



«АККРЕДИТТЕУ ЖӘНЕ РЕЙТИНГТИҢ  
ТӘУЕЛСІЗ АГЕНТТІГІ» КЕМ

НУ «НЕЗАВИСИМОЕ АГЕНТСТВО  
АККРЕДИТАЦИИ И РЕЙТИНГА»

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR  
ACCREDITATION AND RATING

# Report

on the results of the External Expert Commission's work for assessing compliance with the requirements of the standards of international accreditation of educational programs (based on ESG)

7008003 - "Social Work" (master's degree)

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Azerbaijan University (Republic of Azerbaijan)

from February 24 to February 26, 2026

2026

**INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR ACCREDITATION AND RATING**  
**External Expert Commission**

*Addressed  
to IAAR Accreditation  
Council*



**REPORT**

**on the results of the External Expert Commission’s work for assessing compliance with the requirements of the standards of international accreditation of educational programs (based on ESG)**

**7008003 - “Social Work” (master's degree)**

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Azerbaijan University (Republic of Azerbaijan)**

**from February 24 to February 26, 2026**

## CONTENT

(I) LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
(II) INTRODUCTION	4
(III) PRESENTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION	4
(IV) DESCRIPTION OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE	6
(V) DESCRIPTION OF THE EEC VISIT	6
(VI) COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	8
6.1. Standard 1. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY.	8
6.2. Standard 2. DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM	13
6.3. Standard 3. STUDENT-CENTERED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT	16
6.4. Standard 4. ADMISSION, ACCESS, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS	20
6.5. Standard 5. TEACHING STAFF	24
6.6. Standard 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM	27
6.7. Standard 7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	30
6.8. Standard 8. PUBLIC INFORMATION	34
6.9. Standard 9. CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND PERIODIC PROGRAM EVALUATION.	37
6.10. Standard 10. PERIODIC PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE.	40
(VII) OVERVIEW OF STRENGTHS / BEST PRACTICES	42
(VIII) OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY	43
(IX) REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION	46
(X) RECOMMENDATION TO THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL	46
Appendix 1. Evaluation table “Conclusion of the External Expert Commission”	48
Appendix 2. Visit program	<b>Ошибка! Закладка не определена.</b>
Appendix 3. Survey results of the faculty members	<b>Ошибка! Закладка не определена.</b>
Appendix 4. Survey results of students	<b>Ошибка! Закладка не определена.</b>

## **(I) LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AU - Azerbaijan University  
CBE - Competency-Based Education  
CLO – Course Learning Outcome  
ECTS - European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System  
EEC - External Expert Commission  
EP - Educational Programs  
ERIH - European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences  
GPA - Grade Point Average  
IAAR - Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating  
ISO – International Organization for Standardization  
MSE - Ministry of Science and Education  
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations  
NQF - National Qualifications Framework  
OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
PLOs - Program Learning Outcomes  
PhD – Doctor of Philosophy  
QA - Quality Assurance  
QF-EHEA - Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area  
SAR - Self-Assessment Report  
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals  
SDP - Strategic Development Plan  
TKTA - Education Quality Assurance Agency  
TLC - Training and Learning Center  
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund  
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## (II) INTRODUCTION

In accordance with order No 19-26-OД from January 19, 2026 of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR), from February, 24 to February 26, 2026, an External Expert Commission assessed the conformity of educational program 7008003 - “Social Work” (master's degree) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Azerbaijan University (Republic of Azerbaijan) with the standards of international accreditation of the IAAR (approved by order No. 68-18/1-OD dated 05/25/2018).

The report of the External Expert Commission (EEC) contains an evaluation of the submitted educational program against the international standards of the IAAR, as well as recommendations of the EEC for further improvement of educational programs and assessment parameters.

EEC includes:

- *Chair of the EEC* – **Bibigul Kussanova**, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan);
- *International expert* – **Sousana Michailidou**, PhD, Professor at Webster University Athens, Vice President of the Euro-Mediterranean Academy of Arts and Sciences (Athens, Greece), online participation;
- *IAAR Expert* – **Anastasia Lipovka**, PhD, Associate Professor, Almaty Management University (Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan);
- *IAAR Expert* – **Elmina Kazimzade**, Associate Professor, Baku State University (Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan);
- *IAAR Expert, employer* – **Konul Khanlar Hajiyeva**, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Unit for State Language and Foreign Languages, State Examination Center of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan);
- *IAAR Expert, student* – **Mahir Nilay Adhamli**, 2<sup>nd</sup>-year master’s student, Educational Programme “Methods of Teaching Language and Literature (English)”, Azerbaijan University of Languages (Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan);
- *IAAR Coordinator* – **Dinara Bekenova**, Project Manager of IAAR (Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan).

## (III) PRESENTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Azerbaijan University, established in 1991, is the first private higher education institution in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Throughout its thirty-year history, the university has maintained its status as an innovator, evolving from its initial registration by the State Higher Expert Commission to receiving an indefinite license for higher education activities from the Ministry of Economy in 2016. The university is located in Baku and currently comprises three faculties, seven academic departments, and six specialized centers.

Since 2006, the AU has operated in alignment with the standards and principles of the Bologna Declaration, fostering academic mobility and transparency. The institution’s reputation is affirmed by leading global ranking agencies. Institutional quality management is further evidenced by the ISO 9001:2015 "Quality Management System" certificate received in 2019.

The master’s program in “7008003 - Social Work” is delivered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The program is grounded in the principles of human rights, social responsibility, inclusion, and diversity. Training is organized through two specialized tracks: “Social Work in Multiple Fields of Human Activity” - a 2-year program (120 ECTS credits) that includes a research internship and the defense of a master's thesis, and “Work with Youth” - a 1.5-year program (90 ECTS credits) focused on specialized field professionals. Academic delivery is managed by the Department of Organization of Social Work, which was established as a separate unit in 2015. The department comprises 36 faculty members, including 4 Doctors of Sciences and 9 Doctors of Philosophy (PhD), ensuring high-level instruction and research supervision. The master’s program includes 13 experienced faculty members, holding scientific degrees and titles, 12 of whom are full-time employees.

The university features a robust Quality Assurance system established in 2021, which has been recognized as satisfactory by the international EEC of IAAR in 2023. AU actively implements a result-oriented, student-centered approach to foster a strong quality culture.

The university also prioritizes the UN Sustainable Development Goals, integrating them into curricula and supporting sustainability projects. Currently, AU serves approximately 3,990 students, with instruction conducted in both Azerbaijani and English. For the 2025–2026 academic year, the number of students to be admitted to the master’s program in Social Work constituted 28 people. The program has a track record of steady graduation numbers: in the 2024–2025 academic year, there were 24 alumni, and in 2023–2024 - 21 alumni. The master’s program in Social Work is undergoing its first international accreditation in 2026, building upon the successful accreditation of the bachelor’s level program in 2023.

**(IV) DESCRIPTION OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE**

Educational program 7008003 “Social Work” (master's degree) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Azerbaijan University is internationally accredited by the IAAR for the very first time.

**(V) DESCRIPTION OF THE EEC VISIT**

The work of the External Expert Commission (EEC) was carried out based on the approved program of the visit of the Expert Commission for the international accreditation of educational programs at Azerbaijan University from February 24 to February 26, 2026.

To coordinate the work of the EEC, on February 12, 2026, an online kick-off meeting was held among the members of the commission, the schedule of the visit was clarified, and agreement was reached on the choice of examination methods.

To obtain objective information about the quality of the educational program and the entire infrastructure of the university, to clarify the content of the self-assessment report, meetings were held with the vice-rector, heads of structural divisions, heads of departments, faculty, students, alumni, and employers. A total of 76 representatives took part in the meetings (Table 1).

Table 1 - Number and category of meeting participants

<b>Participant category</b>	<b>Number</b>
Vice-rector	1
Heads of structural divisions	10
Heads of departments and heads of EP	2
Faculty	23
Students	20
Alumni	15
Employers	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>

During the visit, the EEC members inspected the material and technical resources supporting the accredited educational program. A subsequent meeting between the EEC and university stakeholders (target groups) was held to clarify the mechanisms for implementing the university's policies and to confirm specific data presented in the university’s SAR.

In accordance with the accreditation procedure, a survey of 25 faculty members and 37 master’s students was conducted.

The external examination involved a comprehensive analysis of the educational establishment’s internal and external documentation to substantiate the claims made in SAR. This review was supplemented by an assessment of the AU’s digital profile via its corporate website (<https://www.au.edu.az/en/>). Based on this comprehensive examination, the EEC elaborated and formally presented its recommendations for the accredited program enhancement to the AU management at a meeting held on February 26, 2026.

## (VI) COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

### 6.1. Standard 1. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY.

**Standard:**

*The educational organization should have a published quality assurance policy which is part of its strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes with the involvement of external stakeholders.*

**Recommendations:**

*The policy and mechanisms for its implementation are the basis of a logically built and consistent system for ensuring the quality of the organization of education. The system is a cycle of continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the educational organization. It supports the development of a culture of quality in which all stakeholders take responsibility for quality at all levels of the functioning of the educational organization. To strengthen it, the policy and mechanisms for its implementation have an official status and are available to the general public.*

*The strategy and mechanisms for its implementation are the basis of a logically built and consistent system for ensuring the quality of the organization of education. The system is a cycle of continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the educational organization. It supports the development of a culture of quality in which all stakeholders take responsibility for quality at all levels of the functioning of the educational organization. To strengthen it, the policy and mechanisms for its implementation have an official status and are available to the general public.*

*A quality assurance policy is more effective if it reflects the relationship between research, teaching and learning and takes into account the contexts, both national, in which the NGO operates, and intra-university. This policy supports:*

- *organization of a quality assurance system;*
- *departments, schools, faculties and other departments, as well as the management of the educational - organization, employees and students fulfilling their duties of quality assurance;*
- *academic honesty and freedom, as well as intolerance to manifestations of various kinds of academic dishonesty;*
- *processes to prevent intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students and faculty;*
- *involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.*

*The policy is embodied in activities that provide for a variety of processes and procedures for internal quality assurance, which involve the participation of all departments of the educational organization. The degree of implementation of the policy is regulated, monitored and reviewed at the level of the educational organization itself.*

*The quality assurance policy also applies to any activity carried out by subcontractors or partners.*

**Evidence**

Azerbaijan University has established quality assurance system in September 2021, with actual start of functioning in February, 2022, covering all levels of educational activities and the implementation of the accredited educational program. The University follows the logic that the QA policy and system has to be organized in a way which creates the environment for application of proven principles and regulations, indicators and mechanisms to ensure the quality of the entire process of education as well as encouraging quality culture in HEI in order to train good quality and competitive specialists.

The University QA policy is based on argument that the quality culture has been forming through absorbing the quality standards by the HEI until they become a system of norms of implementation for each and everybody involved and creates a ground of quality culture which is friendly and open for further continuous development of both, quality system and parties who contribute, manage and conduct the required reforms and upgrades of quality policy and system in order to move the HEI to the higher level of achievements. The University follows the logic that the QA policy and system have to be organized in a way which creates the environment for application of proven principles and regulations, indicators and mechanisms to ensure the quality of the entire process of education as well as encouraging quality culture in HEI in order to train good quality and competitive specialists.

To make this process of quality culture irreversible all parties involved into the process of education and quality assurance has to be informed and interested in success of quality culture. Therefore, the University expands the circles of target groups including the main stakeholders (students, alumni, academic and administrative staff and labor market representatives) to be covered by quality assurance system activities especially monitoring, updating, enriching the education process and procedures as well

as supporting their professional development through the system of quality related trainings run by the QA department and the Teaching Learning Center (TLC) of the University.

For the last 2 years the University has arranged its work in a way to meet the requirements of both national and international quality criteria. Currently, the University QA department along with different units are involved into various self-evaluation processes looking forward to both international accreditation of the Social Work master program contracted with IAAR for early Spring 2026, as well as the institutional accreditation of the University by national QA Agency (TKTA) in Fall 2026.

Therefore, the QA activities are focused on assessment of the mentioned quality criteria related to different functions of the University including the development strategy, quality assurance policy implementation, delivery programs through teaching, learning and assessment, the research policy and activities of both, academic faculty and students, university infrastructure improvements, upgrading student services, and increase the level of international cooperation and relations with partner organizations and HEIs abroad.

The QA activities on one side are implemented through formally designed, scheduled and conducted events organized mainly by QA department, Teaching Learning Center (TLC), Research department and Int'l cooperation department of the University, and on another side informal consultations are provided by the QA department based on needs and requests from academic and administrative staff members through working hours without preliminary appointments.

The QA activities are implemented using different instruments including the regular annual monitoring of the programs delivery and ensuring the teaching, learning and assessment processes, assessing the scheduling and organization of classes by Education Council, respective Dean and departments in order to evaluate the teaching techniques and methods, relevance of teaching process and class environment to the assignments in the syllabus, the records on regular professional development activities of faculty members and their scientific achievements. It has to be emphasized that the results of this extended monitoring are scored and used as a reference for motivation the academic faculty members in rating them in line with differentiating salary criteria which applied for the first time in September 2025.

The management system at Azerbaijan University is organized in line with modern principles of higher education governance, focusing on improving institutional efficiency and ensuring high quality in teaching and research. The administrative structure includes bodies at various levels that play key roles in strategic decision-making, quality control, and the rational allocation of resources. However, the functions and positions within the university are not clearly defined, as the official structure of the university presented by the university administration does not correspond to the positions that participated in the interviews during the accreditation of the educational program.

The Azerbaijan University's quality policy is a formally documented and strategically verified framework designed to ensure operational efficiency and continuous improvement in educational and research activities. It provides a foundation for defining and achieving quality objectives in line with the university's mission.

The quality policy, developed by the management in accordance with Azerbaijan University's general strategic goals and approved by the rector, serves as the basis for setting quality objectives and planning expected outcomes. The QA department is responsible for its implementation. Since the last review, the QA department have made significant upgrades in the QA related policy implementation and institutional development of the University and the department in particular. The proper accomplishment of recommendations and proposals of both external evaluations including institutional (2018) and program accreditation (2023, 2025) by the University contributed to ensuring its internal quality assurance policy, implementation and establishment of QA system as integral part of the overall University management. As a result, for the last 2 years the process of assuring the quality of education has been settled on the solid base of well-tuned system of communication between the mentioned parties and at the same time to have drafted / updated the main normative documents regulating the internal processes of training, research, evaluation and management. The main focus of all processes has been to ensure the result-oriented student-centered education atmosphere so it contributes to quality culture and meets expectations of the individual in particular and society at large on higher education in country.

There is also successful formula applied by the QA department of the University to deepen and expand the impact and sustainability of the quality assurance related activities through creating the

institutional formal and informal formats where the quality related issues are communicated, designed and conducted for particular target groups. For example, students of the University who have been invited into the pool of external experts by the TKTA (Education Quality Assurance Agency) has initiated the establishment of the student club “Quality Ambassadors” which will be the communicator and re-translator of quality related standards, norms and regulations in both directions student community and academic and administrative staff. At the same time, the representatives of academic and administrative staff of the University actively who are involved as external experts into TKTA organized accreditation processes were added into the ‘*AU Commission on QA related issues*’ established 4 years ago.

The key strategic principles of the quality policy include continuous improvement through effective management of educational processes; consideration of the expectations of students, parents, staff, employers, professional organizations, and society; emphasis on human values and the strengthening of national and ethical principles; expansion of university-industry cooperation to train qualified professionals for the labor market; promotion of research aimed at addressing economic, cultural, and social issues; development of distance and lifelong learning systems; active participation in international cooperation and student exchange programs; and adaptation to the Bologna Process and integration into the European Higher Education Area.

The university administration is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the quality policy across all structural divisions and for creating the necessary conditions for its success. The quality policy is supported by the entire university community in both educational and administrative spheres, and responsibility for maintaining quality standards rests with every employee.

In the field of education quality improvement, academic programs are regularly updated in accordance with international best practices. The Quality Assurance Department conducts faculty evaluation surveys among students each semester to assess teaching performance. Students evaluate instructors anonymously through the university’s electronic system, responding to ten questions for each course. The collected data are archived and accessible to instructors at any time. Based on the results, the department compiles a summary report and submits it to the university administration for review and further action.

### **Analytical part**

Quality management at Azerbaijan University is based on a systematic and well-documented approach. The university’s quality policy, developed and approved by the administration, has been communicated to the entire university community. This policy reflects the university’s strategic goals, main directions, and priorities in education and research and is built upon the principle of continuous improvement. Quality objectives are formulated by the relevant departments and implemented through flexible but effective management mechanisms. Overall, Azerbaijan University management model aligns with international standards of higher education and is based on the principles of transparency, participation, and quality.

At the same time, the analysis revealed a number of important shortcomings that require attention for the further development of the quality system and bringing it into full compliance with international standards. The first issue concerns the delineation of responsibilities for business processes in the field of quality assurance; it is necessary to differentiate the functions of each position; since, according to the University Management Structure (‘Administrative and Functional Management Structure of Azerbaijan University’), there are two Vice-Rectors at the university, but during the interview, the university administration presented only one Vice-Rector, the Vice-rRctor for Science, whose position is not included in the Management Structure of the University. It is necessary to align the Management Structure with the current situation. It is also necessary to revise the job descriptions of managers, clearly defining the responsibilities of each manager for the quality of the educational program, and creating a matrix of responsibilities that takes into account all processes of the university’s quality assurance system.

The QA system at the AU seems to execute basic functions of the quality assurance. This is important that QA is a part of the main AU’s documents. With regard to a relatively early stage of QA development at the AU, it is understandable that its main attention is paid to monitoring the quality of the programs; some elements of QA relate to other aspects of the institution’s functioning, too, though. Yet, the links between the program, department, faculty and the university are visible in the context of QA,

too.

However, the analysis revealed the problem of the accessibility of the Quality Policy. Although the policy has been developed, approved, and implemented within the university, it is not publicly available on the official Azerbaijan University website. The absence of public access to this key document reduces the transparency of the quality management system and limits awareness and trust among external stakeholders, including students, prospective applicants, employers, and the wider community.

In accordance with modern requirements for quality assurance in higher education, such a document should be publicly accessible. Openness serves as a guarantee of institutional accountability and demonstrates the university's willingness to engage in dialogue with society. Another aspect that requires improvement is that the Quality Policy should be updated regularly, thereby confirming the university's commitment to the principles of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

To address these issues, it would be appropriate to make the Quality Policy publicly available on the university's official website, accompanied by an explanation of its key principles and objectives, and make the university's quality management system more open, accountable, and responsive to societal needs.

Overall, the quality assurance system at Azerbaijan University demonstrates a high level of organization and technological advancement. However, its further development should focus on reinforcing the principles of openness and transparency. Strengthening these areas will enable the university not only to maintain but also to enhance its position as a modern higher education institution that meets international standards of quality and accountability.

#### **Strengths/best practice in 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

#### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. Ensuring public access and transparent monitoring of the Quality Assurance Policy: it is recommended that the approved Quality Policy be published in the public domain on the university's official website, accompanied by a brief explanatory note outlining its objectives, basic principles and key areas of implementation. The quality assurance unit should systematically disseminate information about the Quality Policy and related procedures through the website, social networks and information boards in order to increase the transparency of the university's activities, raise awareness among students, staff and partners, and strengthen the culture of quality. At the same time, the Quality Policy should be updated regularly (every two years), thereby confirming the university's commitment to the principles of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

Implementation deadline: September 2026

2. Clearly define responsibilities for business processes in quality assurance, differentiate the functions of each position. Bring into compliance the University's s Chart ("The administrative and functional management structure of Azerbaijan University) with the actual situation. Review the job descriptions of managers, clearly define the responsibility of each manager for the quality of the educational program, and draw up a matrix of responsibilities taking into account all processes of the university's quality assurance system.

Implementation deadline: September 2026

#### **Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Quality Assurance Policy" for the educational Master Study Program 7008003 Social Work: strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

## Standard 2. DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM

### **Standard:**

*An educational organization must have mechanisms for the development and approval of its programs. Programs should be designed in accordance with established objectives, including intended learning outcomes. The qualifications resulting from the completion of the program must be clearly defined as well as explained and must correspond to a certain level of the national qualifications framework in higher education and, therefore, the framework of qualifications in the European Higher Education Area.*

### **Recommendations:**

*Educational programs are the basis for the formation of the educational mission of a higher educational institution. They provide students with both academic knowledge and necessary competencies, including transferable ones, that can have an impact on their personal development and can be applied in their future careers.*

*When developing their programs, educational organizations should ensure:*

- *alignment of program objectives with institutional strategy and clearly defined expected learning outcomes;*
- *participation of students and other stakeholders in the development of the program;*
- *carrying out external expertise and availability of reference and information resources;*
- *achieving the four goals of higher education defined by the Council of Europe (see Scope and concepts);*
- *unimpeded advancement of the student in the process of mastering the program;*
- *determination of the expected workload of students (for example, in ECTS);*
- *providing opportunities for internships (where necessary);*
- *the formal approval process for the program at the institutional level.*

### **Evidence**

Azerbaijan University operates within a national legislative framework where higher education study programs have historically been supervised and approved by the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE). Under this system, programs are typically updated every five years, with universities traditionally having flexibility over elective courses. However, the development of the 2025 Social Work master's program represents a significant shift toward institutional autonomy. Program development is carried out based on the standard requirements of MSE, followed by internal review and final approval at the state level. The newly approved framework grants the AU the authority to independently design the structure and content of the program in alignment with defined occupational standards and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). AU develops its undergraduate educational programs in accordance with the current regulatory framework of the higher education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The formal approval process is multi-tiered. Curricula and syllabi are first developed by the academic staff of the Department of Organization of Social Work, where they undergo internal discussion. These documents are then reviewed and approved at the departmental level before moving to the Faculty Scientific Council and ultimately the University Scientific Council for final institutional endorsement.

The content of the educational programs meets modern requirements for the professional preparation of qualified specialists and is aligned with international standards. The design of educational programs at AU is rooted in the university's broader Development strategy, which was updated and approved in November 2023. This strategy ensures that program objectives are not isolated but are integrated into the institution's mission to provide high-quality, student-centered education.

The Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2026–2030 by the Department of Organization of Social Work, which is in charge of the master's program - Social Work in Various Fields of Human Activity and Work with Youth, declares the following mission: *“The Department of Social Work Organization aims to build a socially just society by proposing and implementing information and service models that are appropriate to changing social conditions using modern learning methods and techniques, and by demonstrating and developing curricula, scholarships, and school culture that support the values of equality, diversity, inclusion, democracy, and care for human well-being and are consistent with these values”*.

The AU embeds the department's core values into both the curriculum and the institutional culture through core principles, an inclusive environment, democratic culture, ethics and human well-being. Thus, the program is grounded in the principles of human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversity. The university ensures a barrier-free environment for students with disabilities, particularly

within its library services, and respects student diversity by offering flexible learning paths through elective courses. Student clubs, such as the “Sossfera” Social Development Club, operate with democratically elected leadership and focus on social justice issues like disability inclusion and drug addiction prevention. Courses such as “Academic Writing and Ethics” and “Social Work with Diverse Population Groups” explicitly train students to apply social values and ethical norms in their professional practice to support human well-being.

A central pillar of the program is the establishment of a rigorous PLO-CLO (Program Learning Outcome – Course Learning Outcome) system. Unlike previous theory-oriented models, the current program utilizes a Learning Outcomes Matrix. This matrix identifies how each specific course contributes to the overall program objectives, ensuring there are no gaps in the curriculum and that the workload is balanced. These outcomes are designed to be measurable, facilitating objective assessment and continuous quality monitoring.

Azerbaijan University ensures that all qualifications resulting from its programs are clearly defined and correspond to both national and international standards. The master’s program in Social Work is explicitly categorized as Level 7 under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of the Azerbaijan Republic. Since the university has operated in alignment with the Bologna Declaration, these qualifications are also synchronized with the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). This alignment ensures international transparency and facilitates academic mobility, allowing graduates to have their qualifications recognized across the EHEA. To provide the unimpeded advancement of students, the university utilizes the Electronic University platform to monitor progression, including course completion and internship fulfillment. The International Center for Master's and Doctoral Studies provides systematic oversight and academic advising to support students who may face difficulties.

The student workload is clearly defined using the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Two specializations are proposed to students: “Work with Youth” and “Social Work in Multiple Fields of Human Activity”. A typical master’s degree requires 120 ECTS credits over two years. The maximum student workload is set at 45 academic hours per week, which includes classroom sessions, independent research, and practical assignments. It encompasses essential components such as research practice, scientific work, and the formal defense of a master’s thesis, which are mandatory prerequisites to satisfy national standards for admission into doctoral programs. This structured approach ensures that the educational process is manageable while maintaining high academic standards. Eligibility for doctoral-level studies (NQF Level 8) is restricted to graduates of the Social Work in Multiple Fields of Human Activity specialization within the broader Social Work program (code 7008003). This specific pathway is designed in accordance with the requirements approved by the MSE of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In its turn, the “Work with Youth” track is a shorter, 1.5-year program totaling 90 credits. Since it utilizes alternative capstone requirements - applied research projects or comprehensive examinations, rather than a full thesis defense and research internship, its graduates do not meet the formal qualifications for further education at the doctoral level, but preserve more opportunities to focus on real-world needs of a certain population group.

The educational programs serve as the core of AU’s teaching mission, aiming to provide a balance of academic knowledge and practical competencies. The master’s program has transitioned to a Competency-Based Education (CBE) model. This model moves beyond classical theoretical instruction to focus on:

- ✓ Academic knowledge: grounding students in the theory, history, and legal frameworks of social welfare.
- ✓ Transferable competencies: developing skills in digital social work, ethical decision-making, project management, and analytical thinking.

Focus on new professional spheres is integrated into the program. Such specializations as “Work with Youth ” and “Social Work in Multiple Fields of Human Activity” are designed with specific career paths in the public and non-governmental sectors in mind. The curriculum includes new directions demanded by the market, such as digital social work and clinical interventions. Practice-oriented learning and internships allow for the development of competencies to impact master’s students’ personal development, fostering creative and critical thinking, and are directly applicable to future careers in

various fields, such as social services, rehabilitation, and youth work.

The program syllabi represent an important element of EP, particularly in terms of PLOs and CLOs cascading into operational work. The Strategic Development Plan of the Department of Organization of Social Work for 2021-2025 stated that the literature sources in the syllabi should be from the last 10 years. However, the reference lists and recommended readings in the provided syllabi contain literature older than 10 years, which raises a question whether the set goal from the earlier SDP has been fully attained by the department. Furthermore, the SDP for 2026–2030 declares in target 2, “2.1.2. *Updating all syllabuses with academic resources from at least the past five years*”. Therefore, intensive work should be initiated as soon as possible to meet not only IAAR standards, but also to fulfill the AU strategic goals. In addition, the lowest evaluation of master’s students participated in the survey, among all the questions, was given to the quality of teaching materials. To the statement “*The material suggested by the Teacher is relevant and reflects the latest scientific and practical developments*” - 62.2% of students absolutely agree, 29.7% agree, 5.4% partially agree, and 2.7% disagree.

The development and review of programs involve stakeholders to ensure relevance to the labor market and society. Faculty and master’s students serve as internal stakeholders. Academic staff discuss the program content during formal department meetings, whereas students participate through satisfaction surveys and feedback provided after each term, which is then used to update syllabi and curricula. In addition to official surveys, students can express their opinions through focus groups and informal communication with academic advisors (tutors) and professors. Additionally, members of the student community and "Quality Ambassadors" are also involved in these processes.

The representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and public bodies in charge of social work with the population participate in the consideration of the program content. So, the university maintains cooperation with labor market representatives, such as the DOST Agency and the Social Services Agency. Discussions with these experts help the university adapt its programs to meet the evolving needs of the professional field.

However, AU's work with the external stakeholders within this dimension mostly has an informal and unsystematic character. During the interview with employers, only one participant out of the practitioners reported being involved in the process of curriculum discussion through emails and telephone calls. The AU website also provides some information on the meetings with individual employers for discussing the program’s content, and a few minutes were provided by the university in recent years, demonstrating some involvement of stakeholders in the program discussion. In the process of the interview with alumni, no evidence of their involvement in the program content discussion was gained, excluding a few participants, who are both alumni and current faculty members, so their engagement seems to be obviously caused by their active teaching status. Both the self-assessment report and site visit allowed us to conclude that, although the university has many international partners, their contribution to the curriculum consideration and enhancement is insufficient.

Recognizing that social work is a practice-grounded profession, AU integrates well-structured placement opportunities into its programs. The master’s program includes two primary types of internships:

- ✓ Pedagogical internship through developing teaching skills by delivering sessions to bachelor-level students. The pedagogical internship takes place in the AU.
- ✓ Research internship provides methodological training and field research experience in professional environments.

Master’s students undertake internships in real professional spaces, such as the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues, where they are trained in survey methodology and data analysis. Volunteering at the Probation Service is practiced, providing opportunities for master's students to deliver presentations to real-world professionals. These internships allow students to apply theoretical frameworks to hands-on scenarios, such as working with vulnerable populations or conducting research in liberated territories.

During the EEC visit to AU, the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues welcomed experts to their premises to share their feedback on AU students’ internship opportunities and prospects. The head in charge of students’ internship in the National Observatory shared the recently emerged practice of providing the AU with the list of master’s thesis topics that could be chosen by AU

students who will be further co-supervised by the AU professor and the Observatory's research specialists. This work is at its initial stage, and only a few master's students are covered by it, but it demonstrates a rather prospective area for future fruitful cooperation between the Azerbaijan University and employers.

During the interviews with students, employers, and the formal meeting at the company's premises, the stakeholders expressed the propositions for the program enhancement via its practical component strengthening. The theoretical part of the program was called the strongest contribution to the graduates' preparation; nonetheless, orientation to practical skills needs to be in focus. Despite the general positive assessment of teaching quality, in the conducted survey by EEC, students' comments support the idea of the education's necessity to deliver more hands-on competencies: *"Another problem is the lack of practical sessions and real-life case studies. Students often receive theoretical knowledge without sufficient practical application, which negatively affects their professional readiness."* (master's student)

Upon graduation, master's students are awarded official documentation that validates their achievement of the program objectives. The diploma and its supplement provide a detailed explanation of the qualification gained, the context of the studies, and the specific learning outcomes achieved. This documentation is designed to meet international standards (including ENIC-NARIC requirements), ensuring that graduates can demonstrate their professional readiness to employers and higher education institutions.

### **Analytical part**

The evidence indicates a significant shift toward institutional autonomy in program development, moving away from a historical model where the Ministry of Science and Education strictly supervised all structures. While the university still operates within national legislative frameworks, the Social Work master's program demonstrates the AU's new authority to independently design content based on Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and occupational standards. This autonomy is supported by a multi-tiered internal approval process, involving the Department, Faculty Scientific Council, and University Scientific Council, which ensures that every program is not isolated but is fundamentally integrated into the university's mission and development strategy to provide student-centered education.

The program has successfully transitioned from a theory-oriented classical model to a Competency-Based Education model, which balances academic knowledge with transferable skills like digital social work and ethical decision-making. A critical analytical strength is the implementation of a rigorous PLO-CLO system and a Learning Outcomes Matrix. Furthermore, the alignment of the program with Level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) ensures that qualifications are transparent and support international academic mobility.

The AU utilizes a diverse range of stakeholders to maintain program relevance, including "Quality Ambassadors" and internal student feedback. External cooperation with bodies like the DOST Agency and the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues provides students with high-level research and pedagogical internships. However, evidence suggests that external stakeholder involvement remains mostly informal and unsystematic, with only a fraction of employers reporting consistent involvement in curriculum discussions. Additionally, while the theoretical component is considered a major strength, there is a clear stakeholder demand for even stronger focus on practical skills to better prepare graduates for the field.

The university employs the Electronic University platform to ensure the unimpeded advancement of students by monitoring progression and workload, which is strictly defined using the ECTS system (120 credits for the 2-year track or 90 credits for the 1.5-year track). The AU strategy is reflected in the examined program's PLOs and CLOs, and the Department's strategy is integrated into the newly designed curriculum. Nonetheless, to meet both international IAAR standards and internal strategic targets for 2030, the AU must further prioritize updating academic resources to reflect the most current research in the disciplines.

### **Strengths/best practice for 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. To launch the Advisory Board of the department "Organization of Social Work", directed at the continuous and systematic work with program stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, partners)

for periodic monitoring, review, and revision of the program content. The Advisory Board should include the most enthusiastic, responsible, committed, and competent representatives of the student community, alumni, employers, and international partners. The structure, duties, and responsibilities of the Board should be officially recognized by the AU's formal documentation, and the minutes of the meeting should be kept and stored systematically.

Implementation deadline: December, 2027

2. To reinforce the involvement of stakeholders through obtaining annual expert evaluation of syllabi within the Social Work EP. The written and signed practitioners' reviews of syllabi for the crucial teaching courses should be collected from employers, with specific propositions for improving certain elements, and the department "Organization of Social Work" should further monitor this work to ensure the required amendments are made by the faculty in charge.

Implementation period: December, 2027

3. To renew the reference lists and recommended readings in the syllabi and ensure that they include the sources for the last five years, excluding a few fundamental works in the discipline written by prominent founders in their fields. This measure will help the AU follow the Department's strategy and enrich references with the latest academic articles from international peer-reviewed journals and global databases, including the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, and OECD.

Implementation period: December, 2027

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Development and approval of the program": strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

### Standard 3. STUDENT-CENTERED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

**Standard:**

*The educational organization must ensure that the program is implemented in such a way as to encourage students to take an active role in the joint construction of the educational process, and that student assessment reflects this approach.*

**Recommendations:**

*Student-centered learning plays an important role in increasing students' motivation, self-reflection and involvement in the learning process. For the organization of education, the introduction of student-centered learning requires a balanced approach to the development and implementation of the educational program and the assessment of learning outcomes.*

*Implementing the principle of student-centered learning, the organization of education must ensure:*

- *respect and attention to different groups of students and their needs, providing flexible learning paths;*
- *using different teaching methods (where appropriate);*
- *flexible use of a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regular feedback on the techniques and methods used to evaluate and correct pedagogical methods;*
- *support for learner autonomy with appropriate guidance and assistance from the teacher;*
- *strengthening mutual respect between teacher and student;*
- *the existence of appropriate procedures for responding to student complaints.*

*Given the importance of student assessment for their future careers, quality assurance mechanisms for assessment should consider the following:*

- *Assessors must be familiar with the methods of testing and testing students' knowledge and improve their own competence in this area;*
- *Criteria and methods of assessment should be published in advance;*
- *Assessment should allow students to demonstrate the level of achievement of the planned learning outcome. The student should receive feedback and, if necessary, advice on the learning process;*
- *The examination should be conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *Evaluation rules should include consideration of extenuating circumstances;*
- *Evaluation must be consistent, objective in relation to all students and carried out in accordance with established rules;*
- *There must be a formal appeal process.*

**Evidence**

The student-centered approach at Azerbaijan University has a solid institutional foundation and is integrated into the university's internal quality assurance system. The university adheres to the key principles of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), including the individualization of learning pathways, academic freedom, and equal access to education.

The Master's program in Social Work (code: 7008003) respects and attends to diversity of students through two specialized tracks enabling flexible learning paths. 'Social Work in Various Spheres of Life Activity' (120 credits, 2-year duration) prepares graduates for practice across healthcare, education system, and cultural sectors (minority and local communities), while 'Social Work with Youth' (90 credits, 1.5 years duration) focuses on work with vulnerable group of youth supporting them in some vital spheres such as career development, veterans, teenagers, disabled, drug addicts, migrants and etc. Both programs integrate theoretical knowledge and practical skills with research capabilities, developing competencies in theoretical foundations and social work practices, social process analysis, intervention design, program implementation, and doing research.

The educational process integrates traditional, interactive, and digital teaching methods, enabling students to take an active role in learning. Individual and group activities, project-based learning, simulation of real-life professional situations, laboratory work, participation in hackathons, case competitions, and programming contests are all part of the learning experience. Educational activities include interactive lectures facilitating student participation through discussions and application exercises, research seminars developing analytical competencies through study critique and collaborative problem-solving, field-based case studies connecting theory with practice realities, simulations enabling experiential learning in controlled environments, and independent work comprising research projects, thesis development, and analytical reports. This diverse range of methods allows students to develop not only professional skills but also communication, research, and management competencies.

Digital platforms (Zoom, Teams) support course materials, database access, and thesis supervision

and communication (December 2025 webinar addressing research methodology). The university gathers regularly systematic feedback from Master Students of accrediting program.

There is an 'International Center for Masters and Doctoral Studies' in the University, which coordinates schedules aligned with graduate objectives. Master students exercise autonomy through selecting the elective courses and research topics based on personal interests and future career objectives. This flexibility reflects institutional trust in students' professional judgment and supports development of independent scholarship capabilities.

Research internship respects student diversity through flexible learning paths. Students select dissertation topics and corresponding internship placements from multiple partner organizations (National Observatory, Probation Service, Social Research Center, others), enabling individualized research trajectories. The program uses different delivery modes: structured institutional internships at National Observatory (April 2025) providing methodological training in survey design, sampling, questionnaire development, and data analysis; volunteer-based research integrated with academic work at Probation Service (November 2024); and independent field research in liberated territories (December 2024). All activities are documented in the approved list of thesis topics (Protocol No. 3, dated October 22, 2025), individual study plans, progress reports, and official correspondence.

Students receive dual supervision from university faculty and field-based professionals, ensuring adequate guidance while maintaining research autonomy. International guest lecturers from North Macedonia, India, Turkey, and USA introduce diverse pedagogical approaches and comparative frameworks.

Special attention is paid to the updating and upgrading development of students' research and practical competencies. During research internships, students participate in designing questionnaires, surveys, and interview guides; conduct pilot testing of research tools; collect empirical data; and perform primary data processing and analysis. Since last year, specialized training sessions have been organized on conducting surveys, interviews, and focus groups, as well as on quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Students receive training in statistical data processing methods and principles of result interpretation. The acquired skills are directly integrated into the structure of their master's thesis research.

Within the framework of the program, regular training activities are conducted both for internship base staff and graduate students. These include workshops on case management, seminars on research methodology, courses on academic writing, and practical sessions on publication preparation and academic formatting standards. These activities contribute to the development of a unified professional collaboration environment between the university and social institutions.

Student assessment is conducted based on the principles of transparency, objectivity, and feedback. The University has developed the Examination Rules and grading criteria which is available to all assessment process parties including faculty and students. This document and grading criteria is a part of the syllabus and is used and referred to through the process of teaching, learning and assessment during the semester.

According to internal regulatory documents, the university applies a system of current and intermediate assessments in accordance with the Regulation "On Assessing the Knowledge of Students Studying under the Credit System." The assessment system is based on a 100-point scale, subsequently converted into letter grades (A-F), which corresponds to the standards of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and aligns with the principles of the Bologna Process. The assessment methods are defined for each class learning outcomes and students are aware of them in advance. Students are provided with the respective feedback on the grade obtained both during semester in class studies and exam session. The main argument and purpose of the assessment feedback is to inform student to which extend he has achieved his knowledge and skills in particular course learning outcome in question. The criteria for and method of assessment of dissertation as well as criteria for grading are published in advance through institutional procedures. Students must complete all required coursework and internship to be eligible for defense, as determined by the Scientific Council of the Faculty. Dissertation assessment criteria are communicated through supervisor guidance and program materials, including research competencies (literature review comprehensiveness, theoretical framework sophistication, methodological rigor, data analysis quality, interpretation soundness), theoretical knowledge, critical analysis skills, and contributions to social work field.

Special attention is given to inclusivity. The university has adopted a policy to support students with special educational needs, ensuring equal access to educational opportunities and resources. Adapted assignments and individual consultations are provided to meet their specific learning requirements.

The program has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints. Students submit concerns through multiple channels: direct communication with instructors for course-specific issues, department head for program related concerns, and Electronic University platform for formal complaints during exam session AU Office ([office@au.edu.az](mailto:office@au.edu.az)) manages complaints systematically, ensuring consistent handling. Academic Council reviews significant issues including assessment disputes when departmental resolution proves insufficient, examining evidence, consulting parties, and rendering determinations based on established standards. These procedures ensure students have legitimate recourse when experiencing problems, supporting institutional accountability and procedural justice.

The university's quality policy prioritizes student satisfaction and active engagement in the educational process. This promotes a student-centered environment in which academic and administrative practices are organized around the individual needs of learners, supporting their competence development and encouraging active participation in the learning process.

In summary, Azerbaijan University systematically builds its educational process around the concept of the student as an active participant rather than a passive recipient of knowledge. Assessment is regarded not merely as a control mechanism, but as a developmental tool that supports continuous learning and personal growth.

### **Analytical part**

The EP notes that student-centred learning is an important direction in the organization of the educational process at the university, in which the teacher and students are active participant of the educational process. AU demonstrates consistent and sustainable implementation of the principles of student-centered education, as reflected in the structure of the educational process, the assessment system, teaching methodologies, and the active involvement of students in shaping the learning environment.

The structure of the educational process ensures a clear connection between program objectives, teaching methods, and the assessment system. Faculty members employ diverse teaching methods, including lectures with interactive elements, project- and case-based learning, group discussions, online modules, and laboratory experiments. These approaches promote student engagement in active learning and contribute to the development of critical and analytical thinking skills.

The assessment system combines objectivity, transparency, and opportunities for self- assessment. Each component carries a predetermined weight, and assessment criteria and methods are published in advance in course syllabi.

A notable strength of Azerbaijan University is a strong practice-oriented approach to education. Master students' complete internships in leading Azerbaijani companies, government organizations, where they apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world settings and gain valuable professional experience.

Research practice within the Master's program in Social Work is aimed at supporting students' individual educational trajectories and integrating their research interests with the current priorities of the social work sector. Master's thesis topics and internship placements are determined through close collaboration with partner organizations, including the National Observatory, the Probation Service, the Center for Social Research, as well as other relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions. The internship is structured and well-tuned in incorporates research and project-based components.

One of the key quality assurance mechanisms of the program is the system of dual supervision of master's theses. Each graduate student has assigned an academic supervisor from the department and a co-supervisor (mentor) from the internship hosting organization. This model ensures the integration of theoretical and methodological rigor with practical relevance. Representatives of partner organizations contribute to refining research problems, provide guidance on access to empirical data, assess the applied value of research outcomes, and participate in interim evaluations of research progress.

The formulation of master's thesis topics is carried out with the active participation of internship bases. Starting from the current academic year, partner organizations annually submit lists of actual social issues and research requests. These topics are systematized by the department, offered to students for

selection, and formally approved at departmental meetings. Upon approval, professional mentoring is provided by specialists from the respective organizations. This process ensures the practical orientation and relevance of research projects, as well as the potential apply of findings into the current partner institutions.

The cooperation with internship bases, is institutionalized and long-term in nature. MoU signed between partners internship organization proposed the annual renewal of joint action plans. Within these plans, scientific, practical, and methodological activities are implemented; research priorities are coordinated; and procedures for selecting and assigning graduate students to internship sites are defined. Annual reports reflect the outcomes of joint activities, including student's participation in projects, research and overview its findings for further publication. The existence of MoU, action plans, official correspondence, and reporting documentation confirms the systematic character of this collaboration. The students' surveys showed the following results: Accessibility of academic consultations: 30,4% – very good, 51,9% – good, 12,6% – relatively poor; Accessibility of counselling on personal issues: 25,9% – very good, 43% – good, 20% – relatively poor; Relationships between student and teachers: very good – 47,8%, good – 47,8%, 3,7% – relatively poor. Regarding the work of the academic staff and evaluation criteria, students have no complaints.

A significant component of the program is a joint research activity. Graduate students are involved in preparing scientific articles in co-authorship with faculty members and specialists from partner organizations, present papers and abstracts at scientific and practical conferences, and participate in round tables and seminars. The results of their empirical studies are planned to be used in the preparation of research materials and reports by partner institutions.

#### **Strengths/best practice in 7008003 Social Work:**

A strong practice-oriented approach to education by integrating master students' research interests with the current priorities of the social work sector and through close collaboration with partner organizations. The practice has a clear structure and is well balanced, including components related to research and projects and the formulation of research themes based on partner organizations.

#### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

#### **Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Student-centered training and assessment" for the educational program **7008003 Social Work**: strong parameters - 1, satisfactory - 0, requiring improvement - 0.

## **Standard 4. ADMISSION, ACCESS, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS**

### **Standard:**

*The educational organization must have predetermined, published and consistently applied rules governing all periods of the student's "life cycle," i.e. admission, performance, recognition and certification.*

### **Recommendations:**

*Providing the conditions and support students need to develop academic careers for the benefit of individual students, programs, educational institutions and systems. Appropriate admission, recognition and graduation procedures play an important role in this process, especially when there is student mobility within higher education systems.*

*It is important that access policies, processes and student admission criteria are implemented consistently and transparently. Familiarity with the organization of education and the program must be ensured.*

*The educational organization must have mechanisms and tools in place to collect, monitor and follow up on information about the academic achievements of students.*

*Objective recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior education, including recognition of non-formal education, is an integral component of student achievement in the learning process and promotes mobility. In order to guarantee proper recognition procedures, an educational organization should:*

- *ensure that the actions of the educational organization are in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention;*
- *Collaborate with other educational organizations and national ENIC/NARIC centers to ensure comparable recognition of qualifications in the country.*

*Graduation represents the culmination of a student's period of study. Educational organizations should provide students with documents confirming the qualifications received, including the learning outcomes achieved, as well as the context, content and status of the education received, and evidence of its completion.*

### **Evidence**

Azerbaijan University implements transparent and consistently applied admission procedures ensuring fair access to graduate education. Student admission is conducted in accordance with regulations established by Ministry of Science and Education of Republic of Azerbaijan, ensuring alignment with national higher education policies and standards. The State Examination Center administers entrance examinations providing standardized assessment of applicants' academic preparation and aptitude for graduate study, ensuring objective evaluation criteria applied uniformly across all applicants. Admission decisions are based on examination results, ensuring merit-based selection and transparent processes where candidates understand evaluation criteria and can assess their competitiveness for admission.

The master program provides multiple admission pathways accommodating diverse student populations and educational backgrounds. Transfer students from other universities utilize the portal with applications reviewed according to established criteria including previous academic performance, completed coursework equivalency, and alignment with program requirements.

University has mechanisms and tools to collect, monitor and follow up on information about the academic achievements of students. The Electronic University platform serves as comprehensive student information system documenting enrollment status, course completion, grade records, internship completion, and progression toward degree requirements. Faculty access student academic records enabling monitoring of individual student progress and identification of students experiencing difficulties requiring additional support or intervention. The 'International Center for Masters and Doctoral Studies' coordinates progression monitoring for graduate programs through systematic review of student academic status.

Objective recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior education is an integral component of student achievement in the learning process in the university. The program implements recognition procedures: transfer students receive evaluation of previously completed coursework with recognition granted for courses substantially equivalent to program requirements in content, level, and learning outcomes. This recognition enables students to avoid redundant coursework while ensuring they possess necessary foundational knowledge for advanced study. Institutional practice for recognition aligns with principles promoting student mobility and efficient degree completion.

The curriculum structure enables systematic progression through interconnected components ensuring foundational preparation before advanced work. General Education Component provides foundational research competencies through Academic Writing and Ethics course developing scholarly communication skills and ethical research conduct understanding, and Research Methodology courses appropriate to each specialization establishing methodological knowledge necessary for dissertation work. AU provides students with the opportunity to choose elective courses, supporting academic flexibility and individual learning paths. Specialization-specific courses address distinct professional preparation reflecting different practice domains and populations. ‘Social Work in Various Spheres’ specialization includes ‘Social Service Policy’ course examining policy frameworks governing social services, ‘Field Practice in Social Work’ course developing direct practice competencies, ‘Social Innovations and Management in Digital Era’ course addressing technology integration and contemporary management approaches, ‘Social Work with Diverse Population Groups’ course developing cultural competence and population-specific intervention knowledge, and ‘Community Development’ course establishing community organizing and development skills.

The University works toward creating dynamic and inclusive international network through collaboration agreements with 30 universities (USA, Europe, Central Asia, and South Asia including Georgia State University (USA), Upper Austria University of Applied Sciences (Austria), Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania), University of Rzeszow (Poland), Necmettin Erbakan University (Turkey), L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Kazakhstan). These partnerships facilitate cooperation with other institutions supporting coherent recognition practices of students across borders especially in line with EHEA rules based on Lisbon convention requirements. There is the official procedure in AU regulating the review of applications of students participating in exchange programs as well as those of using the internal transfer opportunities to recognize their prior credits obtained in other HEIs. However, the percentage of students who participate in exchange programs every academic year is low. The management of the educational program needs to develop a prospective plan for student participation in international academic mobility.

Recognition of previously completed disciplines and credits for admitted, transferred, or reinstated students is carried out in compliance with current legislation and the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The process involves pre-approval of study plans, official referrals for study, and recognition of successfully completed courses upon students’ return.

Upon successful completion, students receive official documentation explaining qualification gained. Diploma documents indicate degree awarded (Master of Social Work), specialization completed (Social Work in Various Spheres of Life Activity or Social Work with Youth), and completion date. Diploma supplement or transcript provides detailed information about achieved learning outcomes including competencies developed across theoretical knowledge, research capabilities, and professional practice skills; context of studies including institutional characteristics and program mission; level of qualification within national qualifications framework and alignment with international standards; content of studies including courses completed, credits earned, and grades received; and status of studies confirming full-time enrollment and successful completion meeting all requirements.

This comprehensive documentation enables graduates to demonstrate their qualifications to employers, professional licensing bodies, and institutions considering them for further study as well as to ENIC-NARIC offices abroad.

### **Analytical part**

Azerbaijan University has established, published, and consistently applies unified regulations governing all stages of a student’s educational trajectory—from admission and academic performance monitoring to the recognition of learning outcomes and final certification. University has established a normatively transparent and procedurally stable system for managing the student life cycle, encompassing all stages from admission to graduation and final certification.

The procedures fully comply with national regulations and reflect a high level of institutional maturity, characterized by the existence of uniform rules, their public accessibility, and the reproducibility of administrative practices. Induction to institution and program is provided through orientation activities familiarizing new students with academic policies, available resources, support services, and program

expectations.

Student admission to the Social Work program is conducted through the centralized national process administered by the State Examination Center, ensuring transparency and consistency of procedures. However, admission score thresholds for this specialty at the university are comparatively lower than those of similar programs at other institutions, which may affect the overall academic profile of the student cohort. The university may consider strategies to attract applicants with higher entrance scores, thereby strengthening competitiveness and academic readiness within the program.

At the same time, the External Evaluation Commission (EEC) notes that while the university's procedures for admission, academic support, and credit recognition are systematically organized and compliant with regulatory requirements, the current model does not yet fully utilize the available data for evidence-based management. Regular public analytical reports comparing students' entry levels with their subsequent academic performance are not published, which limits opportunities for early identification of learning challenges and the prediction of academic risks.

The master program encourages student autonomy through elective courses allowing customization based on career interests and dissertation focus. This flexibility enables alignment between coursework and dissertation topics, supporting coherent progression where students develop specialized knowledge directly relevant to research questions investigated in dissertations.

The program implements fair recognition procedures for higher education qualifications, periods of study, and prior learning consistent with principles of transparent evaluation and student mobility support.

Academic mobility is available as an option but has not been institutionalized as a measurable performance indicator, which limits incentives for faculties to expand the international dimension of education. During the interview students and graduates noted the importance of participation in international mobility programs.

#### **Strengths/best practice in 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

#### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. The university administration should consider strategies to attract applicants with higher entrance exam scores, thereby enhancing competitiveness and academic preparation within the program, in order to identify potential learning challenges early on and predict academic risks. Develop a plan to identify and predict risks. Regularly publish analytical reports comparing students' entry levels with their subsequent academic performance.

Implementation period: December, 2027.

2. University administration should enhance the international orientation of educational program by ensuring that at least five percent of students from the program participate in exchange programs every academic year. The leadership of the educational program is required to develop a prospective plan for student participation in international academic mobility.

Implementation period: December, 2027.

#### **Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Admission, access, recognition and certification of students" for the educational program **7008003 Social Work** strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

## Standard 5. TEACHING STAFF

### **Standard:**

*The educational organization must have objective and transparent processes for the recruitment, professional development and development of all staff, which allow them to ensure the competence of their teachers.*

### **Recommendations:**

*The role of the teacher is central to quality learning and the acquisition of knowledge, competencies and skills. Diversification of the student population and a strong focus on learning outcomes require a student-centered approach and, consequently, a change in the role of the teacher (see standard 1.3).*

*Educational organizations bear the main responsibility for the quality of their employees and the provision of favorable conditions for their effective work. Therefore, educational institutions should:*

- Recognizing the importance of teaching, develop clear, transparent and objective criteria for staff recruitment, appointment, promotion, dismissal and follow them in their activities;*
- Provide opportunities for career growth and professional development of teachers;*
- Encourage scientific activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
- Encourage innovative teaching methods and the use of advanced technologies.*

### **Evidence**

At the Azerbaijan University (AU), the management of teaching staff is a cornerstone of the institution's commitment to educational quality, particularly within the master's program in Social Work. The university operates on the principle that the competence of its faculty is the primary driver of the student experience and the successful acquisition of professional competencies.

The AU ensures the competence of its staff through a systematic evaluation of academic qualifications and pedagogical capabilities aligned with the specific needs of the Social Work program. The Department of Organization of Social Work currently consists of 36 faculty members with diverse academic backgrounds essential for undergraduate and graduate-level instruction. Thirteen faculty members constitute the core academic staff of the master's degree program in Social Work with a minimum 13-year and a maximum 49-year academic experience. This composition includes Doctors of Sciences and Ph.D. holders in fields such as Sociology, Philosophy, Pedagogy, Legal studies, and Psychology, professors, and associate professors, which corresponds to the international requirements for this program's level. Over 90% of the program's faculty members are full-time employees at AU.

Several faculty members have practical work experience as psychologists, lawyers, managers in social projects, and heads of non-governmental organizations. This diversity allows the program to maintain strong theoretical foundations while integrating contemporary research perspectives into the classroom.

The attendance of classes during the site visit, including "Project Management", "Social Service Policy", and "Research Methods" courses, allowed the EEC to conclude on the well-established relationships between the professors and master's students that promote effective knowledge comprehension. The group dynamics were positive, with 93% of attendance, the gender composition of groups was balanced, and the master's students did not use their cell phones or other gadgets, but were focused on the interaction with a lecturer and groupmates. All three classes have similar distinctive features: the professors were well prepared, demonstrated practical or research experience which they integrated into the lesson, visual aids were thoroughly designed for high visibility, and students were actively engaged in joint work via interactive formats. The quality of teaching could be assessed as high.

Faculty recruitment is governed by the "HR Policy of the Azerbaijan University", which aims to establish standardized procedures. A key feature of the selection process is the requirement for candidates to deliver open demonstration lessons. These lessons are evaluated by a committee and sometimes by student groups, and they evaluate instructional clarity, student engagement, and classroom management skills. This process ensures that new hires are not only subject matter experts but also effective educators capable of implementing a student-centered approach. However, this information is mostly obtained from the interviews with the department heads. The consideration of the HR policy resulted in defining the gaps in implementing human resource management functions. The mentioned policy has been elaborated in

accordance with the labor legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and in terms of the recruitment process, states that new faculty is applied for vacant positions through an online system, corporate mail, based on an electronic announcement. The initial selection is grounded on a resume, interviews are conducted at the next stage, and further selection is based on the demonstration of the lesson. However, this procedure does not have any further details, criteria, or steps; therefore, they remain in a shadow. The adaptation process is superficially described without any essential nuances on how onboarding of new candidates is guaranteed for fast and smooth orientation under the new conditions. Additionally, the HR policy does not contain information on faculty's career advancement, dismissals, professional development, and performance appraisal, particularly based on the new KPI assessment system. In the current organizational structure of AU, the HR Department is combined with alumni and career counseling functions, which prevents it from effective work being overwhelmed with two critically different activity directions. This challenge is realized by the University administration and the HR Director as a barrier to attaining the set goals effectively and efficiently.

Azerbaijan University recognizes that as the student population diversifies, the role of the teacher must evolve from a mere transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of learning. To support this transition, the university provides professional development opportunities through the Training and Learning Center (TLC) and the Quality Assurance (QA) Department.

These training initiatives are comprehensive, covering topics such as:

- ✓ Interactive teaching methods to promote active student engagement.
- ✓ Contemporary assessment strategies to ensure the valid measurement of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).
- ✓ Case-based and problem-based learning to develop clinical reasoning skills.

During the current reporting period, the faculty participated in a multi-module training program focused on "Knowledge and Activity Strategies Aligned with Lesson Learning Outcomes". The internal training system for academic staff works effectively, providing faculty with ongoing knowledge.

At the same time, beyond the aforementioned internal training, the AU provides limited opportunities for external qualification improvement and specifically for faculty's abroad trainings with their costs' reimbursement. The self-assessment reports contain only isolated cases of such events for several recent years. Academic staff have participated in exchange programs at renowned institutions such as Lund University (Sweden) and Hacettepe University (Turkey), allowing them to integrate international best practices and comparative frameworks into their teaching at AU. The self-assessment report provides information that AU faculty present their research at global conferences in countries such as North Macedonia, Germany, and Qatar. But the interview with academic staff resulted in revealing rather occasional cases of their qualification improvement or conference participation abroad when their costs are reimbursed by AU.

The university encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the vital link between research and teaching. Faculty are required to submit three-year research plans to the Science Department, which provides support in identifying conference opportunities, selecting appropriate journals for publication, and facilitating connections with international researchers. To support this research-teaching linkage, the AU secures research integrity by utilizing the Strike plagiarism software for meeting the highest standards of academic integrity in faculty publications and master's student dissertations. The faculty authors textbooks and publishes in peer-reviewed international outlets, such as Springer. A notable example is the textbook *Social Adaptation and Rehabilitation in Probation Activities*, co-authored with practice leaders from the Probation Service. The *Social Issues Journal* is run by the Department of Organization of Social Work, indexed in ERIH PLUS, and included in the Higher Education Commission's recommended list.

In alignment with fostering a modern, student-centered environment, AU promotes pedagogical innovation and the use of educational technology. Faculty are encouraged to move away from teacher-centered, text-based methods in favor of interactive simulations, role-playing, and field-based learning.

The university's digital infrastructure supports these innovations through:

- ✓ The Electronic University Platform automates administrative workflows and facilitates document management, grade communication, and assignment submission.
- ✓ Microsoft 365 accounts and platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom are utilized for synchronous instruction, remote research supervision, and transdisciplinary webinars.

✓ Faculty and students have remote access to extensive bibliographic databases, including EBSCO and Oxford University Press journals, which provide the latest scientific literature to inform teaching.

To ensure the effectiveness of these policies, the university has implemented a Differential Salary System (applied since September 2025). This system moves beyond traditional compensation models by rewarding faculty based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to both research productivity and teaching innovation. By providing financial incentives for pedagogical excellence and indexed publications, the university creates a competitive but supportive environment that encourages personal and professional growth for all staff. Despite this positive step in faculty's motivation initiated for the current academic year, the provided teaching load evidences a significant active teaching workload among the faculty members. The research potential of the faculty is obviously promising, considering their publications in journals, indexed in Scopus and WoS, and the high level of scientific degrees and academic title holders. During the interview, top management declared science and research as one of the key goals of the Azerbaijan University. However, the motivation program is not oriented for decreasing the workload for those academic staff who demonstrate high potential and excellent results in recent years, but is just motivated by financial incentives. The survey conducted by EEC showed the faculty's insufficient satisfaction with the opportunities to combine teaching and research, where 8% of participants evaluated them as relatively poor, 48% as good, and 44% as very good. Against the background of other very positive answers, this issue highlighted the least positive replies among the professors.

Another significant challenge is a deficit of specialized professional software that is used to support scholars and students in their academic endeavors. During the official meeting, administration, master's students, and faculty did not emphasize any specific software for researchers, actively used by scientists worldwide, such as special programs for qualitative research – MAXQDA, Atlas. ti, Nvivo, etc., and applied for quantitative research – Smart PLS, Stata, SPSS, or other.

Through these integrated processes of recruitment, continuous internal training, and publication support, the Azerbaijan University ensures that its teaching staff can meet the challenges of contemporary higher education and the specific requirements of the social work profession.

### **Analytical part**

The master's program in Social Work is supported by a highly qualified and diverse faculty, most of whom are committed, full-time employees. The core team of 13 academic staff members holds advanced degrees in sociology, philosophy, pedagogy, law, and psychology, which aligns with international standards for graduate-level instruction. A significant analytical strength lies in the integration of practical experience into the curriculum; some faculty members have backgrounds as psychologists, lawyers, and NGO heads, which they effectively incorporate into the courses. Observations from site visits confirm a high quality of teaching, characterized by positive class dynamics, well-designed visual aids, and active student engagement through interactive formats.

Azerbaijan University has established a standardized recruitment process governed by its HR Policy, which features transparent elements such as open demonstration lessons evaluated by both committees and students. As the university continues to refine these processes, there is an opportunity to provide more granular documentation regarding the specific criteria and procedural steps that follow the initial selection phase. While onboarding and adaptation processes are currently in place, they are in a developmental stage, with potential for further formalization to ensure an even smoother orientation for new staff. Additionally, the university administration recognizes the functional scope of the HR Department, which currently manages a broad range of responsibilities, including alumni and career counseling, as a strategic area for optimization to enhance its overall efficiency. Furthermore, as the new point assessment system matures, work is ongoing to more explicitly integrate it into the formal frameworks for career advancement and professional development.

The university maintains an effective internal training system through the Training and Learning Center (TLC), which consistently offers modules on interactive teaching and contemporary assessment strategies. Building on this robust internal foundation, the university should further explore ways to expand external and international professional development opportunities beyond existing exchange programs and conference participation. The introduction of the Differential Salary System based on Key

Performance Indicators represents a significant and positive step toward recognizing faculty excellence through financial incentives. To further enhance this progress, the university should view the balancing of teaching workloads with research activities as a key priority for fully realizing the promising research potential of its staff.

**Strengths/best practice:**

Not visible

**Recommendations:**

1. To design a comprehensive human resource management policy, including a detailed description of the major HR functions: recruitment, selection, adaptation, employee performance assessment, dismissal, career development, and promotion. The detailed criteria for the employee selection, assessment, promotion, and career professional development should be clearly and transparently stated, including the procedure of open demonstration lessons.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

2. To separate the HR Department from the Graduate Career Counseling and Work with Alumni function for further sophisticated focus on effective human resource management.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

3. To provide a more decent support for faculty professional development and research potential utilization by decreasing teaching workload for productive scholars, equipping them with licensed research software, and expanding opportunities for faculty international conference participation (abroad) and publication fees coverage on a competitive basis. This recommendation could be implemented through enhancing the existing faculty motivation program, initiated in 2025.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard “Teaching staff”: strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement – 0.

## Standard 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM

### **Standard:**

*The educational organization must ensure that there are sufficient, accessible and appropriate learning resources and student support services.*

### **Recommendations:**

*During the training, students need educational resources, which can be both material (libraries or computers) and human (mentors, curators and other consultants). The role of support services is especially important in stimulating student mobility both within the educational system and between different higher education systems. When allocating, planning and providing educational resources, support services should take into account the needs of different groups of students (adults, working, part-time students, international students, as well as students with disabilities) and take into account trends in student-centered training. Support services and their activities should be organized taking into account the situation of a particular educational institution. However, the internal quality system ensures that all resources are available and fit for learning purposes, as well as informing students about available services. When providing support services, the key role belongs to the administration and specialized services, so the educational organization must ensure the professionalism of employees and opportunities for the development of their competencies.*

### **Evidence**

Azerbaijan University possesses a well-developed material, technical, and organizational infrastructure that fully supports the educational process and reflects the institution's focus on engineering and technological education, as well as the preparation of highly qualified specialists for modern sectors of the economy. The institution ensures adequate and readily accessible learning resources supporting student academic success through comprehensive physical infrastructure.

The university library contains educational and scientific literature in Azerbaijani, Russian and English, along with a growing collection of electronic resources. The Scientific Library serves as central learning resource facility maintaining 27,413 storage units providing essential academic materials across disciplines. Research integrity infrastructure includes dedicated plagiarism checking room with Strike plagiarism software processing approximately 200 articles and 500 theses annually, with specialized staff providing results within 10 minutes and regular training sessions supporting culture of academic integrity.

AU actively integrates digital technologies into academic management and instruction. The electronic information system is used for student registration, class scheduling, grading, access to syllabi, and communication between students and faculty. In parallel, all course materials and assignments are available in Google Classroom, where instructors upload lectures, laboratory instructions, and self-study materials, ensuring transparency and accessibility.

The university also provides psychological services by the Center for both students and staff, offering individual consultations and organizing workshops on emotional well-being, stress management, and motivation.

Overall, Azerbaijan University has sufficient infrastructure and digital tools to ensure the effective organization of the educational process. However, some resources, in particular library collections, require further improvement and regular updating to maintain compliance with modern academic and technological standards.

In addition, the university lacks a dedicated research Centre for master's students equipped with individual and shared workspaces, computers, software and access to databases, which could provide a structured research infrastructure for scientific and methodological support for master's students.

### **Analytical part**

Infrastructure of the university creates a comfortable, technologically advanced, and accessible learning environment that fosters student engagement, independent learning, and personal development. The integration of electronic management systems, career services, and inclusion initiatives forms a comprehensive system of student support that aligns with modern international standards.

The material, technical, and resource base of university generally meets contemporary requirements for educational institution; however, interviews with the Vice-Rector for Science and representatives of the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection confirmed that students are increasingly involved in joint research projects, field studies and thesis work that require a permanent workspace, access to data sets and methodological support. However, the university currently

does not have a specialized research laboratory or research center that could provide a structured research infrastructure for master's and doctoral students. This gap limits the effective implementation of the research-oriented learning provided for in the program and reduces opportunities for joint student research. During interviews and according to online survey results, master's students reported insufficient dedicated workspace for thesis writing, data analysis, and collaborative research.

The students have access to the tutors' office and the contact information of all the teachers. This indicates that the students can easily reach out to the teachers for any academic assistance or clarification they may require. The lecture material is available in the form of lectures prepared by the teacher and separate literature. This represents that the students have access to different resources for learning and can choose the one that works best for them.

The University provides a range of physical and digital learning resources supporting teaching and research activities, including a scientific library with approximately 27,413 storage units, multilingual holdings, access to EBSCO and EIFL electronic databases, the IRBIS automation system, plagiarism detection software (STRIKE), and research support activities (webinars, guest lectures, and professional collaboration). These resources demonstrate institutional commitment to providing academic materials and research opportunities for students in line with national and international expectations for higher education learning resources.

However, the site visit observations indicate that the physical learning infrastructure is not adequately relative to student capacity and research needs, particularly for graduate-level research activity. The general reading room reportedly serves approximately 65 daily users, which is limited considering the overall student population and the growing emphasis on research-based MA education.

Additional evidence from library observations indicates that a substantial proportion of the physical library holdings consists of outdated or low-demand print materials occupying significant shelving space, while contemporary, specialty-specific academic sources (recent monographs, methodological literature etc.) are limited. Online survey results show that students have difficulties accessing up-to-date sources in their specialization. Optimizing the library fund through systematic weeding of obsolete materials and targeted acquisition of current discipline-relevant resources would enable reallocation of space toward expanded research reading areas and graduate study workstations. Such restructuring would better align the library infrastructure with modern research-oriented MA education and national expectations for student learning resources.

Overall, the University demonstrates commitment to learning resources and student research support; however, infrastructure capacity, library collection relevance, and research facilities require further development to fully meet national standards and support research-intensive MA education.

The university also maintains a well-developed system of practice-oriented education. Its cooperation with leading companies in Azerbaijan provides real opportunities for linking theoretical instruction with professional practice. Through internships, joint projects, and cooperative education initiatives, students gain practical experience that enhances their employability and competitiveness in the labor market.

Overall, Azerbaijan University has a robust organizational structure and highly developed digital infrastructure. However, in order to move from a 'satisfactory' level of compliance to a sustainable 'high' standard, it is necessary to establish a research laboratory, strengthen the material and technical base, expand library resources, and institutionalize the student support system. These improvements will contribute to a more comfortable learning environment, improved academic quality, and closer alignment with international standards of higher education.

#### **Strengths/best practice in 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

#### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. Optimize the library collection by systematically disposing of outdated materials and targeting the acquisition of relevant resources related to the disciplines of the accredited educational program, as well as increasing the space of the library reading room and workplaces for master's students' scientific research education.

Implementation period: 2027–2028 academic year.

2. Establish a specialized research laboratory (Research Center) by creating a dedicated research facility for master students, equipped with individual and collaborative workspaces, computers, software, and access to datasets, that could provide a structured research infrastructure for master's scientific and methodological support.

Implementation period: 2027–2028 academic year.

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard “Educational resources and student support system” for the educational program 7008003 Social Work: strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

## Standard 7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

**Standard:**

*The educational organization must ensure that it collects, analyzes and uses relevant information to effectively manage its activities and its educational programs.*

**Recommendations:**

*Providing reliable information is a necessary condition for making a decision. Educational organizations should use this information to know what is working well and what needs to be improved. It is necessary to be sure that the educational organization has mechanisms for collecting and analyzing information about its activities, its educational programs and uses the information received in the work of the internal quality assurance system.*

*Exactly what information is collected depends to some extent on the type and mission of the TOE. When collecting information, the TOE should consider the following:*

- *key performance indicators;*
- *information about the contingent of students;*
- *level of academic achievement, student achievement and dropout;*
- *satisfaction of students with the implementation of programs;*
- *availability of educational resources and student support services;*
- *employment of graduates.*

*Various methods of collecting information can be used. It is important that students and staff are involved in collecting and analyzing information and planning follow-up procedures.*

### Evidence

Providing reliable information is a foundational requirement for evidence-based decision-making at Azerbaijan University (AU). The institution has established mechanisms for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing information to monitor the effectiveness of its activities and educational programs. These mechanisms are integral to the University's internal quality assurance system, ensuring that data-driven insights inform continuous improvement. AU operates an internally developed digital infrastructure that automates administrative workflows and reference support. Key information systems supporting the Social Work master's program include:

- The application system that manages prospective student inquiries and application processing is linked to its corporate website.
- The AU library system (IRBIS) that facilitates catalog access, resource management, and circulation control of literature sources.
- The educational portal represents a centralized platform that supports course delivery, assignment submission, and grade management.
- Information survey systems refer to platforms for conducting satisfaction surveys among students, faculty, and administrative staff.

All participants in the educational process, including faculty and students, receive Microsoft 365 corporate accounts, which enable professional communication and access to collaborative tools like Microsoft Teams for synchronous instruction and meetings. The university systematically monitors KPIs to evaluate institutional tuition payment status and program progression. Monitored indicators include faculty qualifications, teaching loads, student enrollment trends, research productivity (publications and conference presentations), graduation rates, and time-to-degree statistics.

The profile of the student contingent is meticulously documented, starting from the admission phase. The system captures demographic data, educational backgrounds, geographic origins, and any special needs requiring accommodation. This data allows the International Center for Master's and Doctoral Studies to maintain a comprehensive record of the student population and ensure that individual needs are met throughout the student lifecycle.

Student progression and academic success are tracked via the Electronic University platform, which serves as a centralized student information system. This platform enables the institution to:

- ✓ Document enrollment status and course registration history.
- ✓ Generate reports on course completion rates and semester-to-semester progression.
- ✓ Monitor course comprehension through key program milestones, such as coursework completion, fulfillment of internship requirements, and advancement to the dissertation stage.

The data-informed approach allows for timely intervention. The self-assessment report declares that quarterly monitoring meetings between the Science Department and department heads facilitate discussions on student progression, enabling the university to address bottlenecks or high failure rates in specific courses. The Scientific Council of the Faculty utilizes this information to verify eligibility for dissertation defense, ensuring that only students meeting all prerequisites advance to the final assessment. Nevertheless, the site visit and analysis of the statistics on students' drop-out rates and GPAs allowed the EEC to conclude that the master's students are evaluated rather highly in all the courses. On average, master's students' GPA for 2023-2025 demonstrated that 62% of all program participants got an A grade, and the rest gained a B grade, while C, D, and F grades were not presented. One of the possible reasons for high evaluation might be caused by the absence of clearly identified grading rubrics for students' concurrent participation and assignments in the syllabi.

The lowest points given to a few master's students were 82. Additionally, the dropout rate demonstrates that there is a small percentage of master's students who leave the program, and the percentage of this attrition is almost by 100% constituted due to the students' personal circumstances and decision, but not linked to the dropout caused by the university's requirements.

Satisfaction surveys are a primary method for gathering feedback on the implementation of the master's program. These surveys evaluate multiple dimensions of the student experience, including teaching quality, curriculum relevance, the adequacy of learning resources, and the accessibility of support services. The methodology employed by the AU contributes to the reliability of the data since surveys are conducted anonymously to encourage honest and transparent feedback. Instruments include both rating scales for quantitative analysis and open-ended questions for qualitative insights. Periodic administration, typically annual or biennial, allows for longitudinal tracking of satisfaction trends. The results of these surveys are analyzed at both the departmental and institutional levels. The extended anonymous survey revealed high satisfaction but also identified areas for improvement, such as specific infrastructural shortcomings and teaching hour overloads, which the university subsequently addressed through renovations and the introduction of a new faculty motivation system. However, the EEC still sees a further necessity to work on the uncovered challenges.

Staff and faculty are integral to the information management cycle, contributing through annual activity reports and active participation in strategic planning and curriculum review sessions. This participatory approach is essential for planning follow-up procedures, which result in concrete actions such as curriculum revisions, pedagogical enhancements, and infrastructural improvements like auditorium renovations. By ensuring that both students and staff are involved in collecting and analyzing information, the university fosters a quality culture that guarantees management decisions are evidence-based and responsive to the academic community.

Information management systems are also used to evaluate the fitness-for-purpose of learning resources. Library statistics track collection size, resource acquisition rates, and the usage of specialized databases like EBSCO and EIFL.net. These usage patterns help administrators identify underutilized materials or unmet research needs. Support service units document engagement across various functions, including counseling and academic advising interactions, disability accommodation requests, and research integrity support, where the Strike plagiarism software room processes approximately 700 articles and theses annually.

For graduates, the required policy documents are available within three categories – educational legislation specifically for students related to academic activities (methodical guidelines for master's dissertation, credit transfer and recognition for academic mobility, code of conduct), for administration, and for faculty (policy on academic transparency and integrity, guidelines for developing teaching and learning aids, differentiation policy, code of conduct).

The Electronic University platform further provides usage data that reveals how students engage with digital learning materials and technology, enabling the university to optimize its support infrastructure. The E-University has been elaborated by the AU employees in charge of IT integration. This system is programmed by the head of the IT department and is further monitored by the tutor for the master's program. The E-University has a user-friendly and attractive interface with tabs for points, timetable, teaching materials, status of tuition fees payment, information about the rules for students' conduct and program, etc. Despite the positive aspects of the designed system, several shortcomings have

been identified: not all teaching materials, including syllabuses, are uploaded to the studied courses; the uploaded syllabuses are not in a pdf format with relevant signatures and stamps; there are no specified periods and deadlines before which the teaching aids should be uploaded. During the first trial of the system's monitoring by the IAAR experts, some master's students' points for the first semester of the 2025-2026 academic year were not available, and the link between the professors' contact buttons and redirection to her/his corporate email did not operate properly. The second monitoring of the system demonstrated that these drawbacks were resolved by the IT department; however, this operational disruption should be attentively analyzed by AU administrators to provide sufficient quality of students' timely information.

Tracking graduate employment is a critical component of AU's information strategy. The university has a special section on its website providing transparency regarding graduate outcomes. Over the past three years, 61 people graduated from the Social Work master's program. On average for three recent years, 41 alumni (67% of total number of graduates) are employed, where 32 people (52% of total number) have been engaged by different labour market entities, 8 (13%) of them are pursuing a PhD in their field of specialization, and 1 (2%) of them has joined military service. 67% of employment is considered a decent average level in the context of emerging economies.

While the data for the Social Work program is well-systematized, the expert review notes that the Career Center is currently in a phase of development. The university is in the process of recruiting specialists to expand the alumni cooperation capabilities to more systematically monitor salary ranges, job titles, and long-term career advancement, but currently, this work is disseminated between the Department of Organization of Social Work and the HR and Alumni and Career Unit. The meeting with alumni displayed several challenges. First, none of the presented alumni was employed with the help of the university, excluding several alumni who are current university junior faculty. Second, as a rule, alumni keep in touch with the university very rarely and mostly in case of some joint temporal project initiatives, no regular alumni events or meeting is organized on behalf of their Alma mater. Third, there is no fixed channel of connections; some WhatsApp groups informally exist, but do not represent an effective tool for alumni updating on the university's events or possible opportunities for collaboration. Fourth, there is no department in charge of such communications, but links are sustained via some individuals, voluntarily informally conducting such activities on a non-systematic basis. Particularly, this last shortcoming triggers the risk that as soon as those individuals leave AU, the relationships with alumni will be lost.

AU adopts a participatory approach to information management. Students and staff are involved in providing information, analyzing findings, and planning follow-up procedures. Students provide data through satisfaction surveys, course evaluations, and participation in focus groups. Staff contribute through annual activity reports documenting teaching, research, and service. This information feeds directly into the internal quality assurance system. Every year, during the planning of activities at all organizational levels, a comprehensive analysis of the internal and external environment is conducted to identify risks and opportunities. Findings from this analysis are incorporated into strategic work plans, which include specific measures for risk mitigation and the capitalization of institutional strengths.

### **Analytical part**

Azerbaijan University has cultivated a technological ecosystem designed to facilitate evidence-based governance across the master's program in Social Work. This infrastructure integrates several specialized platforms, including the IRBIS library system for resource management and a centralized educational portal for academic delivery, all supported by a university-wide adoption of Microsoft 365 for professional collaboration. The institution shows an ability to document the entire student lifecycle, capturing data from initial demographic profiles and special accommodation needs to progression milestones. By conducting quarterly monitoring sessions between departmental leadership and the Science Department, the university utilizes this data to proactively identify academic bottlenecks, ensuring that interventions are data-driven rather than reactive. This systematic tracking of KPIs guarantees that institutional decisions regarding program modifications are grounded in reliable, real-time information.

An analysis of student achievement data reveals a trend toward high academic evaluations. While this suggests high levels of student success, the complete absence of lower marks (C, D, or F) and a dropout rate almost exclusively linked to personal circumstances rather than academic rigor warrants ongoing institutional reflection on the stringency of assessment benchmarks. Regarding the E-University platform, the system provides an intuitive interface for students to monitor their grades and tuition status; however, initial expert verification identified operational challenges. Although the IT department resolved these specific technical glitches during subsequent reviews, these findings highlight a necessity for more rigorous quality control protocols during the digital upload phase to ensure the continuous availability of essential academic information.

The program demonstrates a respectable success rate in the labor market, with approximately 67% of recent graduates either gaining employment or pursuing doctoral studies - a figure considered a strong average within the context of emerging economies. Despite these positive outcomes, the mechanisms for maintaining relationships with these graduates remain largely informal and unsystematic. Current alumni engagement relies heavily on individual initiatives and informal social media groups, rather than formalized institutional channels or a dedicated alumni department. To bridge this gap, the university is currently transitioning its Career Center from a developmental phase to a more structured unit by recruiting specialists to monitor long-term career advancement and salary trends. Establishing a systematic, institutionally-led alumni network will be vital for ensuring that the Social Work program continues to evolve in alignment with real-world professional requirements.

**Strengths/best practice:**

Not visible

**Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. To enhance the rigor of student evaluations and monitoring of their academic progress through more sophisticated differentiation of their academic achievements and drop-out rates. This measure will help improve the attainment of learning outcomes and the overall quality of preparation.

Implementation period: September 2028.

2. To improve the content and functioning quality of the E-university platform through the mandatory allocation of all teaching and learning materials before the official start of the semester, including signed and stamped syllabi and teaching aids, and continuous monitoring of all the necessary information, relevance, and availability for master's students.

Implementation period: September 2028

3. To institutionalize the work with graduates and alumni through a formal and systematic framework for engagement, including the designation of an appointed staff and unit for coordinating career counseling and alumni relations activities. The specialized unit should create opportunities for graduates' employment, databases of prospective interested employers, and open vacancies mailing. and monitor and analyze the dynamics of labor market opportunities within the examined majors.

Implementation period: September 2028

4. To establish a new body – the Alumni Association, led by a formally appointed head. The Association should operate based on an approved annual action plan, outlining networking activities, professional events, mentoring initiatives, and institutional collaboration mechanisms. The robust official information channels should be developed to provide regular information inflow and outflow for building the AU image as a socially responsible education establishment taking part in the advancement of its former students.

Implementation period: September 2028

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Information management": strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 0, requiring improvement - 1.

## Standard 8. PUBLIC INFORMATION

**Standard:**

*The educational organization must inform the public about its activities (including programs). Information must be clear, reliable, objective, relevant and accessible.*

**Recommendations:**

*Information about the activities of the educational organization is useful both for applicants and students, as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the general public.*

*Therefore, an educational organization should provide information about its activities, including the programs being implemented, the expected learning outcomes for these programs, the qualifications awarded, teaching, learning, assessment procedures, passing scores and learning opportunities provided to students, as well as information about employment opportunities for graduates.*

### Evidence

Azerbaijan University has established a comprehensive framework for managing and disseminating information to ensure transparency and accountability toward its students, partners, faculty, and community. The university's information processes, digital resources, distribution methods, and mechanisms for evaluating stakeholder satisfaction, specifically regarding the master's program in Social Work, have been introduced by its administrative staff.

The university's approach to information management is grounded in a comprehensive digital ecosystem designed to automate administrative tasks and facilitate seamless communication among internal and external parties. The Public Relations Department plays a central role in this process, operating under a five-year strategic development plan that defines how the AU interacts with the public and its partners.

The university maintains a high level of transparency through its official website and departmental pages. The systematic analysis of the AU website and social network pages allowed the EEC to note that a web page of the Department of Organization of Social Work is particularly well-structured, providing up-to-date information on faculty credentials, research activities, and available technical resources. The university also utilizes an institutional email (office@au.edu.az) for processing inquiries and complaints from external stakeholders, ensuring that management decisions are informed by the needs of the broader community.

The corporate website operates rapidly in both Azerbaijani and English. This site serves as a comprehensive resource for the formation and implementation of educational development plans, institutional history, mission statements, and governance structures. The Department's tab includes all the necessary information about its faculty, including research and teaching profiles. The AU website is adapted to attract and recruit foreign students with its user-friendly interface and nice design. The website lays the ground for expanding opportunities for attracting more international students in the future and widening the program's horizons. The students participated in the EEC survey, provided a decent level of support to the following statement "*Information content of the website of an educational institution, as a whole, and of faculties (schools), in particular*" - 70.3% absolutely agree, and 29.7% agree.

Beyond the main website, information is distributed through a variety of diverse channels:

✓ Social media. The university maintains active profiles on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and YouTube to provide prompt news updates and engage with a younger audience. The Instagram platform of AU covers 2760 publications and 11,000 subscribers. In its turn, TikTok corporate account embraces 900 subscribers, 6180 likes, and 55.5 thousand likes for academic events postings.

✓ Print and digital periodicals. The "*Chaglayan*" magazine, published twice a year since 2017, covers academic achievements and student life. Additionally, the university publishes research journals such as "*Social Issues*" to disseminate scholarly findings.

✓ Media partnerships. AU collaborates with major national news agencies, including Azertag and Qafqazinfo, to broadcast significant events and initiatives to the general public.

✓ Targeted outreach. The institution organizes Open Door days, participates in education fairs, and operates an Applicant Counseling Center to assist potential students with the admission process and major selection.

These systems allow the university to collect and analyze key performance indicators (KPIs), such as student enrollment demographics, faculty teaching loads, and research productivity. This data is used by the QA Department to identify institutional risks and opportunities, which are then integrated into the strategic work plans of the faculty. Azerbaijan University assures that the information published meets the diverse needs of its stakeholders. For the master's program in Social Work, the following details are publicly accessible via the departmental pages and the E-University platform:

- ✓ Program objectives and outcomes. The web page clearly lists PLOs, such as the ability to conduct data analysis and apply ethical behavior in social work.
- ✓ Curricula and qualifications. Detailed structures for specializations, such as “Work with Youth” and “Social Work in Multiple Fields of Human Activity,” are provided, including ECTS credit requirements.
- ✓ Admission and costs. Selection criteria, admission pathways for international and transfer students, and tuition fees are transparently documented.
- ✓ Faculty profiles. Information about the academic staff, including their credentials, expertise, and research activities, is updated to allow for peer evaluation and informed student choices.
- ✓ Employment information.

As for the employment data presenting on the website, it includes the private information of alumni, that should not be at the disposal of the wide public or, if the university, still wants to remain it on the website, the written informed consent should be obtained from the alumni that they agree to have their personal data accessible by all website users and guests. Another challenge is that there is rather brief and general information about the fields graduates could be employed in, such as public bodies, non-governmental organizations, and international funds, without specific data on what organizations regularly employ the AU graduates with a Social Work major.

The investigation of stakeholder satisfaction is a systematic component of the university's internal quality assurance system. The university utilizes Information Survey Systems to conduct periodic, anonymous surveys of students, faculty, and administrative staff. These surveys assess teaching quality, the adequacy of learning resources, and the effectiveness of support services. The results of these evaluations are analyzed at the departmental level and reported to the University Academic Council. Currently, the university facilitates connections with its graduates through a virtual alumni group, which provides informal information regarding career progression and employment outcomes. While this group helps maintain basic ties, the informal and irregular character of such interactions has been described in detail in Standard 7.

To address this, the university leadership is in the process of developing a more formalized career and alumni counselling. Efforts are underway to recruit specialized personnel to expand the existing alumni platform into a structured network capable of monitoring long-term career advancement, job titles, and salary ranges. This enhanced platform should intend to facilitate networking opportunities and collect structured feedback from graduates to further refine the curriculum and its alignment with labor market requirements.

### **Analytical part**

Azerbaijan University demonstrates a systematic and strategically aligned approach to public information, anchored by a five-year strategic development plan and an action plan managed by the PR Department. The institution utilizes its bilingual official website as the primary source for institutional transparency, providing readily accessible and easily navigable data on academic structures, faculty credentials, program objectives, and graduate employment statistics. This digital transparency is bolstered by the active use of diverse social media platforms—including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn—and the publication of the “*Chaglayan*” magazine, which offers a multimedia record of university life, scholarly achievements, and career advice. By partnering with leading national media outlets such as the Azerbaijan State News Agency, AU ensures that its initiatives of public significance reach a broad audience, thereby fulfilling its commitment to public accountability and institutional visibility.

Beyond digital dissemination, the university employs proactive and direct engagement mechanisms to inform stakeholders, such as Open Door Days, participation in educational fairs, and a dedicated Applicant Counseling Center. These initiatives facilitate direct communication between the

public and university leadership, allowing for the immediate and objective resolution of inquiries regarding admissions, international exchange programs, and career prospects. Furthermore, the university demonstrates a commitment to data integrity through the continuous monitoring of its internal resources and mass media presence. While the university publishes data on graduate employment, this information remains incomplete because the career and alumni direction is still an underdeveloped institutional unit that lacks the specialized personnel required for systematic tracking. By analyzing social media reach and verifying the accuracy of published information, the university can implement necessary updates or corrections to its communication strategy, ensuring that information remains relevant, reliable, and tailored to the needs of prospective students and the wider educational community.

**Strengths/best practice:**

Not visible

**Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. To develop integrated multimedia evidence of alumni excellence. The AU should institutionalize the curation of a dedicated digital showcase on its official website to highlight the professional trajectories of its most distinguished graduates. This initiative should move beyond a simple list of names to encompass multimedia success narratives, including high-definition video testimonials, longitudinal success stories, and in-depth interviews that illustrate how the program's Competency-Based Education model translates into real-world impact. By leveraging the university's active social media channels, these narratives would serve to bolster institutional and public trust, while providing prospective students with a tangible vision of the "Social Work" career path.

Implementation period: September 2028.

2. To establish a comprehensive career mapping and labor market directory. To further enhance transparency and support student progression, the university should augment its public information platforms with a granular directory of strategic labor market stakeholders and potential employers. This resource should provide profiles of organizations where graduates have secured high-level placement, such as the DOST Agency, the Social Services Agency, the Probation Service, and NGOs, as well as specialized sectors like the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues. This directory should explicitly link Program learning outcomes to the specific operational needs of these entities, thereby providing a clear roadmap for vocational trajectories in both the public and non-governmental sectors.

Implementation period: September 2028.

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Public information": strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

**Standard:**

*The educational organization should monitor and periodically evaluate programs in order to ensure that they achieve their purpose and meet the needs of students and society. The results of these processes should lead to continuous program improvement. All stakeholders should be informed of any planned or undertaken actions in relation to these programs.*

**Recommendations:**

*Constant monitoring, periodic evaluation and revision of educational programs are aimed at ensuring their effective implementation and creating a favorable environment for student learning. This includes an assessment:*

- the content of the programs, taking into account the latest achievements of science in a particular discipline to ensure the relevance of the taught discipline;*
- the changing needs of society;*
- workload, performance and graduation of students;*
- effectiveness of student assessment procedures;*
- expectations, needs and satisfaction of students with the program;*
- the educational environment and support services and their relevance to the goals of the program.*

*Programs are regularly evaluated and reviewed with the involvement of students and other stakeholders. The collected information is analyzed and the program is brought into line with modern requirements. The changes made are published.*

**Evidence**

Azerbaijan University has established a sustainable internal quality assurance system that includes regular monitoring and periodic review of educational programs to ensure their relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with the needs of students, employers, and society. University departments were provided regular training sessions (6 sessions) and on-job trainings and consultations organized by QA department concerning the ESG standards and study program monitoring rules and procedures.

The accrediting program is publicly available on university official website as well as the respective curricula, syllabi and program documents through e-university platform for main stakeholders including students, administrative and academic staffs. Monitoring and evaluation of the program delivery is implemented by the QA department of the University as well as by the respective dean surveys which are aimed to assess the degree of provision of the supportive and effective learning environment to the students. The monitoring process operates across several levels, including: analysis of the compliance of curricula with national educational standards and qualification frameworks; annual evaluation of academic disciplines and methodological materials at the departmental level; analysis of data on student academic performance, internship outcomes, and graduate employment; systematic collection and processing of feedback from students, faculty, and employers.

The AU QA department launched the extended anonymous survey of internal stakeholders including students and faculty regarding satisfaction with working conditions at the university and recommendation from program alumni and labor market representatives as well.

The quality of teaching is under constant control, especially through online and offline monitoring of teaching process to make sure that the teaching environment and the process itself are in line with AU student and administration expectations.

As it mentioned also in this Overview, the new concept of academic staff motivation has been designed and approved. This the special academic staff rating system and scores which will allow appraisal and financial support / increase salaries for the most successful among them. The system will be applied starting from the new academic year 2025-2026.

The university conducts regular surveys of student and alumni satisfaction, the results of which are systematically analyzed and used to adjust program content and improve teaching quality. The commitment to continuous enhancement embedded in Azerbaijan University quality policy provides a structured framework for monitoring and evaluating educational programs. Clearly defined principles for stakeholder feedback and satisfaction analysis enable timely and evidence-based program adjustments, maintaining their relevance, quality, and responsiveness to evolving academic and professional demands.

Overall, Azerbaijan University demonstrates a systematic, data-driven approach to internal

monitoring and improvement of educational programs, ensuring their consistent alignment with the university's strategic objectives and with the modern requirements of higher education and the labor market.

### **Analytical part**

The Evaluation Panel established that the university had taken measures to regulate the process of monitoring and evaluating educational programs by analyzing self-reports, website materials and interviews with university staff. Monitoring mechanisms are described and implemented in existing internal regulatory documents.

An analysis of the documents submitted to the university showed that all measures taken based on the monitoring results are reflected in the documentation in the form of decisions of the teaching and methodological council, the academic council, etc.; decisions made in departments; measures based on the results of internal audits; measures based on the results of external audits; corrective actions based on the results of identified and potential non-conformities. Monitoring and assessment of students' academic performance are based on academic integrity and comply with the University's academic policy. Monitoring of current performance involves assessing the progress of students. Traditionally, the main indicators of performance for a semester or academic year are absolute and qualitative performance levels. Another type of survey that is practiced is a survey on satisfaction with the objectivity of assessment.

The program monitoring and periodic review system at AU represents a mature and integrated mechanism embedded within the broader internal quality assurance framework. The university demonstrates a clear understanding that program monitoring is not a formal compliance exercise, but a key instrument for the continuous improvement of the educational process.

Monitoring activities are implemented across all levels of academic governance-from departments to faculties and up to the rectorate. The process is cyclical and analytical in nature: monitoring results form the basis for concrete management decisions, which are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. This consistency allows the university to respond promptly to changes in educational standards, technological developments, and labor market needs.

The educational environment and support services at Azerbaijan University are consistent with the objectives of the accredited program. The Social Work program was formally renewed in 2025, indicating that periodic review procedures are in place. However, the analysis also indicates that the existing monitoring system is not yet fully formalized as a complete management cycle, evidence of systematic involvement of key stakeholders, including students and external partners, in the review process was not clearly demonstrated during the evaluation, as supporting documentation such as meeting minutes or consultation records was not available. Strengthening documentation and transparency of stakeholder participation in program monitoring and revision would enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the review process.

The university website contains a blog of the rector, where students and teachers can express their personal opinions, suggestions and complaints about educational programs and other issues.

A student survey conducted during the visit of the Evaluation Panel showed that satisfaction with the academic workload/requirements for students was as follows: completely satisfied – 77.2%, partially satisfied – 20%, dissatisfied – 1.4%, difficult to answer – 1.4%.

Overall, AU demonstrates a developed and functional system for the analysis and periodic updating of educational programs. Nonetheless, achieving a fully continuous improvement model requires the further institutionalization of procedures, consistent documentation of all stages of the monitoring cycle, and the strengthening of systematic stakeholder feedback mechanisms.

### **Strengths/best practice in 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. It is recommended that the university strengthen the participation of students, employers, and other external stakeholders in the program revision cycle. The establishment of permanent advisory councils within faculties-comprising representatives of industry, employers, and alumni-would facilitate

the systematic inclusion of expert opinions and labor market perspectives in the process of updating and improving program content.

Implementation period: 2026-2027 academic year.

**Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard “Continuous monitoring and periodic program evaluation” for the educational programs 7008003 Social Work: strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

## Standard 10. PERIODIC PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

### **Standard:**

*Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.*

### **Guidelines:**

*External quality assurance in its various forms can verify the effectiveness of institutions' internal quality assurance, act as a catalyst for improvement and offer the institution new perspectives. It will also provide information to assure the institution and the public of the quality of the institution's activities.*

*Institutions participate in cyclical external quality assurance that takes account, where relevant, of the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate. Therefore, depending on the framework, this external quality assurance may take different forms and focus at different organisational levels (such as programme, faculty or institution).*

*Quality assurance is a continuous process that does not end with the external feedback or report or its follow-up process within the institution. Therefore, institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

### **Evidence**

Azerbaijan University operates within the national higher education quality assurance framework aligned with the Bologna Process since 2005 and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). External quality assurance is implemented through both institutional and program accreditation conducted by the national agency TKTA and EQAR-registered international agencies.

AU has participated regularly in institutional accreditation cycles. The university was re-accredited by the Ministry of Education in 2009 and again in 2018 for a five-year period, granting the right to issue state diplomas. The next institutional accreditation is scheduled by TKTA for autumn 2026, confirming AU's compliance with national cyclical external quality assurance requirements.

At the program level, the Social Work bachelor program, launched in 2009 and delivered within the first Social Work School established in Azerbaijan (2015), received international accreditation from IAAR (Kazakhstan, EQAR-registered) in May 2023 for a five-year period. The accreditation confirmed overall compliance with IAAR and ESG standards and issued recommendations for improvement. AU developed an implementation schedule agreed upon with the agency and systematically monitored the actions taken. Progress was positively evaluated through IAAR post-accreditation monitoring, including a follow-up review in June 2025, confirming significant implementation of recommendations.

A range of improvements made to implement the recommendations of the IAAR external visit committee for the bachelor program(2023) have been observed by their peers, who visited AU in February 2026 for the master's program accreditation. The most significant of them are described below.

The results of a focus on quality assurance have already made a positive impact on the AU's distinguished attainments. The University has occupied decent positions in national and international rankings: top 5 places among Azerbaijan universities by Shanghai University Ranking, Round University Ranking, and Scopus and WoS highly cited scholars, and decent positions in QS Stars Audit - four stars out of five, and 601-650 place in Western Asia and 54 place in Europe by the QS World University Ranking.

AU has established the Centre for Psychological Support for students and Faculty by the decision of the Academic Council on February 14, 2024, order#1, as a result of the post-monitoring activities after the Bachelor's program accreditation obtained in 2023. Three psychologists work in the centre under the head and assist students with psychological counseling at their request.

The major orientation for the quality assurance for AU is visible through the initiation of the Students' body oriented for education quality improvement and actively disseminating these ideas among the student community. Another piece of evidence of the AU's commitment to quality improvement was observed by the EEC and represents the positioning of the QA unit as an important department connecting other organizational bodies through creating cohesion, and motivating unit heads and employees to contribute to the common QA work. The culture of mutual support and united activities directed to providing a solid foundation for the QA at the university is a distinctive feature of the visited higher educational institution.

The university demonstrates continuity of cyclical external quality assurance across qualification levels. Following IAAR external accreditation and monitoring of the Social Work bachelor program, AU has extended the same external review practice to the second-cycle level: the Social Work master program is currently undergoing IAAR external evaluation. This progression from bachelor accreditation to master external review indicates an embedded institutional culture of continuous program evaluation and alignment across study cycles. Specifically, a cycle of special training directed at the QA provision was organized and conducted by the QA office head for internal stakeholders, including administrative staff and faculty, for several months.

Despite the positive artifacts, the meetings with responsible managers demonstrated that there is still a necessity for active external stakeholders' involvement in the process of QA provision. At the moment, mostly insufficient, unofficial and fragmentary participation of external stakeholders through phone calls, corporate email, and irregular meetings.

Institutional engagement with external QA is further evidenced by ISO 9001:2015 certification (2019), confirming the quality management system for educational processes and learning environment. In addition, AU academic and administrative staff participate as trained external QA experts in national accreditation procedures, strengthening institutional expertise and feedback integration from system-level quality assurance activities.

Overall, evidence confirms that AU participates in cyclical external quality assurance at institutional and program levels, implements accreditation recommendations through structured monitoring and reporting, and maintains ongoing cooperation with national and international QA agencies.

### **Analytical part**

Azerbaijan University has initiated the orientation for international quality assurance since 2019 by going through the procedure of ISO 9001:2015 certification. In 2023, the University strengthen its QA positions by preparing for and successfully granting the 5-year accreditation of its bachelor's program in Social Work. The recent IAAR post-monitoring report prepared upon the review of the AU's measures to follow the EEC recommendations resulted in 70%-satisfactory feedback from the expert team. The changes made as a result of earlier accreditations and post-monitoring processes have positively influenced the AU's functioning and created grounds for a logical, continuous improvement.

The University's top and middle management clearly articulate their focus on quality mainstreaming along all the organizational levels and structures. The first external QA requirements have been integrated into the strategic development and step-by-step penetrated to the hearable layer and finally to the sensitive layer of the corporate culture. Therefore, the orientation for cyclical QA gradually becomes a structural part of the organisation's genotype, providing new insights and widening horizons for future initiatives in quality assurance provision.

### **Recommendations for 7008003 Social Work:**

1. To formalize stakeholder involvement in cyclical QA follow-up. AU should establish a structured and documented mechanism ensuring the involvement of employers, alumni, students, and professional partners in monitoring the implementation of accreditation recommendations and evaluating program improvements across study cycles. These measures will ensure an evolution from a program-level endeavor for quality improvement into a sustainable, cyclical system of external quality assurance and will strengthen the transparency and accountability of executives' decisions.

Implementation period: September, 2027.

### **Strengths/best practice 7008003 Social Work:**

Not visible

### **Conclusions of the EEC according to the criteria:**

According to the standard "Periodic procedures for external quality assurance": strong parameters - 0, satisfactory - 1, requiring improvement - 0.

## **(VII) OVERVIEW OF STRENGTHS / BEST PRACTICES**

### **Standard 1. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY**

Not visible

### **Standard 2. DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM**

Not visible

### **Standard 3. STUDENT-CENTERED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT**

- A strong practice-oriented approach to education by integrating master students' research interests with the current priorities of the social work sector and through close collaboration with partner organizations. The practice has a clear structure and is well balanced, including components related to research and projects and the formulation of research themes based on partner organizations.

### **Standard 4. ADDMISSION, ACCESS, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS**

Not visible

### **Standard 5. TEACHING STAFF**

Not visible

### **Standard 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM**

Not visible

### **Standard 7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

Not visible

### **Standard 8. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Not visible

### **Standard 9. CONTINUIOUS MONITORING AND PERIODIC PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Not visible

### **Standard 10. PERIODIC PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE.**

Not visible

## **(VIII) OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY**

### **Standard 1. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY**

1. Ensuring public access and transparent monitoring of the Quality Assurance Policy: it is recommended that the approved Quality Policy be published in the public domain on the university's official website, accompanied by a brief explanatory note outlining its objectives, basic principles and key areas of implementation. The quality assurance unit should systematically disseminate information about the Quality Policy and related procedures through the website, social networks and information boards in order to increase the transparency of the university's activities, raise awareness among students, staff and partners, and strengthen the culture of quality. At the same time, the Quality Policy should be updated regularly (every two years), thereby confirming the university's commitment to the principles of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

Implementation deadline: September 2026

2. Clearly define responsibilities for business processes in quality assurance, differentiate the functions of each position. Bring into compliance the University's s Chart ("The administrative and functional management structure of Azerbaijan University) with the actual situation. Review the job descriptions of managers, clearly define the responsibility of each manager for the quality of the educational program, and draw up a matrix of responsibilities taking into account all processes of the university's quality assurance system.

Implementation deadline: September 2026

### **Standard 2. DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM**

1. To launch the Advisory Board of the department "Organization of Social Work", directed at the continuous and systematic work with program stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, partners) for periodic monitoring, review, and revision of the program content. The Advisory Board should include the most enthusiastic, responsible, committed, and competent representatives of the student community, alumni, employers, and international partners. The structure, duties, and responsibilities of the Board should be officially recognized by the AU's formal documentation, and the minutes of the meeting should be kept and stored systematically.

Implementation deadline: December, 2027

2. To reinforce the involvement of stakeholders through obtaining annual expert evaluation of syllabi within the Social Work EP. The written and signed practitioners' reviews of syllabi for the crucial teaching courses should be collected from employers, with specific propositions for improving certain elements, and the department "Organization of Social Work" should further monitor this work to ensure the required amendments are made by the faculty in charge.

Implementation period: December, 2027

3. To renew the reference lists and recommended readings in the syllabi and ensure that they include the sources for the last five years, excluding a few fundamental works in the discipline written by prominent founders in their fields. This measure will help the AU follow the Department's strategy and enrich references with the latest academic articles from international peer-reviewed journals and global databases, including the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, and OECD.

Implementation period: December, 2027

### **Standard 3. STUDENT-CENTERED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT**

Not visible

### **Standard 4. ADDMISSION, ACCESS, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS**

1. The university administration should consider strategies to attract applicants with higher entrance exam scores, thereby enhancing competitiveness and academic preparation within the program, in order to identify potential learning challenges early on and predict academic risks. Develop a plan to identify and predict risks. Regularly publish analytical reports comparing students' entry levels with their

subsequent academic performance.

Implementation period: December, 2027.

2. University administration should enhance the international orientation of educational program by ensuring that at least five percent of students from the program participate in exchange programs every academic year. The leadership of the educational program is required to develop a prospective plan for student participation in international academic mobility.

Implementation period: December, 2027.

### **Standard 5. TEACHING STAFF**

1. To design a comprehensive human resource management policy, including a detailed description of the major HR functions: recruitment, selection, adaptation, employee performance assessment, dismissal, career development, and promotion. The detailed criteria for the employee selection, assessment, promotion, and career professional development should be clearly and transparently stated, including the procedure of open demonstration lessons.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

2. To separate the HR Department from the Graduate Career Counseling and Work with Alumni function for further sophisticated focus on effective human resource management.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

3. To provide a more decent support for faculty professional development and research potential utilization by decreasing teaching workload for productive scholars, equipping them with licensed research software, and expanding opportunities for faculty international conference participation (abroad) and publication fees coverage on a competitive basis. This recommendation could be implemented through enhancing the existing faculty motivation program, initiated in 2025.

Implementation period: September, 2028.

### **Standard 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM**

1. Optimize the library collection by systematically disposing of outdated materials and targeting the acquisition of relevant resources related to the disciplines of the accredited educational program, as well as increasing the space of the library reading room and workplaces for master's students' scientific research education.

Implementation period: 2027–2028 academic year.

2. Establish a specialized research laboratory (Research Center) by creating a dedicated research facility for master students, equipped with individual and collaborative workspaces, computers, software, and access to datasets, that could provide a structured research infrastructure for master's scientific and methodological support.

Implementation period: 2027–2028 academic year.

### **Standard 7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

1. To enhance the rigor of student evaluations and monitoring of their academic progress through more sophisticated differentiation of their academic achievements and drop-out rates. This measure will help improve the attainment of learning outcomes and the overall quality of preparation.

Implementation period: September 2028.

2. To improve the content and functioning quality of the E-university platform through the mandatory allocation of all teaching and learning materials before the official start of the semester, including signed and stamped syllabi and teaching aids, and continuous monitoring of all the necessary information, relevance, and availability for master's students.

Implementation period: September 2028

3. To institutionalize the work with graduates and alumni through a formal and systematic framework for engagement, including the designation of an appointed staff and unit for coordinating career counseling and alumni relations activities. The specialized unit should create opportunities for graduates' employment, databases of prospective interested employers, and open vacancies mailing. and monitor and analyze the dynamics of labor market opportunities within the examined majors.

Implementation period: September 2028

4. To establish a new body – the Alumni Association, led by a formally appointed head. The Association should operate based on an approved annual action plan, outlining networking activities, professional events, mentoring initiatives, and institutional collaboration mechanisms. The robust official information channels should be developed to provide regular information inflow and outflow for building the AU image as a socially responsible education establishment taking part in the advancement of its former students.

Implementation period: September 2028

#### **Standard 8. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

1. To develop integrated multimedia evidence of alumni excellence. The AU should institutionalize the curation of a dedicated digital showcase on its official website to highlight the professional trajectories of its most distinguished graduates. This initiative should move beyond a simple list of names to encompass multimedia success narratives, including high-definition video testimonials, longitudinal success stories, and in-depth interviews that illustrate how the program’s Competency-Based Education model translates into real-world impact. By leveraging the university’s active social media channels, these narratives would serve to bolster institutional and public trust, while providing prospective students with a tangible vision of the "Social Work" career path.

Implementation period: September 2028.

2. To establish a comprehensive career mapping and labor market directory. To further enhance transparency and support student progression, the university should augment its public information platforms with a granular directory of strategic labor market stakeholders and potential employers. This resource should provide profiles of organizations where graduates have secured high-level placement, such as the DOST Agency, the Social Services Agency, the Probation Service, and NGOs, as well as specialized sectors like the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues. This directory should explicitly link Program learning outcomes to the specific operational needs of these entities, thereby providing a clear roadmap for vocational trajectories in both the public and non-governmental sectors.

Implementation period: September 2028.

#### **Standard 9. CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND PERIODIC PROGRAM EVALUATION**

1. It is recommended that the university strengthen the participation of students, employers, and other external stakeholders in the program revision cycle. The establishment of permanent advisory councils within faculties-comprising representatives of industry, employers, and alumni-would facilitate the systematic inclusion of expert opinions and labor market perspectives in the process of updating and improving program content.

Implementation period: 2026-2027 academic year.

#### **Standard 10. PERIODIC PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE.**

1. To formalize stakeholder involvement in cyclical QA follow-up. AU should establish a structured and documented mechanism ensuring the involvement of employers, alumni, students, and professional partners in monitoring the implementation of accreditation recommendations and evaluating program improvements across study cycles. These measures will ensure an evolution from a program-level endeavor for quality improvement into a sustainable, cyclical system of external quality assurance and will strengthen the transparency and accountability of executives’ decisions.

Implementation period: September, 2027.

**(IX) REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

Not visible

**(X) RECOMMENDATION TO THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL**

Recommend the educational programs 7008003 Social Work of Azerbaijan University for accreditation for a period of 5 years

## Appendix 1. Evaluation table “Conclusion of the External Expert Commission”

### Educational program 700803 Social work Azerbaijan University

№	IAAR International Standards	Assessment Indicators			
		Strong	Satisfactory	Suggest improvements	Unsatisfactory
<b>Standard 1. POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>					
1	<p>Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> Policies and processes are the main pillars of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that forms a cycle for continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution. It supports the development of quality culture in which all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance at all levels of the institution. In order to facilitate this, the policy has a formal status and is publicly available.</p> <p>Quality assurance policies are most effective when they reflect the relationship between research and learning &amp; teaching and take account of both the national context in which the institution operates, the institutional context and its strategic approach. Such a policy supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the organization of the quality assurance system;</li> <li>• departments, schools, faculties and other organizational units as well as those of institutional leadership, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;</li> <li>• academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud;</li> <li>• guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff;</li> <li>• the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.</li> </ul> <p>The policy translates into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation across the institution. How the policy is implemented, monitored and revised is the institution’s decision.</p> <p>The quality assurance policy also covers any elements of an institution’s activities that are subcontracted to or carried out by other parties.</p>		+		
<b>Standard 2. DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES</b>					

2	<p>Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programs. The programs should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a program should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> Study programs are at the core of the higher education institutions' teaching mission. They provide students with both academic knowledge and skills including those that are transferable, which may influence their personal development and may be applied in their future careers.</p> <p>Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are designed with overall program objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes;</li> <li>• are designed by involving students and other stakeholders in the work;</li> <li>• benefit from external expertise and reference points;</li> <li>• reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (cf. Scope and Concepts);</li> <li>• are designed so that they enable smooth student progression;</li> <li>• define the expected student workload, e.g. in ECTS;</li> <li>• include well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate;</li> <li>• are subject to a formal institutional approval process.</li> </ul>		+		
<b>Standard 3. STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT</b>					
3	<p>Institutions should ensure that the programs are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> Student-centered learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. This means careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programs and the assessment of outcomes.</p> <p>The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;</li> <li>• considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;</li> <li>• flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;</li> <li>• regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods;</li> <li>• encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher;</li> <li>• promotes mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship;</li> </ul> <p>has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.</p> <p>Considering the importance of assessment for the students' progression and their future careers, quality assurance processes for assessment take into account the following:</p> <p>Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The criteria for and method of assessment as well as criteria for marking are published in advance;</li> <li>• The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the</li> </ul>		+		

	<p>intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, assessment is carried out by more than one examiner;</li> <li>• The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;</li> <li>• Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;</li> <li>• A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.</li> </ul>				
<b>Standard 4. STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION</b>					
4	<p>Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i></p> <p>Providing conditions and support that are necessary for students to make progress in their academic career is in the best interest of the individual students, programs, institutions and systems. It is vital to have fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures, particularly when students are mobile within and across higher education systems.</p> <p>It is important that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Induction to the institution and the program is provided.</p> <p>Institutions need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression.</p> <p>Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students’ progress in their studies, while promoting mobility. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;</li> <li>• cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.</li> </ul> <p>Graduation represents the culmination of the students’ period of study. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.</p>			+	
<b>Standard 5. TEACHING STAFF</b>					
5	<p>Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i></p> <p>The teacher’s role is essential in creating a high-quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centered learning and teaching and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing (cf. Standard 1.3).</p> <p>Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively.</p> <p>Such an environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sets up and follows clear, transparent and fair processes for staff</li> </ul>			+	

	<p>recruitment and conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offers opportunities for and promotes the professional development of teaching staff; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;</li> <li>• encourages innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<b>Standard 6. LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT</b>					
6	<p>Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i></p> <p>For a good higher education experience, institutions provide a range of resources to assist student learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries, study facilities and IT infrastructure to human support in the form of tutors, counsellors and other advisers. The role of support services is of particular importance in facilitating the mobility of students within and across higher education systems.</p> <p>The needs of a diverse student population (such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities), and the shift towards student-centered learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources and student support.</p> <p>Support activities and facilities may be organized in a variety of ways depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are fit for purpose, accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.</p> <p>In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.</p>				+
<b>Standard 7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>					
7	<p>Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyze and use relevant information for the effective management of their programs and other activities.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i></p> <p>Reliable data is crucial for informed decision-making and for knowing what is working well and what needs attention. Effective processes to collect and analyze information about study programs and other activities feed into the internal quality assurance system.</p> <p>The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the institution. The following are of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key performance indicators;</li> <li>• Profile of the student population;</li> <li>• Student progression, success and drop-out rates;</li> <li>• Students' satisfaction with their programs;</li> <li>• Learning resources and student support available;</li> <li>• Career paths of graduates.</li> </ul> <p>Various methods of collecting information may be used. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.</p>				+
<b>Standard 8. PUBLIC INFORMATION</b>					

8	<p>Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programs, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> Information on institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the public. Therefore, institutions provide information about their activities, including the programs they offer and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programs, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students as well as graduate employment information.</p>		+		
<b>Standard 9. ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES</b>					
9	<p>Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programs to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the program. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programs aim to ensure that the provision remains appropriate and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students. They include the evaluation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The content of the program in the light of the latest research in the given discipline thus ensuring that the program is up to date;</li> <li>• The changing needs of society;</li> <li>• The students' workload, progression and completion;</li> <li>• The effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students;</li> <li>• The student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the program;</li> <li>• The learning environment and support services and their fitness for purpose for the program.</li> </ul> <p>Programs are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analyzed and the program is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised program specifications are published.</p>		+		
<b>Standard 10. CYCLICAL EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>					
10	<p>Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.</p> <p><i>Guidelines:</i> External quality assurance in its various forms can verify the effectiveness of institutions' internal quality assurance, act as a catalyst for improvement and offer the institution new perspectives. It will also provide information to assure the institution and the public of the quality of the institution's activities. Institutions participate in cyclical external quality assurance that takes account, where relevant, of the requirements of the legislative framework</p>		+		

<p>in which they operate. Therefore, depending on the framework, this external quality assurance may take different forms and focus at different organizational levels (such as program, faculty or institution).</p> <p>Quality assurance is a continuous process that does not end with the external feedback or report or its follow-up process within the institution. Therefore, institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.</p>				
<b>GRAND TOTAL ACCORDING TO ALL STANDARDS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>



**AGREED**  
**RECTOR,**  
Azerbaijan University  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Aliyeva S.N.  
2026 \_\_\_\_\_ «\_\_\_\_»



**APPROVED**  
**GENERAL DIRECTOR,**  
Independent Agency for Accreditation and  
Rating  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Zhumagulova A.B.  
2026 \_\_\_\_\_ «\_\_\_\_»

**PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT  
OF THE IAAR EXTERNAL EXPERT PANEL (EEP)  
TO AZERBAIJAN UNIVERSITY**

**Educational Programme  
“Social Work” 7008003**

**Visit Dates: February 24-26, 2026**

Date and Time (local time)	EEP's Meetings with Target Groups	Position and Full Name (Last Name, First Name, Patronymic) of Target Group Participants	Contact Form
<b>February 20, 2026</b>			
<b>16.00-17.00</b>	Preliminary meeting of EEP ( <i>distribution of responsibilities, discussion of key issues and the site visit programme</i> )	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>February 23, 2026</b>			
<i>According to the schedule Throughout the day</i>	Arrival of the External Expert Commission members		
20.00	Dinner	<i>EEP of IAAR</i>	
<b>February 24, 2026</b>			
<b>08.30-09.00</b>	Transfer from the hotel to the University	<i>EEP, University Coordinator</i>	
<b>09.00-09.15</b>	Distribution of Responsibilities Among Experts, Discussion of Organizational Issues	<i>EEP of IAAR</i>	Conference Hall  Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>09.15-09.50</b>	Meeting with the head of the university	Rector – Saadat Namig Aliyeva	Conference Hall  Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>09.50-10.00</b>	Break		

<b>10.00-10.45</b>	Meeting with Vice-Rectors	1. Vice-Rector for Science - Yusif Soltan Gasimov	Conference Hall
			Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>10.45-11.35</b>	Meeting with Heads of Structural Units of the Educational Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Head of Strategy and quality assurance department – Lala Abasova</li> <li>2. Head of Educational Department – Leyla Agamaliyeva</li> <li>3. Head of Science Department – Latifa Agamaliyeva</li> <li>4. Head of Int’l Relations department – Elmira Ismayilova</li> <li>5. Head of Human Resources – Kamran Rzayev</li> <li>6. Head of Library – Nailya Nagiyeva</li> <li>7. Head of Finance and Infrastructure department – Telman Huseyinli</li> <li>8. Head of Teaching Learning Center (TLC) – Samir Salayev</li> <li>9. Head of Public Relations – Lala Dilanova</li> <li>10. Admin of E-university– Ilham Kazimov</li> </ol>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>11.35-11.40</b>	Exchange of Opinions Among Members of the EEP		Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>11.40-12.20</b>	Meeting with Heads of Departments and Academic Unit Leaders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Head of Center of Int’l master programs and doctorate – Nushaba Guliyeva</li> <li>2. Head of Social Work department – Nigar Shahhuseybeyova</li> </ol>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>12.20-13.00</b>	Visual Inspection of the Educational Organization’s Material, Technical and Teaching Laboratory Facilities	<i>Appendix 8 (List of Physical Facilities, Laboratories etc. for accrediting programme)</i>	
<b>13.00-14.00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>14.00-14.15</b>	Break		

<b>14.15-15.00</b>	Meeting with Academic Staff	<i>Appendix 1</i>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>15.00-17.00</b>	Academic Staff Survey (conducted in parallel)	<i>Appendix 2</i>	The link is sent personally to the teacher's email
<b>15.00-15.15</b>	Technical Break		
<b>15.15-16.00</b>	Meeting with Students	<i>Appendix 3</i>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>16.00-18.00</b>	Student Survey (conducted in parallel)	<i>Appendix 4</i>	The link is sent personally to the student's email
<b>16.00-16.15</b>	Exchange of Opinions Among Members of the EEP		
<b>16.15-17.10</b>	Meeting with Stakeholders (Representatives of Internship Bases and Employers)	<i>Appendix 5</i>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>17.10-18.00</b>	EEP work (discussion of the results and summary of the Day 1 outcomes)		
<b>18.00-19.00</b>	Dinner		
<b>February 25, 2026</b>			
<b>08.30-09.00</b>	Transfer from the hotel to the university	<i>EEP of IAAR, University Coordinator</i>	
<b>09.00-09.15</b>	Work of the EEP	<i>EEP of IAAR</i>	Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969

<b>09.15-10.00</b>	Meeting with head of educational programme	Head of Organization of Social work chair – Nigar Shahhuseybeyova, PhD, head of Social Work department	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>10.00-12.00</b>	Working with the documentation and attending classes according to the schedule (The representatives of the HEI might be invited)	<i>EEP of IAAR</i> <i>Appendix 7 Links to Classes</i>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969

	for some clarifications)		
<b>12.00-13.00</b>	Work of the EEP	<i>EEP of IAAR</i>	Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>13.00-14.00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>14.00-16.00</b>	Selective Visits to Internship Bases of the Study Programme	<i>Appendix 9</i>	
<b>16.00-16.40</b>	Interviews with Alumni	<i>Appendix 6</i>	Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>16.40-18.00</b>	Work of the EEP, Discussion of the Second Day's Results and Profile Parameters (Recording)		Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>17.30-18.30</b>	Dinner		

**February 26, 2026**

<b>08.30-09.00</b>	Transfer from the hotel to the university	<i>EEP of IAAR, University Coordinator</i>	Hotel - University
--------------------	---	--	--------------------

<b>09.00-09.15</b>	Work of the EEP	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>09.15-11.50</b>	Work of the EEP, Development and Discussion of Recommendations (Recording)	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>11.50-12.00</b>	Technical Break		
<b>12.00-13.00</b>	EEP work (collective discussion and	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	

	preparation of a preliminary outcomes) (recording is in progress)		
<b>13.00-14.00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>14.00-15.00</b>	EEP work, discussion of the preliminary results, voting (recording is in progress)	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	Room: TLC Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>15.00-15.30</b>	Final meeting of the EEP with the institution's management		Conference Hall Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>15.30-18.00</b>	EEP work, discussion of the results of the quality assessment, agreeing on the issues of the formation of the final review report	<i>IAAR External Experts</i>	Room: TLC  Join the Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4641732969</a> Conference ID: 464 173 2969
<b>18.00-19.00</b>	Dinner		

### **Annex 3. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE OF TEACHING STAFF**

#### ***Questionnaire Survey for the Teaching Staff of educational programme 700803 Social work of the Azerbaijan University***

**The total amount of questionnaires: 25**

#### **1. Department: Social Work**

#### **2. Position:**

Professor	1 – 4%
Associate professor	7 – 28%
Senior teacher	2 – 8%
Teacher	13 – 52%
Head of the Department	1 – 4%
Lecturer	0 – 0%
Assistant Professor	0 – 0%
Others	1 – 4%

#### **3. Academic degree, academic rank**

Honoured Worker	0 – 0%
Doctor of Science	0 – 0%
Candidate of Science	5 – 20%
Master	11 – 44%
PhD	8 – 32%
Professor	0 – 0%
Associate Professor	5 – 20%
No	1 – 4%

#### **4. Work experience at this HEI**

Less than 1 year	2	8%
1 year – 5 years	15	60%
Over 5 years	8	32%
Over 10 years	0	0%

No.	Questions	Very good	Good	Relatively poor	Poor	Very poor	No answer
5	To what extent does the content of the educational program meet your scientific and professional interests and requirements?	21 - 84%	3 - 12%	1 - 4%	0	0	0
6	How do you assess the opportunities provided by HEI for the professional development of the teaching staff?	14 - 56%	10 - 40%	1 - 4%	0	0	0
7	How do you assess the opportunities provided by HEI for teacher's career development?	11 - 44%	13 - 52%	1 - 4%	0	0	0
8	How do you assess the degree of academic freedom of teaching staff?	14 - 56%	11 - 44%	0	0	0	0
	<b>To what extent can teachers use their own</b>						
8	• Teaching strategies	18 - 72%	7 - 28%	0	0	0	0
9	• Teaching methods	20 - 80%	5 - 20%	0	0	0	0
10	• Educational innovations	19 - 76%	6 - 24%	0	0	0	0
11	How do you evaluate the arrangement of health care and disease prevention in HEI?	14 - 56%	9 - 36%	1 - 4%	1 - 4%	0	0
12	What attention does the school management pay to the educational program content?	15 - 60%	10 - 40%	0	0	0	0
13	How do you evaluate the sufficiency and accessibility of the necessary scientific and educational literature in the library?	14 - 56%	8 - 32%	8%	1 - 4%	0	0
14	Evaluate the level of the	12 -	13 -	0	0	0	0

	conditions created that take into account the needs of different groups of learners?	48%	52%				
	<b>Evaluate the openness and accessibility of management to:</b>						
<b>15</b>	• Students	12 - 48%	13 - 52%	0	0	0	0
<b>16</b>	• Teaching staff	17 - 68%	8 - 32%	0	0	0	0
<b>17</b>	What is the level of encouragement and involvement of young specialists in the educational process?	15 - 60%	10 - 40%	0	0	0	0
<b>18</b>	Evaluate the opportunities for professional and personal growth created for each teacher and employee	14 - 56%	9 - 36%	2–8%	0	0	0
<b>19</b>	Evaluate the adequacy of recognition by HEI's management of teachers' potential and abilities	10 - 40%	14 - 56%	1–4%	0	0	0
<b>20</b>	How the activity is organized regarding an academic mobility	9 - 36%	16 - 64%		0	0	0
<b>21</b>	How the activity is organized regarding teaching staff's professional development:	11 - 44.2%	13 - 52%	1–4%	0	0	0
<b>22</b>	Evaluate how HEI and its management support teaching staff's research and development undertakings	13 - 52%	11 - 44%	1–4%	0	0	0
<b>23</b>	Evaluate how HEI and its management support development of new educational programmes/academic disciplines/teaching methods	17 - 68%	8 - 32%	0	0	0	0
<b>24</b>	Evaluate teaching staff's opportunity to combine teaching with scientific research	11 - 44%	12 - 48%	2–8%	0	0	0
<b>25</b>	Evaluate teaching staff's	16 -	7 -	0	0	0	0

	opportunity to combine teaching with practical activities	64%	28%	2 – 8%			
26	Evaluate whether the knowledge students receive in HEI meets the requirements of the modern labour market	15 - 60%	8 - 32%	1 – 4%	1 – 4%	0	0
27	How do HEI management and administration take criticism?	9 - 36%	16 - 64%	0	0	0	0
28	Evaluate how well your teaching load meets your expectations and capabilities?	12 - 48%	12 - 48%	1 – 4%	0	0	0
29	Evaluate the focus of educational programmes/curricula on providing students with the skills to analyze the situation and make forecasts	11 - 44%	13 - 52%	1 – 4%	0	0	0
30	Evaluate the extent to which the content and quality of implementation of the educational programme meet the expectations of the labour market and employer	11 - 44%	14 - 56%	0	0	0	0

### 31. Why do you work in this particular HEI?

- ✓ İ like this, i believe that there will be new progress in my future carrier
- ✓ Teacher work is objectively evaluated, new educational innovations are used, and teacher-student cooperation is established at a high level in the teaching process.
- ✓ I like this University
- ✓ Developed social work field, Supportive environment Academic staff
- ✓ Work conditions, academic staff
- ✓ Kollektivin psixoloji iqlimi uyğundur. (suitable psychological state of the collective)
- ✓ professional work environment, student-centered education, strong career opportunities.
- ✓ Rahat iş mühiti (convenient work environment)
- ✓ Work conditions are best for my career
- ✓ Professional work environment, student-centered education, strong career opportunities
- ✓ Availability of higher education opportunities, mobility, strong training activities.
- ✓ This match to my investigative and educational interests
- ✓ Daha əlverişli və demokratik sosial mühiti var. (the social environment is more convenient and democratic)

- ✓ work at this higher education institution because its academic environment, development opportunities, and student-centered approach align with my professional goals.
- ✓ Because I am passionate about education and working with young people, and I see opportunities here to develop myself.
- ✓ Profesional iş ortamının olması, inkişafıma müsbət təsir göstərməsi (professional work environment, the positive impact on my professional development)
- ✓ It is better compared to other universities in Azerbaijan
- ✓ I work at this university because it has a strong academic reputation, offers opportunities for research and professional growth, and aligns with my values of fostering innovation and high-quality education.
- ✓ Social work department is very strong

**32. How often do you hold masterclasses and practitioner classes as part of your course?**

Very often	Often	Sometimes	Very rarely	Never
4 – 16%	14-56%	5 -20%	2 – 8%	0

**33. How often do teachers invited from outside (local and foreign) participate in the training process?**

Very often	Often	Sometimes	Very rarely	Never
1 -4%	13-52%	10 - 40%	1 - 4%	0

**34. How often do you encounter the following problems in your work: (please, answer on each line)**

Questions	Often	Sometimes	Never	No answer
34.1 Lack of classrooms	0	7 - 28%	18 - 72%	0
34.2 Unbalanced teaching load by semester	0	5 - 20%	20 - 80%	0
34.3 Unavailability of necessary literature in the library	1 - 4%	12 - 48%	12 - 48%	0
34.4 Overcrowding of study groups (too many students in the group)	4 - 16%	13 - 52%	8 - 32%	0
34.5 Inconvenient schedule	1 - 4%	7 - 28%	17 - 68%	0
34.6 Inadequate facilities for classroom activities	0	7 - 28%	18 - 72%	0
34.7 Lack of internet access/poor internet connection	0	13 - 52%	12 - 48%	0
34.8 Students lack interest in the study	0	17 - 68%	8 - 32%	0
34.9 Late delivery of information about the events	0	5 - 20%	20 - 80%	0
34.10 Absence of teaching aids in classrooms	1 - 4%	6 - 24%	18 - 72%	0
34.11 Other problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No</li> <li>✓ No problems</li> <li>✓ no problems</li> <li>✓ Başqa problem yoxdur. (no other problems)</li> <li>✓ İnternetdə bəzən yüklənmələr olur (there are sometimes problems with internet)</li> <li>✓ Don't observe</li> <li>✓ Əmək haqqı azdır (low salary)</li> <li>✓ Sometimes we face to about few problems</li> </ul>			

**35. There are many different aspects and aspects in HEI's life that affect every teacher and employee in one way or another. Assess how satisfied you are with:**

Questions	Fully satisfied (1)	Partially satisfied (2)	Unsatisfied (3)	Unsure (4)

35.1 HEI management's attitude towards you	18 - 72%	7 - 28%	0	0
35.2 Relationships with direct management	21 - 84.0%	4 - 16%	0	0

35.3 Relationships with colleagues at the department	21 - 84%	4 - 16%	0	0
35.4 Degree of participation in management decisions	17 - 68%	8 - 32%	0	0
35.5 Relationships with students	21 - 84%	4 - 16%	0	0
35.6 Recognition of your success and achievements by administration	19 - 76%	6 - 24%	0	0
35.7 Support for your proposals and comments	20 - 80%	5 - 20%	0	0
35.8 HEI administration's activities	21 - 84%	4 - 16%	0	0
35.9 Remuneration terms	15 - 60%	9 - 36%	1 - 4%	0
35.10 Working conditions, list and quality of services provided in HEI	19 - 76%	6 - 24%	1 - 5.9%	0
35.11 Occupational health and safety	20 - 80%	5 - 20%	0	0
35.12 Management of changes in HEI's activities	19 - 76%	6 - 24%	0	0
35.13 Provision of a social package: recreation, sanatorium treatment, etc.	9 - 36%	8 - 32%	4 - 16%	4 - 16%
35.14 Arrangements for catering in HEI and its quality	-	-	-	-

35.15 Arrangements for health care and quality of medical services	14 - 56%	8 - 32%	2 - 8%	1 - 4%
--	-------------	------------	--------	--------

## Annex 4. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE OF STUDENTS

### *Questionnaire for Students of educational programme 700803 Social work of the Azerbaijan University*

**Total number of questionnaires:37**

**Educational Program (Specialty):**

Social Work	62.2%	23
Others	37.8%	14

**Sex:**

Female	59.5%	22
Male	36.344 0.5%	15

**3. Evaluate how satisfied you are with:**

Questions	Very good	Good	Relatively poor	Poor	Very poor
3.1 Relations with the dean's office (school, faculty, department)	26 - 70.3 %	11- 29.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.2. Accessibility of Dean's Office (school, faculty, department)	27 - 73%	10- 27%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.3. Accessibility and responsiveness of management (of HEI, school, faculty, department)	28 - 75.7 %	9- 24.3 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.4. Accessibility of academic consulting	28 - 75.7	8- 21.6	1 - 2.7	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
	%	%			

3.5. Support with study materials in the learning process	26 - 70.3 %	10- 27%	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.6. Accessibility of counselling on personal issues	23 - 62.2 %	11- 29.9 %	3- 8.1%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.7. Relationships between student and teachers	26 - 70.3 %	11- 29.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.8. Activities of educational institution financial and administrative services	20 - 54.1 %	17- 45.9 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.9. Accessibility of medical services	20 - 54.1 %	17- 45.9 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.10. Quality of medical services in HEI	18- 48.6 %	19- 51.4 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.11. Accessibility of library resources	24 - 64.9 %	12- 32.4 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	1 - 2.7 %
3.12. Quality services provided in libraries and reading rooms	19 - 51.4 %	17- 45.9 %	0 - 0%	1 - 2.7%	0 - 0%
3.13. Educational resources available in HEI	24 - 64.9 %	12 - 32.4 %	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.14. Accessibility of computer classrooms					

	18 - 48.6 %	16- 43.2 %	2- 5.4%	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%
3.15. Accessibility and quality of internet resources	22 - 62.2 %	11- 29.7 %	2- 5.4 %	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%
3.16. Information content of the web-site of an educational institution, as a whole, and of faculties (schools), in particular	26- 70.3 %	11- 29.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.17. Classrooms, lecture halls for big groups	22- 59.5 %	12- 32.4 %	3- 8.1%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.18. Students' recreation rooms (if available)	16- 43.2 %	14- 37.8 %	6- 16.2 %	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%
3.19. Clarity of procedures for taking disciplinary measures	21- 56.8 %	16- 43.2 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.20. Quality educational program as a whole	24 - 64.9 %	13- 35.1%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.21. Quality of curricula in EP	22- 59.5 %	15- 40.5 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.22. Teaching methods as a whole	24 - 64.9 %	12 - 32.4 %	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.23. Teacher's quick response to feedback on educational process issues	26- 70.3 %	10- 27%	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%

3.24. Quality of teaching in general	26 – 70.3 %	11- 29.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.25. Academic load/requirements to students	20– 54.1 %	17- 45.9 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.26. Teaching staff's requirements for students	21 - 56.8 %	15- 40.5 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	1- 2.7%
3.27. Informational support and explanation of the HEI entrance requirements and educational program (specialty) strategy before entering HEI	22 - 59.5%	14- 37.8 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	1- 2.7 %
3.28. Information on requirements necessary to be met to complete this educational program (specialty) successfully	25 - 67.6 %	11- 29.7%	1- 2.7%	0- 0%	0- 0%
3.29. Quality of examination materials (tests, examination questions and so on)	23 - 62.2%	14- 37.8 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.30. Objectivity of evaluation of knowledge, skills and other academic achievements	20 - 54.1 %	16- 43.2 %	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.31. Available computer classrooms	20 - 54.1 %	15- 40.5 %	2- 5.4 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.32. Available scientific laboratories	15 - 40.5 %	18- 48.6 %	3- 8.1%	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%
3.33. Teacher's objectivity and fairness	18 -	18-			

	48.6%	48.6%	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.34. Informing students about courses, educational programs, and the academic degree being received	23 - 62.2 %	13- 35.1 %	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3.35. Providing students with dormitory facilities	13 - 35.1 %	19- 51.4 %	2- 5.4%	2- 5.4%	1- 2.7%

#### 4. Evaluate to what extent you agree that:

Statement	Fully agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree	Fully disagree	No answer
4.1. The course program was clearly presented	24- 64.9 %	12- 32.4%	1- 2.7%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.2. The course content is well- structured	22 – 59.5 %	12- 32.4 %	3- 8.1 %	0 - 0%	0-0%	0 - 0%
4.3. The key terms are properly explained	22- 59.5 %	14- 37.8 %	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.4. The material suggested by the Teacher is relevant and reflects the latest scientific and practical developments	23 - 62.2 %	11- 29.7 %	2- 5.4 %	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.5. The teacher uses effective teaching methods	22- 59.5 %	13- 35.1 %	2 5.4 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.6. The teacher is knowledgeable about information being taught	26 – 70.3 %	11- 29.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.7. The teacher presents the material clearly	25- 67.6 %	11- 29.7	1 - 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%

		%				
--	--	---	--	--	--	--

4.8. The teacher presents the material in an interesting manner	23-62.2 %	13-35.1 %	1-2.7 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.9. Knowledge, skills and other academic achievements are evaluated objectively	23-62.2 %	12-32.4 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.10. The teacher meets your requirements and expectations regarding professional and personal development	21-56.8 %	14-37.8 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.11. The teacher boosts the students' activity	24-64.9 %	11-29.7 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.12. The teacher boosts the students' creative thinking	23-62.2 %	11-29.7 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	1-2.7 %
4.13. Teacher's appearance and manners are adequate	23-62.2 %	14-37.8 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.14. The teacher demonstrates a positive attitude to students	28-75.7 %	7-18.9 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.15. Academic achievement evaluation system (seminars, tests, questionnaires and others) reflects the content of the course	24-64.9 %	11-29.7 %	2-5.4 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.16. Evaluation criteria the teacher uses are clear and available	25-67.6 %	11-29.7 %	1-2.7 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.17. The teacher evaluates students' achievements objectively	24-64.9 %	10-27 %	3-8.1 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
4.18. The teacher speaks the professional language	25-67.6 %	11-29.7 %	1-2.7 %	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%

4.19. The educational organization allows for sporting and other leisure activities	23-62.2%	10-27%	3-8.1%	0-0%	0-0%	1-2.7%
---	----------	--------	--------	------	------	--------

4.20. Equipment and facilities for students are safe, comfortable and up-to- date	23- 62.2 %	11- 29.7 %	3- 8.1%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4.21. The library is well-equipped and has a sufficient collection of scientific, educational and methodological literature	22- 59.5 %	10- 27 %	3- 8.1 %	0 - 0%	1- 2.7 %	1- 2.7 %
4.22. All students have equal opportunities for EP study and personal development	23- 62.2 %	12- 32.4 %	1- 2.7 %	1- 2.7 %	0 - 0%	0 - 0%

### Other problems with teaching quality:

- ✓ *No problem*
- ✓ *Yaxşı (good)*
- ✓ *Proqram fənləri hazırlanarkən daha xüsusişdirilsə daha yaxşı olar. (It would be better if the curriculum subjects were more specialized when being developed).*
- ✓ *Universitetin binasının daha geniş olmasını istərdim (I would like the university building to be larger)*
- ✓ *Insufficient use of modern resources.*
- ✓ *I have not encountered any problems with the quality of teaching.*
- ✓ *1. One of the main issues related to teaching quality is the limited use of modern and interactive teaching methods. In many courses, traditional lecture-based approaches dominate, which reduces student engagement and critical thinking development.*
- ✓ *2. Another problem is the lack of practical sessions and real-life case studies. Students often receive theoretical knowledge without sufficient practical application, which negatively affects their professional readiness.*
- ✓ *Çox savadlı müəllimlər və çox güclü tədris həyata keçirilir. Azərbaycan universitetini seçməyimdən çox razıyam və hər kəsə tövsiyə edirəm. (Highly knowledgeable instructors deliver exceptionally strong and effective instruction. I am very pleased with my decision to choose Azerbaijan University and would recommend it to everyone).*
- ✓ *Dərs saatının dəqiqəsi çoxdur. (The duration of each class session is extensive.)*
- ✓ *1. One of the main issues related to teaching quality is the limited use of modern and interactive teaching methods. In many courses, traditional lecture-based approaches dominate, which reduces student engagement and critical thinking development.*
- ✓ *2. Another problem is the lack of practical sessions and real-life case studies. Students often receive theoretical knowledge without sufficient practical application, which negatively affects their professional readiness.*
- ✓ *No*
- ✓ *The quality of teaching is high and there are no problems. I am very satisfied with the teachers and the quality of teaching.*