**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

Social Sciences,
Doctoral Educational Program

LEPL - Georgian Technical University

Evaluation Date: 26 October, 2023

Report Submission Date: December 12, 2023

Tbilisi

Contents

Information about a Higher Education Institution [1]

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	Georgian Technical University
Identification Code of Institution	211349192
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Martin Dahl, Lazarski University (Warsaw, Poland)
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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)	სოციალური მეცნიერებები
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	Social Sciences
Level of Higher Education	III, Doctoral Program
Qualification to be Awarded[2]	Doctor of Social Sciences
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	0319 Social and behavioural sciences, not elsewhere classified[3]
Indication of the right to provide the teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant cycle of the general education[4]	-
Language of Instruction	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	30 Credits
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/new/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	Conditionally Accredited, №22216, 14.01.2022
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] The representative of the university explained about the technical error in the self-assessment report. In particular, in the self-assessment report, the program code was given as follows: 0388 Inter-disciplinary – involving social sciences, journalism and information, instead of 0319 Social and behavioural sciences, not elsewhere classified(correct version)

[4] 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[5]**

The doctoral program in Social Science at Georgian Technical University has been running since 2012. After the conditional accreditation, the doctoral program in Social Sciences was modified twice. During the first modification, the head, doctor of Social Sciences, associate professor Karlo Kopaliani was added to the program according to the resolution No. 01-05-04/80 of June 29, 2022 of the Academic Council of GTU. During the second modification, the prerequisite for admission to the program was corrected Before the modification, a person who possessed a Master's qualification or an equivalent academic degree (field wide field classifier 03 Social Sciences, Journalism and Information) was eligible to study on the program. After modification, a person who holds a Master's qualification or an academic degree equivalent to it is eligible to study on the program (a broad field of the field of study classifier: 01 Education; 02 Art; Humanitarian Sciences; 03 Social Sciences; Journalism and Information; 04 Business, Administration and Law). The Social Sciences PhD program at Georgian Technical University has a strong research focus. Students are encouraged to conduct original research and make contributions to the field. The program usually includes a set of compulsory and optional courses related to a selected field of social sciences. These courses provide a foundation for PhD students' research and help deepen their knowledge of a given topic. The central element of the program is writing and defending a doctoral dissertation. Students are required to propose, conduct and defend an original research project that makes a significant contribution to the field. This is a multi-year effort and a major requirement for obtaining a Ph.D. The PhD program in social sciences at GTU allows for interdisciplinary studies, which allows combining knowledge from various fields to solve complex social problems.

- **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The site visit took place on the 26th of October 2023. It started with interviews with the Georgian Technical University in Tbilisi administration and a self-evaluation team. It was followed by meetings with the QA service, representatives of the academic and invited staff, employers, as well as with students and alumni. A visit to the library, lecture rooms and other facilities was also organized. The meetings and conversations led to understanding the specificity of the doctoral program in social sciences offered at Georgian Technical University. The meetings took place in a friendly and open atmosphere. The university authorities emphasized the interdisciplinary nature of the program. Meetings with the staff conducting classes and doctoral studies, as well as with students and graduates allowed us to observe the high involvement of people associated with the university. Both students of the program and graduates emphasized the strong connection with the university and the great usefulness of the studies in their professional activities. The above position was also confirmed during a meeting with the external environment, during which many people present were graduates of the visited university. International strategy was also mentioned, considering existing partnerships. During the site visit, it was also mentioned a closed cooperation between the self-

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

evaluation team and the self-evaluation group, the last one mainly composed of academics and invited staff. This additional information confirmed an effective and fruitful cooperation among colleagues.

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

  o The first stage of the assessment was the analysis of the documents sent by the university and the self-assessment report. The documentation presented was well prepared and allowed us to state that the doctoral program in social sciences meets the applicable teaching standards for this type of program.

  o The discussions during interviews added however the necessary information in order to appreciate the main additional value of the program.

  o Having analyzed all documents, having taken part at all meetings and having visited the institution, it proves that the program offers in general all necessary information that candidates need for their information, and for their theoretical and practical training. Students have information about the academic programs, study loading and goal of study courses, study outcomes, teaching-study methods, literature, assessment, and study calendar. Program aims and learning outcomes are properly defined.

  o The Expert Team had a quite positive overall impression of the visited institution and evaluated program with regard to content, level of definition and structure, also with respect to academic and professional demands.

  o Teaching resources are generally adapted to the program's aims and future development.

  o Conformably educational program compliance with the standards are as follows:

  1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme – Substantially complies with requirements
        1.1. – Complies with requirements
        1.2. - Complies with requirements
        1.3. - Complies with requirements
        1.4. - Partially complies with requirements
        1.5. - Complies with requirements
  2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adecuacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering– Complies with requirements
        2.1. - Complies with requirements
        2.2. - Substantially with requirements
        2.3. - Complies with requirements
        2.4. – Complies with requirements

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with Them – Complies with requirements

        3.1. – Complies with requirements

        3.2. – Complies with requirements

4. Providing Teaching Resources - Complies with requirements

        4.1. - Complies with requirements

        4.2. – Complies with requirements

        4.3. – Complies with requirements

        4.4.- Complies with requirements

        4.5. - Complies with requirements

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities - Complies with requirements

        5.1. - Complies with requirements

        5.2. - Complies with requirements

        5.3. - Complies with requirements

- **Recommendations**

  - It is recommended to limit the interdisciplinarity of the implemented program.
  - It is recommended to develop solutions that will make it easier for doctoral students to obtain international projects and research grants.

- **Suggestions for Programme Development**

  - Review the curriculum map to ensure that all the programme learning outcomes are developed on three levels.
  - It is suggested to create a system of internal grants to make it easier for doctoral students to conduct research and to ensure appropriate financing.
  - Based on the demand of doctoral students, it is desirable to increase their international mobility so that they can actively participate in various international conferences or useful events;
  - It is desirable to plan frequent counseling meetings with doctoral students and give them an intensive character;
  - Based on the request of the doctoral students, it is desirable to organize meetings with the authors of the defended dissertations around their dissertation topic, so that the latter can share their experience with them;
  - It is desirable to intensify the internationalization of doctoral students: on the one hand, through their mobility in international projects, on the other hand, in the direction of scientific productivity.
  - It is desirable that the thesis defense procedure should be complex, because a high number of defended theses may indicate the loyalty of the process.
  - The experts' team considers it beneficial for the academic personnel to prioritize more publishing in international recognized peer-reviewed journals, which also requires the advanced English language knowledge.
  - The experts' team considers that increasing frequency and scope of international events participation and more emphasis on advanced international profile of the academic staff would contribute to quality and outstanding research profile of the PhD Program in Social Sciences.

- Prioritizing the research activities through the increased investment in academic staff and doctoral students' scholarly development would improve the competitiveness of the program and ensure better correspondence to the needs of the labor market.
- Continue to support programme staff in order to ensure their full involvement and level of knowledge and skills for QA processes and increase the quality culture.
- Encourage deeper analysis of the programme during external evaluation.

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)[6]**

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

Response for the first recommendation: Interdisciplinarity. We do not think that faculty has clear understanding of the term interdisciplinarity. We ask for more clarification and beside etymological definition we ask to have more epistemological definition which means stating all possible methodological, technical, thematical, instrumental or contextual approaches. Please tell us briefly how you will implement interdisciplinary research projects. Thus, if there are successful projects already submitted please share it with us.

Argument against the TU position is that university does not have enough administrative staff resources, who possibly will implement "interdisciplinary" projects. Lack of international projects participated by the university staff, limited publishing knowledge and skills, and unusually high number and low quality of already defended dissertations, compels us to think that "interdisciplinarity" will create additional difficulties and scopes that faculty aims to reach will be difficult or impossible to achieve.

We would recommend to create strict disciplinary boundaries and grant students with clear or bounded disciplinary knowledge and expertise. Only through this approach will be possible to reach faculty goals, and after some time implement interdisciplinary or crossdisciplinarity projects. If under the term interdisciplinary you understand what we understand it here.

Response for the second recommendation: Research grants. To produce valuable scientific work you need two kind of resources. First Human and second Material. In social sciences formula for success looks this way: Human resource bring material resources, or to put it differently staff professors bring research projects or knowledge how to submit grant proposal, and at the end student gets money. Scientific productions in social sciences are quite expensive and difficult, compare to other sciences. Therefore, instead establishing extra entity (grant finding entity, which is good step but I am sure you already have one kind of international office that shares plenty of research exchange and research grant opportunities via university e mail), we would recommend to invite couple of experienced academic staff who bring important practical knowledge, and with old and experienced staff they could make theory-practice based faculty which could have chances to produce new and valuable disciplinary/or interdisciplinary kind knowledge.

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

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

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 program objectives and learning outcomes are clearly defined and are realistic to achieve. They take into account the specificity of doctoral studies and the specificity of the field of study - social science, level and educational program. Moreover, they allow graduates to achieve the learning outcomes assumed in the study program. The presented study program is structured in such a way that it allows the development of the field through scientific research. However, the competences acquired during studies are then used in practical life, both at the business and government levels, which constitutes the program's contribution to the development of society as a whole. The program objectives are consistent with the mission and strategy of the university, taking into account the requirements of the local and national labor market, and to a small extent the international one. Through cooperation with academic research centers, e.g. German ones, the international level has been achieved. The program's goals are publicly available and shared by people involved in the program.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Doctoral Educational Program "Social Sciences"
- o Mission, vision and values of Georgian Technical University
- o University Website
- o Self-evaluation report
- o Interview results

Recommendations:

Suggestions for the Programme Development

o   -

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 learning outcomes of the Social Science PhD program are consistent with the purpose of the program; Describes the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that a student will acquire upon completion of the program. The adopted concept of education assumes a close connection between modern scientific knowledge and the area of practical activity, which is reflected in the content of education and the achievements and competences of academic teachers. It also indicates taking into account the expectations of internal stakeholders - through the possibility of choosing specializations and optional classes as part of the student's program. The learning outcomes for the major have been described in accordance with applicable regulations. They are consistent with the concept and objectives of education and the general academic profile. Learning outcomes for classes and groups of classes are related to the expected effects for the field of study. The learning outcomes are consistent with the current state of knowledge and are adequate to the areas of professional activity expected for graduates of the field. Moreover, they are achievable and allow for the creation of a system for their verification, especially since the educational concept provides for the use of different and complementary verification methods.

Evidences/Indicators

o   Order No 69/6 by the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport f Georgia (April 10, 2019) "On Approval of the national qualification framework and study sphere classificator"
o   Doctoral education program "Social Sciences"
o   Program goals and mapping learning outcomes
o   Appendex to the Resolution of the Academic Council of GTU No 01-05-04/261 (September 23, 2019) "On Procedures of Planning, Preparation, Appraisal and Development of Educational Programs of the Georgian Technical University (GTU);
o   Survey results
o   University Website

- o   Self-evaluation report
- o   Interview results

Recommendations:

- o   -

Suggestions for Programme Development

- o   -

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	√	☐	☐	☐

- ➢   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.

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

GTU has defined evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes and the programme learning outcome evaluation cycle consists of defining, collecting and analyzing data necessary to measure learning outcomes. The programme learning outcomes evaluation mechanism describes in detail the four stages defined for the programme learning outcomes assessment, namely:
- •   Formulation of the programme learning outcomes;
- •   Curriculum analysis (mapping);
- •   Evaluation of programme learning outcomes;
- •   Usage of evaluation mechanisms for the development of the programme.

Curriculum map is defined for the programme, which also defines the level of attainment of the programme learning outcomes. The third level of attainment is logically achieved within the research component, however, there are no courses/components that are of introductory level (1) and the lowest level is 2. Even though it is a PhD programme, it is suggested that all the programme learning outcomes are developed on three levels, therefore, the programme staff should revisit the map and define introductory courses.

The learning outcomes of teaching and scientific-research component are evaluated in a constistent and transparent manner and the periodicity specific to the characteristics of the field, as well as the education level. The direct methods of assessment, as well as the benchmarks for their assessment are developed in the programme learning evaluation plan and are logically defined. Every programme learning outcome has

benchmarks of assessment, which is developed in accordance with the normal distribution of the students' assessment. As for indirect methods of assessment, the student, alumni, or employer surveys are used. The plan of evaluation of learning outcomes includes the research-dedicated semesters, and as the students in semesters 3,4,5,6 are not assessed with direct methods of assessment, the indirect method of evaluation, observing students' research activities is used.

As the indirect methods of assessment ensure engagement of employers and alumni, the engagement of external stakeholders in evaluation of learning outcomes is ensured. Also, the methodology for programme learning outcomes assessment envisages involvement of other relevant stakeholders, if needed.

The evaluation of the programme learning outcomes of the presented programme has not been carried out yet, however, as the programme was recently modified, there was no sufficient time for the evaluation cycle to close. As for the monitoring of academic performance, which can be said to be an integral part of the programme learning outcomes assessment, it is conducted every semester.

Staff involved in the process of programme learning outcomes assessment receive the needed support. It should be further noted that the minutes of the works of the faculty academic department prove the discussions on the programme learning outcomes and curriculum map.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Evaluation mechanism of the programme learning outcomes;
- o Curriculum map;
- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o –

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- o Review the curriculum map to ensure that all the programme learning outcomes are developed on three levels.

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

In general the program was designed in accordance with the university's methodology for planning, designing and developing educational programs. The content, structure, volume and complexity of the program correspond to the teaching cycle and the level of doctoral studies. Based on the documentation provided by the university, it should be stated that the program was developed in accordance with Georgian legislation and ECTS - the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The design of the study program ensures the individuality of the program. In addition, the content and structure of the program are consistent with the qualification to be awarded and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes covered by the program. Learning outcomes are properly constructed. The structure of the program is transparent, logical and consistent. The teaching and research elements of the program are logically organized and a logical development of the content is ensured. The disadvantage of the program is that it is too interdisciplinary. The conditions for admission to the next component or stage of study are appropriate. The program takes into account new research results and contemporary scientific achievements. The content of the program, depending on the specific field of study and the level of the program, takes into account key issues of internationalization. Program development is a collaborative process with internal and external stakeholders and involves all stakeholders (academic/research/visiting staff, students, graduates, employers, etc.). The university ensures transparency and availability of information about the program.

Interdisciplinary approach. The stated reason why the faculty moves towards more interdisciplinary approach was that it is a trendy and there are plenty of international successful experiences coming from the western European Universities. Here, faculty should explain what is the rationale behind this decision.

Thus, it surprises me that University grants degree with general title - Social Sciences. It probably needs more clarification. At the end we speak about scientific share, publication. At the research gate there are journals that are particularly disciplinary like Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology and so on. And, there are journals that are more flexible and are named as journals from Area studies. This last will be claimed what the members of faculty are calling interdisciplinary.

If faculty decides to make distinctive scientific boundaries it will help both academic and administrative staff to effectively manage dissertation submission procedures, finding appropriate references and scientists, peers who blindly review their articles and research outcomes. Furthermore, with precise scientific field indication faculty administration helps students to find precise academic identity. Being Sociologist, Anthropologist or Psychologist facilitates student to find appropriate job opportunities and establish life long cooperation both academically and outside of it.

The main weaknesses of the program are as follows: 1) History that forms "accountability" is a weak side of the program. History witch forms accountability has been stated as one of strength of the program. However, accountability has negative effects when it comes to the critical judgment of the academic products – dissertations. Structure of the program that pushes towards academic pluralism. Current, academic team changes the structure of the program. They are moving to more interdisciplinarity. This word interdisciplinarity was probably the one of key words during our site visit. It seems that faculty adapts to the new trend incorporated in the field of social sciences meaning two or more disciplinarily related subjects might work together in one project. Something similar to, what we call Area Studies. However, it was unclear why the faculty was pushing to more interdisciplinary dimension, now, and why it has not been launched at the

vary begging of the program. 4) This program has strong affiliation with German institutions. In particular "Humbolt" in the field of Philosophy or Political Philosophy. Only one professor is in charge of this international cooperation. This one example is illustration of how one discipline of social sciences can establish international cooperation and bring interdisciplinarity, international recognition and international projects to the faculty. However, this is very narrow sub disciplinary field (German idealism), not so representative and not so profitable both economically (philosophy is not so popular field of study) and academically (difficult to publish internationally).

Evidences/Indicators

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

Recommendations:

- o   It is recommended to limit the interdisciplinarity of the implemented program.

Suggestions for the programme development

- o   -

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

Each study course in the program meets the requirements of the Doctor degree and program learning outcomes as specified in the national qualification framework. It is supported with the information provided in the map of learning outcomes in the curriculum. The contents of study courses are relevant to the learning outcomes of

a study course. The learning outcomes of a study course meet the requirements of PhD. The number of credits designated for each study course (contact and non-contact hours) is relevant to the course contents and learning outcomes. The proportion of contact and non-contact hours is adequate and adjusted to the specific nature of a course. The number of contact hours, teaching and teaching methods (lectures and workshops) are relevant to the course contents and learning outcomes. The study course programs (syllabus) include students' appraisal forms, methods and criteria which are relevant to the learning outcomes. The literature and other materials specified in the syllabus are in compliance with the learning outcomes. The literature and study materials reflect the modern achievements of the sector/sphere as well as the newest researches in theology and ensure the achievement of the program learning outcomes.

The program content is consistent with the current state of scientific knowledge and, to a large extent, also takes into account the scientific activities conducted at the University. They have also been correctly selected for individual classes constituting the study program, which allows students to achieve the expected learning outcomes. The literature recommended to students is also properly selected and up-to-date.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Doctoral program "Social Sciences"
- o Study course programs (syllabus)
- o Central library of GTU
- o Self-evaluation report;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o -

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

The requirements for candidates applying for admission to doctoral studies in the field of social sciences are clear and precisely defined. A person who holds a master's degree or an equivalent scientific degree and meets the admission requirements for doctoral studies in accordance with the rules applicable at GTU may study doctoral studies in the field of social sciences. During recruiting for studies, the following criteria are taken into account: publications of scientific works, participation in scientific conferences, research studies/articles and other documents (certificates, awards, patents, etc.). The candidate should submit a research project indicating the purpose and direction of the research, an international certificate of English language proficiency at B2 level or pass GTU exams in English. Applicants who have obtained a degree from English language schools/universities do not need to provide a certificate or take an examination. If the candidate passes the exam, he or she undergoes an interview with the temporary faculty committee. The following are taken into account: the existence of scientific publications, participation in scientific conferences, other documents and materials related to teaching/research activities (certificates, legal acts, patents, etc.) Rules and procedure recruitment for doctoral studies are available on the GTU website. Admission to the mobility program is possible within a specified period and under the rules and procedures specified by GTU. Admission or transfer to the program from a foreign educational institution will be in accordance with the laws of Georgia.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report;
- Interview results;
- GTU website.

Recommendations:

- -

Suggestions for the programme development

o   -

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 PhD program at GTU ensures the development of practical skills of postgraduates. The program also ensures students' involvement in scientific research. According to the GTU PhD Regulations, the student is responsible for: information presenting the main research results related to the topic of the PhD thesis (materials from scientific conferences, seminars, forums, congresses, symposia), including at least three scientific articles published during the PhD student's period of study, of which one must take place without co-author(s). At least one of the three scientific articles published by a PhD student in accordance with established rules during their studies must be published in a scientific publication indexed in Web of Science, Scopus or another appropriate database. This standard is very good and allows for increasing the quality of scientific research. However, it is worth considering creating a system of internal grants to make it easier for doctoral students to conduct research and ensuring appropriate financing.

One of weakness of the program is lack of international or local research projects proposed by presented academic staff. Majority of academic staff have not been involved any kind of research activity for the last tree years. This implicitly means that there are no student involvement, no international and local scientific cooperation and most important of all no scientific publication in the Scopus and Web of Science. This last is an objectives which faculty tries to achieve in accordance to the new academic program (at least one publication to the peer reviewed journal). 4) In general Academic life for PhD student is extremely difficult when you consider contemporary social, economic and political environment in Georgia. The publication as a goal seems unrealistic when university charges young scholar and demands academic payment, fee. Furthermore, experienced scholars with expertise of research grant management, submission procedures and international recognition, should pave the way for the whole generation of the new researchers and scholars who from their side will share to the prolongation of the academic tradition. This chain lacks stability because of two factor. 1. Administration fee. 2. Lack of field expertise who will help students to find sources for research and publication.

Evidences/Indicators

o   Self-evaluation report;

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o   Interview results.

Recommendations:

o   It is recommended to develop solutions that will make it easier for doctoral students to obtain international projects and research grants.

Suggestions for the programme development

o   It is suggested to create a system of internal grants to make it easier for doctoral students to conduct research and to ensure appropriate financing.

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

The teaching methods available in the study program allow you to achieve the learning outcomes provided for in the program. The teaching and learning methods are diverse and well suited to the program content and expected learning outcomes. In the learning process, based on the specificity of a given field of study, the following activities of teaching-learning methods are used, which are reflected in the program of the relevant field of study: 1. Discussions/debates; 2. Problem-based learning (PBL); 3. Case studies; 4. Brainstorming 5. Demonstration; 6. Induction;7. Deduction 8. Analysis; 9. Synthesis;10. Verbal or oral method; 11. Written work; 12. Explanatory13. Action-oriented; 14. Project development and presentation; 15. Simulations, role-playing games.

These activities complement each other. The professor himself determines which of the above-mentioned classes to apply, based on the specificity of a specific field of study. The vast majority of classes are conducted in the form of exercises and workshops, this especially applies to classes within each chosen specialization. During teaching classes, various methods of activating students are used, which stimulate independence in the learning process and promote teamwork. The teaching methods used to implement the educational content in individual classes are so diverse that they facilitate adapting the learning process to the diverse individual and group needs of students.

Evidences/Indicators

- Doctoral educational program "Social Sciences";
- Training course programs (syllabi);
- Self-evaluation report;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- –

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

The evaluation of doctoral students of the Doctoral Educational Program of Social Sciences at the Technical University of Georgia is carried out according to the established procedures, it is transparent, reliable and in accordance with the legislation. During the implementation of the program and the teaching of study disciplines, the student's performance in each discipline is evaluated by the European Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the evaluation system according to the "Rules for calculating credits for higher education programs" approved by the Order #3 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia on January 5, 2007.

The Technical University has a 100-point evaluation system for doctoral students. The maximum positive score is 100, and the minimum is 51 points. In addition, the following are considered positive grades: A (91-100), B (81-90), C (71-80), D (61-70), E (51-60). A negative grade is considered: FX (41-50), F (40 or less).

In case of receiving at least 30 points in the intermediate evaluation, the doctoral candidate will be entitled to take the final exam. The final exam has a minimum competence threshold of 21 points, passing it is a mandatory prerequisite for the doctoral student to consider the subject passed. The doctoral student is

considered to have passed the study course if he/she scores at least 51 points as a result of the mid-term evaluations and the final exam.

As mentioned during interviews in various sessions, including program leaders and students/graduates, evaluation forms, methods and criteria are known in advance. In addition, timely feedback is provided.

Students receive information about their own assessment from program leaders and subject teachers, as well as through the website of the Technical University of Georgia. The results of the assessment are reflected in the electronic database, which ensures the student's awareness of the achieved results.

The mentioned electronic resource also has a message function, by using which the student has the opportunity to establish direct feedback with the training course provider. The student is informed about the evaluation system and the regulations in force in STU.

If the doctoral candidate is dissatisfied with the evaluation of the midterm or final exam of a specific subject, he has the opportunity to appeal the result.

As for the thesis evaluation, according to the teaching and research component evaluation rule, it is one-time and includes five positive and two negative evaluations, namely:

Positive evaluations are: a) Friadi - excellent paper - 91-100 points; b) very good - result that exceeds the requirements in every way - 81-90 points; c) Good - result that exceeds the requirements - 71-80 points; d) average - an average-level paper that meets the basic requirements - 61-70 points; e) Satisfactory - the result, which, despite the shortcomings, still meets the requirements - 51-60 points of the maximum assessment.

Negative evaluations are: a) Unsatisfactory – a paper of an unsatisfactory level that cannot meet the requirements - 41-50 points; b) Completely unsatisfactory - result that does not fully meet the requirements - 40 points and less.

During the interview, there were no complaints regarding the existing evaluation system. The given grading scheme for doctoral students and graduates is acceptable and understandable. Accordingly, the said sub-standard is assessed as: Compliant with the requirements.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Doctoral educational program "Social Sciences";
- o training course programs (syllabi);
- o instruction on management of the educational process at the Technical University of Georgia;
- o STU PhD regulations;
- o educational and research components of doctoral educational programs and their evaluation method;
- o Electronic system for monitoring the academic performance of students of STU;
- o website;
- o Results of the interview.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o –

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	√	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

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

Doctoral students of the Doctoral Educational Program of Social Sciences of the Technical University of Georgia receive counseling and support on the planning of the educational process, improvement of academic achievements and career development by the persons involved in the program and/or the structural units of the institution. In order to improve teaching results and individual work with students, the schedule of academic staff includes consulting hours, information about which is written in the syllabus itself and the student has access to it.

In addition to counseling on improving results, the student has the opportunity to receive counseling necessary for career development.

As the representatives of the program mentioned during the interview, at the previous accreditation, internationalization was named as one of the weak areas, however, within the current accreditation, the mentioned area improved, moreover, as they say, it turned into one of the strong areas. Accordingly, students have the opportunity to participate in international mobility, projects, events and conferences. However, as it was said in the students' session, it would be better if they were recommended as much as possible by their program leaders/professors to participate in international projects/conferences, so that this direction could be even more active.

The representatives of the Doctoral Program of Social Sciences of the Technical University of Georgia, with the active involvement of the Quality Service, permanently develop a questionnaire for students, graduates, academic and visiting staff, as well as for employers. The questionnaire has also been developed in connection with the evaluation of the learning environment and the program. The Quality Service actively analyzes the survey results.

In the analysis of surveys to determine the satisfaction of doctoral students, mostly positive responses have been recorded, which gives us the basis to say that a large number of doctoral students are satisfied with the existing services and the work of teachers. Naturally, we checked their level of satisfaction during an interpersonal meeting, where the doctoral students unequivocally confirmed their satisfaction with the program.

There are electronic student information services at the Technical University of Georgia, which allow the student to: get acquainted with the evaluation results in a timely manner; establish communication with the teacher of the training course through electronic message; to see the table of academic groups; Table of teachers and loading of auditoriums/laboratories. In addition, the student has the opportunity to receive information about the current processes and news in STU, which includes both administrative and academic issues, as well as various local and international projects and events.

It is also worth noting that a new electronic learning base was introduced in STU, which offers students a variety of functions.

At the doctoral level, great importance is attached to scientific activities, in this direction scientific-practical conferences and field seminars are held every year at the Technical University of Georgia, in which students participate. Students have the opportunity to participate in open international student scientific conferences planned by the Technical University of Georgia. A collection of theses of theses will be published, in which the Georgian and English theses of each student participating in the conference will be printed. Referred and peer-reviewed scientific journals are functioning at STU. Also, as mentioned, they actively cooperate with foreign scientific bases, therefore, doctoral students, within the same minimum standard, are allowed to publish their scientific articles in both local and international scientific journals. In this direction, according to doctoral students and students, the involvement of scientific supervisors is very high.

As for the mechanism for checking academic integrity, the StrikePlagiarism program has been implemented in Stu, which is actively used at the doctoral level. The program is also provided with an appeal mechanism, which allows the doctoral student to apply, if necessary.

Evidences/Indicators

- Order No. 133/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated September 9, 2013 "Statute of the Legal Entity of Public Law - Technical University of Georgia";
- Faculty Regulations;
- instruction on management of the educational process at the Technical University of Georgia;
- electronic system for monitoring the academic performance of STU students vici.gtu.ge;
- website of the faculty and university;
- Results of the interview.

Recommendations:

o   -

Suggestions for Programme Development

- o   Based on the demand of doctoral students, it is desirable to increase their international mobility so that they can actively participate in various international conferences or useful events;
- o   It is desirable to plan frequent counseling meetings with doctoral students and give them an intensive character;
- o   Based on the request of the doctoral students, it is desirable to organize meetings with the authors of the defended dissertations around their dissertation topic, so that the latter can share their experience with them;
- o   It is desirable to intensify the internationalization of doctoral students: on the one hand, through their mobility in international projects, on the other hand, in the direction of scientific productivity.

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

The Doctoral Educational Program of Social Sciences of the Technical University of Georgia is provided with all the necessary normative documents in order for the process to proceed smoothly, among them, it is especially important to establish a doctoral degree in the program, the manner of preparation of the dissertation, etc.

The program provides all doctoral students with a highly qualified supervisor who has relevant scientific and research experience.

In addition to the main supervisor, the doctoral student can hire a co-supervisor if necessary.

The regulations of the doctoral program of the Technical University of Georgia describe the rights and duties of the supervisor of the doctoral student, according to which the supervisor is required to have regular consultations with the doctoral students.

The supervisor advises the student in the research process regarding the following issues: research design and project management, the process of writing a thesis/scientific-research paper/dissertation, the process of

integrating into the local and international scientific network, the process of participating in local and international scientific events and presenting the results; Publication of scientific articles in a refereed journal.

As part of the minimum standard, doctoral students will be obliged to publish at least three articles in local and international scientific journals. In addition, they have an obligation to participate in at least one scientific conference. It should be noted that in this direction, the university offers doctoral students both intra-university scientific journals and conferences, and actively cooperates with relevant publications/educational institutions on a national and international level.

Dissertation evaluation criteria are known to students in advance, they also have information about the manner of preparation of the thesis.

The following main criteria for evaluating the dissertation work are: 1. Relevance of the dissertation topic (maximum 15 points); 2. Novelty of the dissertation (maximum 18 points); 3. Theoretical/practical value of the thesis (maximum 18 points); 4. Presentation of the problem posed in the thesis and its solution (maximum 25 points); 5. Answers to the questions asked (maximum 18 points); 6. Presentation of visual material (maximum 6 points).

Based on the examples of dissertations requested by the expert corps, it can be said that the papers, to a large extent, take into account all the nuances that are written in the rules of dissertation preparation.

However, it should also be noted here that the number of dissertations defended only on the doctoral program of social sciences during the last 5 years, 2018-2023, is quite high and it amounts to 79. The latter raises certain question marks, which, to a large extent, refer to the supposed lack of complexity of the protection process itself.

Furthermore, defended 79 dissertations in 5 years rises several important questions in both dimensions; Procedural (submission, references and administration) and Academic (writing standards, research ethics e.t.s).

It is unclear if there are fear academic rules for the submission, meaning academic supervision, critical reference and as mentioned above accountability. It is also interesting to see how many dissertations has not been submitted, and if submitted if there are some unsuccessful projects and what was the stated reason of the failure.

Data related to the supervision of doctoral students	
Quantity of PhD theses	23
Number of doctoral students	49
Ratio	0.47

Evidences/Indicators

- ○ Doctoral regulations of the Technical University of Georgia;
- ○ Regulations of the University Dissertation Council of the Technical University of Georgia;
- ○ documents confirming the qualifications of supervisors of doctoral students, list of scientific works;
- ○ protected theses;
- ○ the manner of preparation of the paper;
- ○ list of protected theses;

- o website of the faculty and university;
- o Results of the interview.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o It is desirable that the thesis defense procedure should be complex, because a high number of defended theses may indicate the loyalty of the process.

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 staff of the Doctoral program in Social Sciences staff consists of qualified academic and invited academic personnel, in particular - 15 professors in the field of history, philosophy, education sciences, sociology etc. 7 associate professors and 2 invited professors. Academic staff members are actively involved in the program both through teaching and as doctoral thesis supervisors. They are competent in their respective fields and possess a doctoral degree and/or professional experience in the course(s) they teach or the doctoral dissertation they supervise. The documents submitted by GTU contain the sufficient evidence of staff qualifications.

The teaching and supervision load of the academic personnel is distributed evenly among the academic staff, ensuring the appropriate ratio of PhD students and the staff involved in the program.

A positive development is that the educational program has been continuously reviewed by two co-heads of the program who have been occupying this position throughout one year. The changes were introduced in accordance with the recommendations from the previous accreditation experts' team. Both co-heads of the program possess the relevant expertise in the field and are qualified to run the educational program smoothly and effectively.

The ratio of the academic and invited staff is adequate to the number of the students being part of the program as well as the number of the administrative and supporting staff which ensure respective services provision. The administrative and support staff have appropriate competence, and their number is adequate to the students' needs.

Based on the interviews carried out throughout the accreditation visit and documentation examination, we also consider it beneficial for the academic personnel to prioritize more publishing in international peer-reviewed journals, which also requires the advanced English language knowledge.

Starting from the strong side of the program it is worth to mention, that: 1) Academic and Administrative staff of the program are well organized and interlinked both personally and academically. It seems this team has 30 years or more, academic life experience. This long history looks back to Soviet Era, despite the academic uncertainty arriving together with the 90th and difficult reform years (2005-2011). Up to this moment the team remains and academic accountability is formed. Inside the team probably some slight position changes has been occurred. Some has been promoted, or academic profile has been changed. Resilience of the both academic and administrative team is a strong side. 2) Another strong side is enthusiasm of the both administrative and academic team, how enthusiastically they try to adapt to new realities, attract new and support old students and speak about realized or unrealized research projects and conferences. They reach significant numbers in thesis defenses. In five years (2018-2023) the faculty registered and defended 79 papers.

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[7]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[8]	Among them, the affiliated staff
Total number of academic staff				
- Professor	15	15	15	15

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[7] Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

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

- Associate Professor	7	7	7	7
- Assistant-Professor	-	-	-	-
- Assistant	-	-	-	-
Visiting Staff	2	2	2	_
Scientific Staff	-	-	-	-

Evidences/Indicators

- Current semester load of the academic and invited staff;
- List of program staff;
- Lectures and courses distribution;
- Program curriculum;
- Interviews in the framework of the accreditation visit;
- Responsibilities of program staff.

Recommendations:

- -

Suggestions for Programme Development

- The experts' team considers it beneficial for the academic personnel to prioritize more publishing in international recognized peer-reviewed journals, which also requires the advanced English language knowledge.

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	√	☐	☐	☐

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

According to the Doctoral Dissertation Regulation document, scientific supervisor can be faculty professors or associate professors (including visiting professors), emeritus, as well as the Head or senior associate scientist of an independent scientific research unit (institute, center) of the university, who possesses scientific research experience in the field of the doctoral student's research topic and **ensures the following**:

a) coordination of the performance of educational and scientific-research components of the doctoral candidate;

b) regular consultations with doctoral students on research methodological, structural, conceptual and other issues, as well as research design, research methods, professional development, the process of writing a thesis/scientific research paper/dissertation, the process of integration into a local and international scientific network, local and international scientific events the process of participation and submission of results, scientific articles referred to (Peer-reviewed) journal publication and other relevant directions.

The Regulation envisages that in case of necessity co-supervisors can be appointed for the PhD thesis. They can be university professors, associate professors, the head or senior scientist-collaborator of an independent scientific research unit of the university, as well as a person with relevant scientific research experience, a doctorate academic degree, based on the relevant institutional agreement signed with the university. co-supervisors (if any) provide support to the doctoral student in the process of implementing the scientific research component based on mutual agreement with the supervisor and the doctoral student.

After the procedure of the approval takes place, the scientific supervisor(s) should submit the doctoral student's personal work plan to the faculty's educational process management department within two weeks. The interviews conducted throughout the accreditation visit demonstrated that PhD students received full assistance and support from their respective thesis supervisors. The same concerns the involvement and feedback from the Faculty Administration. Both facilitated students' timely completion of both educational and research components of the PhD studies, their research agenda designed in advance with the involvement of the supervisor. The interviews with both PhD Students and academic staff confirmed their awareness of the limitation for simultaneous supervision of doctoral students which comprises 3 according to the University regulations.

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	23	23	21
- Professor	14	14	14
- Associate Professor	7	7	7
- Assistant-Professor	-	-	-
Visiting personnel	2	2	_
Scientific Staff	-	-	_

Evidences/Indicators

- o The Regulation for the Doctoral Dissertation;
- o Interviews with PhD students, academic staff and Faculty administration.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

o   -

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

Georgian Technical University, Faculty of Engineering, Economics Media Technologies and Social Sciences conducts the evaluation of its academic staff on a regular and systematic basis. This also applies to invited lecturers involved in the program. The evaluation of the staff is based on their teaching and research activities. PhD students are one of the stakeholders' groups that evaluate staff at the end of semester according to the questionnaires developed by the Faculty Quality Assurance Office.

The Human Resource Department is also involved in systematic evaluation of the employees, while the assessment of quality of teaching of the academic staff is performed by the Faculty Commission for the Evaluation of Educational Programs. The workload scheme has been used for evaluation of staff performance (submitted as part of the documentation package).

While academic personnel of the University and program in particular participates in local and international events (workshops, conferences etc.), we would suggest for the Faculty to make a stronger emphasis on academic personnel's involvement in conferences and other activities abroad. In this manner, Social Sciences PhD program would be constantly involved in exchange of experience and best practices with the colleagues abroad.

What regards improving skills for administrative and other staff, the workshops were held on Development of the Syllabi and Curriculum, internationalization of higher education etc. The international conferences are being held at the university on a regular basis, such as cooperation between German, Portuguese, Croatian and other universities in the framework of research on social theory. In the framework of the long-term partnership next year GTU will be hosting the annual meeting of the Consortium members which undoubtedly would present another impetus for the advancement of scientific cooperation and respective skills for both academic and invited staff involved in the doctoral preprogram. Overall, the academic and administrative staff development has been one of the key priorities at GTU, although the experts' team considers that increasing frequency and scope of international events participation and more emphasis on advanced international profile

of the academic staff would contribute to quality and outstanding research profile of the PhD Program in Social Sciences.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Evaluation sheet of educational and research activities at GTU;
- o Workload schemes for each of the academic staff;
- o "Specialists' job descriptions";
- o Interviews with academic and invited staff.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o The experts' team considers that increasing frequency and scope of international events participation and more emphasis on advanced international profile of the academic staff would contribute to quality and outstanding research profile of the PhD Program in Social Sciences.

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	√	☐	☐	☐

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

Based on the self-assessment, as well as the submitted documents and interviews with students, alumni and library stuff, adequate university infrastructure and material-technical resources are available to the students of the program without any impediments to comply with the envisaged learning outcomes.

Mandatory literature and other resources electronic or hard copies are available at the library. We should emphasize a rather impressive and solid infrastructure that ensures timely students' and staff communication regarding the educational process, financial issues etc. The library offers individual and group training session to equip students with necessary skills to navigate in an electronic scientific database; Electronic databases can be accessed from the library of the University: JSTOR; Scopus; ScienceDirect; Clarivate Analytics; SAGE; etc.

During the interviews carried out throughout the accreditation visit students and graduates mentioned that they do not have access to the databases beyond the university, although they can submit the list of requested sources to the respective library staff and get them to their emails.

During the accreditation visit, experts' team checked the availability of books and other materials through a random selection of readings in the syllabi. All the requested literature was available at the library. We should stress though, that the library electronic system (KOHA) has been updated and functions properly, while ability to search for academic sources (books, book chapters, academic papers) has been ensured which was confirmed throughout the visit.

Georgian Technical University is part of the Universities' Consortium which ensures continuous access to the electronic databases. Among the databases are the ones offering access to Cambridge University Press, Royal Society Journals, New England Journals of Medicine etc. Overall, the information about the program's technical and material resources acquired before and throughout the accreditation visit demonstrates full compliance with the designated standard.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Georgian Technical University Central Scientific and Technical Library webpage: gtu.ge/library
- o   Georgian Technical University Library Book Fund: gtu.ge/bef/Resources/Library.php
- o   Library and Infrastructure Tour on the day of the accreditation visit.

Recommendations:

- o   -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o   -

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

In the framework of the accreditation documentation, the Social Sciences PhD program has submitted its own financial plan, which mainly covers the costs for the lecturers' salaries and other components. According to the information that the budget document contains, 122.500 GEL comprises the program income (according to the 2023 Budget of the program).

According to the data available in the budget report, the largest part of the expenses are designated for the teaching staff salaries (roughly 50% of the budget), other expenditure envisaged are assisting staff, administrative costs. Student-oriented activities and research activities are assigned less than 10% of the annual budget, the same concerns costs related to other program costs 8,000 GEL). Up to 10% of the expenses are envisaged for purchase of study materials necessary for the educational process.

Overall, the distribution of funds in the program budget ensures its functioning and sustainability. At the same time, prioritizing the research activities through the increased investment in academic staff and doctoral students' scholarly development would improve the competitiveness of the program and ensure better correspondence to the needs of the labor market.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Program budget (Excel file)
- o Interviews with the university representatives
- o Social Sciences PhD Program
- o Self-assessment Report

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Prioritizing the research activities through the increased investment in academic staff and doctoral students' scholarly development would improve the competitiveness of the program and ensure better correspondence to the needs of the labor market.

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

The work on the SER of the programme was a collaborative effort and all relevant stakeholders were involved in the process, including academic and administrative staff, students, employer and alumni. The faculty QA service was supporting and consulting the self-evaluation group throughout the process.

The faculty QA service is responsible for the QA processes at the faculty, and the activities of the faculty QA is coordinated by the university QA service.

Programme staff taken into consideration quality assurance results when making the programme-related decisions, which is proven both through documents provided and the interviews. It could be said that the group together with QA office work towards improving weaknesses of the programmes grouped in a cluster, and as mentioned, the self-evaluation group was composed of all the relevant stakeholders, however, the overall level of involvement of the programme staff in the QA processes and their knowledge on the processes needs further improvement to ensure the quality culture. Even though the QA service carries out various activities to increase the quality culture and support academic and invited staff through provision of trainings, meetings and consultations, the continuous support and effort is still needed.

Increasing quality culture was named by the representatives of the QA office as one of their main aims and discussed the implemented and planned activities, pointing to the fact that even though there is a progress, the process in ongoing.

The quality assurance process of the programme is based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act continuous cycle, the relevant tools for the programme quality assurance are at place and implemented for the programme development, the details on the quality assurance of the programme is presented in the standard component 5.3 description and analysis.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER;
- o Interview results;
- o QA mechanisms and results of their implementation.

Recommendations:

- o –

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Continue to support programme staff in order to ensure their full involvement and level of knowledge and skills for QA processes and increase the quality culture.

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	√	☐	☐	☐

5.2 External 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

The external quality assurance process is used regularly to improve the programme. Namely, the authorization and accreditation processes are the main mechanism for the external quality assurance. The programme was conditionally accredited by the decision of the higher educational programmes' accreditation council (decision 14/01/2022, MES 22216) and the recommendations issued by the expert panel were fulfilled by the programme staff and utilized for the programme development.

To improve the quality of the educational programme, the external peer evaluation is also used by the programme staff. The programme was sent to employers and peers, namely to three professors of the relevant field from Georgian universities, international peers/professors from Warsaw university, Berlin Humboldt University, Croatia, and Lietuva. The special form for the external evaluations is developed, where the evaluator marks one's assessment as "relevant"; "relevant, however, it requires a slight correction/improvement" and "not relevant" regarding different indicators. The development of the form is a good practice and together with marking evaluation, evaluator is free to provide recommendations and tips, or write a general point of view. Also, the wide representation of peers from local and international universities is commended. However, most of the evaluators evaluated programme only by marking evaluations. In future, it is suggested to promote more deep and analytic evaluation as well.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER;
- o Educational programme and syllabi;
- o Reports of the external evaluators.

Recommendations:

- o -

Suggestions for the programme development

- o Encourage deeper analysis of the programme during external evaluation.

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	√	☐	☐	☐

5.3 Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

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

The monitoring and periodic review of the PhD programme "Social Sciences" is conducter with the involvement of academic, invited, administrative staff, students, employers and other stakeholders, through systematic collection and analysis of information. As mentioned in the descriptive part of the standard component 5.1, GTU has developed relevant tools for the QA and the tools are implemented for the evaluation and improvement of the programme.

The surveys of PhD students is carried out with the specially developed form, aimed at assessing the quality of supervision process. Also, the questionnaire covers other aspects, like availability of the material resources required for the doctoral dissertation, academic freedom of doctoral students while working on the dissertation, communication with the supervisor, the level of satisfaction with the evaluation criteria of doctoral dissertation, institutional support, further plans and whether the doctoral students wish for international co-supervisor. Students also evaluate the lecturers of the courses by the end of the semester.

The documentation provided by GTU include analysis of the PhD students' survey, alumni, staff, evaluation of staff by students, and the results of the feedback from alumni and employers were taken into consideration while modifying the programme, therefore, the results of the QA mechanisms are utilized for the improvement and modification of the programme.

To bring the programme in compliance with the modern requirements, benchmarking was carried out and the programme was compared against similar programmes of different universities, like Doctoral programme in Social Sciences of Vienna university of Social Sciences, Göttingen Doctoral School of Social Sciences, Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Georgian university's programme in social sciences was also addressed as one of the analogues.

It should be further noted, that faculty academic commissions for programme evaluation are formed at GTU and involved in the evaluation of the programmes, namely, they assess the compliance of the material and laboratory recourses, library resources, programme staff and other parameters with the defined standards.

Based on the abovementioned, programme monitoring and review is conducted with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, complex indicators of results are analyzed and if necessary, used for the development and modification of the programme.

Evidences/Indicators

- o SER;
- o Report of the programme evaluation faculty committee;
- o Analyses of doctoral students' survey and evaluation of staff;
- o Report on utilizing feedback from employers and graduates for the programme development;
- o Benchmarking analysis;
- o Analysis of alumni survey;
- o Analysis of staff survey;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

- o –

Suggestions for the programme development

- o –

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:

LEPL – Georgian Technical University

Name of Higher Education Programme, Level:

Social Sciences, PhD

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:
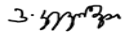
Chair of Accreditation Expert Panel

Martin Dahl,

Accreditation Expert Panel Members

Ivanna Machitidze, signature

Vakhtang Kekoshvili, signature

Tinatin Gabrichidze, signature

Soso Gazdeliani, signature