

Approved by decree of the Academic Council

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Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Tbilisi

2025

The goals and objectives of the Quality assurance

Quality assurance of University Alterbridge, LLC (hereinafter referred as to "University") is an integral part of management and applies to all areas of the University's activities, and the Quality Assurance Mechanisms Document is a guiding document for quality assurance and continuous development. Quality assurance mechanisms are based on the legislative and by-laws of Georgia and the legal acts of the University, as well as the standards and guidelines for quality assurance of the European area of Higher Education (ESG). International practice of quality management of an educational institution (IQM textbook "Internal Quality Management in competency-based education").

Ensure the establishment of a Quality Assurance System, meeting the standards defined by the state, the introduction and continuous improvement of the quality culture of the University. Ensure the creation and development of high academic standards, result - oriented educational programs; formation of the student as a specialist with knowledge, skills and competences relevant to modern requirements; promotion of employment of graduates; provision of educational process and student services at a high level; ensuring compatibility of educational programs with international requirements, through integration and internationalization of teaching and research processes. To increase the effectiveness of activities in academic, scientific and governance spheres; participation of internal and external stakeholders in the processes and promotion of University awareness and recognition.

The University's Quality Assurance System includes: An integrity of quality policies, procedures, instructions, rules/guidelines, planning-related practices, activities, criteria, tools, reflection and measures aimed at improving the quality of the University's activities. There are internal and external assessment, quality control and monitoring mechanisms aimed at strengthening the understanding of how the University fulfills the relevant requirements (control) and establishing compliance with the quality standards of education through systematic collection and analysis of quality indicators (monitoring).

In order to achieve the defined goals, the Quality Management Service carries out a multifaceted assessment of the following interrelated components:

1. Educational Programs;

2. **Staff and research;**
3. **Internationalization research;**
4. **Management Effectiveness;**
5. **Learning / teaching process;**
6. **Student services and awareness;**
7. **Proper work of university structures.**

The Quality Management Service collects and analyzes the data through the evaluation tools and indicators contained in this document, which are developed in cooperation with the structural units of the University (see below table and annexes). The results are taken into account by all the levels leading administrative, educational and scientific-research activities. Accordingly, the focus of the activities of the Quality Management Service is broad and oriented on introducing quality culture practices, which implies:

- ✓ Involvement and authority of all stakeholders in the decision-making process;
- ✓ As a result of multilateral assessment of the institution, identifying and eliminating problems;
- ✓ Management of processes by team principles.

The Main Principles of Quality Assurance

The activities of the Quality Management Service are based on the "plan -do-check -act" (PDCA) cyclical principle, which ensures continuous improvement of processes.

Plan - In accordance with the Strategic Development Plan of the University and the present document, the Quality Management Service determines the work to be carried out during the year at the beginning of each academic year, which is reflected in the work (action) plan. The function of the Quality Management Service is, in addition to the planned assessment, to identify the priority issues that correspond to the identified situation and need - what/whose assessment is currently the most important.

At the planning stage the following takes place:

- Determination of the sequence of inspection, determination of the object to be tested/evaluated;
- Define and develop criteria for adequate evaluation of the object to be tested/evaluated;
- Development of the evaluation procedure, evaluation and analysis form of the results, determination of the competences of the evaluator(s) in accordance with the object to be evaluated.

In each direction of activity of the Quality Management Service (educational programs; staff and research; learning/teaching process; student services and awareness; smooth operation of university structures), stakeholder opinion research tools are developed, which provides a comprehensive assessment of the above components (see Annexes);

Do - At this stage, the activities that were defined at the planning stage are carried out in accordance with the set plan and instruments.

The Quality Management Service organizes mobilization of stakeholders and distribution of functions according to the plan. In addition to the Quality Management Service, other structures of the University are also involved in this process.

Check - This process involves the processing of information received from the respective structural units of the University. Analysis of the results obtained from the checking/evaluation, drawing of respective conclusions, drafting of recommendations and identification of the activities to be carried out;

Act - The last stage of the cycle involves searching for the causes of the results obtained, developing recommendations for eliminating shortcomings. At this stage, the Quality Management Service prepares the report in writing and submits the results orally to the parties involved.

Internal evaluation is aimed at maintaining strengths, eliminating weaknesses and existing deficiencies. If various inconsistencies are found, there is an instant response and the planning and implementation of the necessary measures.

Persons and resources involved in the Internal Quality Assurance System

All levels of the University (management, administrative staff, academic and invited staff, students, graduates, potential employers) are actively involved in the implementation of internal quality assurance mechanisms, which is expressed in the evaluation and analysis of various components of the University's activities, followed by the development of relevant recommendations to eliminate the discovered problems.

Quality assurance mechanisms introduced at the University ensure continuous evaluation and development of the University's activities and resources; Alterbridge makes decisions for future activities and effective management based on quality assessment results that are used for further development of the activities of the whole institution.

The Quality Management Service also takes into account the results of the University SWOT analysis, the results of external assessment (authorization, accreditation, independent expertise).

The Quality Management Service is authorized, if necessary, to invite specialists/organizations to conduct specific studies.

II

Educational Programmes

The educational program / programs should be in line with the mission of the University and be the main focus of strategic development. The program should provide the student with both academic knowledge and skills that will influence their personal development and career advancement. The educational programs of the University should be formulated in such a way that the student achieves the defined goals and expected learning results, should be taken into account the field standards (if any), should be based on the outstanding achievements of the field, modern and renewable national and foreign-language literature, and fully complies with the framework of National Higher Education Qualifications. University educational programs should be developed as a result of labor market research, with the

involvement of all stakeholders. The best local and international experience should be taken into account in the designing and developing of programs and they should be periodically compared. The program should have clearly defined learning outcomes that are consistent with the program's goals, the qualification to be awarded and the level of education;

Programs must meet the standards recognized and applicable in Georgia and allow the student's unhindered progress to be flexible. Educational programs, taking into account their specifics, should offer the student the opportunity to receive practical education, as well as activities for the professional growth of the student (trainings, internships, master-classes, etc.). Educational programs should be public and accessible to all stakeholders and wider community. In order to continuously improve the quality of education, the Quality Assurance Service carries out the evaluation of educational programs and educational process with the involvement of students and other stakeholders. The evaluation shall lead to constant improvement of the programs.

Internal evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of educational programs

The goal of the internal evaluation of the implementation of educational programs is to determine whether the program is in compliance with the set goals and how it meets the needs and requirements of students and the field. The internal evaluation mechanism of program implementation implies periodic evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of educational programs by the University, which serves for the development of programs and their constant improvement. The internal mechanism for evaluating the implementation of the educational program includes:

- Periodic analysis and monitoring of the educational program;
- Analysis of expectations and needs of students, graduates and other stakeholders with regard to the academic programme;
- Analyzing the quantitative data of students' academic performance, program completion and the dropout from the program indicators;
- Analysis and evaluation of teaching and learning processes efficiency;
- Analysis of changing needs of society and labor market;

Monitoring and periodic evaluation of the programme

Program monitoring and periodic evaluation includes the following information of all stakeholders involved in the program: Systematic research, data processing and analysis of views of academic, invited, administrative staff, students, graduates, employers. Evaluation results are applied for the programme improvement.

In addition to surveys, the internal quality assurance process includes the retrieval and processing of various data. During every semester, quantitative data on enrollment and outflow are recorded and monitored. In addition, learning and evaluation processes are analyzed, information about which is obtained within the framework of various survey forms, as well as students have the opportunity to anonymously voice their opinions on any issue at any time. The mentioned data are collected in the Quality Management Service and information is provided to the program manager and program implementers as needed.

For evaluation of the program, the field professors/local and foreign experts and partner universities are periodically surveyed.

Labor market analysis and Benchmarking

Based on the University's mission, establishing labor market requirements is a crucial factor in preparing market-oriented programs. The employer participates in the processing/implementation/development process of each educational program.

Before developing the program, the employer's expectations for a specific program are studied, where the main directions, knowledge and skills that the employer needs to get a competitive staff are revealed. Research results are used in the process of shaping program goals and learning outcomes. In addition, labor market research can be carried out by an independent research company, commissioned by the University. The results are taken into account in the processing and development process of the program.

Employer survey also take place during the program's operation process. Employer assesses the skills and competencies of the Alterbridge graduate who will be employed by his/her company. In case of specific recommendations, the program leader and the Working Group will discuss the issue of making appropriate changes to the program as needed.

In addition, the employer periodically evaluates the program, because on the one hand, the requirements of the labor market may change, and on the other hand, the program may undergo modification for various reasons. In this case, the format and period of the assessment will be decided on the basis of the initiative of the head of the program.

Research of employers' requirements and needs allows the heads of the programs to better plan the educational process, take into account market requirements, study the attitude of graduates and employers towards the development of the program. Surveys are conducted with the organizations and practice objects, with which the University has concluded agreements (memorandums) for the purposes of internships and/or further employment, as well as implementing the practical component of its educational programmes.

In the part of the programs, the benchmarking process is important, which includes the research of similar educational programs and the establishment of existing ones within the framework of both Georgian and foreign universities. Benchmarking serves to share best practices and maintain/develop the quality of programs.

Benchmarking is carried out by the head of the program before the development of the educational program and every 4 years after the implementation of the program.

Educational program assessment questionnaires:

Appendix 1 Course / subject assessment (completed by students);

Appendix 2 Evaluation of the educational program (students and graduates);

Appendix 3 Evaluation of educational program (invited and academic staff);

Appendix 4 Survey of graduates for program development purposes.

Appendix 5 Employer expectations survey (interview);

Appendix 6 Evaluation of the educational program by outside person (a professor, an expert);

II

Staff and research

Qualified academic and invited staff are the necessary preconditions for implementing the mission and conducting the programs. Staff work is assessed from different sides, both in educational and research directions.

Evaluation of studying activities of the academic and invited staff

To assess staff training activities, at the end of each semester, lecturers are evaluated in the form of an electronic survey by students. Also, according to the principle of random selection, attending a lecture and mutual evaluation of colleagues takes place. The results obtained are processed by the Quality Management Service and serve the development of staff.

Assessment of staff training / pedagogical competence includes such issues as:

- design of the syllabus and application of proper methods of teaching and evaluation;
- Participating in the designing of programs;
- Verifying the ability to transfer knowledge;
- Fair assessment of students;
- knowledge of field competencies;
- management of the process of academic course implementation;
- Holding consultations and etc.

The Quality Service also checks the use of ELMS (Electronic Learning Management System) by academic and invited academic staff to communicate with students and timely notification of teaching results.

The results of the assessment are used by lecturers to identify the sides to be improved and to take appropriate measures (for example, to conduct training around a particular issue). The Quality Management Service Human Resources constantly provides targeted trainings for staff, which is related to the correct use of teaching methods, formulation and evaluation of learning results, requirements of the qualification framework and ensures informing them about innovations.

Assessment of scientific-research competence and achievements of academic staff

The subject of annual assessment is scientific-research activities of academic staff. In order to increase research and creative potential, the University has developed mechanisms for assessing activities in educational-research and administrative directions, criteria and indicators of qualitative and quantitative research.

In order to assess the quality of research and staff productivity, the Quality Management Service has developed mechanisms for assessing the quality of research and a system for self-assessment of staff productivity, through which the results of research of academic staff are assessed annually. At the end of each year, reports of scientific research activities of academic staff are collected and research results are used to develop future research activities. The awareness and activity of the University staff in terms of international cooperation is also assessed.

As a result of the **evaluation of the scientific and research activity**, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results is performed, the results are publicly announced, the recommendations are published and the feedback is given to the personnel. Based on the analysis of the report, the Quality

Management Service will present recommendations to the Academic Council and, if necessary, changes will be made, new competitions will be announced, other events for professional development of staff, etc.

The University has an allocated budget to promote professional development.

Staff and research assessment tools:

Annex 7: Lecturer evaluation form

Annex 8: Mutual attendance form;

Annex 9: Form of assessment of educational-pedagogical competence;

Annex 10: Assessment of academic staff's scientific activity

Annex 11: Research form of international cooperation and internationalization;

Annex 12: Academic/affiliated staff of the teaching university;

Scientific-research productivity self-assessment application/ form;

Annex 12/1: RFAP form (Research Activity Assessment Form).

III

Educational process and student services

Evaluation of the educational process involves determining how adequately the training is being carried out, identifying problems and identifying ways to eliminate them. Students complete

questionnaires about subjects and lecturers at the end of each semester, in which the questions about the organization of the educational process are integrated.

Students, as well as academic and visiting staff, evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the library, its serviceability and accessibility.

Students are surveyed annually about their involvement in research/Arts and curricula-free activities and support of relevant initiatives, the purpose of which is to determine how actively students are involved in research/Arts and curricula-free activities, to see where the weaknesses are, what types of activities should be planned in this direction, to make student life interesting and competitive in parallel with the educational process.

Every year, students and staff are surveyed / evaluated for the purpose of studying the promotion of international cooperation and internationalization, the purpose of which is to determine how actively students and staff are involved in the activities offered by the International Relations Service, various activities, whether they participate in international mobility, exchange programs, whether they are familiar with the University's internationalization policy, to see where the weaknesses are, what types of events should be planned in this direction, to strengthen the international aspect and internationalization issues, to conclude new cooperation agreements with foreign higher education institutions, etc.

Questionnaires for study process and student services assessment:

Annex 13: Library assessment questionnaire

Annex 14: Survey of the academic staff for the purpose of studying the promotion of international cooperation and internationalization

Annex 15: The students' survey results regarding their participation in scientific/creative activities and relevant supporting initiatives;

IV University Management

The university carries out assessment of administrative management mechanism, Quality Management Service and other structural units. For this purpose, appropriate questionnaires have been developed.

Monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness combines the introduction of a system of self-assessment and reporting of the whole institution and a culture of quality. It includes submitting of reports of Services by structural units and departments at the end of the calendar year and conducting procedures for assessing the effectiveness of management based on them.

Management efficiency monitoring mechanisms and evaluation system aims to continuously improve and develop processes and procedures using the presented system, periodically review the effectiveness of the quality system and ensure sustainable development of quality culture with high involvement of employees and all stakeholders.

Internal quality assurance includes evaluation of the proper functioning of university structures. On the basis of the survey, the Quality Management Service, the work of the chancellery, the administrative management mechanism, material resources are evaluated.

In addition, the University as a whole is evaluated by students, academics and visiting staff; this assessment includes:

- Quality of service delivery
- Awareness and financial promotion
- Transparency and reporting
- Infrastructure

Assessment questionnaires developed in the management part:

Annex 16: University as a single, integrated system

Annex 17: Administrative management mechanism

Annex 18: Quality Management Service assessment questionnaire

Annex 19: Chancellery assessment questionnaire

Annex 20: Material and technical resource assessment questionnaire

In addition to specific areas, the Quality Management Service has developed stakeholder satisfaction survey forms. Students, graduates, academic and invited staff and administration staff fill out a satisfaction questionnaire every year, which, together with other above-mentioned tools, forms the basis for an adequate assessment of the complete picture.

The quality management service annually summarizes the received information, processes and reports to the Rector and Academic Council. The developed recommendations are the basis for planning and implementing changes in specific directions.

Stages, periodicity and tools of Internal Quality Assessment:

- At the first stage, the relevant indicators and criteria of the area to be evaluated are determined and the assessment method is refined;
- At the second stage, data is collected, for which the following tools are used: reports, protocols, statistical material, questionnaires.
- At the third stage, research is carried out (Table Research, survey) and the information obtained as a result of the research is processed, analyzed and placed with target benchmarks(if any);
- At the fourth stage, based on the results of the analysis, conclusions and recommendations will be developed by the Quality Assurance Service, a report will be prepared and submitted to the Rector;
- At the fifth stage, recommendations are implemented;
- At the sixth stage, an assessment of the implementation of recommendations is carried out.

Periodicity of the research

- Taking into account the specifics of the object to be examined, surveys are carried out once a year, depending on the need for assessment, the University additionally determines the objects of assessment and periods, the terms of which are determined by the rector's act.
- The survey methods used are: Online survey, questionnaire, telephone survey or face-to-face interview, meeting with focus groups and their combination.

External quality assessment External quality assessment processes include formal evaluation of the program by external experts (local or international expert), based on the self-assessment report of the University (authorization, accreditation). External assessment is carried out in relation to the standards established by the state. External quality assessment, in its various forms, can verify the effectiveness of Internal Quality Assurance, Act as a catalyst for improvement and offer new perspectives to the institution; external assessment provides the interested public with information about the quality of alterbridge's activities; the university reviews recommendations made as a result of external assessment, outlines ways to improve quality or develops an action plan, which includes specific interventions, responsible authorities/staff/school, time span, etc.; if necessary, a developmental collegial assessment (by Georgian and/or foreign colleagues employed in other HEIs) may be used to improve one or another aspect of university activities.

Final Provisions

1. Quality assurance mechanisms are in force upon approval by the Academic Council;
2. "Internal quality assurance mechanisms" shall be declared invalid upon approval of this document.

3. The document is subject to renewal according to the amendments made in the Georgian legislation or the decisions made by the University.

Questionnaire	Participant	Periodicity	N
Evaluation of the educational course/subject syllabus	A student	<i>At the end of the semester</i>	#1
Educational Program Evaluation	Student / Graduate	<i>Annually</i>	#2
Educational Program Evaluation	Academic/Invited Staff	<i>Annually</i>	#3
a graduate survey forms In terms of program development	Graduate	<i>At the end of the program (annually)</i>	#4
Employer questionnaire (interview)	Employer	<i>When developing the program and annually</i>	#5
Evaluation of Bachelor's and Master's educational programs by an external individual	(Professor of the field, expert)	<i>As required</i>	#6
Lecturer assessment	A student	<i>At the end of each semester</i>	#7
Teaching University Professor's Mutual Attendance Form and Evaluation Criteria	Staff	<i>As required</i>	#8
Form for evaluating the teaching and pedagogical competence of a professor at a teaching university	School Dean, Educational Process Service, Quality Management Service	<i>Annually</i>	#9
Questionnaire for assessing scientific activities of academic staff	Dean of the School, Department of International	<i>Annually</i>	#10

	Relations, Research Center, Quality Management Service		
Evaluation of staff for the purpose of the promotion of international cooperation and internationalization	Staff	<i>Annually</i>	#11
Self-assessment application/form of scientific-research productivity of academic/affiliated staff of teaching university	academic staff	<i>Annually</i>	#12
RFAP form (form for assessing research activities of academic staff)	Academic Council/Quality Management Service.	<i>Annually</i>	#12/1
Library assessment questionnaire	student, Academic / invited staff;	<i>At the end of each semester</i>	#13
Evaluation of the student for the purpose of promoting international cooperation and internationalization	A student	<i>Once every 3 years</i>	#14
The students' survey form regarding their participation in scientific/creative activities and relevant supporting initiatives;	A student	<i>Once every 2 years</i>	#15

Teaching university as a single whole system	academic and invited staff /Student	<i>At the end of each semester</i>	#16
Administrative management mechanism	Administration staff	<i>At the end of each academic year</i>	#17
Quality Management Service assessment questionnaire	Rector, chancellor, administration staff, academic and invited staff	<i>Annually</i>	#18
Chancellery assessment questionnaire	student, Academic / invited/administrative staff;	<i>At the end of each semester</i>	#19
Material and technical resource assessment questionnaire	Staff	<i>At the end of each semester</i>	#20
Students' satisfaction survey	A student	<i>Annually</i>	#21
Alumni satisfaction survey	Graduate	<i>Annually</i>	#22
Academic staff satisfaction survey	Academic Staff	<i>Annually</i>	#23
Administrative/ assisting personnel satisfaction survey.	Administrative /Support staff	<i>Annually</i>	#24

