

# Quality Assurance in Higher Education

(Georgian Experience)

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# System of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms

- **Internal** - developed and implemented by the institutions of higher education  
(institutional level)
- **External** - through independent quality assurance institution  
(national level,  
also at European/international level)

# Internal Mechanisms in Georgia

Institutions are relatively free to establish system of their choice, but they need to comply with the requirements of the Law:

- Should have **Quality Assurance Body**,
- **Short** (one year) and **long term** (six years) Institution Development **Strategy**,
- Submit **annual Self-assessment Report**.

# Self-assessment

External evaluation is conducted on the bases of **self-assessment**.

On the basis of expert reports decision is made by independent board.

**External evaluation** is **proof of honesty in self-assessment**.

# External Mechanisms in Georgia

- Authorisation of institutions and
- Accreditation of educational programmes.

Both administered by the **National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (EQE)**.

(established by the Law of Georgia on Educational Quality Enhancement).

Working with two independent –  
Authorisation and Accreditation – boards.

# National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (EQE)

## Making all decisions by consensus

(setting authorisation and accreditation standards, interpreting them according to given circumstances)

## Supporting institution in:

development of strategic goals (indicating strength of particular institution – e.g. HE vs. VET), elaboration of the new programs and modification of existing ones.

through offering trainings, round tables, conferences.

# Authorisation

- the instrument for external evaluation of compatibility of an institution with standards, certifying internal (self) evaluation.
- **Obligatory** for all types of educational institutions in order **to carry out educational activities** and **to issue an educational document** approved by the state.

# Mission Based

Based on the mission of the educational institutions the authorisation procedure shall establish the compatibility of an educational institution with the following standards:

- a) educational programmes;
- b) material resources;
- c) human resources.

*Particular standards set (agreed by consensus) by EQE, approved by MoES.*

# Interrelation

- Mission is defined by the Institution,
- Institution identifies in self-assessment how it complies with its own mission (using pre-agreed assessment document),
- External evaluation proofs honesty in self-assessment!

# Higher Education Institutions in Georgia

College – only the first cycle of higher academic education;

Teaching University – all programmes (except doctoral programmes);

University – educational programmes of all three cycles of higher education and research.

# Accreditation

establishes the compatibility of an educational programme with accreditation standards and aims at introducing regular self-evaluation for the improvement of educational quality and promotion of further development of quality.

Accreditation procedure is a voluntary one.

# Nevertheless

the State funding goes only to students of accredited programmes (i.e. the state study grants and state Master's study grants are allocated for funding only of those educational programmes of a higher education institution, which are accredited).

Accreditation is mandatory for doctoral programmes and regulated professions (Law, Medicine, Pedagogy).

# Accreditation standards:

- The goals of an educational programme, learning outcomes and the compatibility of the programme with them;
- Methodology and organisation of teaching, adequacy of the assessment of programme mastering;
- Student Performance, Individual Work with Them;
- Provision with teaching resources;
- Potential to further enhance the educational quality.

# Interrelation

- Program is elaborated (implemented) by the Institution,
- Institution identifies in self-assessment how it complies with accreditation standards (using pre-agreed assessment document),
- External evaluation proofs honesty in self-assessment and while accreditation is development oriented – provides recommendations for further sophistication.

# EQF Goals:

- It is translation grid for qualifications throughout Europe;
- Supports cross-border mobility by simplifying comparison of the content and profile of qualifications;
- Enables linking and combining qualifications from different institutions and subsystems;
- Responds to the increasing diversity of qualifications in Europe.

# National Qualifications Framework

Main **tool** employed for the internal and external quality assurance

and

through the link to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning creating a **common reference point** for international cooperation.

EQF 8 Levels = Georgian NQF 8 Levels

+ “0 level” (for 9<sup>th</sup> grade of secondary education)

# NQF consists of:

- General Education Qualifications Framework;
- Vocational Education Qualifications Framework;
- Higher Education Qualifications Framework;
- List of Qualifications (Directions, Field/Specialties, Sub-fields/Specializations and Professional Specialisations);
- Procedure of Formation of Qualifications.

# Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF)

The HEQF is a part of the NQF, providing for systematised qualifications of higher (academic) education existing in Georgia.

It ensures the description of higher education qualifications through learning outcomes.

Higher education qualification is the learning outcome, attainable through successful completion of an academic educational programme and is certified by a diploma, issued by a higher education institution.

# HEQF aiming at:

- Description of the interrelation between qualifications existing in the country;
- Making the existing qualifications easily understandable for students, employers, and an academic staff;
- Assisting higher education institutions in the improvement of existing educational programmes and planning new ones;
- Supporting quality assurance internal and external systems and enhancement of the quality of higher education;

# And further

- Creating the basis for a student-oriented education system;
- Ensuring the compatibility and comparability at the international level and promoting the process of recognition of qualifications;
- Promoting and supporting student mobility;
- Promoting lifelong learning.

# Higher Education Qualifications Descriptor

Defines the scope of knowledge, skills and values to be attained at a relevant level according to the following **six** criteria:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Applying knowledge
- Making judgments
- Communications skills
- Learning skills
- Values

# Learning Outcomes

Based on the NQF, relevant sectoral standard and the mission of the higher educational institution the learning outcomes of a specific educational programme, module and study course are defined.

They are described through field-specific and generic competences.

# Award of Qualifications

- The title of a qualification of the first cycle educational programme includes the term “Bachelor” together with the specification of the direction or/and field/specialty.
- A student is entitled to combine major (at least 120 credits) and minor (60 credits desirable) specialties in the following manner:
  - Major and free components;
  - Major, minor and free components;
  - Major and two minors.

# MA and PHD Qualification

- The title of a qualification of the second cycle educational programme includes the term “Master” together with the specification of the direction, field/specialty or/and sub-field/sub-specialty.
- The title of a qualification of the third cycle educational programme includes the term “Doctor” together with the specification of the direction or/and field/specialty.

# New Qualifications

- Only the qualifications, compatible with NQF List of qualifications can be awarded in Georgia.
- An educational programme with qualification not envisaged in the NQF List of Qualifications can be implemented only when the relevant institution has obtained an approval from the EQE upon authorisation, accreditation of the programme concerned or submission of an annual self-evaluation report.

If one of the above cases occurs, EQE submits a proposal to the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia concerning the introduction of an addition to the List of Qualifications. Introduction of an addition to the List is a precondition for awarding the relevant qualification.

Thank you!