

Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia

№65/n of May 4,

2011

City of Tbilisi

On Approval of the Charter and Fees for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions

Order №83/ N of July 7 2022 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia - Website, 08.07.2022

Based on Article 3, paragraph 3, subparagraph “c” and Article 30 of the Law of Georgia On Education Quality Improvement, and Article 7 paragraph 1 subparagraph “f” of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education",

1 Approve the Charter for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions according to Annex №1.

2 Approve Fees for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions according to Annex №2.

2¹. Approve the Accreditation Standards for Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institution according to Annex №3 of this Order.

2². Approve the service fees provided by the Legal Entity of Public Law - National Center for Education Quality Enhancement based on the Charter for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions (Annex № 1) approved by this Order, according to Annex № 4.

2³. Approve the rules and conditions for grouping higher educational programmes into clusters in accordance with Annex No. 5.

3 The Order shall enter into force upon promulgation.

D. Shashkin

The Charter for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions

Chapter I General provisions

Article 1. Regulation Scope

This Charter sets the conditions for meeting the Accreditation Standards (hereinafter - the Standards) for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions (hereinafter – the Institutions), the procedure of accreditation, monitoring of the fulfillment of accreditation conditions, recognition of accreditation granted by a foreign organization, the rule and procedure of accreditation of the higher educational programme of a higher educational institution operating abroad, the rules and conditions for determining the threshold for students' places on the educational programme of Medical Doctor and for increasing this threshold, the rules for reviewing appeals, the authority and rules of procedure for the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes and for the Appeals Council.

Article 2. Purpose and Content of Accreditation

1. The purpose of the accreditation is to establish systematic self-evaluation of the institutions and promote the development of quality assurance mechanisms to improve the quality of education through determining compliance of educational programmes of the institution with the accreditation standards.

2 The accreditation standards include:

- a) Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme;
- b) Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering;
- c) Student achievements and individual work with them;
- d) Providing teaching resources;
- e) Teaching quality enhancement opportunities.

2¹. In accordance with this Charter, each accreditation standard is broken down into the components.

3. Accreditation is an external evaluation mechanism of the compliance of educational programmes with the standards, which, in order to develop the quality of education, by determining compliance with accreditation standards, promotes the establishment of a systematic self-evaluation process in the institution and the development of mechanisms for ensuring the quality of education. An institution shall carry out the self-evaluation in accordance with the procedure for evaluating its own activities and compile an accreditation self-evaluation report, while external evaluation shall be carried out by the Legal Entity of Public Law - the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter - the Center).

Article 2¹. The term for rectifying the deficiencies

1. Within the administrative proceedings envisaged by this Charter, the term for rectifying the deficiencies determined by the Center shall be no less than 5 and no more than 15 working days.
2. The term determined for the administrative proceedings shall be deemed as suspended during the term determined for rectifying the deficiencies.

Chapter II

(removed)

Chapter III

(removed)

Chapter IV

Accreditation Standards of Educational Programmes of the Institutions

Article 13. Accreditation Standards of Educational Programmes of the Institutions

Accreditation standards of educational programmes of the higher education institutions are determined by the Annex N°3 of this Order.

Article 14. (removed)

Article 15. (removed)

Article 16. (removed)

Article 17. (removed)

Article 17¹. Evaluation Guidebook of Accreditation Standards

Evaluation Guidebook of Accreditation Standards shall be approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 17². Specifics of the accreditation of a joint educational programme

While defining the compliance with the accreditation standards of joint higher education programmes to be implemented together with a higher education institution/institutions recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, the approaches developed by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for the quality assurance of joint higher education programmes are taken into account.

Article 18. Specifics of the accreditation of a regulated educational programme

While defining the compliance of a regulated educational programme with the accreditation standards special requirements established by the sectoral benchmarks shall be taken into consideration.

Article 18¹. (Removed - 17.12.2012, N°248/N)

Chapter V

Rule of Conducting an Accreditation

Article 19. Accreditation Process

1. Accreditation process includes the following stages:

- a) Submitting an accreditation application;
- b) Recognition of an educational institution as a seeker of accreditation (hereinafter - accreditation seeker) of respective educational programme/cluster of educational programmes;
- c) Creation of Accreditation Expert Panel;
- d) Preliminary study of the self-evaluation report of the accreditation seeker and the attached documentation and elaboration of the accreditation site visit agenda;
- e) Implementation of the accreditation site visit;
- f) Elaboration of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel and submitting it to the Center;
- g) Introduction of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel to the accreditation seeker;
- h) Submission of the argumentative position on factual circumstances reflected in the report of accreditation expert panel by the accreditation seeker to the Center;
- i) Elaboration of the final report by the accreditation expert panel and submitting it to the Center;
- j) Introducing the report of the accreditation expert panel to the accreditation seeker;
- k) Sending an accreditation application, the final report of the accreditation expert panel and the argumentative position submitted to the Center by the accreditation seeker on the draft report of the panel to the members of the Accreditation Council (hereinafter- the Council);
- l) Oral hearing on accreditation issue and decision-making by the Accreditation Council of Educational Programmes;
- m) Publication of a substantiated decision of the Council by the Center.

2. The decision related to accreditation by the Council is made within 180 calendar days after the official submission of the document confirming the payment of the accreditation fee to the Center.

3. Accreditation process can be done through the electronic system of quality management, the rule of management and use of which is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 19¹. Preparatory meeting for accreditation process

1. At least 1 month prior to submitting the accreditation application, the institution has the right to write to the Center with a request to hold a preparatory meeting for the accreditation process.

2. Preparatory meeting is consultative in nature and covers the following:

- a) Planning and implementation of the self-evaluation process;
- b) Planning and implementation of the accreditation visit;
- c) Definition of accreditation standards and procedures.

3. In case provided by paragraph 1 of this Article, an individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center shall be issued on determining the employee / employees of the Center authorized to conduct the preparatory meeting for the accreditation process and on conducting the preparatory meeting. The preparatory meeting for the accreditation process can be held remotely, using modern electronic means of communication.

4. In case provided by paragraph 3 of this Article, after the preparatory meeting for the accreditation process, an authorized employee of the Center draws up a written protocol, which reflects the information about the provided consultation. The institution is obliged to facilitate the implementation of the preparatory meeting for the accreditation process and the preparation of the corresponding protocol, as well as to designate an authorized person who will sign the protocol of the preparatory meeting for the accreditation process on behalf of the institution. On behalf of the Center, the protocol is signed by the employee / employees of the Center provided for in paragraph 3 of the same Article.

Article 20. Accreditation Application

1. The following shall be attached to the accreditation application submitted to the Center for the accreditation of the educational programme/cluster of educational programmes of the educational institution:

- a) A self-evaluation report created for an educational programme/cluster of educational programmes and documentation to be attached to it;
- b) Document confirming payment of the fee for review of the accreditation application;
- c) In case of submission of foreign educational programme, an international agreement or document certifying the consent issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.
- d) In case of submission of a joint higher educational programme, the contract signed between the implementing institutions for the implementation of the joint higher education programme and the document confirming the agreement with the Center of the draft contract.

2. For the purpose of accreditation of one educational programme, it is permissible to submit an accreditation application to the Center if:

- a) the institution implements an educational programme in the field of study corresponding to the "Classifier of Fields of Study", which cannot be grouped with other educational programme/programmes in accordance with Annex No. 5 of this Order;
- b) the institution, for the purpose of the first accreditation, submits an accreditation application to the Center for the educational programme whose cluster is not to be accredited in the corresponding year;
- c) for the purpose of accreditation, the institution submits an educational programme with conditional accreditation to the Center;
- d) for the purpose of accreditation, the institution submits to the Center the educational programme of a Medical Doctor or the educational programme of Georgian language preparation.

3. For the purpose of accreditation of educational programmes grouped in a cluster of educational programmes, one accreditation application submitted to the Center shall include no more than eight educational programmes.

4. The rules and conditions for grouping the higher education programmes into a cluster provided for in paragraph 3 of this Article shall be determined in accordance with Annex No. 5 of this Order.

5. An educational programme submitted for accreditation corresponds only one qualification according to the learning outcomes. Except for the case when one accreditation application envisages:

a) master's degree educational programme, which, according to the learning outcomes, corresponds to more than one, but not more than three qualifications, taking into account the fields of studies within the same detailed field of “Classifier of Fields of Study“, except for the regulated educational programmes;

b) teacher training educational programme which, according to the learning outcomes, provides for the teaching of modules of subject teaching methodology within the limits of the number determined by the sectoral benchmarks of teacher training.

6. During each subsequent accreditation of the educational programme to maintain the continuity of the status of the educational programme, while submitting an accreditation application to the Center, the educational institution shall take into consideration the terms defined by paragraph 2 of Article 19 and Article 22 of this Charter in such a way that the 180 calendar days set by the Council for deciding on accreditation is devoted to the implementation of the stages of the accreditation process provided for from subparagraph “c” to subparagraph “m” of paragraph 1 of Article 19 of this Charter. The institution shall be responsible for the consequences caused by not taking this into account.

7. The educational institution is authorized to apply to the Center about including an international expert/experts in the accreditation expert panel for accreditation of an educational programme. The educational institution shall indicate about this issue in the self-evaluation report of the accreditation. In the case envisaged by this paragraph, the international expert included in the accreditation expert panel shall be defined as the Chair of the panel.

8. In the case envisaged by paragraph 7 of this Article, an educational institution is obliged to additionally attach to the accreditation application or submit the translations after submission of the application within the term agreed upon with the Center in written form, the English language translation of the accreditation self-evaluation report envisaged by subparagraph “a” of paragraph 1 of this Article and of those accompanying documentations which are required to be provided in English as indicated in the approved form of the accreditation self-evaluation report.

9. If an educational institution fails to submit the documentation provided for by the paragraph 8 of this Article to the Center, the Center shall create an accreditation expert panel without including an international expert in it.

10. An educational institution is responsible for the correctness and authenticity of the translation of the documents provided in paragraph 8 of this Article. If the translation error has been identified during the accreditation process, which affects determining compliance of an educational programme of the educational institution with accreditation standards, the Center is entitled to issue an individual administrative legal act on termination of administrative proceedings. In the case of difference between Georgian and English texts of the documents, preference shall be given to the Georgian text.

11. If the accreditation application presents a regulated academic higher education programme/programmes (except for teacher training or veterinary training programmes) envisaged by paragraph 2 of Article 75 of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" or/and doctoral education programme (individually as well as included in a cluster of educational programmes) the accreditation expert panel shall include an international expert with relevant qualifications, who shall be defined as

the Chair of the accreditation expert panel. Also, in the case when a joint higher education programme is submitted with an accreditation application, which is planned to be implemented in cooperation with a higher institution/institutions recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, the accreditation expert panel shall include the international expert/experts with respective qualifications from the country/countries that implement the programme.

12. In case of the participation of an international expert/experts in the accreditation expert panel, the institution is obliged to submit on its own to the Center the English language translation of the accreditation self-evaluation report envisaged by subparagraph "a" of paragraph 1 of this Article and of those accompanying documentations which are required to be provided in English as indicated in the approved form of the accreditation self-evaluation report, when submitting the accreditation application to the Center or within the term agreed upon with the Center in written form.

13. In the case provided by paragraph 12 of this Article, the institution is responsible for the correctness and authenticity of the translation of the documentation. If the translation error has been identified during the accreditation process, which affects determining compliance of an educational programme of the educational institution with accreditation standards, the Center is entitled to issue an individual administrative legal act on termination of administrative proceedings. In the case of difference between Georgian and English texts of the documents, preference shall be given to the Georgian text.

14. In case of participation of an international expert/experts in the group of accreditation experts, based on the petition of the institution, upon payment of the amount specified in Appendix No. 2 of this Order, the Center will provide an English translation of the completed accreditation self-evaluation report envisaged by subparagraph "a" of paragraph 1 of this Article and of those accompanying documentations which are required to be provided in English as indicated in the approved form of the accreditation self-evaluation report.

15. In the case provided by paragraph 14 of this Article, in order to control the quality of the translation service, the Center sends the translation to the institution. Within 10 (ten) calendar days after receipt of translations, the higher education institution is authorized to inform the Center on translation-related reasonable comments. Upon expiration of the above-mentioned term, a higher education institution shall be deemed to have no comments regarding translations.

[16. In order to re-accredit the educational programme, the accreditation application can be submitted to the Center twice a year - from the first of January to the first of May and from the first of September to the first of December. ***(Enters into force from January 1, 2023)***]

[17. The deadlines for submitting the accreditation application to the Center established by paragraph 16 of this Article do not apply:

a) on the accreditation application submitted to the Center for the purpose of the first accreditation of educational programm/educational programmes included in the cluster of educational programmes;

b) on accreditation applications submitted for the purpose of accreditation of a conditionally accredited educational programme. ***(Enters into force from January 1, 2023)***]

18. The documentation stipulated in paragraph 1 of this Article can be submitted to the Center through the electronic document management system or in physical form, in which case the documentation to

be attached to the accreditation self-evaluation report shall be submitted to the Center through the electronic information carrier.

Article 21. Self-Evaluation

1. The goal of self-evaluation is to evaluate the readiness of the educational programme/cluster of educational programmes to get accreditation.
2. Self-evaluation is done according to the accreditation standards.
3. Self-evaluation results are reflected in the accreditation self-evaluation report.
4. The form of accreditation self-evaluation of an educational programme and for the educational programmes grouped into a cluster of educational programmes is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center, which is public.

Article 22. Recognition as Accreditation Seeker

1. Within 3 working days, and within 7 working days, in the case of submitting an accreditation application for the purpose of accreditation of educational programmes grouped in a cluster, the Center shall approve the compliance of the documents attached to the accreditation application with the requirements provided for by the Article 20 of this Charter.
2. If the institution shall not submit to the Center any of the documents provided in paragraph 1 of Article 20 of this Charter, the Center shall define a term for an institution to rectify the deficiency.
3. In the case of rectifying the deficiencies within the term envisaged by the paragraph 2 of this Article, the Center shall issue an individual administrative legal act on recognition of the institution as Accreditation Seeker, while in the case of failure to rectify the deficiencies within the same term - it shall issue an individual administrative legal act on not reviewing the application.
4. The individual administrative legal act of the Center on recognition of an institution as an accreditation seeker is issued no later than within 20 calendar days from the date of submission of application or rectification of deficiencies.
 - 4¹. If necessary, the institution is entitled to submit changes, as a onetime manner, about the information reflected in the self-evaluation report or/and about attached documentation to the Center within 15 calendar days after receiving individual administrative legal act described in paragraph 4 of this Article. In addition, if the change considers the need for substitution of any document, the institution shall submit a written description / explanation of the changes together with the mentioned document. After expiration of this deadline, changes to the information reflected in the self-evaluation report and in the attached documentation are inadmissible.
 - 4². After expiration of the term envisaged in the paragraph 4¹ of this Article, the changes made to the self-evaluation report and attached documentation shall not be taken into account.
5. If the accreditation seeker does not pay an accreditation fee within 15 calendar days after getting familiar with the individual administrative legal act about its recognition as a seeker and does not submit to the Center the document confirming the fee in the same timeframe, the Center shall issue an individual administrative legal act on termination of administrative proceedings.

Article 23. Accreditation Expert Pool

1. An accreditation expert cannot be a public servant, also cannot be an employee of the Center, except in case when, he/she is employed at the Center for a period of less than 3 months in order to execute expert work of specific volume.
2. The accreditation experts pool shall be represented by the relevant field specialists taking into account the specifics of educational programmes.
3. The procedure of selection, activity and termination of membership of the expert pool is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 24. Creation of Accreditation Experts panel

1. Within 60 days from the submitting to the Center the document confirming the payment of the accreditation fee, the Center shall issue an individual administrative legal act on the creation of an accreditation expert panel and the site visit to the institution that seeks the accreditation.
2. In the case of the accreditation of the higher educational programme, the accreditation expert panel is composed from the following members of experts pool: administrative/academic/scientific/invited personnel and students of other higher educational institutions; it may also include international experts (participation of international experts is mandatory in the cases provided by paragraph 5¹ of Article 20 of this Charter), the employers, the representatives of corresponding regulatory body and/or professional associations in the case of regulated educational programme and other persons with relevant qualifications.

[2. The accreditation expert panel includes members of the experts pool - administrative/academic/scientific/invited staff of other institutions, international expert (except for those presented in individual form in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 20 of this Charter - Georgian language preparation, teacher training and veterinary training 60 credits educational programmes), student; The composition may also include the employers, the representatives of corresponding regulatory body and/or professional associations in the case of regulated educational programme and other persons with relevant qualifications. *(Enters into force from January 1, 2023)*]

2¹. (Removed - 07.07.2022, No. 83/ N).

2². In the event that a joint higher education programme is submitted via the accreditation application, which is planned to be implemented in cooperation with a higher educational institution/institutions recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, the panel of accreditation experts shall include international expert/experts with appropriate qualifications from the implementing country/countries.

3. The accreditation expert panel is chaired by the Chair of the panel. In the event that an international expert is included in the accreditation expert panel, he/she will be designated as the chairman of the accreditation expert panel.

4. Accreditation expert is obliged to declare if he/she has a conflict of interest with the institution seeking the accreditation in which the visit shall be implementation.

5. An institution seeking accreditation is authorized to submit a recusal of an accreditation expert/experts at the Center within two working days after obtaining an individual administrative legal act referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.
6. The institution is obliged to justify the recusal of the accreditation expert/experts. The basis for recusal may be the conflict of interest of the chair and/or member of the accreditation expert panel.
7. For this Charter, the conflict of interest is considered the circumstances provided by the Rules of Accreditation Experts' Selection, and Activities, and Termination of Membership of Expert Pool and/or circumstances envisaged by Article 92 of the General Administrative Code of Georgia.
8. The Center shall review the claim on recusal within 3 business days. In case of satisfying the application for recusal, the Center shall make a decision on amendment of the composition of the accreditation expert panel.
9. In case of not satisfying the application for recusal of accreditation expert/experts, accreditation expert panel shall continue its activities in the same composition.
10. The duration of the site visit and the number of members of the accreditation expert panel shall be determined by the Center under the individual administrative legal act stipulated in paragraph 1 of this Article, taking into consideration the volume and specifics of work to be done according to the Rules Accreditation Experts' Selection, and Activities, and Termination of Membership of Expert Pool.
11. In order to effectively manage activities of the accreditation expert panel within the framework determined by legislation and to adhere to unified approach to the evaluation, the Center shall send its representative to the site visit of the accreditation expert panel.
12. The remuneration of the international expert is determined in accordance with the rules of remuneration of experts approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center, in the labor contract signed between the center and the international expert, and shall be added to the accreditation fee.
13. The Center sends to the institution the invoice drawn up on the basis of the labor contract signed with the international expert. In the event that the institution does not pay the amount required for the remuneration of the international expert within 15 calendar days from the receipt of the invoice and does not present a document confirming the payment within the same period, the Center will issue an individual administrative legal act on the termination of the administrative proceedings.

Article 25. Evaluation of Accreditation Self-evaluation Report

1. The Center shall send to each member of the accreditation expert panel the documents defined in subparagraphs "a", "c" and "d" of paragraph 1 of Article 20 of this Charter after the expiry of the term provided in the paragraph 5 of Article 24 of this Charter.
2. The Chair of the accreditation expert panel shall ensure distribution of duties among the members of the panel to study the completed self-evaluation report and the accompanying documentation and determine their compliance with the accreditation standards.

3. Before the accreditation site visit, the expert panel reviews the completed self-evaluation report and accompanying documentation, based on this determines the agenda of the site visit and agrees on it with the Center. In the process of agreeing on the agenda, the Center considers the argumentative opinions of the institution. The Center sends the final version of the agenda to the institution.

4. The panel of accreditation experts, within the framework of the preparatory meeting held before the accreditation visit, establishes additional issues to be studied within the framework of the visit in order to draw up a report.

Article 26. Accreditation Site Visit

1. The Chair of the accreditation experts panel ensures distribution of duties among members of the accreditation experts panel during the visit.

2. A member of the accreditation expert panel participates in the work of the panel, ensures the implementation of the functions envisaged by Rules of Accreditation Experts' Selection, and Activities, and Termination of Membership of Expert Pool.

3. Following the agreed agenda, an accreditation expert shall examine all issues for drafting a report within the accreditation site visit, including an interview with stakeholders, if necessary, request additional documentation, conduct visual inspection and, if necessary, implement activities unforeseen by the agenda.

4. (Removed - 10.09.2020, №96/N);

5. The institution is obliged to assist the accreditation expert panel during the implementation of the accreditation site visit and preparation of the relevant report, submit the necessary documentation for accreditation purposes and organize an interview with the persons requested by the panel.

5¹. In case of international expert's participation in the Accreditation Experts Panel, the Center takes responsibility to provide required translation services during the accreditation visit. The Center shall ensure that conflicts of interest with the accreditation seeker are avoided when selecting an interpreter.

6. On the last day of the site visit the accreditation expert panel shall present the main findings to the accreditation seeker.

7. If the institution interrupts the activities of an accreditation experts panel, the Center is entitled to issue an individual administrative legal act about termination of the administrative proceedings.

26¹. Definition of the four-level evaluation scale

1. The educational programme is evaluated against the standard component as "complies with standard requirement" if the educational programme fully meets the requirements of the standard component.

2. The educational programme is evaluated against the standard component as "substantially complies with standard requirement" if the educational programme mostly satisfies the requirements of the standard component and the institution can demonstrate relevant results. However, the institution has weaknesses and demonstrates a willingness to solve those shortcomings within a short period of time (no more than 1 year) and it has a plan ensured with relevant resources.

3. The educational programme is evaluated against the standard component as “partially complies with standard requirement” if the educational programme meets the component requirements on a basic level and has such areas for improvement that require the mobilization of significant resources. However, the institution has a willingness and the plan to overcome weaknesses ensured with relevant resources in the medium-term period (more than 1 year, not more than 2 years).

4. The educational programme is evaluated against the standard component as “does not comply with standard requirement” if the educational programme fails to satisfy at least the requirements of the standard component at the level defined by paragraph 3 of this Article.

Article 27. Evaluation of compliance with the accreditation standards

1. Compliance with accreditation standards is assessed using a four-level scale: “complies with standard requirements,” “substantially complies with standard requirements”, “partially complies with standard requirements,” and “does not comply with standard requirements”.

2. An educational programme “complies with standard requirements” if it is evaluated against not more than one component of this standard as “substantially complies with standard requirements” and with regard to the rest of the components is evaluated as “complies with standard requirements”.

3. An educational programme “substantially complies with standard requirements” if the educational programme is evaluated against not more than one component of this standard as “partially complies with standard requirements” and is not evaluated in regard to any other component as “does not comply with standard requirements”.

4. An educational programme “partially complies with standard requirements” if the educational programme is evaluated against more than one component of this standard as “partially complies with standard requirements” and is not evaluated in regard to any other component as “does not comply with standard requirements”.

5. An educational programme “does not comply with standard requirements” if the educational programme is evaluated against at least one components of the standard as “does not comply with standard requirements”.

Article 27¹. Preparing the report

1. The draft report of the accreditation expert panel shall be elaborated and submitted to the Center as a result of study of the self-evaluation report and documentation attached to it and the accreditation site visit.

2. The draft report shall describe the compliance of the educational programme with the accreditation standards.

3. The Center shall define the formal compliance of the accreditation expert panel’s draft report with the requirements established by the individual administrative legal acts issued by the Director of the

Center envisaged by the paragraphs 3 of Article 23 and paragraph 9 of this Article of this Charter. If the compliance is established, the draft report shall be sent to the institution.

4. If necessary to ensure formal compliance of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel, it shall be returned back to the accreditation expert panel.

5. Within 5 working days after the introduction of the draft report on the educational programme, and within 10 working days in the case of a cluster of educational programmes, the accreditation seeker shall submit an argumentative position regarding the factual circumstances provided in the draft report in written form to the Center, which then shall be sent to the expert panel and the council.

6. In case of submission of the argumentative position provided in paragraph 5 of this Article, after getting acquainted with it or in case of non-submission of argumentative position, after expiry of term envisaged by the paragraph 5 of this Article, the expert panel shall elaborate the final report and submit it to the Center.

6¹. In the case of submission of the argumentative position provided for in paragraph 5 of this Article, the report formed by the accreditation expert panel shall include information on sharing or not sharing the argumentative position by the expert panel.

7. In the case of participation of an international expert in the expert panel, the Center shall provide the necessary translation service to form the draft report and final version of report of the expert panel. In case of difference between the Georgian and English texts, preference is given to the Georgian one.

8. The Center shall send the accreditation expert panel final report to the institution.

9. The forms of the educational programme and the cluster of educational programmes' accreditation expert panel report and requirements set for them, are approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 27². Oral Hearing

1. The Council shall make a decision on accreditation based on the accreditation documents, accreditation expert panel report, the argumentative position of the institution on the accreditation expert panel draft report and the oral hearing.

2. The session of the Council is convened by the Chair of the Council, or the Director of the Center.

3. The interested party shall be notified on the oral hearing at least 7 calendar days prior to the oral hearing. The interested party participating in administrative proceedings shall be authorized to participate in oral hearing.

4. The oral hearing shall be led by the Chair of the Council, in case of his/her absence it shall be led by the deputy, while in case of absence of both the Chair and the deputy it shall be led by a member of the Council selected through majority of attendees' votes. If the secretary of the Council is unable to perform his/her duties, such duties are carried out by one of the members of the Council, as requested by the Chair.

5. The session is authorized, if it is attended by more than half of the members, but no less than 3 members. In case of participation of invited members of the Council, it is authorized if it is attended by more than half of the members, but no less than 3/4 of invited members. This number does not include the member of the Council, which has self- recusal or recusal towards the issue discussed.
6. The session is public. The chairperson of the session is authorized to declare session as closed in the cases envisaged by the legislation.
7. Members of the accreditation expert panel participate in the oral hearing, while the representatives of the Center and/or other interested parties are entitled to take part in the discussion with the consent of the Chair of the Council.
8. It is possible to invite other expert in the relevant field, a member of a professional organization, a specialist of the field and other person to the oral hearing by the decision of the Council.
9. The Chair of the session is obliged to ensure that the important circumstances of the case are examined at the oral hearings.
10. Stakeholders participating in the administrative proceedings are entitled to place a motion for further investigation of the circumstances that are important to the case.
11. When making a decision on the oral hearing, the document of the accreditation seeker elaborated after the accreditation site visit shall not be taken into consideration.
12. Minutes of the Council meeting shall be signed within 10 working days after the session by the Chair of the Council and the Secretary. Based on the minutes of the Council sessions an individual administrative legal act is issued signed by the Chair of the Council and Secretary.
13. The functions and duties of the members of the Council stipulated by this regulation can also be performed remotely or semi-remotely using modern electronic means of communication (if possible).

Article 27³. Composition of the Council

1. The term of office of the Council shall be determined by one year and the term of office of invited members of the Council is determined by two years. Activities of the Council members will be remunerated (will be given honorarium) from the Center's own revenues. Rule of issuing and amount of remuneration (honorarium) of the member of the Council shall be determined by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center. The members of the Council are appointed and dismissed by the Prime Minister of Georgia upon submission of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

1¹. Accreditation Council is composed of permanent and invited members. Invited members participate in the activities of the Council only if the accreditation application submitted by the institution indicates the regulated academic higher education programme (hereinafter - educational programme of Medical Doctor) provided in subparagraph "b" of paragraph 2 of Article 75 of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education. Invited members of the Accreditation Council have the right to vote.

1². During the selection of the candidates of invited members of the Council, the Ministry is guided by the requirements and criteria established by the World Federation for Medical Education in relation to the composition of the Council.

2. 2 persons according to the field specifics shall be determined by the Chair of the Council to participate with the right to deliberative vote in the decision-making process of the Council. The manner and amount of remuneration for their activities (honorary payment) is determined by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center. Invited persons will be compensated for their activities (honorary will be given) from the Center's own income.

3. A member of the Council can have his/her term terminated before expiration based on the initiative of the Prime Minister of Georgia, or based on as follows:

a) On the basis of a personal statement;

b) Upon the entry into force of the court conviction against him/her;

c) In case of recognition as an entity with limited legal capacity or as a support recipient by a court, unless otherwise provided by the court's decision;

d) In case of systematic absence from the sessions, if this hinders the work of the Council;

e) In case of violation of the norms envisaged by Article 27⁴ of this Charter.

f) Taking into account the Center's motion/ on its own initiative based on the submission of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

4. Termination of authority of the member of the Council before expiration of the term is confirmed by an individual administrative legal act of the Prime Minister of Georgia. In case of termination of the mandate before the term, the Prime Minister, as recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science, appoints a new member, within one month, for the remaining term of the previous member.

Article 27⁴. Rules and Principles of Activity of the Council

1. A member of the Council shall be independent, objective, and impartial in fulfilling his/her functions.

2. A member of the Council shall maintain neutrality in any situation, and shall not be subject to the influence of interested parties, regardless of their status.

3. A member of the Council shall not disclose any information and/or documents obtained while performing his/her official duties, and shall not use them for personal interests.

4. A member of the Council shall be focused on cooperation and shall not try to display privileged position. He/she shall not publicly doubt competence of experts, representatives of institutions, members of Council, and members of the Appeals Council, even if he/she does not share their position.

5. A member of the Council shall be responsible for declaring about any conflict of interest and self-recusal before the oral hearing. A conflict of interest can be any circumstance stipulated in Article 92 of the General Administrative Code of Georgia.

5¹. In the presence of the conflict of interests provided for in paragraph 5 of this Article, the member of the Council shall not participate in the processes of discussion, decision-making and voting of the issue to be discussed at the Council session.

5². The member of the Council provided for in paragraph 5¹ of this Article is not authorized to present the position of the interested party - the institution at the meeting of the Council.

6. Organizational-financial support of the Council is ensured by the Accreditation Council Secretariat (hereinafter -the secretariat) and its functions are fulfilled by the Center. Composition of the secretariat is defined using individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

7. The secretariat sends the session agenda and the following documents to the Council members 7 days prior to the oral hearing:

- a) Self- evaluation report of the accreditation seeker and attached documents;
- b) Accreditation expert panel's final report;
- c) The argumentative position presented by the accreditation seeker on the draft report of the accreditation expert panel.

8. Before the oral hearing, for full examination and assessment of all substantial issues, each member of the Council is responsible for reviewing documents described in the paragraph 7 of this Article in advance. A member of the Council is entitled to request additional documents for reviewing the subject matter, and the Council is entitled to postpone the oral hearing for that reason, with consideration of remaining time frame of the administrative proceeding.

Article 27⁵. Decisions Regarding Accreditation

1. The decisions made by the Council can be as follows:

- a) On accreditation;
- b) On conditional accreditation;
- c) On refusal of accreditation;
- d) On cancellation of accreditation.

2. The decision of the Council shall be made by at least 3/4 of the members attending the session. In addition, in case of participation of invited members of the Council, the Council shall make a decision by no less than 3/4 of the attending members, from which the votes of the invited members shall be no less than 3/4 of the invited members.

2¹. The Council makes the decision provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article on the basis of secret voting. Furthermore, the minutes of the Council meeting ensure publicity of the ballot results.

3. In case of the decision envisaged by paragraphs "a" and "b" of this Article, the Council shall be authorized to give recommendations to the accreditation seeker.

3¹. In case of a decision on inspecting (monitoring) fulfillment of the accreditation conditions together with the decision envisaged by subparagraph "a" of paragraph 1 of this Article, the institution shall

submit a document confirming the payment of the fee to the Center within 15 calendar days after receiving a written notification on payment of the fee established for monitoring of the accreditation conditions sent by the Center at least one month before the implementation of the monitoring site visit. In case of non-payment of the fee within this period, the Council shall consider cancellation of the accreditation for the relevant educational programme upon the submission of the Center.

3². If the decision envisaged in the paragraph “c” and “d” of the first paragraph of this Article is made during an academic year, the Council is authorized, based on petition of the respective institution and considering the lawful interests of the students, in order to maintain continuity of the academic process, despite the remaining term of the accreditation, to allow students to complete the ongoing academic year at respective educational institution upon proper decision and indicate no later than the end of the ongoing academic year as the date of entering the decision on cancellation of accreditation or refusal to re-accreditation into force.

3³. When the permanent and invited members of the Council make the decision provided for in subparagraph “a” or “b” of paragraph 1 of this Article related to the educational programme of a Medical Doctor, the Council determines the maximum number of student places for the educational programme of the Medical Doctor in accordance with the rules established by this Charter, within the limits of the number of student places established for the institution, during the term of accreditation.

4. A member of the Council is not entitled to refrain from voting.

5. The Council is obliged to substantiate its decision.

6. The decision envisaged by paragraph 1 of this Article is published on the Center’s website within 10 working days after its adoption. Together with the decision, the expert panel report is also published on the webpage.

7. The decision provided in paragraph 1 of this Article shall enter into force on the day of its publication on the website of the Center.

7¹. For continuity of accreditation of educational programme, for each subsequent accreditation of the educational programme, the decision provided for in subparagraphs “a” and “b” of paragraph 1 of this Article shall indicate the beginning of the accreditation period (date of enactment of the decision), which may be determined upon the petition of the institution from the following day of the expiration of the ongoing accreditation term remaining from the day the decision entered into force or from a specific date before the expiration of the ongoing accreditation term remaining from the day the decision entered into force.

7². If the decision envisaged by subparagraphs “a” and “b” of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be made during the term envisaged by paragraph 2 of Article 19 of this Charter due to the reasons that are independent from an institution, the commencement date of the accreditation (date when decision enters into force) may be determined by the rule different from paragraph 7¹ of this Article based on the petition of the institution.

8. The accreditation is canceled in case of expiration of authorization term or cancellation of authorization.

Article 27⁶. Decision on Accreditation or Conditional Accreditation

1. In the case of the first and every subsequent accreditation of the educational programme, if during Council's evaluation of the educational programme's compliance with the accreditation standards the educational programme:

a) is evaluated against all standards, as "complies with standard requirements", the Council makes decision on accreditation;

b) is evaluated against one standard as "substantially complies with standard requirements" and is not evaluated against any of the standards as "partially complies with standard requirements" or "does not comply with standard requirements", the Council shall make a decision on accreditation and shall define the term for the institution to submit the report on the fulfillment of the recommendations that will be reflected in the minutes of the Council session;

b¹) in relation to the standards provided for in subparagraphs "a" or "d" of paragraph 2 of Article 2 of this Charter, is evaluated as "substantially complies with standard requirements" and in relation to any standard is not evaluated as "partially complies with standard requirements" or "does not comply with standard requirements" and the substantial compliance of the standard is due to the evaluation of no more than one component of the same standard as "partially complies with standard requirements", the Council makes a decision on accreditation and applies to the Center with a petition to carry out monitoring in the institution in the manner established by this Charter (within no more than 2 years), which is reflected in the minutes of the Council session;

c) is evaluated against at least one standard as "partially complies with standard requirements" and is not evaluated against any of the standards as "does not comply with standard requirements", the Council makes a decision on conditional accreditation;

d) is evaluated against at least one standard as "does not comply with standard requirements", the Council makes a decision to refuse the accreditation.

1¹. In the case of the next accreditation of an educational programme with conditional accreditation, if the educational programme was assessed by the Council in relation to at least one accreditation standard as "partially in compliance with the requirements of the standard", the Council makes a decision to refuse accreditation;

2. The deadline for the submission of the report determined by the Council in subparagraph "b" of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not exceed the period provided in paragraph 2 of Article 26¹ of this Charter. The calculation of the deadline for submission of the report shall start from the day of entry into force of the decision provided for subparagraph "b" of paragraph 1 of this Article and the final date of submission of the report shall be indicated in the same decision.

2¹. A form of the report on fulfillment of the Council's recommendations shall be approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

2². The institution shall attach the document confirming payment of the fee to the report in accordance with the form provided in paragraph 2¹ of this Article.

2³. The Center shall verify the compliance of the report submitted by the institution with the requirements stipulated in paragraphs 2¹ and 2² of this Article within 3 working days.

2⁴. If the institution shall not submit the report considered by paragraph 2¹ of this Article or the documents attached to it to the Center, it shall set the term for the institution for rectifying deficiencies.

2⁵. The report submitted by the institution in accordance with paragraph 2¹ of this Article shall be examined by a member of the Accreditation Experts Pool, an expert in the relevant field.

2⁶. Upon request from the expert envisaged by the paragraph 2⁵ of this Article, the Center is authorized to request respective documentation from the institution.

2⁷. An expert shall elaborate a conclusion as a result of the examination of the report, as well as, of the documentation referred in paragraph 2⁶ of this Article.

2⁸. A form of the conclusion on the report on the fulfillment of the recommendations submitted by the institution shall be approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

2⁹. The Center shall establish formal compliance of the report elaborated by the expert with the form envisaged by the paragraph 2⁸ of this Article. If necessary, to ensure formal compliance, the report is returned back to the expert.

2¹⁰. Taking into account paragraphs 2⁷ - 2⁹ of this Article, the report drawn up by the expert will be submitted to the Council and also to the relevant institution for information.

2¹¹. The report submitted by the educational institution and the expert's opinion will be discussed at the meeting of the relevant council. The Council is authorized to approve a report or to refer to the Center with a petition on the implementation of monitoring at the educational institution for examination of the accreditation conditions, which will be reflected in the minutes of the session.

2¹². The decision provided in paragraph 2¹¹ of this Article shall be adopted within 90 calendar days from the submission of the report by the institution.

3. The term of accreditation of the educational programme is 7 years. An educational programme submitted for accreditation to the Center during the calendar year when educational programmes classified in the field of study of the said educational programme do not have to be re-accredited, the educational programme submitted for accreditation is granted accreditation until the next period of accreditation of educational programmes classified in the field of study of the said educational programme.

4. The term of conditional accreditation of the educational programme is no more than 4 years. An educational programme submitted for accreditation to the Center during the calendar year when educational programmes classified in the field of study of the said educational programme do not have to be re-accredited, the educational programme submitted for accreditation is granted conditional accreditation until the next period of accreditation of educational programmes classified in the field of study of the said educational programme, but no longer than a period of 4 years. The decision on conditional accreditation may not be taken twice in a row.

Article 277. Accreditation of joint higher education programmes

1. To implement the joint higher education programme provided in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 49¹ of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, an agreement shall be concluded between its implementing institutions, which shall define the content and forms of implementation of the joint higher education programme. The draft contract provided by this paragraph shall be agreed with the Center.
2. The draft agreement form of the contract provided in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be approved by an individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.
3. In order to implement the joint higher education programme provided in paragraph 1 of this Article, the draft contract must be submitted prior to the submission of the accreditation application and must be accompanied by a document confirming the payment of the contract agreement fee.
4. In case of agreement on the draft agreement, the institution, together with the accreditation application for the joint educational programme provided in paragraph 1 of this Article and the documents provided in paragraph 1 of Article 20 of this Charter, shall also submit the document about agreement on draft contract with the Center according to the form envisaged by the paragraph 2 of this Article and also the contract signed considering the agreed draft.
5. Accreditation of the joint higher education programme provided in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be carried out in accordance with the rules established by this Charter.

Article 278. Legal consequences for refusing the accreditation or cancellation of accreditation

1. In case of refusal or cancellation of accreditation of the higher education programme of a higher education institution:
 - a) the institution is restricted to accept students / entrants / master 's degree candidates / doctoral candidates to the educational programme and the Georgian language preparation educational programme for which the accreditation was refused, the accreditation was canceled or the accreditation period has expired;
 - b) a student, who studies on the accredited educational programme with the State funding shall be entitled according to paragraph 3² of Article 27⁵ of this Charter to continue the studies at the same higher education programme for the term (if any) established by the Accreditation Council and to receive State funding or exercise the right of mobility, transfer to other accredited educational programme and transfer the remaining funds allocated by the State to him/her to that higher educational programme;
 - c) a student, who studies on the accredited educational programme with the State funding, according to paragraph 3² of Article 27⁵ of this Charter, after expiration of the term (if any) established by the Accreditation Council, shall be subject to termination of the student status for 5 years after the Accreditation Council's decision on refusing or canceling the accreditation enters into force and this student shall be entitled to exercise its right for mobility.
 - d) an entrant who successfully passed the Unified National Examinations and obtained a right to be enrolled to the higher education programme or to the Georgian language preparation programme

according to the ranking document approved by the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Center, shall be authorized to exercise the right of mobility;

e) a candidate of master's programme, who has been listed in the document of ranking with the coefficients of the master's exams shall be authorized to exercise the right of mobility;

2. In case of expiration of the accreditation period for an educational programme or Georgian language preparation educational programme, based on a reasoned petition of the institution, based on the decision of the Council, the student has the right to continue studying in the same educational programme until the end of the ongoing academic semester and receive State funding. Within 5 years after the end of the ongoing academic semester, the student's status is suspended and he/she is entitled to exercise the right of mobility.

Article 27⁹. Determining the maximum number of places for students in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor

1. The basis for determining the maximum number of places for students at the Medical Doctor educational programme is the number of places specified in the accreditation application submitted by the institution to the Center, or in the application for increasing the maximum number of student places.

2. The maximum number of student places specified by the institution in the application provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article must be based on the methodology for determining the maximum number of student places of the institution and the educational programme, which takes into account the requirements of the relevant field characteristics, the specifics of the educational programme, human resources, the resources of the institution, practice facilities, laboratory and clinical bases.

3. The Council shall review the application provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article in accordance with the procedure established by this Charter and, taking into account the report of the accreditation expert panel and the opinions of other interested parties, make the appropriate decision by at least 3/4 of the members present at the meeting, of which the votes of the invited members must be at least 3/4 of the invited members present.

4. The Council is authorized to agree to the institution's request or to reduce the maximum number of student places requested by it. The Council shall substantiate its decision.

Article 27¹⁰. Increasing the maximum number of places for students in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor

1. The institution, within the limits of the maximum number of student places set for it by the authorization council, is entitled to submit a written application to the Center for increasing the maximum number of student places in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor.

2. The written application form for increasing the maximum number of places for students to be presented to the Center is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center, which is published publicly.

3. Within the framework of the administrative proceedings provided for in this article, the Director of the Center issues an individual administrative legal act on the creation of the accreditation expert panel and on the visit to the institution.
4. The accreditation expert panel includes members of the experts pool - administrative/academic/scientific/invited staff and a student of other institutions, also the composition may include employers, the representatives of corresponding regulatory body and/or professional associations and other persons with relevant qualifications.
5. Based on examination of the application and the documentation attached to it provided for in paragraph 1 of this article, taking into account methodology for determining the maximum number of places for students of the institution and educational programme, the requirements of the relevant sectoral benchmarks, the specifics of the educational programme, human resources, the resources of the institution, practice facilities, laboratory and clinical bases, as a result of the visit, the accreditation expert panel draws up a draft report and submits it to the Center.
6. The Center shall define the formal compliance of the accreditation expert panel's draft report with the requirements established by the individual administrative legal acts issued by the Director of the Center envisaged by the paragraphs 3 of Article 23 of this Charter and paragraph 14 of this Article. Upon determination of the compliance, the draft report is sent to the institution. If necessary to ensure formal compliance of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel, it shall be returned back to the accreditation expert panel.
7. Within 5 calendar days upon reviewing the draft report of the accreditation experts panel, the higher education institution submits to the Center a written argumentative position related to the factual circumstances in the draft report. Then, it is sent to the Experts Panel and the Council.
8. In case of submission of the argumentative position provided in paragraph 7 of this Article, after its examination or in case of non- submission of the argumentative position, after the expiration of the period envisaged in paragraph 7 of this Article, the accreditation expert panel prepares the final version of the report and submits to the Center.
9. In case of submission of the argumentative position provided for in paragraph 7 of this Article, the report formed by the accreditation expert panel shall include information on sharing or not sharing the argumentative position by the expert panel.
10. The Center shall send the accreditation expert panel final report to the institution and the Council.
11. The decision to increase the maximum number of student places is made in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 27⁹ of this Charter.
12. A decision to increase the maximum number of student places in the educational programme of Medical Doctor or to refuse to increase the maximum number of student places shall be made within 90 calendar days after the submission of a written application for increasing the number of student places to the Center.

13. Exceeding the maximum number of student places in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor shall be the basis for revocation of accreditation for that programme, except in the case of exceeding the maximum number of student places upon restoration of student status.

14. At the initiative of the Center, based on the verification of the accreditation conditions in accordance with Article 31 of this Charter, according to the decision of the Council, it is possible to reduce the maximum number of places for students in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor.

15. The form of the report of the accreditation expert panel on the increase of the maximum number of student places in the programme of Medical Doctor is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 28. Recognition of the accreditation granted by foreign organization

1. Accreditation of higher educational programme, including a joint higher education programme developed in accordance with requirements of Georgian legislation, may be carried out by a foreign organization with the relevant competence recognized by the Center.

2. For the purposes provided for in this Article, the Center recognizes accreditation granted by an organization operating in the territory of the EU member states and by an organization that is a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is registered in the European Register of Independent Agencies for the Development of the Quality of Higher Education (EQAR) and which has such authority under the legislation of the relevant country. The higher educational institution provides the Center with preliminary information about the selected organization and educational programme (including the name of the programme, qualification/qualifications to be awarded, components of the programme, number of credits, distribution of credits).

2¹. For the purposes provided for in this Article, in the case of Medical Doctor educational programme, the Center recognizes the accreditation granted by the organization operating in the territory of the EU member states and a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and registered in the European Register of Independent Agencies for the Development of the Quality of Higher Education (EQAR), organization's such authority shall be established by the law of the respective country and shall be recognized by the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME). The institution provides the Center with preliminary information about the selected organization and educational programme.

3. In the case provided for in clauses 2 and 2¹ of this Article, recognition is carried out by the institution based on the submission of a relevant statement to the Center, the report of the accreditation expert panel created by the foreign organization and the decision made by the foreign organization on the accreditation of the educational programme.

4. For the purposes envisaged by this Article, the Center is authorized to recognize the accreditation granted by the organization operating in the United States of America, which has such authority according to the rules established by the relevant legislation.

5. An institution addresses the organization envisaged by paragraph 4 of this Article with an accreditation application on the basis of preliminary consent from the Center to recognize the accreditation granted by this organization. The prior approval of the Center is issued if the external evaluation mechanism of the organization, in terms of quality assurance, is compatible with the accreditation standards and procedures operating on the national level. Otherwise, the Center refuses to recognize the accreditation granted by the organization indicated by the institution.

6. The basis for commencement of proceedings envisaged by paragraph 5 of this Article is the submission of a written application and document confirming the payment of the fee for review of this application to the Center by the institution. The written application provided for in this paragraph shall be submitted to the Center no less than 30 calendar days before addressing to the organization provided for in paragraph 4 of this Article. The written application envisaged by this paragraph must consider information about relevant educational programme (including indication of programme duration, components comprising the programme, credit distribution and qualification to be awarded), also the information on the status and authority of the organization implementing accreditation, on the standards and procedures of accreditation.

7. In the case provided for in paragraph 4 of this Article, the recognition is carried out by the institution based on the submission of a relevant application to the Center, the report of the accreditation expert panel created by the foreign organization, and the decision made by the foreign organization on the accreditation of the educational programme.

8. Except for cases envisaged by paragraphs 2, 2¹ and 4 of this Article, the Center is authorized to recognize the accreditation granted by the foreign organization if the external evaluation mechanism used by this organization is compatible with the accreditation standards and procedures operating at the national level in respect of quality assurance, and if the stipulation about such recognition is provided by an international treaty. Before signing an international treaty, the Center shall ensure the compatibility of the external evaluation mechanisms of the foreign organization with the accreditation standards and procedures operating at the national level on the basis of application to the structural unit responsible for the preparation of this agreement.

9. In the case provided for in paragraph 8 of this Article, the recognition is carried out by the institution based on the submission of a relevant application to the Center, the report of the accreditation expert panel created by the foreign organization, and the decision made by the foreign organization on the accreditation of the educational programme. Submitted application shall include information about respective educational programme (including the title, the qualification(s) to be granted, the programme components, the programme duration, the number of credits, the credit distribution).

10. The decision on the recognition of accreditation by the Center shall be made no later than 30 calendar days after the submission of the documentation provided in paragraphs 3, 7 and 9 of this Article. If a period of more than 30 calendar days is necessary to establish the circumstances relevant to the case, the Center is authorized to make a decision to increase this period up to 60 calendar days at the beginning of the administrative proceedings.

11. The institution is obliged to notify the Center about any change in the decision on accreditation granted by the foreign organization envisaged by this article.

12. The Center is authorized to check the conditions of accreditation granted by the foreign organization through case-based monitoring in accordance with the rules established by this Charter, with a prior agreement with the foreign organization provided for in paragraphs 2, 2¹, 4 and 8 of this Article. The accreditation experts panel's report shall be sent to respective foreign organization and institution.

13. The institution is obliged to notify the Center about the information on the results of examination of the accreditation conditions by the foreign organization.

14. The application form for recognition of accreditation granted by a foreign organization provided in this Article shall be approved by an individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Chapter V¹.

Authority and Rules of Operation of the Appeals Council

Article 28¹. Composition of the Appeals Council

1. The decisions envisaged by paragraph 1 of Article 27⁵ of this Charter can be appealed at the Appeals Council by the institution within one month after familiarization with it, according to procedure established by the law. The appeal submitted by the educational institution to the Center must be accompanied by a document confirming the payment of the fee for the admissibility for the review of the complaint.

2. Members of the Appeals Council are appointed and dismissed by the Prime Minister of Georgia, as recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. The term of office of the Appeals Council is set at two years. Members of the Appeals council cannot be public servants, members of Authorization Council or member of a Council.

3. Members of the Appeals Council are paid for their work (are given honorarium) from the Center's revenues. Rule of issuing and amount of remuneration (giving honorarium) of the Appeals Council shall be determined by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

4. The Appeals Council is functionally independent from the institution and the State agencies.

5. Termination of the mandate of the member of the Appeals Council before the expiration term takes place through the initiative of the Prime Minister, or based on the following:

- a) On the basis of a personal statement;
- b) Upon the entry into force of the conviction of the court against him/her;
- c) If the court declares him / her incapable;
- d) In case of systematic absence from the sessions, if this hinders the work of the Appeals council;
- e) In case of actions that are incompatible with implementation of mandate of the member of the Appeals Council;

f) In the case of employment in the structural unit of the institution that regularly ensures quality assurance;

g) taking into account the Center's motion/ on its own initiative based on the submission of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

6. Termination of the mandate of the member of the Appeals council before the term is confirmed by the individual administrative legal act of the Prime Minister. In case of termination of the mandate before the term, the Prime Minister, as recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science, within a month appoints a new member for the remaining term of the previous member.

Article 28². Regulations for activities of the Appeals Council

1. Member of the Appeals Council shall be independent, objective and impartial in fulfilling his/her functions.

2. A member of the Appeals Council shall maintain neutrality in any situation and shall not be subject to the influence of interested parties, regardless of their status.

3. Member of the Appeals Council shall not disclose and use in personal interest the information and / or documentation obtained during the performance of his / her official duties.

4. Member of the Appeals Council should be focused on cooperation and should not try to portray himself/herself in a privileged position; he/she should not publicly doubt competence of an expert, member of the Council or other member of the Appeals council, regardless he/she agrees with their position or not.

5. A member of the Appeals Council is obliged to declare about conflict of interests with an institution and on self-recusal before the review of the case starts. Conflict of interest is existence of circumstances described in Article 92 of the General Administrative Code of Georgia.

5¹. In the presence of the conflict of interests provided for in paragraph 5 of this Article, the member of the Appeals Council shall not participate in the processes of discussion, decision -making and voting of the issue to be discussed at the Council session.

5². The member of the Appeals Council provided for in paragraph 5¹ of this Article is not authorized to present the position of the interested party - the institution- at the session of Appeals Council.

6. The Secretariat of the Appeals Council (hereinafter - the Secretariat) is responsible for the organizational and financial support of the Council activities. Its function is fulfilled by the Center. Composition of the Secretariat is defined according to the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

7. The Secretariat shall send the following documents to the members of the Appeals Council at least 7 calendar days before the oral hearing:

a) Appeal and documentation attached to it;

b) The accreditation documentation;

c) A report of the accreditation expert panel and an augmentative position of the accreditation seeker on that report (if any);

d) Appealed decision.

8. (Removed - 31.01.2018, №09/N).

9. Before the oral hearing, to fully study and evaluate all substantial circumstances regarding the case, each member of the Appeals Council is responsible for preliminary revision of documents listed in the paragraph 7 of this Article. Member of the Appeals council is entitled to request additional documents for better examination of the case.

Article 28³. The appeal

1. Appeal should be drawn up in written form and it shall indicate the following:

a) Address to the Appeals council;

B) Identity / name, address and contact information of the person presenting the appeal;

c) Name of the Council decision of which is under appellation;

d) The title of the appealed resolution;

e) Request;

f) Circumstances on which the request is based on;

g) List of documents attached to the claim, if any;

2. Appeals Council does not review the appeal, if:

a) the appealed resolution is under a court proceeding;

b) the appeal is submitted by an unauthorized person;

c) The term laid down in paragraph 1 of Article 28¹ of this Charter for submission of the appeal has expired;

d) The claimed issue is beyond the scope of the Appeals Council authority.

3. Appeals council makes its decision on accepting or refusing the review of the claim within 10 days after submission of the claim. The decision of the Appeals Council shall be signed by the Chairperson of the Appeals council.

4. (Removed - 31.01.2018, №09/N).

5. The institution shall submit a document confirming the payment of the fee for reviewing the appeal within 10 calendar days after the entry into force of the decision on the appeal by the Appeals Council. In case of non-submission of the document confirming the payment of the appeal fee within the mentioned period, on the basis of the motion of the Center, the Appeals Council shall make a decision to not review the appeal.

Article 28⁴. Term for review of an appeal

The Appeals Council shall review an appeal claim and make a relevant decision within 60 calendar days from receiving the claim.

Article 28⁵ Oral Hearing

1. The Appeals Council shall make a decision based on appeal, accreditation documentation, the report of the accreditation expert panel, argumentative position of accreditation seeker on report (if available), examination of decision of the Council and based on conducting the oral hearing.
2. The session of the Appeals Council is convened by chairperson of the Council.
3. Interested parties are informed on the oral hearing no less than 7 days before the date of oral hearing. Interested parties are authorized to participate in oral hearings.
4. The session is led by the Chair of the Council, while in case of his/her absence – by the deputy. In case of absence of both, the Chair and deputy, the session is led by the Council member, as determined by majority of attendees. In case of inability of the secretary to fulfill his/her duties, his/her functions are carried out by one of the members of the Appeals Council.
5. The session is authorized, if it is attended by more than half of the members of the list of Appeals Council, but no less than by 3 members. This number does not include member of the Appeals Council, who has been recused, or submitted self- recusal towards the issue to be discussed.
6. Sessions of Appeals Council are public. The chairperson of the session is authorized to declare session as closed in the cases envisaged by the legislation.
7. Experts of the accreditation expert panel as well as representatives of the Center are entitled to attend oral hearing, and participate in oral hearing as well upon decision of the Chair of the session.
8. It is possible to invite other person to the oral hearing by the decision of the Appeals Council;
9. Depending on the specifics of the field, a person designated by the Appeals Council may participate in the process of decision-making by the appeals council with a right to deliberative vote.
10. The chairperson of the hearing is obliged to ensure the examination of the circumstances relevant to the case at the oral hearing.
11. The interested party has the right to file a motion to investigate the circumstances relevant to the case, to provide oral or written explanations to the Appeals Council, to present additional evidence, to substantiate its claim or to reject the data, opinions or evidence on which the appealed decision was based.
12. At the oral hearing, the Appeals Council discusses only the documentation that was prepared prior to the appealed decision was made.
13. The minutes of the Appeals Council is signed within 10 business days after the session by the signatures of the Chair and Secretary of the Appeals Council. Based on the minutes of the Appeals Council session an individual administrative legal act shall be issued, which is signed by the Chair and Secretary of the Appeals Council.

14. The functions and duties of the members of the Appeals Council provided for in this Charter can also be performed remotely or semi-remotely using modern electronic means of communication (if possible).

Article 28⁶. Participation of the Council that made the appealed decision in the proceedings related to the appeal

1. In case of receipt of an appeal by the Appeals Council, the appeal and copies of the accompanying documents are forwarded through the Secretariat to the Council, which made the appealed decision.
2. The Council, that made the appealed decision is authorized to submit its own written opinion on the appeal to the Appeals Council within 10 working days from the receipt of the copy of the appeal.
3. In administrative proceedings related to the appeal, the Council, that made the appealed decision shall exercise the same rights that are assigned to the interested party participating in the administrative proceedings.
4. At the administrative proceedings including oral hearings, the Council, that made the appealed decision shall be represented by its Chair or by other member of the Council with the consent of the Chair.

Article 28⁷. Decisions of the Appeals Council

1. The Appeals Council shall examine the appealed decision in respect of legality and expediency.
2. Appeals Council shall make one of the following decisions by a majority of the members present at the hearing:
 - a) On sharing the decision of the Council;
 - b) On returning the issue to the Council for reconsideration.
- 2¹. The decision referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be taken by the Appeals Council on the basis of secret ballot. Furthermore, the minutes of the Appeals Council meeting ensure publicity of the ballot results;”
3. Member of the Appeals Council is not authorized to refrain from voting.
4. Appeals Council is responsible for providing arguments for its decision.
5. Decision of the Appeals Council is published on the webpage of the Center within 10 business days upon making it.
6. Appealing against the decision of the Council at the Appeals Council does not result in suspension of that decision.

Article 28⁸. Legal Consequences of the decisions of the Appeals Council

1. If the Appeals Council decides to support the decision of the Council, interested party is authorized to appeal that decision in court under the rules and within the terms established by the legislation.
2. If the Appeals Council decided to return the issue to the Council for reconsideration, the respective Council shall review the issue according to the rules defined by Articles 27² and 27⁵ of this Charter and makes a decision within the time frame defined by the legislation.
3. If the Appeals Council decides to return the issue to the Council for reconsideration, within 45 calendar days after publication of the decision and minutes of the session on the website of the Center, respective Council shall make a decision based on the documentation envisaged by paragraph 1 of Article 27² of this Charter, the appealed decision of the Council, review of the decision of the Appeals Council and the oral hearing.
4. Institution can appeal only once against the decision related to the accreditation in accordance with the procedure defined in this Chapter.

Chapter VI

Checking Accreditation Conditions

Article 29. Submission of Accreditation Self-evaluation Report

1. For checking the accreditation conditions, institution that implements accredited programme(s), is obliged to submit the self-evaluation report once in three years to the Center. The terms for the submission of the self-evaluation report are determined by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.
2. The self-evaluation report of the educational programme / cluster of educational programmes can be submitted through the electronic document circulation system or in a material form, at which time the accreditation self-evaluation report and the documentation attached to it are submitted to the Center through the electronic information carrier.
3. Submission of a self-evaluation report shall not be obligatory for the following educational programmes:
 - a) which was granted with a conditional accreditation;
 - b) which was granted with an accreditation or conditional accreditation for the term of no more than 4 years;
 - c) which was granted accreditation and on the basis of the Council's petition, the verification of the accreditation conditions was carried out on the basis of Article 27⁶, paragraph 1 sub-paragraph b¹ or Article 31 of this Charter.
 - d) which has been accredited by a foreign organization recognized by the Center and the Center has recognized the accreditation granted to this programme;
 - e) which was granted an accreditation based on the accreditation standards of the educational programmes of the institutions operating before enactment of the "Standards of Accreditation of Educational Programmes of Higher Educational Institutions" envisaged by the Order N09/n of 2018

January 31 issued by the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia on making amendments to the Order №65 / N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of May 4, 2010 on approval of the accreditation provision and fee of educational programmes of educational institutions;

f) which is subject to administrative proceedings about an accreditation application during the period of submission of the self-evaluation report envisaged by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

4. The forms of the self-evaluation report of the educational programme and the cluster of educational programmes are approved by the Director of the Center with an individual administrative legal act.

5. Within 3 working days, the Center shall examine compliance of the self-evaluation report submitted by the institution with the requirements envisaged by the paragraphs 2 and 4 of this Article.

5¹. Within 7 working days, the Center shall examine compliance of the self-evaluation report of the educational programmes cluster submitted by the institution with the requirements envisaged by the paragraphs 2 and 4 of this Article.

6. In order to examine the self-evaluation report, the Director of the Center shall issue an individual administrative legal act on creation of an accreditation experts panel and on evaluation of the self-evaluation report.

7. Composition of the accreditation expert panel created for the purposes of study of the self-evaluation report shall include the members of the expert pool - administrative/academic/scientific/invited personnel and students of other higher educational institutions; the representatives of corresponding regulatory body and/or professional associations in the case of regulated educational programme and other persons with relevant qualifications.

8. Based on the request from the accreditation experts panel, the Center is authorized to request respective documentation from an institution.

9. As a result of the examination of the self-evaluation report, as well as, if necessary, of the documentation referred to in paragraph 8 of this Article, the panel of accreditation experts shall draw up a draft report.

10. The Center shall define the formal compliance of the accreditation expert panel's draft report with the requirements established by the individual administrative legal acts issued by the Director of the Center envisaged by the paragraphs 3 of Article 23 and paragraph 18 of this Article of this Charter. If the compliance is established, the draft report shall be sent to the institution.

11. If necessary to ensure formal compliance of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel, it shall be returned back to the accreditation expert panel.

12. Within 5 working days after the introduction of the draft report on the educational programme, and within 10 working days in the case of a cluster of educational programmes, the accreditation seeker shall submit an argumentative position regarding the factual circumstances provided in the draft report in written form to the Center, which then shall be sent to the expert panel and the Council.

13. In case of submission of the argumentative position provided in paragraph 12 of this Article, after getting acquainted with it or in case of non-submission of argumentative position, after expiry of term

envisioned by the paragraph 12 of this Article, the expert panel shall elaborate the final report and submit it to the Center.

14. In the case of submission of the argumentative position provided for in paragraph 12 of this Article, the report formed by the accreditation expert panel shall include information on sharing or not sharing the argumentative position by the expert panel.

15. The Center shall send the report of the accreditation experts panel to the institution within 90 calendar days after the issuance of the individual administrative legal act of the Center provided in the paragraph 6 of this Article.

16. The evaluation results of the self-evaluation report provided for in this article are used by the Center to promote the establishment of systematic self-evaluation within the framework of the institution and educational programme/cluster of educational programmes, the development of internal quality assurance mechanisms, and the planning of development and support measures based on the needs of institutions.

17. Failure to submit the self-evaluation report within the prescribed time-frame provided in this Article may serve as a basis for examination of the accreditation conditions of the educational programme in accordance with Article 31 of this Charter.

18. The forms of the educational programme and the cluster of educational programmes' accreditation expert panel report and requirements set for them, are approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 30. Amendments to the educational programme implemented during the accreditation/conditional accreditation period by the educational institution

1. During the accreditation/conditional accreditation of an educational programme, in the case of any changes to the title of the programme, the precondition(s) to the programme admission, learning outcome(s) or/and place of implementation of the educational programme (except of the cases envisaged by paragraph 2 of this Article) or/and to the structure of the educational programme (making changes to the components of the basic fields of study and changing-adding or/and subtracting the number of credits granted to them by at least 30%, that does not change the learning outcomes of the educational programme or/and adding or/and removing a concentration), the institution is obliged to notify the Center about the amendments in written form within 30 calendar days after implementing the amendments and submit revised educational programme, also the basis for amending the programme and the respective legal act issued by it.

2. It is inadmissible to change the language of instruction or/and the title of the qualification to be granted during the accreditation/conditional accreditation period of the educational programme, also to join or divide the educational programmes under the accreditation/conditional accreditation mode (except for the cases envisaged by paragraph 3 of this Article). Also, during the period of accreditation/conditional accreditation of the regulated educational programme provided for in Article 75 of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education", the change of place/places of implementation of the

educational programme - municipality/municipalities is not allowed. In case of the implementation of the amendments provided in this paragraph, the educational programme(s) are reviewed as new programme(s) and the right for their implementation shall be obtained by the institution as provided by the legislation.

2¹. During the period of accreditation/conditional accreditation of the joint higher education programme, an amendment entered into the agreement signed on the implementation of the joint higher education programme, which provides for the termination/suspension of the agreement by any institution implementing the joint higher education programme, shall result in the circumstance that the higher education programme is considered a new programme, the right of implementation of which the institution shall obtain according to the rules of procedure established by law.

3. It is permissible to change the qualification to be awarded in the educational programme or to divide educational programmes within the period of accreditation/conditional accreditation of the educational programme, if this relates to complying the educational programme(s) with the National Qualifications Framework and the Classifier of Fields of Study or with the sectoral benchmarks based on the implemented amendments in the existing sectoral benchmarks. In such a case, the said educational programme/programmes are not considered as new programmes/programmes and continue to operate in the accredited mode until the change of the title of the qualification to be granted under this paragraph and/or the division of the existing educational programme in the accreditation/conditional accreditation mode for the remaining period of accreditation determined for the valid educational programme.

4. If complying with the National Qualifications Frameworks and the Classifier of Fields of Study results in division of an educational programme into two or more programmes, the institution shall bring the divided educational programmes into compliance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Classifier of Fields of Study during the same calendar year despite the codes of their detailed field.

5. In case of implementation of the changes stipulated in paragraphs 1 and 3 of this Article, as well as non- fulfilment of the obligation stipulated in the same clauses, the Center is entitled to check the accreditation conditions through monitoring.

Article 31. Checking the accreditation conditions through monitoring

1. Checking the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions is carried out through Planned and/or case-based monitoring.

2. Planned monitoring is carried out by mediation of the Council and/or by initiative of the Center.

3. The methodology for drawing up the plan for Planned monitoring, the criteria for selection of educational programmes, are approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

4. The annual plan for Planned monitoring of educational programmes is approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center, which is sent to the relevant institution within 10 working days after its publication.

5. Case-based monitoring is implemented by the mediation of the Council, based on the complaint submitted to the Center about fulfillment of the accreditation standards of the education programmes and/or by the initiative of the Center.

6. The complaint stipulated in the paragraph 5 of this article may be submitted to the Center by the interested person (legal representative, student, academic, invited, scientific or administrative staff, etc.) who believes that the standards defined by this regulation are violated. In addition, the form of the complaint, the methodology for drawing up and reviewing the complaint shall be approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Center Director.

7. In order to verify the fulfillment of the conditions of accreditation of an educational programme or educational programmes grouped in a cluster of educational programmes, during Planned and/or Case-based monitoring, the Center is authorized to request relevant documentation/information from the institution and/or to issue an individual administrative legal act on the creation of a panel of accreditation experts and/or on the Planned/Case-based monitoring visit to the institution.

8. In the event that the Center requests relevant documentation/information from the institution, if as a result of the study of the documentation/information, an additional need to verify the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions is identified, the Center shall issue an individual administrative legal act on the creation of a panel of accreditation experts and on the implementation of Planned and/or Case-based monitoring of the institution through a visit and/or documentation study, and otherwise, on the basis of the Center's petition, the Council terminates the administrative proceeding regarding monitoring.

9. In case of verification of the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions through Planned and/or Case-based monitoring, the members of the expert's pool - administrative/academic/scientific/invited personnel of other institutions are included in the accreditation experts panel. Also, taking into account the scope and content of the monitoring, the expert panel may include - a student, an employer, the representatives of corresponding regulatory body and/or professional associations in the case of regulated educational programme and other persons with relevant qualifications.

10. The accreditation expert panel is chaired by the Chair of the panel.

11. The individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center regarding the creation of the accreditation expert panel and on the implementation of Planned monitoring in the institution with a visit and / or study of documentation shall be submitted to the institution at least 10 working days before the beginning of the visit / evaluation process.

12. The individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center on the creation of a panel of accreditation experts and on the implementation of Case-based monitoring in the institution with a visit and/or study of documentation shall be submitted to the institution directly at the beginning of the visit/evaluation process, or at least 5 calendar days before the beginning of the visit/evaluation process.

13. The issues of self-recusal or/and recusal of the expert/experts shall be regulated according to the paragraphs 4-9 of Article 24 of this Charter. Using the right to recusal by the education institution does not hinder the implementation of the visit.

14. In case of creation of accreditation experts panel, a draft report of the accreditation experts panel is drafted and submitted to the Center.

15. The Center defines formal compliance of the accreditation expert panel's draft report with the requirements established by the individual administrative legal acts issued by the Director of the Center envisaged by paragraph 3 of Article 23 and paragraph 9 of Article 27¹ of this Charter. Upon determination of the compliance, the draft report is sent to the institution.

16. If necessary to ensure formal compliance of the draft report of the accreditation expert panel, it shall be returned back to the accreditation expert panel.

17. Within 5 working days after the introduction of the draft report on the educational programme, and within 10 working days in the case of a cluster of educational programmes, the accreditation seeker shall submit an argumentative position regarding the factual circumstances provided in the draft report in written form to the Center, which then shall be sent to the expert panel and the Council.

18. In case of submission of the argumentative position provided in paragraph 17 of this Article, after getting acquainted with it or in case of non-submission of argumentative position, after expiry of term envisioned by the paragraph 17 of this Article, the expert panel shall elaborate the final report and submit it to the Center.

19. In the case of submission of the argumentative position provided for in paragraph 17 of this Article, the report formed by the accreditation expert panel shall include information on sharing or not sharing the argumentative position by the expert panel.

20. The Center shall send the accreditation expert panel final report to the institution.

21. As a result of checking the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions, the Council is authorized to make a decision on the cancellation of accreditation/conditional accreditation of the educational programme, if during evaluation of the compliance of the educational programme with the accreditation standards, the Council has evaluated at least one standard as "does not comply with standard requirements".

22. In case of occurrence of the deficiencies, taking into consideration remaining terms for the administrative proceedings the Council is authorized, to define no more than 60 days for the relevant educational institution to rectify these deficiencies, unless it is apparent that there will be no actual results.

23. If after the expiry of the period defined on the basis of paragraph 22 of this Article, as a result of the checking the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions, it is established that none of the recommendations have been fulfilled by the institution, the Council is authorized to make a decision on the cancellation of accreditation / conditional accreditation.

24. After the expiration of the period determined on the basis of paragraph 22 of this article, if as a result of the checking the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions it is determined that part of the recommendations have been fulfilled by the institution, and none of the standards are evaluated as "does not comply with standard requirements", the Council will determine the period for the institution to submit a performance report on the remaining recommendations or apply to the Center

for implementation of monitoring through motion. The procedure for presenting and considering the report provided for in this paragraph is determined in accordance with paragraphs 2-2¹² of Article 27⁶ of this Charter.

25. If the examination of the accreditation conditions establishes that the institution has fulfilled all the recommendations, the Council shall make a decision to terminate the administrative proceedings related to the monitoring.

26. In the case of addressing the Center with a motion on examination of the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions, the Council shall define the period for implementation of the monitoring, the form and the scope of the implementation of such monitoring.

27. Respective decision of the Council shall be made within 90 calendar days after the Director of the Center issues an order on examination of the fulfillment of accreditation conditions by the institution. This term is deemed suspended during the term determined by the Council for the elimination of the deficiencies.

Article 31¹. The rules of procedure for review of complaints related to the accreditation process

1. An educational institution or/and other stakeholder that participates in the accreditation process shall be authorized to submit a complaint to the Center about the accreditation process within 10 calendar days after occurrence of a specific circumstance during the accreditation process or after its completion, if the employee/employees of the Center or/and the member/members of the accreditation expert panel violate the requirements established by this provision, by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center envisaged by paragraph 3 of Article 23 of this provision, by the Code of Ethics of Authorization and Accreditation Experts approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center or/and by the internal regulations of the Center.

2. A complaint which is submitted against the member/members of the accreditation expert panel, shall be reviewed according to the rules of procedure established by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center envisaged by the paragraph 3 of Article 23 of this provision.

3. A complaint which is submitted against the employee/employees of the Center, shall be reviewed according to the rules of procedure established by the Center's internal regulations.

4. The form of the complaint envisaged by this article, the methodology for drawing up and reviewing the complaint shall be approved by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center.

Article 31². International Accreditation of Education Programmes of Higher Education Institutions Operating Abroad

1. International accreditation and examination of the conditions of the educational programme of a higher education institution operating abroad shall be carried out in accordance with the procedures established by this Article. Matters not regulated by this Article shall be governed by the relevant Articles of the same Order.

2. At least 2 months before the submission of the accreditation application, the higher education institution operating abroad notifies the Center in written form about the desire to start the accreditation process for the education programme.
3. Higher education institutions operating abroad are authorized to apply in written to the Center with a request to hold a consultation meeting on the accreditation process, which concerns to:
 - a) The process of international accreditation;
 - b) Preparation of an accreditation application, planning and implementation of the self-evaluation process;
 - c) Planning and implementation of the accreditation visit;
 - d) Definition of accreditation standards and sectoral benchmarks;
4. The cost of the consultation meeting and accreditation is set out in the Annex 4 of this Order;
5. In order to find information about the system of higher education operating in a foreign country, sectoral benchmarks and standards and procedures for quality assurance of higher education, the Center is authorized to contact the organization/organizations responsible for external quality assurance of higher education operating in the country of the higher educational institution.
6. The accreditation application and the attached documentation must be submitted to the Center in English by the higher education institution operating abroad. The Center provides translation into Georgian of the documents, for which the requirement of the Georgian language translation is indicated in the form of the accreditation self-evaluation report to be completed by the higher education institution operating abroad.
7. At the stage of being recognized as an accreditation seeker of a higher education institution operating abroad, an agreement is concluded between the Center and the institution, which defines the rights and responsibilities of the parties, expenses related to translation of accreditation documents, to business trip of members of the accreditation experts panel and representative(s) of the Center and accreditation fee.
8. When evaluating the higher education programme of a higher education institution operating abroad, the experts panel must include an expert from the country in which the institution seeking international accreditation operates. The mentioned expert is determined on the basis of consultation with the organization responsible for ensuring the external quality of higher education in the country of the institution.
9. In case of accreditation of the educational programme of a higher education institution operating abroad, the accreditation experts panel includes members of the experts pool - administrative/academic/scientific/invited staff and a student of other higher educational institutions, international expert, employer, also, in case of a regulated educational programme, the composition may include representatives of the relevant regulatory body or/and professional association and other persons having relevant qualifications from the respective country.
10. When reviewing the educational programme of a higher educational institution operating abroad by the Council of Educational Programmes, 2 persons according to the field specifics shall be

determined by the Chair of the Council to participate with the right to deliberative vote in the decision making process of the Council. The manner and amount of remuneration for their activities (honorary payment) is determined by the individual administrative legal act of the Director of the Center. Invited persons will be compensated for their activities (honorary will be given) from the Center's own income.

11. When the accreditation application presents an educational programme of Medical Doctor, during the evaluation process the Center will take into account the field characteristic of higher education in the field of medicine approved by the Director of the Center, the standards of the World Federation for Medical Education on basic medical education and also the basic requirements (if any) of the field characteristics of the country of the accreditation seeker.

12. The decision of the Council regarding the higher education programme of the higher education institution operating abroad and the relevant part of the minutes of the Council session shall be published in the Georgian and English languages.

13. A higher education institution operating abroad is entitled to file an appeal in English against the decision of the Council of Educational Programmes.

14. The decision of the Appeals Council on the educational programme of the higher education institution operating abroad and the relevant part of the minutes of the Council session shall be published in the Georgian and English languages.

Chapter VII

Transitional Provisions

Article 32. Accreditation of the programmes developed based on the Order №120 / N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of 10 December 2010 on Approval of National Qualifications Framework at the transitional stage

1. For continuous implementation of the programmes developed on the basis of the Order №120/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of 10 December 2010 on Approval of National Qualifications Framework and the programmes operating in an authorized/accredited mode as of 5 October 2018, the accreditation application of the respective educational programme may be submitted to the Center by 29 February 2020.

2. An educational programme reflected in the accreditation application envisaged by paragraph 1 of this Article may correspond to more than one but for no more than three qualifications (except for regulated educational programmes of Teacher Training, Georgian Language Preparation, and doctoral programme).

3. The educational programme reflected in the accreditation application provided in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be comply with the "National Qualifications Framework" and "Classifier of Fields of Study" approved by the Order N69/N of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of April 10, 2019 within the term determined by the same order.

Article 33. Rules for implementation of some legal relations envisaged by the Charter during the transitional period

1. During the transitional period, functions-duties of the experts, Council members and members of the Appeals Council envisaged by this Charter may be implemented remotely by using the modern electronic means of communication (if possible) except for the functions-duties to be implemented by the accreditation experts before the Council session within the proceedings related to the implementation of the regulated academic higher educational programme in medicine.

1¹. During the transitional period, within the administrative proceedings related to the accreditation of regulated academic higher educational programme envisaged by subparagraph “b” of paragraph 2 of Article of Law of Georgia "On Higher Education”, the functions and duties of the accreditation experts of the higher educational programs provided for by this provision may be implemented in a partially remote manner, which implies evaluation of the HEI's material resources, clinical bases and laboratories by the accreditation experts (except for the international expert) through a site visit. In addition, this implies that an international expert will evaluate the HEI's material resources, clinical bases and laboratories remotely via modern electronic communication means, which shall be technically ensured by the accreditation seeker.

2. Transitional period is the period before the threat of New Coronavirus spread is eliminated.

Article 34. Reviewing the report on fulfillment of the recommendations issued by the Council

The review of the report submitted by the educational institution before January 30, 2020 on the implementation of the recommendations issued by the Council shall be carried out in accordance with the regulations in force for the reporting period.

Article 35. Re-accreditation of an educational programme and suspension of the term for administrative proceedings

1. If the term of the accreditation of the educational programme (except for the educational programmes accredited in 2011-2012) expires in 2020, it shall be extended until 31 December 2020.

2. If the term of the accreditation for the educational programme of Medical Doctor (except for the educational programmes accredited in 2011-2012) expires in 2020, it shall be extended until 1 July 2021.

3. This article shall not apply to those educational programmes on which the Council made the respective decision before the Law of Georgia N6284-IIS of 12 June 2020 on making amendments to the Law of Georgia on Education Quality Improvement entered into force and/or for which the term of accreditation has expired before the enactment of this law and which is not under accreditation administrative proceedings at the Center.

Article 36. In individual cases, the period of validity of the regulation related to the participation of an international expert in the accreditation expert panel

Paragraph 11 of Article 20 shall be declared void from January 1, 2023.

Annex №2

Accreditation Fee for Educational Programmes of Higher Education Institutions

Article 1. Amount of accreditation fee

1. Accreditation application review fee is 200 GEL for one programme, 400 GEL for 2-3 programmes, 600 GEL for 4-6 programmes, 800 GEL for 7-8 programmes.
2. The fee for reviewing the accreditation application submitted by a higher education institution operating abroad is 600 GEL for 1-2 programmes, 900 GEL for 3-4 programmes, 1100 GEL for 5-8 programmes.
3. The application fee for increasing the maximum number of vacant places in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor is 200 GEL.
4. The accreditation fee includes: actual administrative costs related to administrative proceedings (salary, office and council meeting), costs of remuneration of accreditation experts, services related to checking the fulfillment of the conditions of accreditation of the educational programme during the accreditation period, the cost of simultaneous translation during the visit, the corresponding amount to be transferred to the State budget of Georgia from the Center's own revenues.
5. Accreditation fee for educational programmes (except for regulated, teacher training, Georgian language preparation and doctoral education programmes) / Accreditation fees for educational programmes included in the cluster are:
 - a) 6,239 GEL in case of one educational programme, and 7,759 GEL if a business trip is required;
 - b) 8,904 GEL in case of two educational programmes, and 10,672 GEL if a business trip is required;
 - c) 13,162 GEL in case of three educational programmes, and 16,027 GEL if a business trip is required;
 - d) 16,319 GEL in case of four educational programmes, and 19,252 GEL in case of a business trip is required;
 - e) 18,106 GEL in case of five educational programmers, and 21,502 GEL in case of a business trip is required;
 - f) 19,973 GEL in case of six educational programmers, and 23,537 GEL in case of a business trip is required;
 - g) 25,006 GEL in case of seven educational programmes, and 30,619 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

h) 28,095 GEL in case of eight educational programmes, and 34,722 GEL in case of business trip is required.

6. The amount of the fee for the accreditation of the regulated educational programme (except for the educational programme of Medical Doctor), as well as the doctoral educational programme / accreditation of the educational programme included in the cluster is:

a) 9,362 GEL in case of one educational programme, and 10,670 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

b) 11,760 GEL in case of two educational programmes, and 13,316 GEL if a business trip is required;

c) 16,345 GEL in case of three educational programmes, and 18,849 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

d) 19,549 GEL in case of four educational programmes, and 22,491 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

e) 21,123 GEL in case of five educational programmes, and 24,157 GEL in case of business trip is required;

f) 22,767 GEL in case of six educational programmes, and 25,970 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

g) 28,750 GEL in case of seven educational programmes, and 33,853 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

h) 31,617 GEL in case of eight educational programmes, and 37,733 GEL in case of business trip is required.

7. The amount of the accreditation fee for the educational programme of Medical Doctor is 12,573 GEL, and in case of a business trip is required - 14,093 GEL.

8. The amount of the accreditation fee for the Georgian language preparation educational programme is: 4,795 GEL, and in case of a business trip is required - 6,315 GEL.

9. The amount of the accreditation fee for the teacher training programme (60 credits) / the educational programs included in the cluster are:

a) 5,573 GEL in case of one educational programme and 7,093 GEL if a business trip is required;

b) 8,415 GEL in case of two educational programmes, and 10,183 GEL if a business trip is required;

c) 12,162 GEL in case of three educational programmes and 15,027 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

d) 13,986 GEL in case of four educational programmes, and 16,919 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

e) 16,773 GEL in case of five educational programmes, and 20,168 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

f) 18,528 GEL in case of six educational programmes and 22,093 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

g) 23,339 GEL in case of seven educational programmes, and 28,953 GEL in case of a business trip is required;

h) 26,317 GEL in case of eight educational programmes, and 32,944 GEL in case of business trip is required.

10. The amount of the accreditation fee for the veterinary training educational programme (60 credits) is 5,573 GEL, and in case of a business trip, it is 7,093 GEL.

11. The fee for increasing the maximum number of student places in the educational programme of a Medical Doctor is 6,328 GEL, and in case of the need for business trips - 8,134 GEL.

12. The accreditation fee for the educational programmes of the higher education institution operating abroad is:

A) 35,376 GEL in case of one and / or two educational programmes;

B) 55,634 GEL in case of three and / or four educational programmes;

C) 89,244 GEL in case of five, six, seven and / or eight educational programmes.

13. The fee for consulting services provided by the Center for higher education institutions operating abroad is 7,500 GEL.

14. If one master's educational programme, with its learning outcomes, corresponds to more than one but no more than three qualifications in one detailed field of the Classifier of Fields of Study (except for the regulated educational programmes), its accreditation fee shall increase by 20% of the fee envisaged by paragraph 5 of this Article for each subsequent qualification (7,944 GEL, and 9,253 GEL in case of a business trip).

15. If the educational programmes included in the cluster (except regulated, teacher training, Georgian language preparation, veterinary training educational programmes) include a doctoral level educational programme, the amount of the accreditation fee will be calculated using paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same Article.

16. The fee for the study of the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Education Programme Accreditation Council is:

a) 1,627 GEL in the case of an educational programme (except for regulated, teacher training, Georgian language preparation, veterinary training and doctoral educational programmes);

B) 2,016 GEL in case of a regulated educational programme (except for a Medical Doctor educational programme), as well as in the case of a doctoral education programme;

c) 2 549 GEL in the case of the educational programme of Medical Doctor;

d) 1,494 GEL in the case of an educational programme of the Georgian language preparation;

e) 1655 GEL in case of teacher training (60 credits) educational programme;

f) 2,016 GEL in case of veterinary training educational programme.

17. The fee for checking the fulfillment of the accreditation conditions is 38% of the relevant fee provided for in paragraphs 5 -10, and 12 and 15 of this Article.

18. The admissibility fee for the review of an appeal is 200 GEL, and the fee for the admissibility of a complaint submitted by a higher education institution operating abroad is 500 GEL. Fee for the Review of an appeal is 2,777 GEL.

19. The fee for the draft agreement to be concluded between the institutions for the implementation of the joint higher education programme is 480 GEL.

20. The fees envisaged by this Article shall be paid as non-cash payment via transferring the funds to the bank account of the Center. The fees provided for in this Article shall not be reimbursed to the applicant, except in the case provided for in paragraph 21 of this Article.

21. Accreditation fee for educational programmes / programmes cluster is fully refundable if the educational institution requests termination of administrative proceedings before a panel of accreditation experts is established.

22. The fee for the translation of the documentation submitted by the Center for accreditation into English is calculated according to the number of pages to be translated, and the amount is determined by the educational institution according to the invoice sent by the Center. The cost of translating of one page is 30 GEL.

Annex №3
(Attached as an attachment file)

Annex №4

**The Service Fees Provided by the Legal Entity of Public Law - National Center for Education
Quality Enhancement based on the Charter for the Accreditation of Educational
Programmes of the Higher Education Institutions (Annex № 1)**

Article 1. To recognize the accreditation granted by the organization operating on the territory of the United States, the fee for reviewing written application submitted by a higher education institution to the legal entity of public law - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter - the Center) for issuing prior consent by the Center for addressing this organization with accreditation application.

1. To recognize the accreditation granted by the organization operating on the territory of the United States, the fee for reviewing written application submitted by a higher education institution to the Center for issuing prior consent for addressing this organization with accreditation application equals to 1,000 GEL (including value added tax).

2. The fee provided for by the paragraph 1 of this Article shall be covered through non-cash transaction through deposit to the Center's bank account. The paid amount shall be returned to the applicant only in the case if it requests termination of administrative proceedings based on the application provided by paragraph 1 of this Article within 5 working days from submitting the application.

Article 2. Remuneration of the activity of international expert participating in the accreditation process of the higher education programme.

1. In the case of participation of an international expert in the accreditation process of the higher education programme, the higher education institution shall pay the necessary amount for the remuneration of work of the international expert.
2. The amount of money provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article is determined in accordance with the invoice sent by the Center, which is drawn up on the basis of the labor contract signed between the Center and the international expert.
3. The fee provided for by the paragraph 1 of this Article shall be covered through non-cash transaction through deposit to the Center's bank account.

Annex N5

(Attached as an attachment file)