
Georgian National University SEU
Strategic Development Plan
2020-2026

REALISING OUR FULL POTENTIAL

2019

The goal of the Georgian National University (SEU) Strategic Development Plan for 2020-2026 is to define the strategic directions that the SEU will lead for the next seven years.

The document allows the SEU to share with its stakeholders its vision and mission, ways to achieve them.

This long-term Strategic Development Plan for the Georgian National University SEU lays out the main pillars for the future development of our institution. It is understood as a living document that we will continuously review and, whenever required, update to reflect new developments in order to ensure that we remain an agile university that adequately responds to a fast-changing international and national environment in higher education and ensures that Georgian National University SEU remains on track in its ambition to establish itself as the leading private university in Georgia.

We base our Strategic Development Plan on our mission and seeks in all our operations to accomplish the goals set out therein.

The Mission of Georgian National University SEU is to:

Create an internationally recognised academic environment that is centred on students and their success in a high quality modern setting that stimulates learning, teaching and research and thereby provides the opportunity for everyone to achieve their full potential and prepares competitive and highly qualified specialists for the labour market.

Providing education based on the principles and values of the European Higher Education Area and using innovative and flexible approaches to

respond to the different needs and demands of all students and society, anticipating trends and focusing on quality improvement is the constant goal of SEU.

The Vision of Georgian National University SEU is to:

Be a prestigious and value-based university serving society through high-quality education and research, putting personal development at the core

The slogan of Georgian National University SEU is:

“Be ahead of time”

“Bissenos tempus”

Our core values are:

- Academic freedom
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Social responsibility
- Fairness
- Respect
- Dedication
- Patriotism

Thus, the main pillars of the mission are to:

- be student-centred
- provide a stimulating environment
- provide opportunities
- provide innovative solutions
- serve society and students

- be future oriented
- align its operation with European values

These main pillars are the reference points for the strategic objectives laid out in this plan. The alignment with the European values (academic freedom, autonomy, student involvement) is a fundamental and cross-cutting theme that forms the basis of our self-understanding and translates into governance and decision-making practices as well as general operations.

In always focusing on the achievements of the mission Georgian National University SEU as the fundament of its strategy, a reference point is established to support growth and ambitions as well as responsibility towards internal and external stakeholders and society at large.

The Strategic Development Plan has been developed as a joint exercise between leadership and administration, ensuring full integration of feedback from departments. It has then undergone a wider consultation process, involving all our internal and external stakeholders.

Thus, the Strategic Development Plan, as well as the corresponding Action Plan have been developed on the basis of a rigorous and self-critical evaluation of our past and current activities. We have initiated larger research, such as a comprehensive labour market research, to inform us. In addition, we have undertaken a thorough SWOT analysis. It is part of our self-understanding that we undertake evidence-based decisions, both in the context of wider strategic planning and in our daily operations.

The outcomes of our SWOT analysis are presented below and form part of the rationale for this Strategic Development Plan.

| | | Competence development (Individuals) | Organisational development | Cooperation systems | Enabling frameworks |
|----------------------|----------|---|---|--|---|
| SWOT Analysis | S | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long-standing employees, knowledge of the institution - Motivated administrative staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent growth - High popularity amongst Georgian students - High level of student services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good cooperation with students - Increasing international cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High investment in infrastructure - Flexible tuition fee arrangements; Financial support for students - Interesting and diverse student life; - Recreational zones - Modern equipment |
| | W | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reliance on invited staff - Not widespread research experience - Little experience in strategic planning - Level of student intake quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational bottlenecks - Informality of processes - Reputation not aligned with institutional reality - Concentration of tasks with few people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak internal communication - Little involvement of academic staff in governance - Low awareness of international scientific activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of university hospital - Quality assurance system focused on teaching |
| | O | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willingness to foster changes - Increasing attractiveness for staff with international experience - Capability of academic staff to increase publications in reputed journals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversification of offerings - Increase of international students - EQE re-authorisation and re-accreditation processes - New financial management system - Improved personnel management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good knowledge of labour market and cooperation with employers - Memberships in national and international organisations - Large pool of alumni - Openness to use innovative teaching, learning and assessment approaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New brand image - Financial liquidity and sufficient funds for further development - New campus building and further infrastructure development - Incentive and bonus systems |

| | | Competence development (Individuals) | Organisational development | Cooperation systems | Enabling frameworks |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| | | - Possibility for professional development programs for academic and administrative staff | system | | |
| | T | - Staff migration - Staff might not embrace new organisational culture | - Student exflux - Resistance to change - Lack of organisational and structural changes | - High competition and quickly changing environment | - Changes to regulatory frameworks: EQE standards; Visa policies, etc. - Deterioration of the economic situation of the country |
| Intended Changes | | - Staff development - Increased research activity - Attraction of more staff | - Renewed organisation structure and culture - Improved decision-making processes - Enhanced efficiency of management processes - Improved reputation - Development of quality and research culture | - More diverse and innovative offers for students - Formalised communication processes | - Further infrastructure development - Enhanced motivational systems |
| Measures & Impact hypotheses | | - Staff training and development => Improved teaching and research => Greater attractiveness for new staff | - Enhanced QA system => Improved administration and governance => Better services and offerings - Renewed organisational structure => Efficient processes => | - Understanding of labour market => Enhanced study options => Increased employability and reputation | - Performance assessment => Incentives and professional development => Higher motivation - Enhanced infrastructure => Better facilities and resources => More attractive teaching and research environment |

| | Competence development (Individuals) | Organisational development | Cooperation systems | Enabling frameworks |
|---|--|------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | Better Planning and implementation | | |
| Interactions with other levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for improved communication and better division of responsibilities between academics and administration - Sharing of good practice depends on intensified cooperation and better communication between units and departments - Staff satisfaction depends on success of organisational change | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for continued cooperation with labour market and employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attracting more and better students and staff requires an improved external perception of SEU |
| Complementary measures by other actors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External experts | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International partners and projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoE and EQE support for overall education strategy |

This Strategic Development Plan outlines the main strategic objectives and priorities for Georgian National University SEU to successfully operate and be a leader in the ongoing development in Georgian higher education.

To pursue our mission, Georgian National University SEU will focus on 3 **Strategic Priorities**, which are interlinked.

We will be:

- Enhancing the **Brand Image**
- Expanding **Research**
- Increasing and Broadening **innovative Study Options**

In order to accomplish the 3 Strategic Priorities, we have defined 3 Cross-Cutting Priorities. The fulfilment of the Strategic Priorities will have to be underpinned by:

- Attracting and Retaining **More and Better Staff**
- Strengthening **Management**
- Creating a Vibrant **Working and Learning Environment**

Only through adequate staff, management and the further development of appropriate infrastructure, we will be able to accomplish the increase of attractiveness, the expansion of research and the realisation of further study



options.

We understand our Strategic Priorities and the Cross-Cutting Priorities as interdependent and mutually reinforcing and will therefore treat all of them with equal priority. For example, a better brand image will help attracting better and more staff. At the same time, better and more staff will enhance the brand

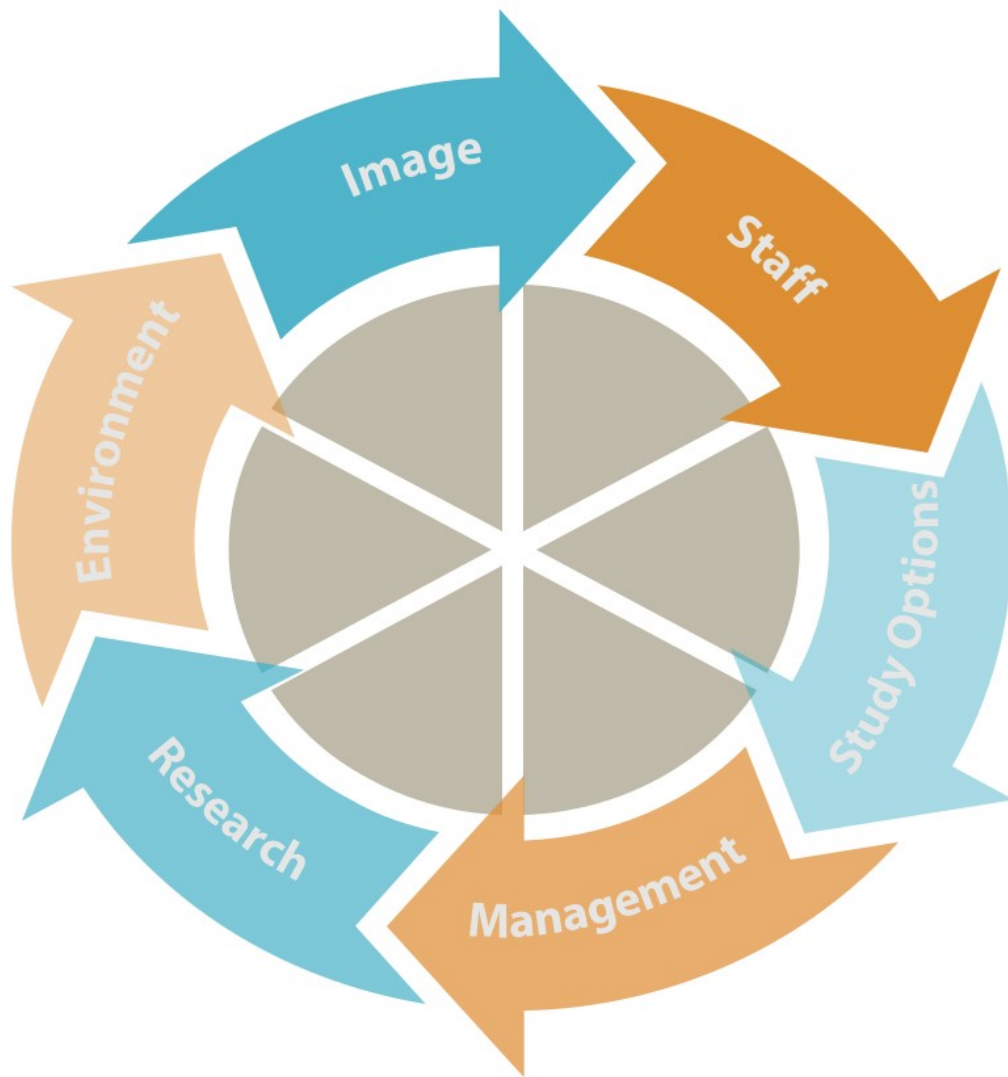


image. Hence, we also illustrate our strategy as a continuous circle of improvement:

Within each of the Strategic Priorities as well as the Cross-Cutting priorities, we will foster different development actions, which are more closely defined in our 3-Year Action Plan. These actions correspond to the main **Strategic Initiatives** that underpin each of the Strategic Priorities.

Strategic Priority 1: Enhancing the Brand Image

Georgian National University SEU has continuously grown since its foundation, both in terms of numbers and quality. However, this growth has not been reflected in a balanced and adequate manner in the perception, in particular with regard to Georgian students. Whilst it will remain an important aspect to continue working on increasing quality, it will be a priority to ensure that the brand image is matching the reality and the efforts that have been placed over the last years to improve all aspects of the university.

Georgian National University SEU has been able to become a destination of choice for highly qualified staff and also succeeds in the development of state-of-the-art environment to establish a modern learning community. The number of students has continuously risen and the university became the largest private university in the country. Student services are all encompassing and match the needs of students. Study programmes have been updated and improved and the employability rate of our graduates shows very positive developments. Learning resources have been significantly improved and research activities are broadening. Yet, these developments are currently not sufficiently reflected in the public image about the university. Georgian National University SEU needs to become a brand name that is associated with student and institutional success. This will support and catalyse further institutional development and strengthen our position in the Georgian higher education landscape. It is our aim that through all our activities and strategic implementation, we will become one of the best universities in the country and the most acclaimed private university.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will be able to convey the message of our success to potential students,

employers, and society at large. This in turn will further catalyse improvements in all other areas of our work and thereby again improve the public perception.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Creating a clear and well understood image and brand identity
2. Communicating effectively about SEU's accomplishments and activities
3. Attracting more and better qualified students
4. Strengthening the alumni network

This is how we will rate our success:

- We will continuously increase the enrolment of Georgian and international students.
- We will become a preferred choice for high achieving students.
- We will improve the stakeholders' perception of the university.
- We will become a preferred choice for highly qualified academic staff.

Strategic Priority 2: Expanding Research

Georgian National University SEU has been a teaching centred university, but always considered research as an important element of what constitutes a university. We now consider that we are adequately prepared to take on the next steps to further increase research activities and our research profile. Hence, our achievements need to be consolidated and expanded in a strategic manner.

To foster this, we will need to clarify and agree on specific research priorities, which will form part of a comprehensive research strategy that is fully supported within Georgian National University SEU and by our stakeholders. We

understand that we can only succeed in our ambition to become one of the top universities in the country if we place research as an integral part of our activities, supported by appropriate budgets.

We will start the process of obtaining the permission to offer PhD programmes in selected fields in line with our capacity and strategic portfolio. At the same time, we aim to develop a common understanding of the inseparability of research and teaching. This will also entail more exposure and involvement of students in research activities.

Many of our teaching staff are already actively engaged in research activities. Yet, we will further encourage and incentivise research activities to increase quantity and quality of research outputs. At the same time, we will place greater importance on research achievements and potential in the selection of new staff.

We will aim to nourish the research activities through adequate research infrastructure that is both addressing needs for research as well as consultancy services that can be offered to our stakeholders and interested parties.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will be able to boost research productivity and we shall work towards embedding a strong research culture in our university with the aim of serving the scientific community, economy and society at large.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Providing adequate financial support for research activities
2. Increasing research productivity

3. Extending the academic portfolio to PhD programmes
4. Enabling an active research climate

This is how we will rate our success:

- Overall and comparative spending on research
- Number of PhD programmes
- Adequacy of research infrastructure
- Number of research publications, type of journals and active conference participation

Strategic Priority 3: Increasing and Broadening Innovative Study Options

Georgian National University SEU has always been flexible in terms of the delivery of its study programmes to meet the needs of its diverse student base. This includes specific provisions for students who are work next to their studies or have to commute. Also, our academic portfolio enlarged over the years in line with anticipated trends and requirements on the labour market and student interests.

We shall seek to continue this practice and become even more flexible in the modes of delivery and assessment that we are offering. We will also aim to broaden our academic offers to provide a wider array of choices, both for existing programmes and with a view to establishing new programmes.

We will ensure that our study programmes are state of the art in terms of infrastructure and teaching, learning and assessment approaches. Modern and

innovative solutions will continue to be embedded in curricula and staff will be empowered to provide student-centred education.

We will gradually expand our international programmes and simultaneously enhance the international aspects of existing programmes. Thereby, we seek to provide an increasingly international study experience also for Georgian students. We will also explore possibilities to provide education outside Georgia through distance learning and the establishment of branch campuses.

We will engage with stakeholders and society to provide possibilities for continuous development through the development of lifelong learning opportunities, offered through appropriate means.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will be agile to quickly embed new trends created through advancement of technology, new pedagogical and methodological approaches and the development of diverse learning opportunities in line with anticipated labour market demands with the aim of providing the best options for current and future students and economy and society at large.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Expanding the academic portfolio
2. Innovating curricula and their delivery
3. Extending the reach of educational offerings

This is how we will rate our success:

- Number of study programmes

- Satisfaction of employers and students
- Number of Georgian and international students
- Number of students in non-traditional programmes

Cross-Cutting Priority A: Attracting and Retaining More and Better Staff

The quality of Georgian National University SEU stands and falls with the quality of our staff, both academic and administrative. We have been able to attract staff in the past, but we are operating in a highly competitive environment. We are well placed to become an even more attractive place of work if we also undertake some strategic activities.

We will develop a system to better reward high quality performance of staff. This will be based on a systematic staff performance assessment system. At the same time, we will provide ample opportunities for professional development to ensure continuous improvement at individual and collective level and a more formalised system of feedback.

We will seek to attract more staff with the required skills and competences to match our academic and scientific ambitions. We will work towards better talent management to leverage the potential that already exists at our university. We will also employ outside candidates based on a rigorous recruitment process.

We will establish a transparent and motivating incentive system that corresponds to the needs and requirements of our staff. Established policies and procedures for human resources management will support all our endeavours.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will be a preferred choice for new staff and that existing staff will be retained. Yet, we need to establish mechanisms that ensure staff are adequately qualified and willing to further develop supported by a systematic and transparent approach that promotes high quality and excellence.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Developing a robust staff performance assessment system
2. Providing professional development opportunities
3. Developing an incentive and motivation system
4. Devising a system of strategic and improved recruitment

This is how we will rate our success:

- Number of employed staff and staff/student ratios
- Staff and student satisfaction
- Professional development opportunities and their impact
- Staff performance assessment outcomes

Cross-Cutting Priority B: Strengthening Management

The long-term success of Georgian National University SEU relies on our ability to meet internal and external expectations, be they by staff, students, employers, the labour market and society generally. This requires a dedicated, versatile, highly competent and service-oriented professional institutional management. To this end, we will seek to further professionalise and strengthen our management approach.

This requires formalising all operations of Georgian National University SEU, based on sound policies, accompanied by an appropriate structure and results-oriented processes and procedures. We will strive to continuously revise and update our modus operandi and ensure that everyone is fully knowledgeable about it.

The quality of services and operations is our focal point. Therefore, we aim at upgrading and extending our quality assurance and enhancement system to fully embrace all aspects of daily and strategic activities. Furthermore, we will aim at embedding a university-wide quality culture. It is our goal that each and every person who constitutes part of Georgian National University SEU has a mindset of enhancement and not simply compliance.

We will intensify our efforts of strategic planning and subsequent implementation of our plans coupled with appropriate and thorough monitoring. We believe that we have to act and develop in a strategic and comprehensive manner if we are to attain our goals. This also involves ongoing dialogue with our stakeholders, in particular students, staff and employers to incorporate their views in our planning and to ensure we clearly understand the expectations placed on us.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will firmly and consistently work towards excellence in management through appropriate structures, people and systems that align our operations with the long-term vision and mission that we set for ourselves.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Revising the organisational structure and systematising evidence-based decision-making
2. Enhancing the quality assurance system and embedding a quality culture
3. Providing excellent services to all
4. Sustainable diversification of revenue streams.

This is how we will rate our success:

- Staff and student satisfaction
- Attainment of external quality assurance requirements
- Level of managerial efficiency and departmental performance
- Ability to implement our strategic plan

Cross-Cutting Priority C: Creating a Vibrant Working and Learning Environment

Over the years, Georgian National University SEU has invested significantly into facilities and infrastructure. We understand that we need to continue with this to ensure we create an environment that allows for creativity and is suitable for our academic and scientific needs.

We will ensure that all disciplines have the infrastructure they need for sustainable development. This will include the creation of a university hospital. We will focus on modernising equipment to remain a hallmark of Georgian higher education.

We will equip classrooms and offices with modern infrastructure to facilitate learning, teaching and operations. At the same time, we seek to establish an

atmosphere that is stimulating and provides a sense of wellbeing. This also includes high quality infrastructure for extracurricular activities.

We will enlarge infrastructure and equipment in line with our strategic research objectives to allow for high-class research and productivity. Through our new campus and continuously investing in further infrastructure, we will be able to develop a learning, research and working environment that will facilitate all our operations. We will expand teaching and research laboratories and ensure our infrastructure corresponds to our ambition of delivering student-centred education.

We understand that the environment we create will reflect on the mood and attitude of students and staff. Likewise, the attitude that our teachers and administrative staff show towards students has implications on their performance. We seek to establish an environment that fosters new ideas and generates knowledge.

In realising our full potential, it will be crucial that Georgian National University SEU will continue to understand the symbiosis of infrastructure and academic and scientific delivery in an environment that is a welcoming, yet demanding second home for our staff and students so that we can focus on achieving all our goals.

We will therefore in particular address the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. Providing adequate infrastructure for all learning, teaching and research
2. Ensuring state-of-the-art equipment aligned with development strategies
3. Creating a sense of community that stimulates and nourishes learning and quality

This is how we will rate our success:

- Student and staff satisfaction
- Level of investment in infrastructure
- Adequacy of teaching and research facilities