**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

PhD Programme In LIFE Sciences

New Vision University

Evaluation Date(s)
May 19 2023
Report Submission Date
June 28 2023

Tbilisi

First Draft June 28 -2023

Contents

Information about a Higher Education Institution [1]

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	New Vision University
Identification Code of Institution	404987332
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Laurent Counillon - Université Côte d'Azur, France
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Tamta Lekishvili – East European University, Georgia
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Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	

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[1] In the case of joint education programme: Please indicate the HEIs that carry out the programme. The indication of an identification code and type of institution is not obligatory if a HEI is recognised in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country.

I. Information on the education programme

Name of Higher Education Programme (in Georgian)	სიცოცხლის შემსწავლელი მეცნიერებები
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	Life Sciences
Level of Higher Education	PhD
Qualification to be Awarded[2]	Doctor of Life Sciences
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	0511.1.1 Biology/Life Sciences
Indication of the right to provide the teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant cycle of the general education[3]	
Language of Instruction	English
Number of ECTS credits	60
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/new/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	Conditionally Accredited (1 year)
Additional requirements for the programme admission (in the case of an art-creative and/or sports educational programme, passing a creative tour/internal competition, or in the case of another programme, specific requirements for admission to the programme/implementation of the programme)	

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[2] In case of implementing a joint higher education programme with a higher education institution recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, if the title of the qualification to be awarded differs, it shall be indicated separately for each institution.

[3] In case of Integrated Bachelor's-Master's Teacher Training Educational Programme and Teacher Training Educational Programme

II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

- **General Information on Education Pogramme[4]**

The present education programme aims at training high level PhD students in Life Sciences. It focuses on cell and tissue biology/tissue engineering, microbiology/immunology neurosciences experimental cancerology and genetics. The programme consists in courses contents spread between mandatory methodological (45 credits) and elective courses (15 credits) on the very basics of Biochemistry, Microbiology/Immunology and Genetics or on follow up on the methodological courses. It is then followed by the research component in the HEI facilities. The programme is scientifically ambitious and benefits from a good scientific equipment/environment to train the PhD students for their experimental project. Its design is also influenced by the HEI ecosystemic vision that integrates the teaching part with research, institutes, socioeconomic partners, but also health.

Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit

The accreditation visit was held on May 19; after a series of preparatory meetings in which the panel members were introduced to the standards and procedures of higher education assessment in Georgia and in which the workload was shared between the panel members. A list of preliminary questions was also established and shared between the panel members. The interviews with the different HEI responsible and stakeholders of the programme were followed by a visit of the research facilities and of the library.

- **Brief Overview of Education Programme Compliance with the Standards**

The programme divides in a 60 credit courses contents (that contains both compulsory and electives) the thesis research work. Taken together the whole programme complies with standards in term of learning outcomes, courses and experimental contents, staff qualification and research laboratories.

- **Recommendations**

- **Suggestions for Programme Development**
  - The programme should recruit its first students ASAP (including international students) in the courses and in laboratory.
  - The programme staff should consider increasing the elective scientific course content to cover the gaps that exist yet concerning cell biology and in Neurobiology. This could be coupled to the creation of very basic level electives for students of different origins who may not have a background in a particular field. Of note the principle of adding such a modularity was very positively agreed on during the interviews.
  - The students number may increase fast if the programme become very successful. This could be anticipated by collaborative projects and maybe by decreasing the course contact hours (see previous sections) to alleviate a part of the teaching load to the teaching staff.
  - One important part for a successful and attractive PhD programme lays in the students' funding/salary during the PhD. While it is not included in the required standards, we prompt the programme and HEI top management to take this issue into consideration.

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[4] When providing general information related to the programme, it is appropriate to also present the quantitative data analysis of the educational programme.

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)[5]**

  - This programme it is built with an ecosystemic vision that interconnects teaching with research laboratories, institutes, socioeconomic partners and health through the private/nonprofit hospital associated with the HEI. There is also a strong drive towards internationalization with the aim to reach the scientific level of the best international Universities and Research Institutes.

  - The quality culture and quality insurance mechanism of the HEI are well detailed and of excellent quality.

- **Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI**

- **In case of re-accreditation, it is important to provide a brief overview of the achievements and/or the progress (if applicable)**

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[5] A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

III. 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 HEI. Programme learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis to improve the programme. The content and consistent structure of the programme ensure the achievement of the set goals and expected learning outcomes.

1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives consider the specificity of the field of study, level and educational programme, and define the set of knowledge, skills and competences a programme aims to develop in graduate students. They also illustrate the contribution of the programme to the development of the field and society.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The programme objectives are to train high level and internationally competitive PhDs in Life Sciences. For this, it focuses on both current and modern fields of Life Sciences that are microbiology/immunology (including phage biology and therapeutic application), neurosciences, cell and tissue biology/tissue engineering, experimental cancerology, and genetics. Such topics are indispensable in Life Sciences worldwide. These objectives have also been underlined during the interviews by scientists and employers who explained that specialists in these fields are needed to fuel societal development in the biomedical sector in Georgia. To reach these goals, the programme is divided in a study component that is given through a set of compulsory and elective teaching modules and through the PhD research part that is performed in the laboratories affiliated to the HEI. The programme design meets the accreditation standards in terms of credits distribution between compulsory methodology modules and electives with a choice between advanced methodology and disciplinary modules. This sums up to 60 credits. The research component of the PhD consists in a project that should lead to a defense and at least one first author publication, well in accordance with the international requirements for a PhD. Taken together the workload is realistic and consistent with a high-level PhD education in modern Biology.

The SER, the documents provided to the committee (e.g. programme contents) and the interviews showed that the programme objective and learning outcomes are well aligned with those of the HEI that has a strong ambition towards the best international science, new and somehow disruptive approaches in teaching and learning, as well as interdisciplinarity and modularity. This is particularly important to reach such goals at a PhD level, where the aim is to expand the students' horizon, well beyond transmitting disciplinary knowledge and technical competences. Taken together the programme makes use of the overall philosophy of the HEI i.e. learning by doing.

During the interviews, it appeared that this programme has been built with an ecosystemic vision that interconnects teaching with research laboratories, institutes, socioeconomic partners, and health through the private/nonprofit hospital associated with the HEI. There is also a strong drive towards internationalization with the aim to reach the scientific level of the best Universities and Research Institutes worldwide. This is commendable as such as this vision is required to drive top higher education institutions and programs.

Evidences/Indicators

- From the SER and additional documents provided to the experts the credits distribution, the proposed topics for theoretical courses and the research subjects are in line with the aims and organization f the programme
- During the interview the representatives explained that they had based their programme construction on a large set of discussion with the different stakeholders susceptible analyze societal needs and to train and recruit the PhD students.
- During the visit it was clear that both training and research facilities are well adapted with pursuing a PhD in biomedical Life Sciences. The facilities are well suited for cell culture, imaging (with a strong collaboration with Zeiss), high throughput sequencing. Of note through to the University hospital, the research facility has access to a in hours blood bank that is a particular asset for PhD projects using genomic approaches. (evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results)

Recommendations:

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- The programme should recruit its first students ASAP (including international students) in the courses so that they can also start rapidly in laboratory.
- One important part for a successful and attractive PhD programme lays in the students' funding/salary during the PhD. While it is not included in the required standards, we prompt the programme and HEI top management to take this issue into consideration to attract and stabilize the best students.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.1 Programme Objectives	☒	☐	☐	☐

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

➢The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specifics of the study field. (

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The connection between the course's depiction and the outcomes and all related matters could have been described more clearly and specifically in the SER that refers too much to other documents making the reading difficult. Nevertheless, it is clear that the programme aims at providing the PhD students with a "learning by doing" research education of excellence in Life Sciences. Learning outcomes focus on training specialists who can perform research and/or work in Biochemistry, Microbiology/Immunology and Neurosciences at very good to excellent international level. In this respect the aim is here to train very autonomous scientists who can think

by themselves, solve complex problems, and bring added value to the Georgian society. Reaching these learning outcomes is achieved in a reasonable manner through the teaching modules that go from the basic molecular mechanisms of life (Molecular Biology and Genetics; Biochemistry) that are necessary to understand microbiology and immunology. Those also connect very well to the projects and facilities available for the research part of the PhD (Sequencing, blood bank…)

Considering the background of the applicants and their interest, which can differ slightly, courses contents should be designed with the possibility to evolve in the next years (e.g. neuroscience, Data).

A particularity of this programme is to welcome students of diverse origins such as master's degree in biology, chemistry or biophysics or an equivalent academic degree, Medical Doctor (MD), Doctor of Dental Medicine, Veterinary and equivalent. Those may consequently not have the same level of knowledge in different biology fields. To achieve its learning outcomes in a realistic manner, the programme therefore proposes disciplinary modules that start from very basic knowledge, which is a good idea for unfamiliar students, but might be rather useless and slightly boring for those who already have a strong background. Such a matter and possible improvement will be discussed later in this report. The learning dispositive is completed with a courses section that consists in a set non-disciplinary modules directly aimed at providing effective skills for PhD and to learning by research. Those consist in: Basics Tools for PhD research; Teaching Methods 1&2, Seminar 1&2 (2 being electives) that all constitute very useful methodological modules for PhD students.

During the interviews and the facilities visit, it was clear that generating excellent PhD students was needed for the employers and the Georgian society as well. Since the COVID crisis the labor market in the Biotech/Medtech field is in expansion, not only for technicians, but also for highly qualified scientists who can have a leading role in leading startups and in the growth of larger companies or institutions.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER, PhD programme in life sciences general information,
- o courses list, syllabi and content that describes the contents and assessment method of each course,
- o interviews of the staff
- o Interview of employers and stakeholders who participated in the programme.

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for Programme Development

- o A suggestion would be to increase the elective scientific course content to cover the gaps that exist yet concerning cell biology and in Neurobiology. Of note the principle of adding such a modularity was very positively agreed on during the interviews.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	☒	☐	☐	☐

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

➤ Evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes are defined; the programme learning outcomes evaluation cycle consists of defining, collecting and analyzing data necessary to measure learning outcomes;

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

The New Vision Universtiy, has developed a mechanism for evaluating the learning outcomes of the program. This mechanism provides detailed descriptions of the methodology, mechanisms, and procedures used to assess the program's learning outcomes. In accordance with the provided regulation, the evaluation of the doctoral program in Life Sciences employs both direct and indirect methods. The direct method evaluates students' knowledge based on tasks performed by them (mostly assessed during the performance and defense of the doctoral dissertation), while the indirect method gathers opinions from stakeholders such as students, graduates, academic staff, and employers through surveys, peer evaluation, etc. which are used to assess the achievement of learning outcomes.

The Life Sciences doctoral program adheres to a program curriculum map that illustrates the relationship between program goals and learning outcomes. The curriculum map logically presents how each learning outcome is achieved through mandatory courses, with a focus on introduction, enhancement, and reinforcement.

The development cycle of learning outcomes in the program is logically described, considering the specifics of each study course and the overall program's learning outcomes. Additionally, a map showcasing the relationship between program goals and learning outcomes is provided, logically presenting the connection between mandatory study components and the program's goals.

The comprehensive evaluation of learning outcomes for the Life Sciences doctoral program is outlined in a learning outcomes plan. The plan clearly specifies the evaluation methods (direct and indirect) used for each learning outcome, defines evaluation periods, establishes target marks, and adequately defines each learning outcome. The evaluation plan aligns with the institution's rules and considers the field of study and the graduate level, incorporating suitable evaluation periods, forms, and methods.

The evaluation of learning outcomes for the Life Sciences doctoral program also employs an indirect method, such as student self-evaluation, observation of academic staff, employers' survey, alumni survey, etc. The employer and market research conducted in 2023 aimed to determine the labor market requirements in Georgia and match the qualifications provided by the program with the competencies of graduates in the field of Life Sciences. The alumni survey in 2022 assessed the competitiveness of program graduates in the labor market.

It is worth noting that the analysis of the program's learning outcomes evaluation is utilized to enhance the program. For instance, based on the so-called "early-diagnostic survey" (a direct method of learning outcomes evaluation), several module courses, like "Research Methodology I"," Research Methodology II", "Public Health I", and "Public Health II" were modified.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Educational Program;
- o Learning outcomes evaluation mechanisms;

- o   Questionnaires and minutes (surveys of stakeholders, early diagnostics report, market research, QA minutes)
- o   Interviews' Results;

Recommendations:

- o   Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- o   Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	☒	☐	☐	☐

1.4. Structure and Content of Education Programme

- ➢   The Programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of education programmes.
- ➢   The Programme structure is consistent and logical. The content and structure of the programme ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. The qualification to be granted is consistent with the content and learning outcomes of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

As previously explained, the programme has been crafted within the ambitious ecosystemic aim of the HEI and its "learning by doing" methodology. At this step, the programme is also strongly impregnated with the vision of the staff who built it, hence with a strong focus in microbiology, as evidenced during the interviews. The programme also has a strong connection with the research facilities present on the site: genomics, analytics, cellular biology, imaging, samples, and data from the nearby University hospital. Taken together, this makes a good use of the different assets of NVU. Of note during the interviews, it appeared that there had been discussions between the scientific and teaching staff and students belonging to other PhD programmes as well as with possible employers. The persons in charge also wrote surveys to be filled by all stakeholders. They processed the data.

The courses organization is logical and consistent for a PhD programme and to some extent its (still limited) modularity as well as the fact that each student will have his/her own research project ensure well the individuality of the studies performed here. However, the panel would like to stress that more modularity could be added for reasons explained further in the report.

Coming to the experimental research project, of the PhD, the HEI has the means of its ambition in modern Life Sciences with an open laboratory where every PhD student can work with very good equipment for classical Biology lab work, sequencing and genomics with blood analysis facilities (notably in the context of cancer therapy) and a blood bank. The PhD students also benefit from a modern cell culture room and high-resolution confocal microscopy through the collaboration with Zeiss. In addition, the language of education for this programme is English, thereby ensuring students internationalization by their ability to exchange with scientists all over the world.

The publicity and availability of this programme have so far not received clear advertising, but it is in a large part because it has received conditional accreditation for 1 year, which placed the PhD programme in a very difficult, if not impossible situation to attract students and to open.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER and additional documents
- o Interviews
- o Visit of the installations and equipment
- o

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Please think about adding more scientific electives and also about changing the assessment method

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	☒	☐	☐	☐

1.5. Academic Course/Subject

➢ The content of the academic course / subject and the number of credits ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by this course / subject.
➢ The content and the learning outcomes of the academic course/subject of the main field of study ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.
➢ The study materials indicated in the syllabus ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Taken together, the "Learning by doing" strategy is incorporated in most of the educational components which is supported by lots of practical activities covered by courses.

The educational component of the program consists of 60 credits and includes 3 mandatory/compulsory study courses (Basic Tools for PhD Research, Teaching Methods I and Seminar I) each with 15 credits, and one elective course with 15 credits. Offered elective courses are Teaching Methods II, Seminar II, Molecular Biology and Genetics, Immunology and Virology and Biochemistry. However, there is no elective course offered within the field of neurobiology/neuroscience, although among research areas of the programme are: (i) Neuroscience / Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology / Synaptic Plasticity in Health and Disease and (ii) Neuroscience / Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology / Neurotoxicology.

Of note, the contents, and volumes in hours of the scientific modules are rather high (> 180 hours). Moreover, in some cases, there are more contact hours indicated throughout the weekly activities than summed hours are given in the syllabi. It was explained during the interviews that, as the students are of diverse origins, some may not have enough knowledge in a particular field of life sciences. Students are also required to perform independent learning for an estimated time of about 380 hours. While this is commendable to intend to train students as completely as possible, such a volume of courses could be reduced significantly as PhD students must be able to learn fast and have also a significant scientific training from their previous studies. In order not to generate too much frustration, we therefore encourage to increase the diversity and modularity of these courses. One could imagine optional refresher courses for people coming from a different background, with more challenging courses for advanced biology students.

The programme also strictly lists and respects the requirements on compulsory literature and other materials, which are very well listed in the documents provided to the panel, and well identified in the library (while not fully visible during the visit). As it is here a very ambitious PhD programme, focusing too much on textbook literature, which is fine in most contexts, may not represent the adequate methodology for teaching at PhD level. For instance, topics of some elective subjects are too general and inclusion of some more recent trends in the field would be beneficial (e.g. epigenetics). As the structure and ambition of the HEI allows disruptive approaches, the present panel also encourages the staff to use research oriented interactive teaching at PhD level (e.g. inverted classroom, problem solving based learning, open discussion etc…)

The contact hours of Seminar and Teaching modules are more limited (Teaching methods I 63 hours, Seminars I 35 contact hours) but still with a high content of individual work, which is logical for such methodological modules.

The student's assessment methods (see later chapters in this report), that is an important part of the training (especially as it can be used as formative assessment) seems a little too narrow for the scientific modules as it consists in the answers to multiple choice questions. While such can be very challenging if well designed, it seems that at PhD level some other assessment methods (e.g. problem solving, assay writing, scientific article analysis etc…) could better fit the openness and excellence spirit that fosters the HEI and the programme.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Syllabi
- o   List of research areas of the programme
- o   PhD Programme description in Life sciences
- o   SER
- o   Interviews; SER as well as in the courses contents provided in the additional documents;

Recommendations:

Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Add one or more elective courses of Neurobiology/neuroscience
- o Correct the discrepancy between weekly and overall contact hours in syllabi.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.5. Academic Course/Subject	☒	☐	☐	☐

Compliance of the Programme with the Standard

1. Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme	Complies with requirements	☒
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adecuacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering

Prerequisites for admission to the programme, teaching-learning methods and student assessment consider the specificity of the study field, level requirements, student needs, and ensure the achievement of the objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme.

2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions

The HEI has relevant, transparent, fair, public and accessible programme admission preconditions and procedures that ensure the engagement of individuals with relevant knowledge and skills in the programme to achieve learning outcomes.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Programme admission preconditions are the following: Master's degree in biology, chemistry or biophysics or an equivalent academic degree; Medical Doctor (MD), Doctor of Dental Medicine, Veterinary and the equivalent of these qualifications. For graduates of a foreign university enrollment happens according to the Article 50 of the Law of Georgia on Higher education regulates.

Knowledge of English language at the C1 level (Proof of Proficiency such as TOEFL, IELTS certificates) or passing a university exam).

Candidate should apply to the dissertation council indicating the expected title, structure, and preferred supervisor of the thesis. Applicant should also submit a doctoral research idea -a prospectus and have an interview with committee formed by pre-selected field specialists. Evaluation components are defined and supported by the corresponding document.

Taken together, the admission preconditions fit well with the requirement of the standard.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   SER
- o   Programme description
- o   Website of the University
- o   Evaluation components
- o   Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results

Recommendations:

- o   Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o   Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions	☒	☐	☐	☐

2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The programme provides the student with professional and transferrable skills, allowing them to acquire knowledge, practical skills, autonomy and responsibility necessary for doing research, writing scientific manuscripts and present research outcomes to the professional community.

Most of the offered courses imply "learning by doing" and this approach begins already in the first semester with such subjects as "basic tools for PhD research", "teaching methods I". All compulsory courses are

dedicated to train student at using research tools and practical skills, design and plan the research projects and writing proposals using primary and secondary sources. Diverse teaching methods, current trends and approaches of higher education are taught. As previously explained the disciplinary courses are also in line with the PhD programme requirements but we encourage the staff to make it more flexible (with more electives), more interactive and think about the level of the contents.

Moreover, PhD candidate carries individual doctoral research with the supervisor. Supervisor takes responsibility to guide a candidate, maintain adequacy in the research process and make sure that the research topic corresponds to modern trends and a candidate works according to the principles of academic integrity. The University has a document on academic writing standards giving clear instructions to the candidates how to prepare a thesis. It also requires one peer reviewed scientific article for the PhD defense, which is an extremely important requirement for ensuring the scientific quality of the defended PhD.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Syllabi
- o SER
- o Programme description
- o CVs
- o Site visit
- o Academic writing standards

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.2. The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills	☒	☐	☐	☐

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

The programme is implemented by use student-oriented teaching and learning methods. Teaching and learning methods correspond to the level of education, course/subject content, learning outcomes, and ensure their achievement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

It is worth mentioning that this programme could not run yet and that therefore it was not possible to interview students who followed the curriculum. We can however infer information from the SER, additional documents, the different interviews, and the conversations with PhD students of the HEI (as requested by the panel), that all yielded a positive impression. Teaching methods are adequate for a PhD level. In particular, a large part of the courses is aimed at providing the students with the adequate knows how for a successful PhD. Those are well adapted with engaging the students in an active and project-based attitude. It is also worth noting that in a PhD programme the experimental part represents 2/3 of the programme and here research and many transferable skills are taught through the research project itself. From the interviews and the laboratories and facilities visits it was clear that this will be taught adequately.

As previously mentioned on the contents and the assessment of the disciplinary modules, it appears that a more open spirit in teaching methods and choice of contents could be applied: e.g. interactive courses, less textbook knowledge, more modern contents, larger choice of electives, more reasoning based assessment. This would better fit an international PhD courses content structure and would better reflect the HEI spirit.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER
- o Courses contents and syllabi
- o Interviews and site visit

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.3. Teaching and learning methods	☒	☐	☐	☐

2.4. Student Evaluation

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

When it comes to the assessment criteria for the courses taught during the doctoral program, the student can find the information layed out in the syllabi. It makes it transparent and clear for the student to see in what

way they are being taught and graded. Beyond this point we suggest to abandon the multiple choice questions for ther evaluation of the scientific modules.

Besides the taught courses of the program a very important part of the evaluation system is the thesis evaluation itself. The doctoral candidate will be allowed to defend their thesis once they pass the taught component of the program, get supervisor's recommendation on the admission of thesis and two positive evaluations from evaluators that have been appointed by the board itself and that each grade themat least 50% of 60 points each. They also have to publish a 1st author peer review article. In the case of very varying opinions between these two evaluators such as, a negative and positive evaluation or even in case of both being positive but the point difference being 15 points, then a third evaluator is added and the same principle is applied here as well. If third one evaluates with at least 50% of 60 points theta re approved but in the cases where the thesis is returned back to the candidate, then they are given a one-year period for correction.

In regard to the thesis defense itself, the evaluation of it is independent from the evaluation of the thesis itself. The defense amounts to $\frac{2}{5}$ and the doctoral thesis to $\frac{3}{5}$.

The doctoral thesis is regarded as defended, when the final evaluation is:

91-100 grades - Excellent (summa cum laude); 81-90 grades – Very Good (magna cum laude); 71-80 grades – Good (cum laude); 61-70 grades - Satisfactory (bene); or 51-60 grades - Sufficient (rite).

In case of 41-50 points which is evaluated as "inadequate", this thesis can be submitted and defended again within one year and the application regarding the repeated defense is to filed with the board.

All in all, it appears that the grading system is transparent and overall complies with requirements of this standard. Also, it gives students the opportunity to resubmit/redefend based on criteria which makes it fair and once this program has active students should be an easily implemented system.

Evidences/Indicators

Syllabi
New Vision University Dissertation Board Regulation - https://newvision.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/nvu_dissertation_board_regulation.pdf
PhD Program in Life Sciences

Recommendations:

o   Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

o   Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.4. Student evaluation	☒	☐	☐	☐

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies with requirements	☒
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with Them

The programme ensures the creation of a student-centered environment by providing students with relevant services; promotes maximum student awareness, implements a variety of activities and facilitates student involvement in local and/or international projects; proper quality of scientific guidance is provided for master's and doctoral students.

3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services

Students receive consultation and support regarding the planning of learning process, improvement of academic achievement, and career development from the people involved in the programme and/or structural units of the HEI. A student has an opportunity to have a diverse learning process and receive relevant information and recommendations from those involved in the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

This program although active does not have students currently but it seems that the mechanisms and the services that they plan to provide are fairly standard across the board throughout the university. At the beginning of the course, students have orientation meeting where they show and discuss the program, offices, the structural units and other element needed throughout their years at the university. While the panel visited the library it was also indicated that this facility also conducted orientation meetings in order to familiarize them with the database and everything that they offered. In terms of updates and if any issues arise, students can go to Student Services Center. The Student Services Center provides assistance to students by email, in person or by phone.

For PhD students, most importantly NVU provides support in carrer development. The office of Carrer Development provides services for students and its alumni in order to make them more employable by helping them with career planning, networking, and referrals. Students are encouraged to meet with advisors from their first year to get a sense of what they intend to do. Also during interviews with employers it was apparent that NVU had quite a few memorandum and had good relationships with the companies and places that employed their students. Additionally it was revealed to us that students also get the opportunity to help out and work at the university by teaching which in turns then makes them potential employees.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Interviews
- o New Vision University Regulation on Carrying out Educational and Research Activities - https://archive.newvision.ge/sites/default/files/regulation.pdf
- o Career development center web - https://newvision.ge/eng/career-services/

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for Programme Development

- o Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	☒	☐	☐	☐

3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

- ➢ A scientific supervisor provides proper support to master's and doctoral students to perform the scientific-research component successfully.
- ➢ Within master's and doctoral programmes, ration of students and supervisors enables to perform scientific supervision properly.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Due to the intrinsic nature of any doctoral programme and in general what a doctoral student requires, it is very important to have appropriate and highly qualified supervisors and staff in order to lead them into successfully completing the programme. The supervisors work directly with the students and are an essential part of the students experience with the program.

The primary responsibilities written out for a supervisor by NVU are as follows:

« provides academic advising to a doctoral student on planning their educational and research process.

meets with their student on a regular basis when they are working on a dissertation, provides timely feedback on different parts of a dissertation, and supervises the progress of dissertation preparation process.

advises and assists a doctoral student on the following topics: publishing articles in Impact Factor and/or peer-reviewed journals; obtaining research grants; participating in scientific conferences; fosters doctoral student's integration into scientific society, and supports, encourages and motivates him/her during the research process.

Reviewing the CVs and during the interviews it was apparent that the staff that NVU has and specifically this programme, is qualified and knowledgeable in their respective areas and therefore able to lead their students in this program to the end.

This was confirmed by the interviews and the laboratories visits in which the staff appeared very specialized, very motivated and experienced in managing research projects and laboratory students.

Data related to the supervision of master's/ doctoral students	
Quantity of master/PhD theses	NA
Number of master's/doctoral students	NA
Ratio	NA

Evidences/Indicators

- o Staff CVs
- o Interviews
- o New Vision University Regulation on Carrying out Educational and Research Activities - https://archive.newvision.ge/sites/default/files/regulation.pdf
- o Document - "Statement 2020 Regarding Educational Program Head(s) and Doctoral Student Supervisor(s)"

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.2. Master's and Doctoral Students Supervision	☒	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

3. Students Achievements, Individual Work with them	Complies with requirements	☒
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

4. Providing Teaching Resources

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme ensure sustainable, stable, efficient and effective functioning of the programme and the achievement of the defined objectives.

4.1 Human Resources

➢ Programme staff consists of qualified persons, who have necessary competences in order to help students to achieve the 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. Quantitative indicators related to academic/scientific/invited staff ensure programme sustainability.

➢ The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration, and also the appropriate competences in the field of study of the programme. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation.

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The workload of academic scientific and invited staff is reasonable supporting sustainability of the programme. This workload is defined by NVU protocol #3 of the Academic Council of NVU dated March 03.2022. Academic degrees, scientific work and practical experience of the staff are strong, and all necessary documents are provided to prove their qualification.

Program heads are 3 researchers with doctorate degrees in relevant fields with a strong scientific record. Programme includes 22 staff members, 21 of which are NVU academic personnel and 18 affiliated staff, which is a strong basis for the sustainability of the programme.

Administrative personnel – school dean, program coordinator, school manager, representatives of student service center, department of international relations, legal department, library are also available for the NVU students.

The interviews showed that the programme staff members who were invited to discuss with the panel were very qualified and knowledgeable for the present programme. Almost all have a PhD (see thetable thereafter). They also showed an important motivation to science and to training through higher education. Those qualities are essential for the present programme. The staff showed also a very good adhesion and was even proud of the ecosystemic vision of the HEI in general, and towards this programme.

The number of teaching and research staff involved in the programme given in the documents provided to the experts (SER: list of staff indicating the courses they teach) show a total of 22 academics with 18 affiliated to NVU. This corresponds to significant number of personals dedicated to the course's contents (>12 persons in charge of the different modules) and 10 staff members dedicated to the research component of the PhD. Furthermore, most of the staff (19/22) own a PhD and 3 a MD. This represents a sufficient workforce for starting the programme and ensures that all staff members are well qualified and specialized to ensure a proper mentorship of the students. There is to the best of the panel understanding, no dedicated administrative staff for the programme, which is logical given its size. The SER mentions that administrative staff such as the dean, school head; programme coordinator as well as school manager. The University also provides staff for student support that will be involved in this programme (students service, international relations, library…). Taken together this appears to be sufficient for a starting programme that will not have many students at the beginning.

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[6]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[7]	Among them, the affiliated staff
Total number of academic staff	22		22	18
- Professor	17		17	14
- Associate Professor	3		3	3
- Assistant-Professor	1		1	1
- Assistant				
Visiting Staff	1		1	_
Scientific Staff				_

Evidences/Indicators

- o The CVs of the staff members and different tables.
- o SER
- o Staff list along the course names
- o Staff workload

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for Programme Development

- o Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.1 Human Resources	☒	☐	☐	☐

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[6] Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study
[7] Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students

The Master's and Doctoral students have qualified supervisor/supervisors and, if necessary, co-supervisor/co-supervisors who have relevant scientific-research experience in the field of research.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The head of the programme, an excellent microbiologist with an international track record, is fully able to lead this PhD programme. This was very clear both from the CV and the interview with her and the other protramme team members.

A careful examination of the CVs provided by the HEI shows that many of the members of the staff for the present programme are also internationally visible scientists. They publish or are coauthors in good to excellent peer review journals, attend regularly international conferences and some have obtained prizes and distinctions. Furthermore, their thematic fields are consistent with the programme and per se, they appear capable to supervise a doctoral thesis in the field. In case a PhD research projects requires knowledge and or competencies that are not fully available at NVU, the SER also states that the students can recruit an external cosupervisor for their projects. This is an important point both to ensure scientific quality and to foster new collaborations.

Of note the examination of the CVs show that there are also staff members working on non-biological disciplines such as politics/international relations or linguistics who can provide their knowledge on the topics taught in the methodological courses.

Two matters will have to be thought of during the programme in the next years. Firstly, if the hired students number reaches 3 for each section of the programme; this may rapidly lead to a saturation of the number of PhDs to supervise for the 19 staff members. Secondly, the research facilities are at present well-sized to host the first PhD students but may at some moment become too limited in space if the student number expands fast.

Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	Thesis supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral thesis			
- Professor			
- Associate Professor			
- Assistant-Professor			
Visiting personnel			–
Scientific Staff			–

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Tables, staff CVs; SER, Panel interviews; lab and facilities visits.

Recommendations:

   o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

   o The student number may increase fast if the programme become very successful. This could be anticipated by collaborative projects and maybe by decreasing the course hourly contents (see previous sections) to alleviate a part of the teaching load to the teaching staff and transfer it to PhD student education and supervision.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students	☒	☐	☐	☐

4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

   The New Vision University periodically evaluates the educational and academic activities of the academic and invited personnel involved in the implementation of the program. For the purpose of the personnel development of staff, the university uses a Personal Development Plan, which identifies the needs of employees and adjusts the university action plan accordingly.

   The Quality Culture Committee evaluates the quality of educational and scientific research activities, as well as the professional development of the staff of the institution. The coordinating units for evaluating the staff progress are the university Human Resources Committee and the Department of Personnel Development. The Human Resources Committee semi-annually evaluates the progress of the staff and, if required, modifies the initial plan. The university supports staff to participate in local and international conferences, research, and grant projects; additionally, the university provides scholarships (partial or full) for academic/invited personnel to study abroad.

   The evaluation of the personnel involved in the program is also done through a student survey on a semester basis. In particular, based on the students' electronic survey, feedback on the activities of the lecturers is received, and the corresponding action (if needed) is provided. Module leaders, as well as the supervisors of the research component, are evaluated on a regular basis.

The staff is informed about the support and encouragement of their scientific activities. The university provides both co-financing and full financial support for the printing of articles in various scientific journals, participants in conferences, and other scientific activities. Necessary conditions (material, financial resources, etc.) have been created to facilitate the implementation of scientific/research activities by academic, scientific, and invited personnel at the University

Academic staff involved in the program participate in international projects, research and conferences (Appendix 12 for detailed information about the specific training/workshops/etc.).

The programme heads and PhD supervisors' duties are well codified and explained in a dedicated document (Programme Head and Doctoral Students Supervisors Roles and Responsabilities). The SER states that the HEI has a personalized development plan for each employee. Here the academic and administrative staff are invited to "analyse their own skills and make some changes in their professional development" (SER p23). Staff can also benefit from dedicated training sessions on various topics such as Innovative teaching methods; stress management, personal development plan, professional burnout etc…(SER p24), or workshops (project management, KPI systems etc…) that can be of use for the heads and mentors of this PhD programme. In addition, academic staff is encouraged to participate in national and international scientific conferences.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Curriculum vitae of the academic members and of the PhD supervisors of the programmes
- o Detail of the SER
- o Additional documents with detail of the staff for the programme management, courses and research components of the programme
- o Self-Evaluation Report;
- o Regulatory Documents (Appendix 07)
- o Staff Development (Appendix 12)
- o Budget (Appendix 11)
- o Staff Personal Profiles (Appendix 03)
- o Interview Results;
- o

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o No suggestios

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements

4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff	☒	☐	☐	☐
		27		

4.4. Material Resources

Programme is provided by necessary infrastructure, information resources relevant to the field of study and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

NVU campus has well equipped auditoriums. The Eco-campus offers areas for students group work, collaboration, and relaxation.

NVU Library is integrated with the international library network and has access to electronic sources such as the Elsevier system database for example.

However, on the visit day, accreditation panel members were unable to find randomly chosen books, indicated in programme syllabi, in the electronic catalogue of the NVU library, likely due to a computer problem that was to be solved in the best delay.

The University has well equipped laboratories that will enable PhD candidates to perform research. Important equipment notably include a ZEISS microscopy laboratory (with confocal laser scanning microscope); cell culture facility and a Prime Lab (with Next Generation Sequencing, Sanger sequencing and real-time PCR) Also, NVU has a in house Blood bank so that samples can directly be used for research purposes too.

The University has collaboration (supported by memoranda) with Ivane Beritashvili Experimental Biomedicine Center (equipped with behavioral test facilities for rodents, optical, electron and confocal microscopes) and Giorgi Eliava Institute of Bacteriophage, Microbiology and Virology (with 100 years of experience in phage research and therapy).

Taken together the different equipment and facilities available ensure that the first generation of students will benefit from an adequate scientific environment for a PhD in good conditions.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER
- o Site visit

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.4 Material Resources	☒	☐	☐	☐

4.5 Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in the programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to the programme needs.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The budget of the Life Sciences Doctoral program is a part of the central budget of the University. The range of expenses provided for in the budget of the HEI covers the range of needs to be met by both the university and the program. It takes into account both the development of educational processes and academic staff, the costs of scientific research activities, student needs, and the development of university infrastructure.

During the interviews, it was mentioned by the university administration that the university diversifies various sources of income and does not depend only on the payment of student's tuition fees, on the contrary, it offers various financial benefits to the students. The academic and visiting staff of the university also mentioned that the university finances them both for professional development and various scientific activities and with the funding of the university, they are given the opportunity to be fully involved in the processes.

In addition, the structure of expenses to be borne by the university is well broken down in the presented budget, and it can be said that the existing budget ensures the sustainability of the Life Sciences Doctoral program.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Budget – Life Sciences;
- o Interview with the rector of the university, representatives of the administration;
- o Interview with the academic and invited staff implementing the program, with the students of the program.

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o . While it is not included in the required standards, we prompt the programme and HEI top management to investigate how to ensure that the students have a full salary to perform their PhD and adjoining missions.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.5. Programme/ Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	☒	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standard

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	☒
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilises 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.

5.1 Internal Quality Evaluation

Programme staff collaborates with internal quality assurance department(s)/staff available at the HEI when planning the process of programme quality assurance, developing assessment instruments, and implementing assessment process. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

  Issues related to internal quality assurance at the New Vision University are coordinated by the Quality Culture Committee of the university according to the "NPLE – New Vision University Quality Culture Committee Regulation". The goals of internal quality assurance are to continuously improve educational activities and strengthen the culture of quality. With this focus, the university has developed a number of regulations and frameworks related to the elaboration and development of educational programs, as well as the procedure for review of educational programs and the mechanisms for ensuring program quality.

Quality assurance operates in accordance with the "plan–do–check-act" (PDCA) cycle and is used as follows: (1) program development and approval, (2) implementation according to the curriculum; (3) monitoring, evaluation and analysis (survey of students and academic staff, analysis of the results of student's academic performance, etc.); (4) Considering the results and modifying the program ("NPLE – New Vision University Quality Culture Committee Regulation" document for a detailed description: https://newvision.ge/eng/quality-assurance/)

The quality assurance service and the faculty are involved in the process of continuous monitoring of the educational process. Monitoring is mainly carried out through surveys of target groups and systematic observation of sessions.

Survey forms include the assessment of such issues as - satisfaction with educational programs, learning outcomes, assessment of management processes, infrastructure, needs for development, assessment of academic

staff, etc. Taking into account the results of the obtained information, data is processed, strengths and weaknesses are revealed, problems are identified, and ways to solve them are selected.

The quality assurance service provides regular consultations to academic, scientific, invited, administrative, and support staff on issues related to internal and external quality assurance, authorization, and accreditation.

From the self-evaluation report and the interviews conducted by the expert group, the involvement of the academic/invited staff in the program development is observed.

The involvement of employers has totally confirmed during the interviews, and their contribution is a valuable asset for the programs' development. The contribution and engagement of administrative staff in this process were obvious.

Various events and training are conducted by the quality assurance service in order to improve the development of programs and the teaching process at the university.

To summarize, the internal quality assurance mechanisms are well established in the university, and some of them can be considered as the best practice, among them the "early diagnosis tool" can be a good example. This should therefore apply to the present programme when it runs.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Program and Syllabi;
- o Self Evaluation Report;
- o Internal Quality Esurance Mechanisms;
- o Regulations of quality culture committee (https://newvision.ge/eng/quality-assurance/)
- o Evaluation of program learning outcomes;
- o Survey Results;
- o Interview Results.
- o

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.1 Internal quality evaluation	☒	☐	☐	☐

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

New Vision University actively uses external assessment tools for program accreditation in the process of developing higher educational programs. The university closely cooperates with the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of Georgia. In addition to the external evaluation carried out during authorization/accreditation, the university collaborates with local and international stakehoders and experts in the field to evaluate the program.

Life Sciences doctoral educational program went through the first accreditation process in 2002, where the number of recommendations and conditions were given to the university. All of the recommendations given that time, are fulfilled by the HEI (Please see the detailed report on recommendations in the self-evaluation document and in the program/syllabi files of the accreditation package).

Evidences/Indicators

- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Educational Program and Syllabi;
- o University web-page;
- o Interview Results.

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	☒	☐	☐	☐

Programme monitoring and periodic evaluation is conducted with the involvement of academic, scientific, invited, administrative, supporting staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders through

systematic data collection, study and analysis. Evaluation results are applied for the programme improvement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Information and rules on monitoring and periodic evaluation of the educational program are placed in the program regulations, in particular, according to the mentioned document, the procedures for initiating, approving, modifying and periodic evaluations of the program are defined.

For each program, a program development committee is established, which is responsible for evaluating/analyzing the achievement of the outcomes defined by the program. Accordingly, the assessment of program outcomes is carried out periodically by direct and indirect methods.

The direct methods of evaluating the results involve the assessment of student's academic performance and the "early diagnosis tool" is applied.

The indirect method of evaluating the results involves studying the attitude of all stakeholders of the program - a) Students, b) Academic/invited staff involved in the implementation of the program c) Employers d) Graduates of the program. The following instruments of the program learning outcomes assessment are introduced:

Questionnaires – a) Evaluation of educational courses and/or processes by the students in an electronic database, b) Assessment of student satisfaction

Self-evaluation questionnaire of doctoral students;

Peer evaluation of doctoral students;

Publication of a paper in refereed journals;

Assessment of module/research component leaders;

Evidences/Indicators

- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Educational Program and syllabi;
- o Regulations of the quality culture committee
- o Survey results and reports;
- o Interview results;

Recommendations:

- o Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review	☒	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	☒
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Name of the Higher Education Institution:

New Vision University

Name of Higher Education Programme, Level:
PhD Programme in Life Sciences

Compliance with the Programme Standards

Evaluation / Standards	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1. Education Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	☒	☐	☐	☐
2. Teaching Methodology and Organisation, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	☒	☐	☐	☐
3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	☒	☐	☐	☐
4. Providing Teaching Resources	☒	☐	☐	☐
5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	☒	☐	☐	☐

Signatures:

Chair of Accreditation Expert Panel

Laurent COUNILLON

Accreditation Expert Panel Members

Tamta LEKISHVILI

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