the letter of motivation stating applicant's research interest in the selected Business Administration area. However, the selected/submitted topic or draft should have the possibility of a partial/complete revision and adaptations.
- o Applicant should also be required to submit two letters of reference and one of them should must be an academic reference and the second a professional experience reference (in case of work experience), from a company or organisation at which they have worked considering the academic nature of the programme.

Suggestions for programme development:

- o Regarding the minimum qualification requirements, it does not clarify, if from national or international institute? It was also unclear during the site visit if a master's degree even executive education or master's in arts with hardly any focus on scientific research or applicants should have achieved a master of science in relevant subject areas or an MPhil in relevant fields? It would be better to specify this.
- o It is suggested that the admission requirements should include a preliminary assessment on the social science research methods skills especially qualitative and/or quantitative data analysis techniques which are critical to judge any potential candidate's research capacity for this PhD program.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.2 Educational Programme Structure and Content

Programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of educational programmes. Programme content takes programme admission preconditions and programme learning outcomes into account. Programme structure is consistent and logical. Programme content and structure ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. Qualification to be granted is consistent with programme content and learning outcomes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The HEI operates with a methodology for the planning, development, and enhancement of educational programs, which consists of 4 main stages to design and implement any new educational program. Programme content takes programme admission preconditions and programme learning outcomes into account. Programme structure is consistent and logical. Programme content and structure ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes and final qualification to be granted at the end of successful completion of the programme is consistent with programme content and learning outcomes.

According to the information provided in the self-evaluation report and meetings held during site visit, similar guidelines for the doctoral programs in Business and Management has been considered during the elaboration of the structure of the program. The PhD program consists of 60 ECTS and research (120 ECTS) component, whereas the learning component itself comprises mandatory and optional elements. The educational component of the Doctoral Program aims to provide doctoral students with methodological specialization, it supports a doctoral student to complete a dissertation thesis and prepares him/her for future teaching and scientific research activities.

Mandatory elements of a learning component:
- Academic writing for doctoral students - **5 ECTS**
- Quantitative and qualitative methods of research in business **(10 ECTS)**;
- Modern methods of teaching (**5 ECTS**):
- Assistantship to a professor - **(15 ECTS)**;
- Thematic seminar - **(15 ECTS)**;
- Science management - **(5 ECTS)**;

As for the research component, in the program it is presented as the following mandatory components:
- Planning and design of a research paper;
- Colloquium of the research paper - 1;
- Colloquium of the research paper - 2;
- Colloquium of the research paper - 3;
- Completion of the dissertation paper and its defense **(120 ECTS)**.

PhD in Business Administration program consists of 180 ECTS credits and the duration of the program is 3 years up to a maximum of 4 years on full-time basis. Teaching process is structured around semesters. All teaching components last for one semester. A semester consists of calendar weeks. Each week comprises contact hours, as well as, hours for independent study work.

In the structure of the student workload the ratio of core subjects, electives and research components' weight is not clearly presented to see if this is done in a balanced manner. Thus, program structure therefore may not help in setting the objectives of the student workload effectively and the students to acquire the skills related to the programme objective. Also, it is unclear if the amount of credit points per semester is evenly spread throughout the study programme. Credit points and workload specifications needs to be carefully and properly implemented to achieve smooth delivery of the program. The HEI provided detailed course descriptions which are helpful for the students and teaching faculty.

However, the panel was not sure if the structural requirements for the programme, a relative grading and an entitlement to compensation for disabilities regarding students in terms of time and form of examination have been in place. A manageable student workload is ensured in the programme through a suitable curriculum design and a plausible workload calculation as per Georgian and European standards. Also, the number and frequency of the assessments seems to be of traditional masters' level program rather a PhD program and panel is not convinced if it can serve the purpose effectively. This was also highlighted during the discussions as one of the issues by the current PhD students and alumnus of the PhD programs at CIU. Assessments are spread across the semester, but the panel encourages the HEI to monitor regularly how students cope with the type of assessment as these appears to be rigidly structured and there could be some possibilities for necessary flexibility.

Educational programme structure and content is clearly not one of the strengths of this PhD programme and the panel failed to find any unique element compared to similar PhD programs. For example, when asked about any unique or innovative aspects of this program, repeatedly the module of Science Management was mentioned. The panel finds that this module covers a very basic and fundamental elements of scientific research. This is important for PhD students but normally such aspects are delivered via regular seminars/workshops. Additionally, the panel hopes that the tight structure might not pose any issues for necessary flexibility normally expected for a PhD programme both from student's research skills and teaching practices point of view.

Evidences/indicators

- CIU's methodology for planning, designing and developing educational programmes;
- Educational programme;
- Programme Syllabi;
- HEI's website;
- The data proving the involvement of stakeholders in modification of the program;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:

- There is a need to benchmark the study program against well-known internationally recognized relevant PhD programs. The core of taught program is focusing mainly on the key aspects of research methods and some basic management aspects without any clear identification and/or elaboration of core fields or subjects of focus under the broad area of business administration.

o The panel suggests to have a system to facilitate any special needs students if the structural requirements for the programme, a relative grading and an entitlement to compensation for disabilities regarding students in terms of time and form of examination have not been in place.
o The number and frequency of the assessments seems to be of traditional masters' level program rather a PhD program and panel is not convinced if it can serve the purpose effectively. Assessments are spread across the semester, but the panel encourages the HEI to monitor regularly how students cope with the type of assessment as these appears to be rigidly structured and there could be some possibilities for necessary flexibility considering the PhD level studies.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

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

2.3 Course
➤ Student learning outcomes of each compulsory course are in line with programme learning outcomes; Moreover, each course content and number of credits correspond to course learning outcomes;
➤ Teaching materials listed in syllabi are based on the core achievements in the field and ensure the achievement of intended programme learning outcomes.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements
Student learning outcomes of almost all obligatory courses appears to be in line with program learning outcomes. However, this cannot be confirmed as no mapping was provided to assess this. The content of each course corresponds to the course learning outcomes. Number of credits allocated for each course (number of contact and independent study hours for students) correspond to the content and learning outcomes of the course. Also, the ratio between contact and independent hours is logical and takes into consideration peculiarities of the course and the number of contact hours and teaching and learning methods (lecture, seminar, research work, etc.) corresponds to the content and learning outcomes of the course. However, the panel failed to see if all learning outcome of each course is assessed through the selected assessment methods. There is only some description provided but no specific or brief information is given to evaluate this aspect.
Teaching materials listed in syllabi are based on the broad achievements in the field of business administration and it is not sure if they ensure the achievement of intended programme learning outcomes. Mostly the compulsory literature and other reading materials listed in the syllabi appear

to correspond to course learning outcomes. Unfortunately, under this section, a lot of unnecessary emphasis is given to a fairly simple aspect of research literature and library facilities both in the PhD program and self-evaluation documents. The panel failed to find, necessary details such as mapping of the courses with the program learning outcome, vertical and horizontal cohesion, integration among courses and any rationality or justification of the learning outcome / content of selected courses and the selected assessments. Clearly an analytical reflection is more important than a generic description to help the accreditation experts to understand the program curriculum and its rationality.

The panel finds that it would be better to find latest relevant literature on a continuous basis to keep the courses up to date with the latest developments in this field. Additionally, based on the course content and information provided in the curriculum, the panel finds that there is less emphasis given to quantitative data analysis in the programme Syllabi and teaching. There should be some clear focus on developing both qualitative and quantitative data analysis skills considering the PhD programme in addition to teaching merely these two topics in a course(s). PhD student should also deliver mini seminar or guest lectures in other HEIs on visiting scholar basis to enhance their experience on a more comprehensive basis.

Evidences/indicators

- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;
- Course learning outcomes assessment results;
- Survey results;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- The panel failed to see if all learning outcome of each course is assessed through a carefully selected assessment methods appropriate for a PhD program. There is only some broad description provided in this regard but no specific or precise information is given to evaluate this aspect with appropriate reasonings. The HEI should map the learning outcomes for each course with an appropriate set of assessment methods pertinent to all courses.
- The panel was unable to find, necessary details such as mapping of the courses with the program learning outcome, vertical and horizontal cohesion, integration among courses and any rationality or justification of the learning outcome / content of selected courses and the selected assessments. It is important to explain this especially for the program PhD students to understand their progression in the program from the beginning to completion.

Suggestions for programme development:

- Considering the course content and information provided in the curriculum, the panel finds that there is less emphasis given to necessary details and specifications when it comes to the individual courses and integration among other courses. The panel failed to find, necessary details such as mapping of the courses with the program learning outcome, information on vertical and/or horizontal cohesion, integration among courses and any rationality or justification of the learning outcome / content of selected courses and the selected assessments.

Best Practices (if applicable):
○

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

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

2.4 The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performance and transferable skills

Programme ensures the development of students' practical, scientific/research/creative/performance and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The presented PhD program compiles of learning (60 ECTS) and research components (180 ECTS). The content of the program is oriented on giving the students the opportunity of gaining practical skills in teaching and scientific activities and involving in the scientific-research projects. One of the learning component –assistantship for a professor (15 ECTS)– implies giving lectures and conducting seminars for by PhD students. Also, preparing midterm and final examination tests, grading the exam papers/tests and reviewing theses of BA and MA level students. However, while conducting interviews, the expert team did not get the clear understanding whether the students find this component sufficient to gain the specific practical skills and develop them for future career. In addition, the content of the course of Modern Teaching Methods do not support students to implement and gain practical skills regarding the theoretical knowledge they get from this subject. The university proposes PhD students a new subject, Management of Science. As the subject has not been taught yet, the expert team could not trace its functionality, this is mentioned above as well. Though, according to the "content of the academic course", it is not clear whether a student can gain practical skills in accordance with the theoretical material that is described briefly in the document. According to the interviewees the expert team has met, the needs of prospective employers from different sectors were considered while developing the program. Though, there are concerns whether PhD graduates can bridge scientific research outcomes and gained skills to real businesses. During accomplishing the components of assistantship of a professor and researching, a student is supervised by qualified professor selected by the university according to the defined criteria.

Evidences/indicators

- ○ Memoranda with economic agents;
- ○ Syllabuses of learning component;

○ Scientific conferences materials, information on activities carried out;   ○ Scientific papers published by students (co-authorship);   ○ Survey results conducted by the higher education institution;   ○ Doctoral Educational Program in Business Administration;   ○ Statistical data confirming students' participation in research projects;   ○ Interview results

Recommendations: ○ To make the component of "assistantship for a professor" skills developing oriented and valuable for PhD students;   ○ To make a subject "management of science" more practice oriented.
Suggestions for programme development:
Best Practices (if applicable):
In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress
Evaluation ☐ Complies with requirements ☐ Substantially complies with requirements ☒ Partially complies with requirements ☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.5 Teaching and learning methods

Program is implemented using student centered teaching and learning (SCL) methods. Teaching and learning methods correspond to the level of education, course content, student learning outcomes and ensure their achievement.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements Teaching methods are defined in each syllabus of the program. Some of them are: interactive lectures, case study analysis, problem based teaching, group works, group discussions, demonstrations, practical work/home-work assignment, etc. Though, in some cases teaching methods noted in syllabi are too many and do not correspond to the learning outcomes. In addition, in some cases the effectiveness and efficiency of the specific teaching method/methods identified in the syllabi cannot be measured by the evaluation methods and criteria indicated in the same syllabus. Moreover, in some cases, teaching methods do not allow the students to achieve the goals stated in the syllabuses. University provides the professors involve in the programs with trainings on the topic of modern teaching methods. However, quality assurance unit do not measure the effectiveness of the trainings

and whether lecturers try to implement new methods or not. The panel failed to find any information in the documentation provided and also during the site-visit interviews. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that there is not clear understanding what does HEI regard in modern teaching methods. During the meetings with expert team, interviewees did not mention specific examples about individualized programs tailored to the needs to the particular student/s.

As the program is conducted in Georgian, foreign students are not involved in it.

Evidences/indicators

- o Program syllabuses;
- o Survey results made in the HEI;
- o Doctoral Educational Program in Business Administration;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o To ensure linkage of teaching methods to learning outcome;
- o To ensure achieving the goals stated in the syllabuses by teaching methods;
- o To measure effectiveness of the trainings and track whether lecturers try to implement knowledge gained during the trainings by quality insurance unit;
- o To define the meaning of modern methods and reflect it in syllabuses.

- o **Suggestions for programme development:**

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

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Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.6. Student Evaluation

Student evaluation is conducted in accordance with established procedures. It is transparent and complies with existing legislation.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The HEI has established students' evaluation system in accordance with the evaluation procedures. The assessment criteria for both learning and research components of the program are stated clearly and transparently in the syllabus. Assessment of students is based on their performance during the whole course period. The final evaluation comprises of two parts - midterm and final evaluation.

Midterm evaluation compiles of several components. The highest point students can earn is 100 points and minimal satisfactory level is 51 points.

Evaluation criteria are presented in each syllabi of the program and complies with legislation ("Regulation of Calculation of Higher Education Program Credits"). They are transparent and known to students (lecturers and supervisor inform the students during the first meeting). Though, in some cases evaluation criteria are very strict and inflexible and do not correspond to the PhD level. Moreover, in some cases, evaluation criteria do not allow the students to reach learning outcomes defined in the syllabi. Lecturers and supervisors who are involved in the program are familiar with evaluation system and criteria, which are presented in program in the standard manner and do not any reflect modern evaluation methods.

Thesis supervisor periodically assesses the doctoral student's progress by presenting three colloquiums during study and research process. Also, before the oral defense of a PhD thesis, students have to pass through the pre-defense stage where the students get feedback for preparation for final defense. This step somehow is a good rehearsal for students. Defence of the final thesis is conducted according to the University's "dissertation evaluation and defense procedures" with the participation of defence commission. Assessment of the final dissertation involves one internal and one external evaluator who are defined by defense committee. In case one expert gives the student unsatisfactory evaluation, the committee identifies the third one for moderation. Evaluation criteria are defined in the statement about dissertation defense committee. Evaluation is also made by two reviewers. Dissertation thesis defense is a public event.

Students can appeal the grade according to the relevant existing procedure in the university.

Evidences/indicators

- Doctoral Educational Program in Business Administration;
- Dissertation commission composition;
- Evaluation forms, components, and methods;
- Survey results conducted by HEI;
- Syllabuses of learning components;
- Evaluation system regulatory document;
- Doctoral dissertation evaluation and defence regulations;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:

-

Best Practices (if applicable)

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

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

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering			☒	

3. Student achievements and individual work with them

HEI creates student-centered environment by providing students with relevant services; programme staff ensures students' familiarity with the named services, organizes various events and fosters students' involvement in local and/or international projects.

3.1. Student support services
Students receive appropriate consultations and support regarding the planning of learning process, improvement of academic achievement, employment and professional development.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements
Interviews with students, graduates, academic and administrative staff, as well as evidence provided by the institution revealed that students receive consultation and support about determination of their profile, planning of learning process and improvement of their academic achievement. Also, they receive the information about the opportunities to participate in local and international events and exchange programs. In this process, students are assisted by administrative and academic personnel. In case of the problem students have the opportunity to address study process management department and get the necessary service. The interview with the students revealed that they are satisfied with the support services provided.
The consultation hour for particular course is indicated in the syllabus and also communicated by the lecturer. .PhD students also have the opportunity to use specialised rooms available in library and also in main building of the university, which are equipped with the necessary facilities for them to be able to conduct a research activity effectively.
Evidences/indicators
o   PhD Program

o Self-Assessment Report
o Interview with the University Administration
o Interview with the Programme Coordinator and Administrator
o Interview with students and alumni

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:
o

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

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

3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student supervision
Master's and Doctoral students have qualified thesis supervisors.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements
Interview with students confirmed that consultation time is adequate and that they have the opportunity to discuss the issues on their research with academic personnel and their supervisors. Students have the opportunity to meet with their supervisors as well as contact them via different means of communication. Academic staff workload scheme includes individual work with students. Also, during the interviews, it was apparent that faculty members were motivated and happy with the communication and supervisory process. Intensive communication was also mentioned by students. They have the predetermined schedule of the consultation when they meet and discuss issues related with the thesis. Also, communication process with the supervisors is intensive via different means of electronic communication. University has internal regulation in place with which it makes sure that PhD students have qualified supervisor(s) in the field of their theses. One of the requirements is that the supervisor should have a minimum number of scientific publications in relevant field and at least three years of supervisory experience at PhD level. In addition, students have the opportunity to have the supervisor from the other institution who meets the above-mentioned requirements in case such expertise are not available in house at CIU.

Evidences/indicators
○ PhD Program   ○ Self-Assessment Report   ○ Interview with the University Administration   ○ Interview with the Programme Coordinator and Administrator   ○ Interview with students and alumni
Recommendations:
Suggestions for programme development: ○
Evaluation ☒ Complies with requirements ☐ Substantially complies with requirements ☐ Partially complies with requirements ☐ Does not comply with requirements

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Student achievements and individual work with them	☒			

4. Providing teaching resources

Programme human, material, information and financial resources ensure programme sustainability, its effective and efficient functioning, and achievement of intended objectives.

4.1 Human Resources

➢ Programme staff consists of qualified people who have necessary competences in order to help students achieve programme learning outcomes;

➢ The number and workload of programme academic/scientific and invited staff ensures the sustainable running of the educational process and also, proper execution of their research/creative/performance activities and other assigned duties. Balance between academic and invited staff ensures programme sustainability;

➢ The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation;

➢ Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff of appropriate competence.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

Business administration doctoral program is implemented by academic personnel, as well as invited personnel who have scientific, educational and practical experience confirmed by at last 5 years of publishing experience of monographs, textbooks, scientific articles, systematic participation in national and international scientific conferences, training and capacity building activities.

To select the program implementing staff, the University held several competitions for academic positions. An academic staff of 22 is involved in the implementation of this program. Among them 2 professors, 17 associated professors, 3 lecturers are invited. From the above-mentioned academic staff, 2 professors are affiliated and 9 are associate professors. The academic process conducted by academic personnel and the lecturers invited for a particular period based on a labor agreement. The academic positions are drawn up by the Rector's order and persons with the relevant academic degree and scientific experience selected by the competition. In addition, experienced specialists with appropriate qualification, specialized training and research papers in a particular direction, invited as lecturers.

Invited teachers were specially recruited for the needs of the programme by the programme administration team and contributed to its development. The experts' panel had the opportunity to review all CVs of personnel who are involved in program development and implementation. Moreover, there was an interview session with several members of the personnel who seemed enthusiastic, caring about their subjects, aware of various learning approaches and supportive to the programme implementation. Interview session covered the areas like academic personnel's involvement in program development and implementation; assessment system; scientific components, teaching methods and so on. Thus, based on the interview session and CVs, university ensures to have competent, qualified and experienced academic personnel for the programme.

Head of the PhD program possesses the necessary knowledge and experience required for program elaboration and is personally involved in program implementation. His/her qualification is confirmed by appropriate education.

Evidences/indicators

- o Infrastructure of the university
- o University budget
- o Interview results with academic and invited staff.
- o Personal files of the staff
- o Survey results conducted by higher education institution;
- o Qualification requirements.

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:

- o It is good to develop a long-term HRM strategy to develop a pool of future researchers and scientists in the areas in which there is shortage.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

4.2 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff
➢ HEI conducts the evaluation of programme academic, scientific and invited staff and analysis evaluation results on a regular basis; ➢ HEI fosters professional development of the academic, scientific and invited staff. Moreover, it fosters their scientific and research work.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The Quality Assurance Services of the university regularly assess the program implementation academic, scientific and invited personnel training as well as scientific activities as per the established procedures and criteria.

Self-evaluation report outlines the following procedure used for assessing academic and invited personnel:

1. The Quality Assurance Department obliged to evaluate at least five core training courses within each program each semester;
2. The Quality Assurance Department required to introduce evaluation criteria to the university academic, scientific and invited personnel and explain the content and needs for their evaluation;
3. The Quality Assurance Service obliged to inform academic and invited staff on their attendance the lecture in advance;
4. The Quality Assurance Department authorized to conduct students and graduates survey on academic, scientific and invited personnel in accordance with the work plan agreed with the Rector at the beginning of the academic year;
5. The Quality Assurance Department establishes the evaluation form and criteria, individually informs the academic, scientific and invited personnel on the evaluation results;
6. The evaluation conducted each semester;
7. The evaluation carried out fully or selectively;
8. The evaluation results confidential for other academic/invited personnel of the university;

Upon completion of the evaluation, the Quality Assurance Department prepares the final report and elaborates recommendations to the Program Supervisor to improve any deficiencies. At the same time, the Quality Assurance Department asks the Program Supervisor to determine the alleged causes of violations. However, it is important to note that there are no measures or actions mentioned in the quality assurance system in case there are no issues. For example, under this section it is mentioned, "the Program implementing academic, scientific and invited personnel evaluate by the Dean during the study process, according to established criteria and forms." But it is not clear why and how it is done and in what ways these results are used. It is not sufficient to say "the Quality Assurance Department will use the results to improve the implementation of educational programs and to the professional development of academic, scientific and invited personnel". The panel was not convinced with the documents and information available of the results of the staff evaluation which gives us information about staff's participation in the conferences, training courses, research and consulting projects.

As per the self-evaluation report, in order to facilitate the academic staff and raise the level of their research, a number of measures have been developed and implemented in the HEI:

o Trainings are conducted on a regular basis for the purpose of obtaining financing from donor organizations to fund scientific projects and international scientific activities; Scientific Research Department provides individual consultations. The number of individual and institutional grants

attracted from Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG) is worth mentioning. Six out of the won nine giants were funded in 2018, which is the outcome of the University's research strategy.

o   Co-financing is allocated during submission of design proposals to donor organizations to support the University's affiliated staff, scientists and junior scientists;

o   From 2019 the University announces its readiness to fully fund the expenditures related to publication of scholarly papers of the affiliated academic staff and junior researchers in impact-factor journals that encourage researchers to publish high-level scientific journals

o   Scientists are funded in accordance with established procedures for participation in international scientific activities;

o   University Scientific Research Department along with the International Relations Department, conducts negotiations in accordance with the requirements of a particular scholar to attract foreign scientists – to involve them in the research as a key personnel or project consultant, as well as to implement a joint institutional project.

However, CIU verifies the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established procedure. Academic and invited staff has sufficient competence in the subjects they are teaching. This was proved by the list of scientific papers and other publications, participation in some projects of academic staff. Research and development activities are considered in the budget of doctoral program. University created R&D department in order to support the research activities.

Evidences/indicators

- o   Incentive mechanisms of the scientific-research activities.
- o   Scientific/research indicators of persons involved in the program;
- o   Results of academic personnel activities (quality of teaching and research) evaluation and satisfaction survey;
- o   Use of evaluation results in personnel management and development;
- o   Statistical data on the personnel;
- o   Indicator of the personnel involvement in international projects, conferences, studies and events;
- o   Documentation confirming international cooperation;
- o   The budget of Business Faculty.

Recommendations:

o

Suggestions for programme development:

- o   It is desirable to set some international benchmark standards for selecting faculty especially for the PhD programme.
- o   A budget should be set for any international faculty exchange programs and it should be promoted to connect the CIU faculty with other well-known comparable research institutions.
- o   The panel suggests not to admit students at least for the first one to two cohorts of PhD students on research topics expertise not available in house with the academic faculty of CIU. After successful implementation of the program with at least first two cohorts – only then new students should be

admitted with a possibility of having a PhD supervisor from outside CIU. This will ensure not only to meet the standards effectively but also important for a smooth delivery for the key stakeholders.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

4.3. Material Resources

Programme is provided by necessary infrastructure and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The material and technical base of the Faculty of Economics and Business ensures the achievement of academic outcomes envisaged by the educational programs, including this doctoral program. The faculty premises are equipped with academic auditions, working rooms, conference rooms, library, computer labs.

The university has a new library building where the students have all the necessary materials for their studies and the research work.

The programme offers its students an unlimited access to physical paper based and digital collection of scientific and professional/text book reading material and to computer labs, equipped with software packages for statistical analysis. CIU is registered as a member of the consortium for electronic information libraries - EIFL, which enables students to use the following electronic resources: EBSCO Publishing, Academic Search Elite Business Source Elite, ERIC (the Education Resource Information Center), Cambridge University Press and so on.

Evidences/indicators

- o   Visit to the university library and computer classes
- o   Self-Assessment Report
- o   Interview with the programme management
- o   Interview with students
- o   Interview with the academic and invited personnel implementing the program

Recommendations:
Suggestions for programme development:
○
Best Practices (if applicable):
In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress
Evaluation
☒ Complies with requirements
☐ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements

4.4.Programme/faculty/school budget and programme financial sustainability
The allocation of financial resources stipulated in programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to programme needs.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements The programme income is generated by the tuition fees received from the PhD students. The doctoral programme income is unable to cover all the costs, but the programme operates under the faculty of Economics and Business, which is financially stable and sustainable unit and easily covers the costs of the programme as well. The administration of the university also has expressed the willingness to subsidise the program in the future.

Evidences/indicators
 	
  ○ Program budget;
  ○ Self-Assessment Report
  ○ Interview with the programme management
  ○ Interview with the University administration

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development: ○	
Best Practices (if applicable):	
In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress	

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

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Providing teaching resources	☒			

5. Teaching quality enhancement opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilizes internal and external quality assurance services and also periodically conducts programme monitoring and programme review. Relevant data is collected, analysed and utilized for informed decision making and programme development on a regular basis.

5.1 Internal quality
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements Programme staff collaborates with internal quality assurance service(s) available at the higher education institution when planning the process of programme quality assurance, creating assessment instruments, and analysing assessment results. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.

The quality assurance unit of the CIU uses PDCA ((plan–do–check–act) cycle for program development. The head of the quality assurance unit and representatives of the other structural units of the university take part in all stages of the study process: program planning, implementation (current assessments and analysis), inspection and development. The unit assesses and evaluates activities and productivity of the academic staff involved in the program at the end of the semester. Though, in some cases lacks ongoing control mechanisms. Also, little attention is payed to administrative staff involved in the program. Quality assurance unit appraises the program based on the surveys mentioned above. Though it should be mentioned that the university does not have the mechanism to measure the overall effectiveness of the program which would show whether the program is functional or not. After conducting the survey, quality assurance unit takes measures in case of problems stated after analysis. Though, there is not a predefined system of giving feedback to academic staff based on the research results. The university has developed a document "Quality assurance mechanisms and assessment of their effectiveness", according to which the internal quality of the program is carried out. The document mainly gives the information in descriptive way and lacks analytical part that would enable the program to function more effectively. The quality assurance unit does not have elaborated assessment system for evaluating the supervisors by PhD students.

It is important to note that there are no measures or actions mentioned in the quality assurance system in case there are no issues. There is always a need to develop systems and procedures including academic content on a regular basis. Most of the information given in the self-evaluation report and relevant documents is of operational and/or procedural rather than strategic and long-term policy related. There is hardly any reflection or analytical analysis on the rationality of the quality assurance system and its expected success. The so called PDCA is described in details but it was difficult to understand how it is effectively implemented or will be implemented in future. When asked the same question from the head of the quality assurance, the same description was presented rather any convincing argument, example as an evidence of its effective and successful implementation. In most cases, it is easy to develop a detailed description of quality assurance system but the proof of the pudding is in the taste - the effective implementation of such a system.

The expert team could not identify activities and changes made by internal quality control system in order to eliminate weaknesses identified during self-evaluation report elaboration process or based on research results.

Evidences/indicators

- The Document "Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Efficiency Management";
- Survey results conducted by higher education institution;
- The University Quality Assurance Department Statute;
- The provision of Educational Process Management Service;
- The rule of regulating the learning process;
- Interview with University Administration;
- Interview with the SER team;
- Interview with the Programme management team.

Recommendations:

o To develop a mechanism to measure the overall effectiveness of the program;
o To develop a system of giving systematic as negative as positive feedback to the staff involved in the program;
o To add analytical part in the document "Quality assurance mechanisms and assessment of their effectiveness";
o

Suggestions for programme development:

- o To pay more attention in terms of quality control to administrative staff involved in the program;
- o To develop a questioner for evaluating a supervisor by a student.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☒ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

5.2 External quality

Programme utilizes the results of external quality assurance on a regular basis.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

Quality assurance unit, administrative unit, head of the program and the academic staff involved in the program use external quality evaluation findings for program development and improvement on regular bases. All the members of the staff involved in the program took in to consideration experts' recommendations and advises submitted after the accreditation procedures. They modified the program according to the findings of previous accreditation group which terminated program's functioning.

Also, the university practices evaluation made by Georgian and foreign colleagues employed in other higher education institutions for program improvement.

For fulfillment one of the goals of the program the university needs to research and collaborate more with potential employers for improvement and tailoring the program to the needs of the market.

Also, the expert team could not identify how and in what manner the program was externally benchmarked. There is not a document to trace the process. Even though it was mentioned during

the interview that the program was benchmarked, expert team did not find any specific indication developed based on it.

Evidences/indicators

- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o The HEI should collaborate with potential employers effectively especially in private business sector and in connection to the research done within the relevant PhD program(s). This is imperative to develop effective mechanisms for helping PhD students/graduates to bridge scientific research outcomes to real businesses.
- o Develop a system of periodic external benchmarking to ensure high quality standard in both research and teaching at PhD level.

Suggestions for programme development:

- o

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review

Programme monitoring and periodic review is conducted with the involvement of academic, scientific, invited, administrative staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders through systematically collecting and analysing information. Assessment results are utilized for programme improvement.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

One of the objectives of the document "Mechanisms of quality assurance and assessment of their

effectiveness", which is developed by quality assurance unit of the university, is to monitor and assess PhD program effectiveness.

The university monitors and evaluates the learning process for improving teaching/learning and researching process in the end of the semesters. Also, one of the objectives is to identify deficiencies in the program, define recommendations and plan preventive measures in order to avoid such inaccuracies in future that will ensure the program to improve and develop consequently.

The program monitoring and evaluation is carried out based on researches of professors, students, graduates and employers. At the end of each semester, on the basis of the processing and analysis of the information received from the surveys, it is possible to modify and update the program if necessary. Though it worth mentioning that the expert team could not identify (interviewees could not state) any changes made based on research. Also, the program's monitoring system lacks some ongoing reviews that would enable the program to function accurately.

Evidences/indicators

- o Academic/scientific and invited staff teaching evaluation results;
- o Classroom observation template;
- o Survey results conducted by higher education institution;
- o Interview with Head of QA;
- o Interview with SER group;
- o Interview with program coordinator;
- o Interview with academic staff;
- o Interview with employers;

Recommendations:

- o To develop ongoing control mechanism to manage the program quality effectively as per relevant standards;

Suggestions for programme development:

- o To develop a document for tracing the changes made based on monitoring.

Best Practices (if applicable):

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

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Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Teaching quality enhancement opportunities		☒		

Enclosed Documentation (If Applicable)

HEI's Name: Caucasus International University

Higher Education Programme Name: PhD in Business Administration
Number of Pages of the Report: **37**

Programme's Compliance with the Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
1. Programme objectives are clearly defined and achievable; they are consistent with the mission of the HEI and take into consideration labour market demands		☒		
2. Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering			☒	
3. Student achievements and individual work with them	☒			
4. Providing teaching resources	☒			
5. Teaching quality enhancement opportunities		☒		

Expert Panel Chair's

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Signature

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