

SELF EVALUATION REPORT OF QA SYSTEM IN GANJA STATE UNIVERSITY

10 May 2021

Please describe your answers under each question with the limit of 100 words for each.

1. Policy for quality assurance

- **Do you have an institutional strategic plan or equivalent document? / (If yes, when adopted and which period covers, main institutional goals)**

The university had “2016-2020 strategic plan” which was adopted by the Academic Council in 2016 (protocol N1). The plan had 3 overall goals one of which is about creation of quality assurance system and quality culture.

- **Does your institution have a policy for quality assurance that is published and specifies structures and processes through which it is implemented?**

The quality assurance policy (Version 1) was created within the framework of EQAC project in 21 June 2019.

Currently the updated version is about to be finalized. The updated version will be approved by the Academic council by the end of May.

- **Do you have an institutional quality assurance (QA) policy statement?**

The institutional quality assurance (QA) policy statement is included in the quality assurance policy.

- **Who is responsible for QA?**

According to the charter of quality assurance center, head of the quality assurance office is responsible for quality assurance.

- **How would you define the role of senior leadership (rector, vice-rector) in building a quality culture within your institution?**

According to the charter of quality assurance center, the university leadership directly participates in the formation of quality culture. The center is under the supervision of the rector and reports to the rector.

- **Does your institution review its quality assurance policy on a regular basis? Is there a specified period for review?**

The quality assurance policy is regularly monitored and updated should there be any need. Especially, governmental and national programs and recommendations are taken into account. For example, at the end of this May the academic council will make updates to quality policy accordingly.

- **How did you introduce a quality assurance system?**

It was introduced through EQAC project activities. Trainings conducted and necessary documents have been created throughout the project life time. For example, quality policy, necessary documents for the establishment of the center, strategic plan and sustainability plan of the center, work plan has been created

- **What is the place of a Quality Assurance Center within an organizational structure?**

In the organizational structure, the quality assurance center is independent body, only reporting to the rector of the university. This has been reflected on the charter of the center.

- **What is the main role of the Quality Assurance Center at your university?**

The role of the center has been described on the charter of the center. There are 30 items mainly concerning with creation of quality culture, quality system and providing functionality of the center.

- **Did you launch the Quality Assurance Center within the EQAC project?**

According to the “order N5” of the academic council dating to 25.09.2020 and the “order 5/181” of the rector dating 28.09.2020, the quality assurance center was created within the framework of EQAC project at Ganja State University.

2. Design and approval of programmes

- **What kind of structure do you have in place to support the internal quality assurance processes for the study programmes?**

After the quality assurance center was created, 1 job position for the head of office, and 2 job positions for the experts were opened and necessary salaries has been identified. Head of the center and 2 experts are responsible for supporting internal quality assurance such as the quality of the study programs and so on.

- **Does your institution have in place(a)procedure(s) for the design and / or approval of programmes?**

There are certain guidelines for the design and or approval of programmes. This process has been implemented by the vice rector for educational affairs, and office of education. Within the framework of EQAC project a pilot program

has been conducted for the “Biology Teaching” study program. This experience is currently being applied to other study programs.

- **How does the process for designing syllabuses work within your institution?**

This process has been implemented by the vice rector for educational affairs, and office of education. The pilot program which was implemented through EQAC project updated “Biology Teaching” specialty by including 5 subjects (Botany-2, Zoology-1, Non organic Chemistry, Sitology, and Human anatomy) and updating syllabuses. The syllabus which is created through this pilot program are recommended to other teachers.

- **Are these processes designed by involving students and other stakeholders (employers and other partners)?**

In the past design process of the programs were not included students and stakeholders. But after the experience of pilot program through EQAC project, program committee was created, which included stakeholders. This experience is shared and recommended during the design of other programs.

3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

- **How do you evaluate if the students reached the expected learning outcomes?**

Evaluation if the learning outcomes is being reached is done through examinations. 3 mid-term exams are conducted throughout semester. In addition, independent work assignments are given. Final exams are conducted in the form of multiple-choice test, oral exam, written exam, and performance test.

- **Does your institution use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including those which encourage active and interactive engagement of students in their learning?**

Teaching and learning center and e-learning center was created at the university through Erasmus+ PETRA project. These centers conducted trainings the topics of which included interactive teaching methods and student-centered teaching. For the sustainability of the project, trainings are being continued. After, the pandemic online trainings are offered by European partners as well as local experts.

- **Does your institution evaluate and adjust the modes of delivery of programmes, teaching and learning methods on a regular basis?**

Evaluation and regulation of programs and teaching methods are done by the related teaching departments. These processes are regulated during departmental meetings.

- **Does your institution publish in advance the criteria for and method of assessment as well as criteria for marking?**

Methods and criteria of evaluation are published in advance. These methods are reflected in the related syllabuses of the subjects. Also, guidelines and regulations are created before exams and shared with the students. At the same time these guidelines and regulations are shared at the university's website and social media.

- **Does your institution evaluate checks if procedures, methods and criteria enable assessing the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved by students?**

Surveys are conducted about procedures, methods and criteria to check the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved by students

- **Does your institution have in place a procedure to ensure consistency and fairness in student assessment is in place?**

There are certain mechanisms to ensure consistency and fairness in student assessment. These processes are conducted with the help of Appeal Committee. At the same time Student Union and Student Trade Union supervises the process according to their own regulations. All the information is discussed with the university leadership and then necessary decision are made.

- **Does your institution have in place a procedure for student appeals/complaints is in place?**

The university has a procedure for students' appeals and complaints. Students can send all appeals and complaints to the official e-mail address of the Appeals Commission (apelyasiya@gdu.edu.az). Students can also apply to the Student Trade Union and the Student Youth Organization. In addition, they can apply to the Student Ombudsman's Office (ombudsman@gdu.edu.az) established within the framework of the European Union's Erasmus + KA2 AESOP project. All appeals are shared anonymously with the university administration and appropriate decisions are made to address the issues. Information on the activities of the Student Ombudsman and the rules of appeal are available on the official website of the university (<http://gdu.edu.az/ombudsman/>).

4. Teaching staff

- **What is your role in quality assurance as a faculty dean/chair?**
Deans of faculties and heads of departments also take part in the process of quality assurance at the university. They oversee many processes, such as curriculum development, syllabus updating, learning strategies, and assessment methods.
- **What is the role of academic staff in QA?**
The teaching staff periodically cooperates and supports the Quality Assurance Center in the process of self-assessment and compliance with quality assurance standards. Some teachers are involved in the process of creating quality monitoring (external and internal) and evaluation mechanisms at the university. Teachers are members of commissions established for inspections of the quality of curricula and teaching materials.
- **How does your institution ensure that the teaching staff is qualified and competent?**
In order for our teaching staff to be qualified and competent, we involve them in relevant trainings organized by the "Teaching and Learning Center" and "e-Learning" Center.
- **Do you organize pedagogical training for academic staff?**
In order for our teaching staff to be pedagogically competent, we involve them in relevant trainings organized by the "Teaching and Learning Center" and "e-Learning" Center.
- **Does your institution offer incentives to encourage the use of new technologies in teaching?**
In order to encourage the use of new technologies in teaching, the teaching staff regularly involved in trainings at the "Teaching and Learning Center". They also have opportunity to practically improve their skills in the use of new technologies in the "e-Learning" Center.
- **Does your institution have in place mechanisms for rewarding teaching achievements?**
There are nominations such as "Teacher of the Year", "Researcher of the Year", "Dean of the Year" and "Head of the Department of the Year". Winners are announced at the Scientific Council held at the end of the year, which evaluates the activities of the teaching staff at the university.
- **Does your institution regularly assess the performance of teaching staff?**

The Vice-Rector for Science and Innovations conducts a competition to stimulate scientific and teaching activities. In accordance with the decision of the Scientific Council of Ganja State University and the relevant order of the rector, the monthly salaries of 10 professors and 10 doctors of philosophy and teachers with the highest scores are increased every month for 1 year. In addition, employees who receive a PhD degree are awarded a one-time cash prize of AZN 500, and those who receive a postdoc degree are awarded a one-time cash prize of AZN 1,000. At the same time, university employees whose articles are published in journals included in the Web of Science platform scientific reference index Thomson Reuters are awarded cash prizes according to predetermined categories by the decision of the Academic Council and the relevant order of the rector.

5. Information management

- **Does your institution have an overarching information system (i.e. database) used for the effective management of its activities? Please describe the system.**

Work on the purchase of an electronic management system for the effective management of the activities of our university began last year. Due to the pandemic, there were delays in this process. At present, meetings have been held with several leading companies and their products have been closely acquainted. We are nearing the end of the process. The university administration has already made announcement through the e-tender system created by the state. Negotiations with the winning company will begin after the deadline of the tender. It is planned to prepare the necessary databases during the summer months. It is planned to put it into operation from the beginning of the new school year in September.

- **How do you measure the quality of the programmes?**

The Publishing Department, which reports to the Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation, conducts implementation of this process. Also, the relevant commission established by the university administration analyzes the submitted programs and expresses its opinion. Based on this, the Ministry of Education is asked to approve for the program. Newly established Quality Assurance office will monitor the process according to its charter.

- **How often do you conduct the surveys among students?**

Within the framework of the EQAC project (as well as Erasmus+ projects such as PETRA, AESOP, MEDIATS, ESFIDIP, etc.), relevant surveys were conducted among students. At the same time, relevant surveys were conducted by several agencies subordinated to the Ministry of Education. It should be noted that the process of organizing surveys has been started at our university recently. That is, conducting surveys in large scale is relatively new for the university. In order to better implement this process, the university is developing a "Survey Policy". Work is underway to submit this document to the Academic Council of the university as soon as possible. We hope that the development of the "Survey Policy" will create fertile conditions for regular surveys of students at the university.

- **What kind of data does your institution collect on a regular basis? Please specify if you collect the following data:**
 - **A defined set of key performance indicators for the institution**
Regular reports are collected from all structural units of the university. These reports are regularly discussed by the heads of departments in the Academic Council of the University, the members express their views and relevant decisions are made. At the same time, the information obtained is submitted to the relevant government agencies in the form of a report.
 - **Profile of the student population (e.g. age, gender, domicile; level, mode and subject of study)**
Information about students is regularly collected in all faculties and relevant departments. Thus, information about students is often updated by the faculties and the updated information is handed over to the relevant departments.
 - **Student progression, success and drop-out rates**
Student development, success, failure percentage, etc. information is regularly prepared in the faculties and handed over to the Department of Education. The Education Department reports by placing information in the relevant tables prepared by the Ministry of Education. The final reports are submitted to the university administration and the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education.
 - **Students' satisfaction with their programmes**

In order to measure students' satisfaction, tutors working in the faculties conduct regular interviews with students and conduct surveys. The results are collected and discussed at faculty meetings, and the final reports are submitted to the Department of Education.

- **Learning resources and student support available**

A tutoring service is provided at the faculties to provide student support at the university. In the coming days, the university administration plans to establish a Tutor Service Center to organize the tutoring service more effectively. At the same time, there are organizations responsible for student support, such as the Student Trade Union, Student Youth Organization, Student Ombudsman, Student Scientific Society. In the coming days, it is planned to establish a Student Startups Organization to provide support to students in the field of startups. The Statute of the Student Startups Organization is currently being prepared.

- **Indicators of graduates' employability**

Related alumni information is collected by the University's Internship and Career Center. At the same time, for 5 consecutive years, a book containing information about students who have graduated each year has been published and shared among stakeholders.

- **Indicators of internationalization of the institution**

A lot of work is being done to internationalize the university. This issue is always in the focus of the university administration. Many international projects are being implemented at the university for this purpose. In order to further develop this field at the university, the university administration has given relevant instructions to the Innovation Department to develop an "Internationalization Policy". The document has already been prepared and is scheduled for approval by the Scientific Council in late May.

- **Other, please specify:**

6. Public information

- **Do you inform the public about the results of evaluations carried out internally and externally?**

Information on the results of internal and external evaluation is always discussed at the meetings of the Scientific Council. Information about this is then shared on the official website of the university. The accreditation process

conducted by TKTA at the university has recently been completed. The final results of the accreditation process will be discussed at the next meeting of the Scientific Council. The final result will then be shared with the public.

- **Does your institution publish information about its programmes and graduate employment?**

The university always prepares promotional products, booklets, videos, graduation books about its educational programs. The booklets are available in several languages (English, Russian, German, French, Turkish). The videos are shared on the university's official YouTube channel under the name GDUTV. The prepared information is used in local and international exhibitions. At the same time, during the "Promotional Campaigns" organized at local schools by the university these promotional materials are used.

7. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

- **What kind of processes do you have in place for monitoring programme design?**

Programs are developed and monitored by the related departments. The developed programs are approved at the meetings of the department and discussed by the relevant commission. Elective subjects are decided and provided by the university, and basic compulsory subjects are provided by Ministry of Education.

- **Do you prepare self-evaluation report annually?**

Our university does not prepare an annual self-assessment report. This process is carried out only every 5 years before the accreditation process.

- **Who is responsible for the evaluation of SER?**

The Vice-Rector for Organization of Teaching and Learning Technologies is responsible for evaluating the self-assessment report at the university.

- **Do you have internal monitoring processes?**

The internal monitoring process at the university is carried out by several commissions established by the university administration. These commissions are: Open Lessons Supervision Commission, Monitoring Commission, Teaching Control Commission. There is a relevant order of the rector on the establishment of all these commissions. The reports prepared by the commissions are regularly submitted to the university administration. At the same time, the university

has a department of "Strategic Analysis, Evaluation and Monitoring". This department is one of the newly established departments at the university.

Existence of the documents

QA policy	Available
QA strategy	Available
Statue of QA Centre	Available
QA staff job description	Available
Stakeholder mapping	Available
QA action plan	Available
QA reports	Available

1. How will you evaluate the impact of the project for your institution? What has changed over the project? Please present what has been done according to the EU recommendation after the first monitoring?

After the areas for improvement and recommendations provided by the EU experts following work has been done:

- *Overall institutional strategic plan, vision, mission, objectives have been prepared and updated;*
- *Institutional strategic plan included 3 goals one of which is related to establishment of quality assurance system and establishment of quality culture;*
- *Quality assurance office has been established for the first time at the university;*
- *3 job positions were created at the QA office and their salaries identified: a head of office and 2 experts;*
- *Job responsibilities of the QA office was defined;*
- *Charter and statue of QA office was created;*
- *Strategic plan and substantiality plan of QA center was created;*
- *Monitoring processed has been decided to be more systematic under the supervision of Quality Assurance Office;*
- *Survey Policy has been created;*

- *Stakeholder Mapping has been prepared for the first time at the university;*
- *Quality policy was created and key performance indicators has been identified;*
- *Organizational chart was created;*
- *SWOT Analysis was done;*
- *Information management system has been purchased to establishing better communication channels.*

2. How many people trained during the project?

700 people were trained within the framework of project

3. How many retraining sessions are organized at the university?

40 trainings have been conducted within the framework of project

I hereby confirm that I have fully acknowledged the content of the presented report.

Signature and stamp of the rector: