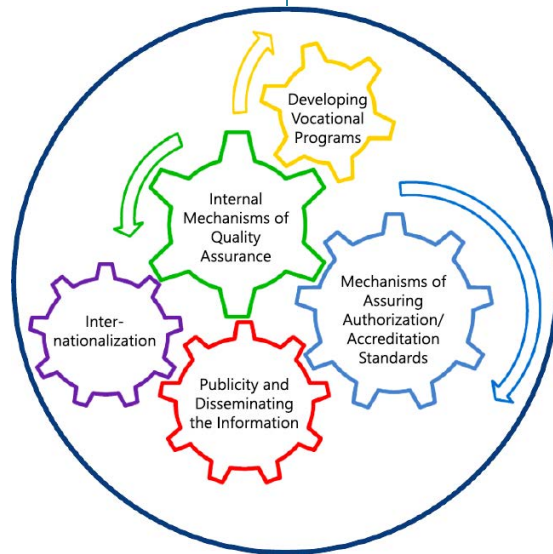




AKAKI TSERETELI
STATE UNIVERSITY

*Quality Assurance Service
Report, 2015*





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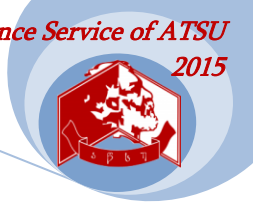
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Quality of education at the university is conducted by the Quality Assurance Service, which is equipped with the relevant authority, daily activities and at the same time is the responsibility of every person working at the university.

Development of quality culture is the priority of Akaki Tsereteli University Quality Assurance Service.

The University Quality Assurance Service is based on the work development of the quality of internal quality assurance in the perceptions of each faculty and its autonomy, which implies independence within agreed agreement.

Accents of 2016-2017:

- ❖ Planning and implementing activities for improving teaching quality;
- ❖ Involvement in the process of elaborating university strategies for vocational programs;
- ❖ Involvement in the process of developing university strategies for scientific research;
- ❖ Promoting professional development of academic staff (trainings);
- ❖ Preparing for university authorization and program accreditation;
- ❖ Elaborating mechanisms for assessing teaching-scientific work and promoting scientific researches;
- ❖ Promoting engagement in international and national projects.

Sincerely,

Irma Grdzeldze

Head of Quality Assurance Service of
Akaki Tsereteli State University

Quality Assurance Service of Akaki Tsereteli State University

The history of establishing Quality Assurance Service at Georgian Universities starts from 2004, after adopting the “Law of Georgia on Higher Education”. Implementation of educational and scientific- research activities of higher education institutions substituted to new legislative regulation. According to the law, the following management bodies of higher education institution were defined: Academic council, representative council, rector, head of administration and quality assurance services; Management bodies of the faculty: board of the faculty, dean and quality assurance service of the faculty.

Akaki Tsereteli State University Quality Assurance Service was established in 2006, by the decision of the Government of Georgia, LEPL Akaki Tsereteli State University was created as a result of reorganization and unifying of LEPL Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University and LEPL Kutaisi Niko Muskhelishvili State Technical University. As a result of the union, the educational process management and development department at the university, led by Dr. Imeri Basiladze, was reorganized. As a result, Quality Assurance Service of Akaki Tsereteli State University was established and Associate Professor D. Lekveishvili was appointed as the Chief Executive. In December 2007, Professor K. Sirbiladze was elected as the Head of Quality Assurance Service.

Quality Assurance Service of Akaki Tsereteli State University functions in accordance with the Articles 25 and 31 of the “Law of Georgia on Higher Education” and the Statute of Akaki Tsereteli State University and its own Regulations.





For the purpose of improving quality of education, QA Service: complexly utilizes external evaluation system of educational quality and internal assessment procedures; leads the preparatory and ongoing processes for educational program accreditation and university authorization within the competences granted by the law; promotes implementing the principles of Bologna Process, achieving high level of quality in teaching and research, introducing modern methods of learning, teaching and assessing, integrating university in the international and European educational area; conducts events for improving the quality of teaching and scientific-research work at the university and for enhancing the staff qualification.

By the decision of the Government of Georgia, in January 2011, Sokhumi State Teaching Subtropical University was merged to Akaki Tsereteli State University. As a result, Akaki Tsereteli State University became the largest and multi-profile university of western Georgia.

At present there are special challenges to Quality Assurance Service of Akaki Tsereteli State University, in order to improve internal quality assurance procedures, to plan, develop and implement internal assessment of educational activities.

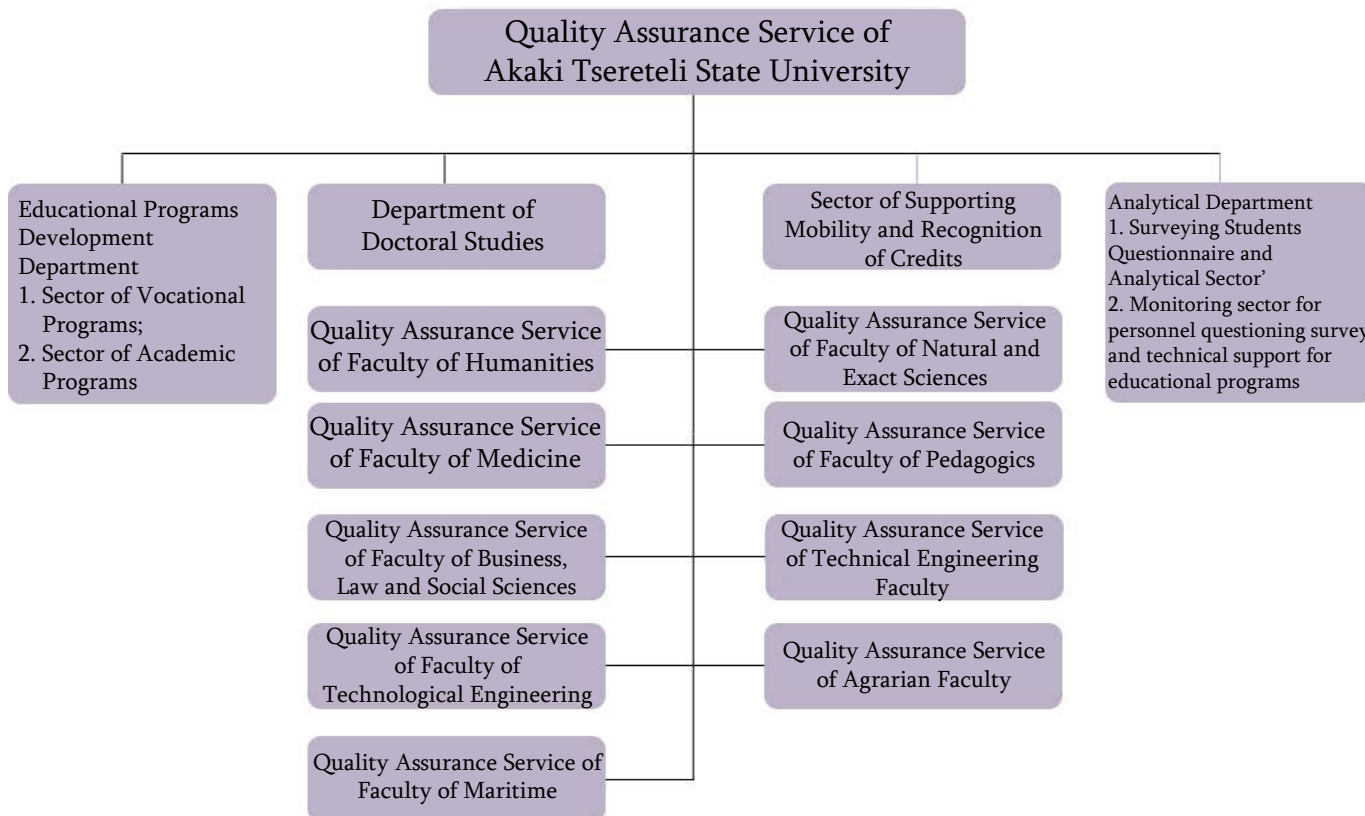
Implementing decentralization approach in the work of ATSU Quality Assurance Service has resulted in a change of structure since 2015. The functions of the analytical department of the service (surveying students, staff and analyzing the results, monitoring technical assistance of educational programs) has been transferred to the competencies of the faculty quality assurance service. In order to strengthen faculty quality assurance services, staff units of the specialists were increased proportionally to the number of faculty students, academic programs and staff.

Since 2015, faculties of ATSU have independently used tools of monitoring quality and internal assessment: surveying students and staff, monitoring graduates' employment data, analysis of the results and planning appropriate procedures. Faculty quality assurance services strengthened cooperation with the educational program coordinators. The role of program coordinators increased in the process of enhancing quality of the program and in making SWOT analysis.

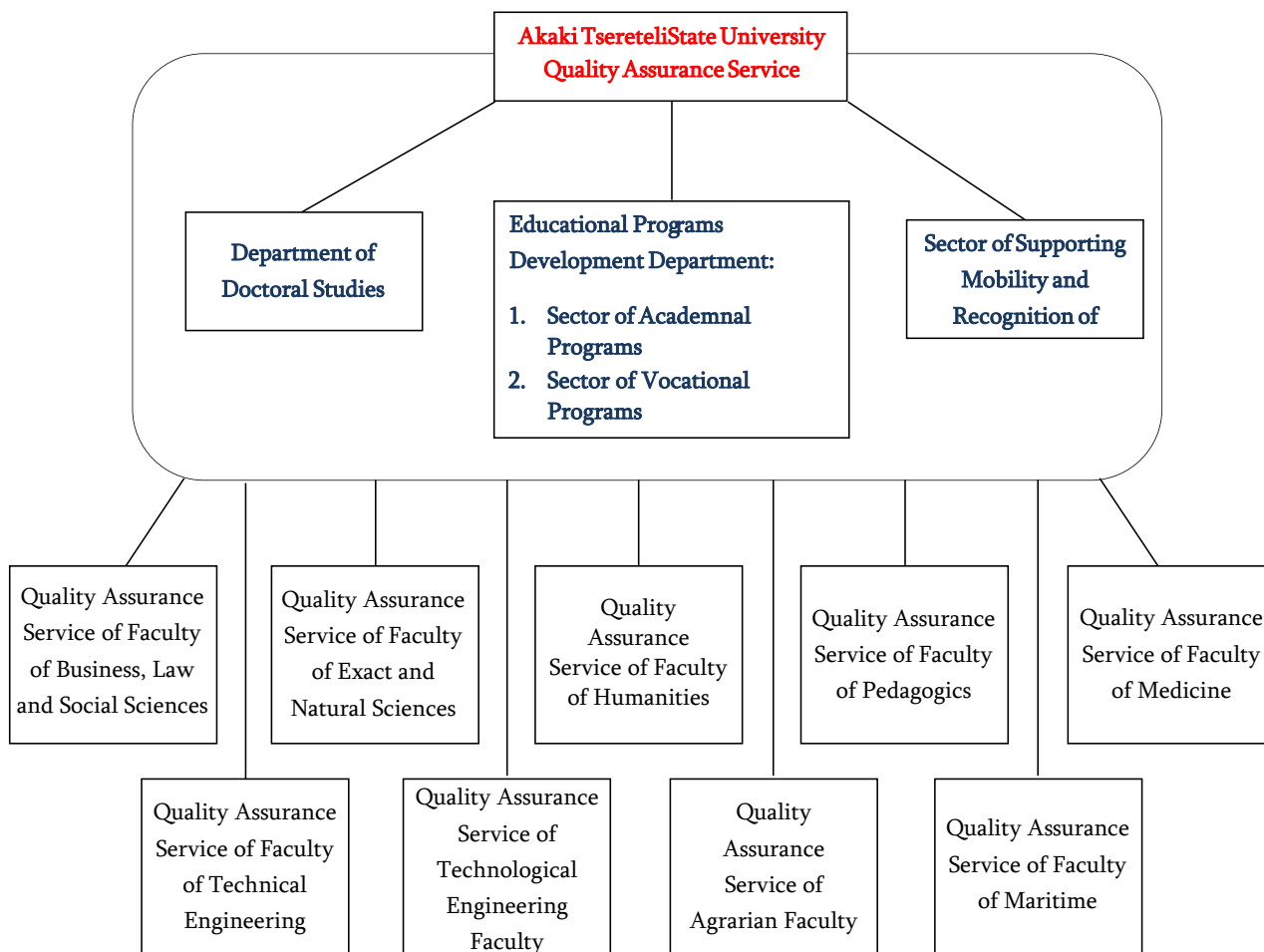




Structure of Quality Assurance Service, 2012-2015



Structure of ATSU Quality Assurance Service since 2015





Extract

Regulations of Akaki Tsereteli State University, approved by the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia № 132 / N, 9 September 2013, Tbilisi.

„2. Quality Assurance Service:

- a) Regularly assesses the ongoing teaching and scientific processes at the university and issues relevant recommendations;
 - b) Implements the activities necessary for the professional development of academic staff;
 - c) Cooperates with the appropriate services of Georgia and foreign higher education institutions to develop a comprehensive methodology for quality monitoring and assurance;
 - d) Prepares University for authorization and programs for accreditation.
3. Quality Assurance Service is accountable to the Academic Council.“

Administrative staff of ATSU Quality Assurance Service:

Irma Grdzeldze - Head of ATSU Quality Assurance Service, Associate Professor;

Nato Alavidze - Head of the Educational Programs Development Department, Associate Professor;

Murtaz Svanidze - Head of the sector of Vocational programs at the Educational Programs Development Department;

Mate Khvedelidze - Head of the Sector of Supporting Mobility and Recognition of Credits;

Teimuraz Surguladze - Head of the Department of Doctoral Studies, Professor;

Inga Abramidze - Head of Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of Humanities, Associate Professor;

Nana Shonia - Head of Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Professor;

Nana Julakidze - Head of Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences, Associate Professor.

Gulnara Shelia - Head of Quality Assurance Service at the Faculty of Medicine, Professor;

Mamulo Buchukhishvili - Head of Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of Pedagogics, Associate Professor;

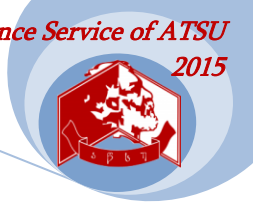
Paata Geradze - Head of Quality Assurance Service of Technical-Engineering Faculty, Associate Professor;

Tsitsino Turkadze - Head of Quality Assurance Service of Technical-Engineering Faculty, Professor;

Marieta Tabagari - Head of Quality Assurance Service of Agrarian Faculty, Associate Professor;

Manana Pkhakadze - Head of Quality Assurance Service of Faculty of Maritime Faculty, Associate Professor.





1. ATSU Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Akaki Tsereteli State University quality assurance system represents internal evaluation system of teaching, research and creative activities, which is managed by the "Law on Higher Education", authorization and accreditation standards, university statute, other legal documents and standards to promote strategic goals and mission of the university.

Quality Assurance System is an integral part of the planning, managing and monitoring needed for university development, through which assessing educational and research activities, evaluation of assessment results and their usage for further development of teaching / learning process are available.

Quality Assurance Service carries out its activities as a cyclical process involving four main interconnected elements: planning, implementing, reviewing and improving - PIRI).

In 2015, ATSU Quality Assurance Service carried out a number of activities aimed at improving quality assurance mechanisms.

Among them:

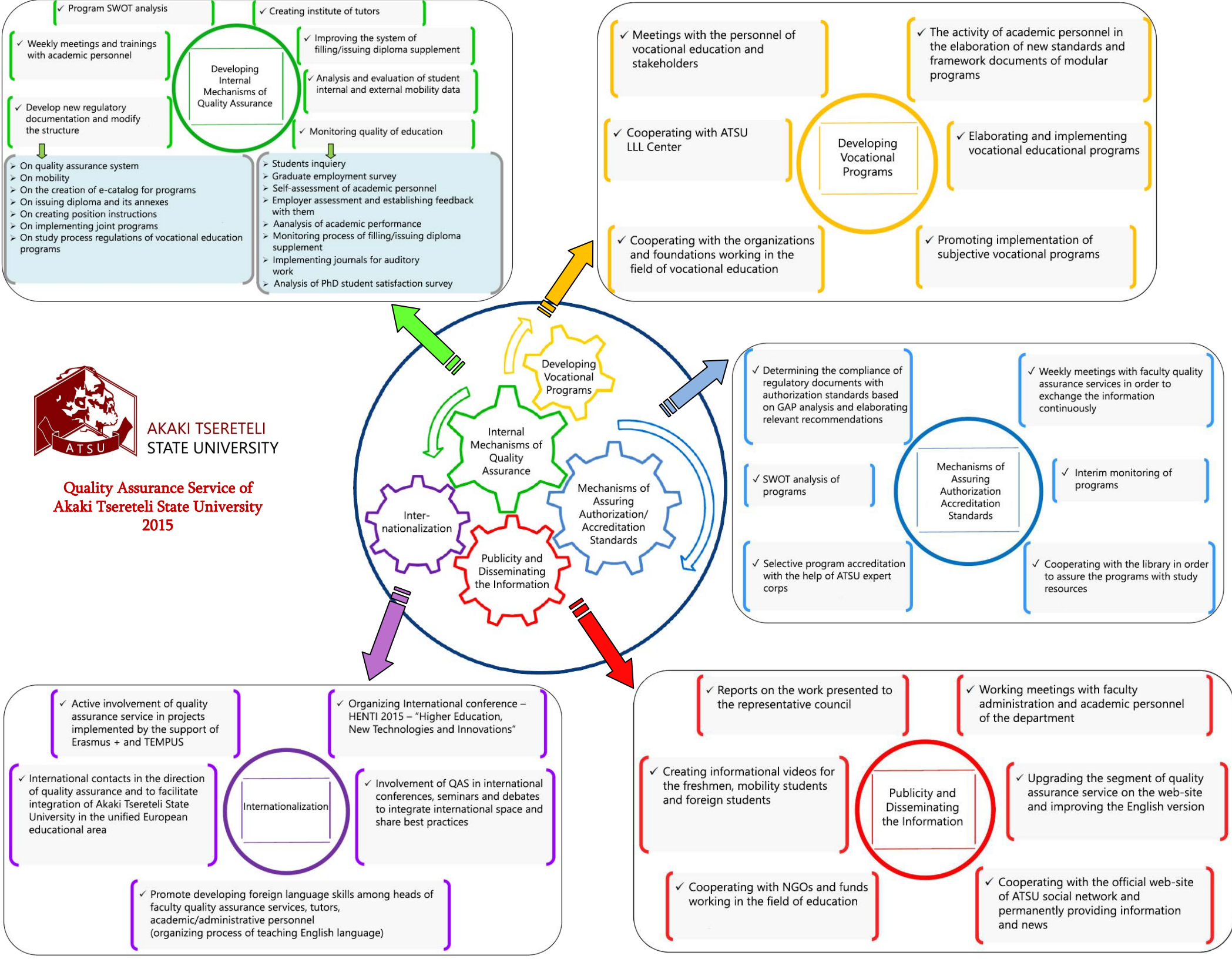
- Promoting enhancement of authorization / accreditation standards;
- Developing internal quality assurance mechanisms;
- Publicity and disseminating information;
- Developing vocational educational programs;
- Participating in the processes of internationalization.





**AKAKI TSERETELI
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Quality Assurance Service of
Akaki Tsereteli State University
2015**



Developing Internal Mechanisms of Quality Assurance

- ✓ Program SWOT analysis
- ✓ Creating institute of tutors
- ✓ Weekly meetings and trainings with academic personnel
- ✓ Improving the system of filling/issuing diploma supplement
- ✓ Develop new regulatory documentation and modify the structure
- ✓ Analysis and evaluation of student internal and external mobility data
- ✓ Monitoring quality of education

- On quality assurance system
- On mobility
- On the creation of e-catalog for programs
- On issuing diploma and its annexes
- On creating position instructions
- On implementing joint programs
- On study process regulations of vocational education programs

- Students inquiry
- Graduate employment survey
- Self-assessment of academic personnel
- Employer assessment and establishing feedback with them
- Aanalysis of academic performance
- Monitoring process of filling/issuing diploma supplement
- Implementing journals for auditory work
- Analysis of PhD student satisfaction survey

Developing Vocational Programs

- ✓ Meetings with the personnel of vocational education and stakeholders
- ✓ The activity of academic personnel in the elaboration of new standards and framework documents of modular programs
- ✓ Cooperating with ATSU LLL Center
- ✓ Elaborating and implementing vocational educational programs
- ✓ Cooperating with the organizations and foundations working in the field of vocational education
- ✓ Promoting implementation of subjective vocational programs

Mechanisms of Assuring Authorization Accreditation Standards

- ✓ Determining the compliance of regulatory documents with authorization standards based on GAP analysis and elaborating relevant recommendations
- ✓ Weekly meetings with faculty quality assurance services in order to exchange the information continuously
- ✓ SWOT analysis of programs
- ✓ Interim monitoring of programs
- ✓ Selective program accreditation with the help of ATSU expert corps
- ✓ Cooperating with the library in order to assure the programs with study resources

Internationalization

- ✓ Active involvement of quality assurance service in projects implemented by the support of Erasmus + and TEMPUS
- ✓ Organizing International conference – HENTI 2015 – “Higher Education, New Technologies and Innovations”
- ✓ International contacts in the direction of quality assurance and to facilitate integration of Akaki Tsereteli State University in the unified European educational area
- ✓ Involvement of QAS in international conferences, seminars and debates to integrate international space and share best practices
- ✓ Promote developing foreign language skills among heads of faculty quality assurance services, tutors, academic/administrative personnel (organizing process of teaching English language)

Publicity and Disseminating the Information

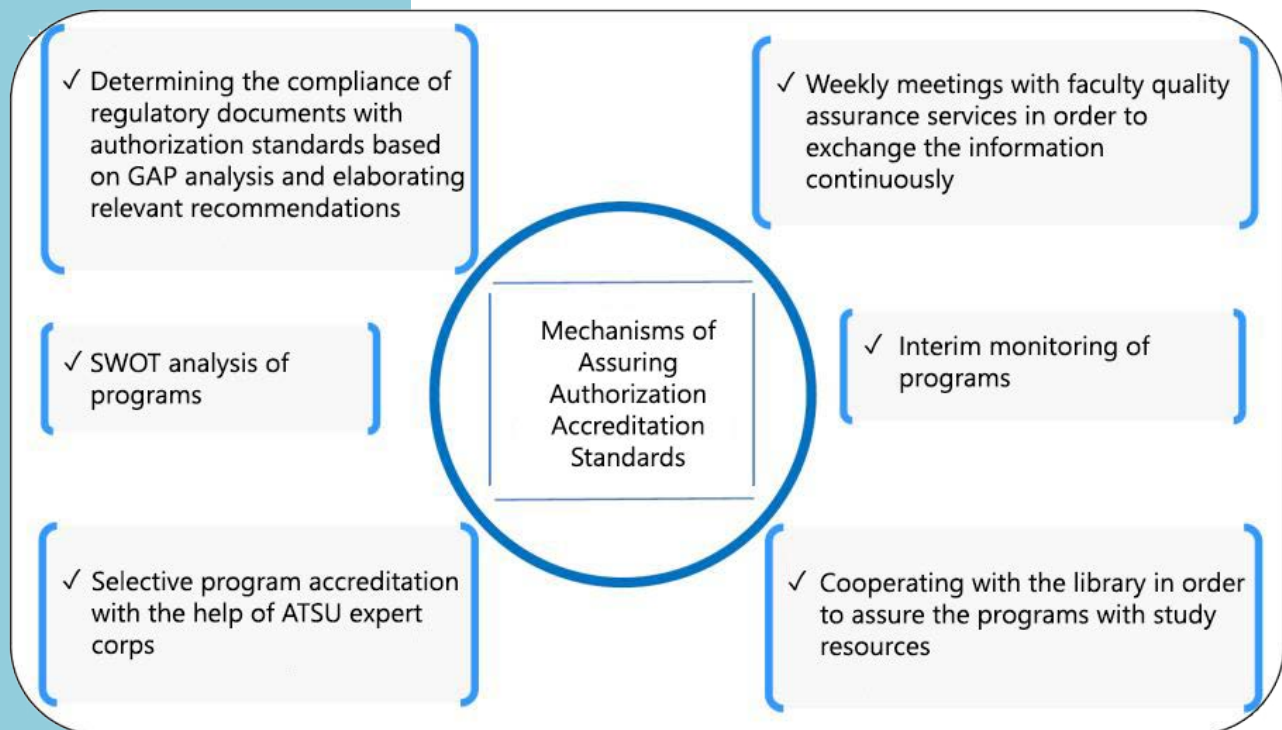
- ✓ Reports on the work presented to the representative council
- ✓ Working meetings with faculty administration and academic personnel of the department
- ✓ Creating informational videos for the freshmen, mobility students and foreign students
- ✓ Upgrading the segment of quality assurance service on the web-site and improving the English version
- ✓ Cooperating with NGOs and funds working in the field of education
- ✓ Cooperating with the official web-site of ATSU social network and permanently providing information and news



2. Mechanisms of assuring authorization / accreditation standards

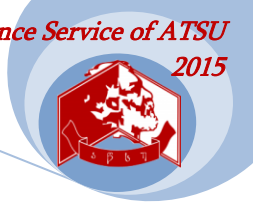
❖ Institutional authorization

In 2010, as a result of changes in the law on "Higher Education", the system of authorization and program accreditation was introduced. In 2010, ATSU Quality Assurance Service started active works to implement internal assessment system that would meet new standards of authorization and accreditation.



According to the Georgian law on "Higher Education", "Procedure of obtaining status of a higher education institution aims at ensuring compliance of standards, necessary for the performance of relevant activities to issue the State-recognized educational documents". Accordingly, only an authorized educational institution will issue the document - diploma certifying education, recognized by the state.





Authorization is mandatory for general, vocational and higher education institutions. All types of educational institutions shall be authorized for a period of 5 years.

In order to obtain authorization, the institution must satisfy three following standards:

1. Educational programs: according to the above mentioned standard, the program should include aims of the program, learning outcomes, methodology, relevant qualifications, etc.

2. Material resource: in order to satisfy this standard, the institution must own the space equipped with the relevant inventory, library, website and so on.

3. Human resources: the standard requires the institution to have academic and invited personnel with the qualification relevant to their positions. They should be selected according to the legislation and so on.

The content of authorization standards differs due to the peculiarities of general, vocational and higher education institutions.

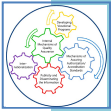
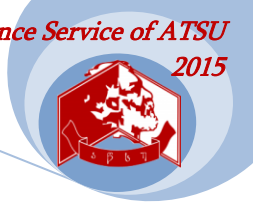
According to the resolution № 82 of the Higher Education Institutions authorization council (07/11/2011), Akaki Tsereteli State University was awarded the status of higher education institution and was granted the authority to carry out vocational educational programs as well. According to the same resolution, LEPL Akaki Tsereteli State University enrolled 11 312 students and 812 vocational students (within the overall number)

❖ Accreditation of ATSU Educational Programs

Accreditation is a type of external evaluation mechanism, which determines the compatibility of an educational programme with standards. State funding goes only to accredited programmes, in other words, the right to enroll students by state grant or state master's degree grant. Academic program is accredited for 5 years.

The accreditation shall aim at the establishment of regular self-evaluation of educational institutions for the improvement of educational quality and promotion of the development of quality assurance mechanisms through the establishment of the compatibility of an educational programme of an educational institution with the following accreditation standards:





1. The aim an educational program, learning outcomes and the compatibility of the program with them;
2. Methodology and organization of teaching, adequacy of the assessment of mastering the program;
3. Student performance, individual work with them;
4. Providing teaching resources;
5. Potential of enhancing quality of educational.

Most of the educational programs of ATSU are accredited in 2011-2012. Nowadays, there are 43 Bachelor's, 53 Master's, 32 Doctorate, 3 one-year programmes, also, Teacher Training (One Year) and Georgian Language Training Programs, 5 Independent and 34 Additional (minor) accredited programmes.

ATSU has been authorized to implement vocational educational programs in 2011. At present, 56 subject-based vocational programs of the fourth and fifth levels are being implemented in ATSU.

In 2015, European Studies (MA) and German Linguistics (PhD) programs were accredited, furthermore in 2015, by submitting the self-assessment of authorization, the university added the first joint master program "Biomedical Engineering" and 11 modular vocational programs.

❖ ATSU accreditation and authorization experts and their experience

In 2010, simultaneously with starting program accreditation, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement created Accreditation Expert Corps for Higher Education Programs, which was gradually increased and reorganized. 11 professors are enrolled in Expert Body from academic staff of Akaki Tsereteli State University.

Innovative approach of Quality Assurance Service is to apply their experience for developing internal mechanisms of ATSU QAS and improving higher education programs. This approach is based on the involvement of ATSU experts as "external assessors" in the evaluation process, which positively affects the quality of programs.





Accreditation and authorization experts and their experience

Name, Surname	Faculty and academic position	Area of experience
1. Irma Grdzeldze	Faculty of Humanities, Associate Professor	Higher Education Reform Expert HERE, Accreditation of Vocational and Higher Education Program, Specialist of External Monitoring and Supporting Group of Vocational Programs Development.
2. Nato Alavidze	Faculty of Medicine Associate Professor	Authorization of Higher and Vocational Educational Institutions and Accreditation of Higher and Vocational Educational Programs, Facilitator of Vocational Programs Development
3. Kote Sirbiladze	Faculty of Technological Engineering, Professor	Higher education Programs Accreditation, Member of Authorization Council
4. Davit Gegechkori	Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Professor	Accreditation of higher education programs
5. Irina Phkhakadze	Faculty of Medicine Associate Professor	Authorization of higher and vocational educational institutions and accreditation of higher education programs
6. Nana Sharabidze	Agrarian Faculty, Associate Professor	Authorization of higher and vocational educational institutions and accreditation of higher and vocational education programs
7. Qetevan Kintsurashvili	Agrarian Faculty, Professor	Accreditation of higher and vocational education programs
8. Tsitsino Turkadze	Faculty of Technological Engineering, Professor	Accreditation of higher education programs
9. Teimuraz Kochadze	Faculty of Technical Engineering, Professor	Accreditation of higher education programs
10. Nana Shonia	Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Professor	Accreditation of higher education programs
11. Tamar Valishvili	Faculty of Medicine Associate Professor	Authorization of higher and Vocational educational Institutions and accreditation of higher and Vocational Educational programs, Facilitator of Vocational Programs Development





❖ Interim monitoring of programs

Monitoring programs at ATSU is aimed at developing contextual part of the programs and improving teaching / learning process. Besides, the purpose of monitoring is to upgrade the package of educational programs according to the implemented amendments in terms of programs improvement.

In 2015, the Department of Academic Programs re-analyzed accreditation documentations of ATSU educational programs (which took place in 2011-2012) and issued recommendations of the experts. The recommendations were grouped by specificity. To take into account experts' recommendations and improve the programs, the Academic Program Development Department conducted interim monitoring of the educational programs and elaborated a number of recommendations.

One of the outcomes of this monitoring was the recommendation for them to present the curriculum and syllabus in renewed forms, which was implemented by the relevant normative acts of ATSU.

In the framework of the interim monitoring of programmes, electronic versions of personal and academic staff histories were created/updated. In the process. Faculty quality assurance services and the heads of relevant departments were actively engaged in the process.

❖ SWOT analysis of educational programs

By 2015, some changes have been introduced in the education program accreditation form of self-assessment report of higher education institution.

In order to submit content-oriented self-assessment report, documentation (SWOT analysis and / or others) implying strategic planning methodology was requested.

In 2015, procedures of SWOT analysis were introduced for the first time as one of the most important methods of strategic planning. In the process of implementation ATSU Quality Assurance Service, Program Cordinators and Field Departments were actively engaged. The aim was to enhance involvement and strengthen the contextual part. (See the detailed information on this issue in chapter 3).





❖ **Determining the compliance of authorization standards with regulatory documentation based on "GAP-Analysis" and elaborating relevant recommendations**

Based on using methodology of "GAP analysis" the comparison of the documents regulating the activities of the University was carried out. Results of the analysis were delivered to the relevant structural units for the further response.

❖ **Weekly meetings with Heads of Quality Assurance Services for the purpose of exchanging information in continuous mode**

Quality Assurance Service of ATSU regularly holds meetings with the Heads of Faculty Quality Assurance Services. Planning and monitoring external and internal assessment of quality, elaborating and improving educational programs and management issues of quality assurance. At the session the collegial decisions are made and the weekly work plans and dates are available. During 2015, 35 sessions were held and the protocols of these sessions were sent to the Faculty Quality Assurance Services.

❖ **Cooperation with the library to facilitate the development of programs with teaching resources**

According to the initiative of ATSU Quality Assurance Service, in 2015 the Academic council of the University has adopted a resolution № 78 (14/15) about "Instructions for developing academic educational programs". According the resolution when submitting an educational program package, it is obligatory to present the proof of university library that the literature noted in the syllabus is fixed in printed form or electronic media.

Based on this resolution, the contact of program coordinators and academic personnel with the library have been improved in order to acquire new editions of literature and to enrich the library books. In addition, while working on the syllabus, plans for elaborating and submitting electronic textbooks of the courses were established by the program coordinators and implementing staff.

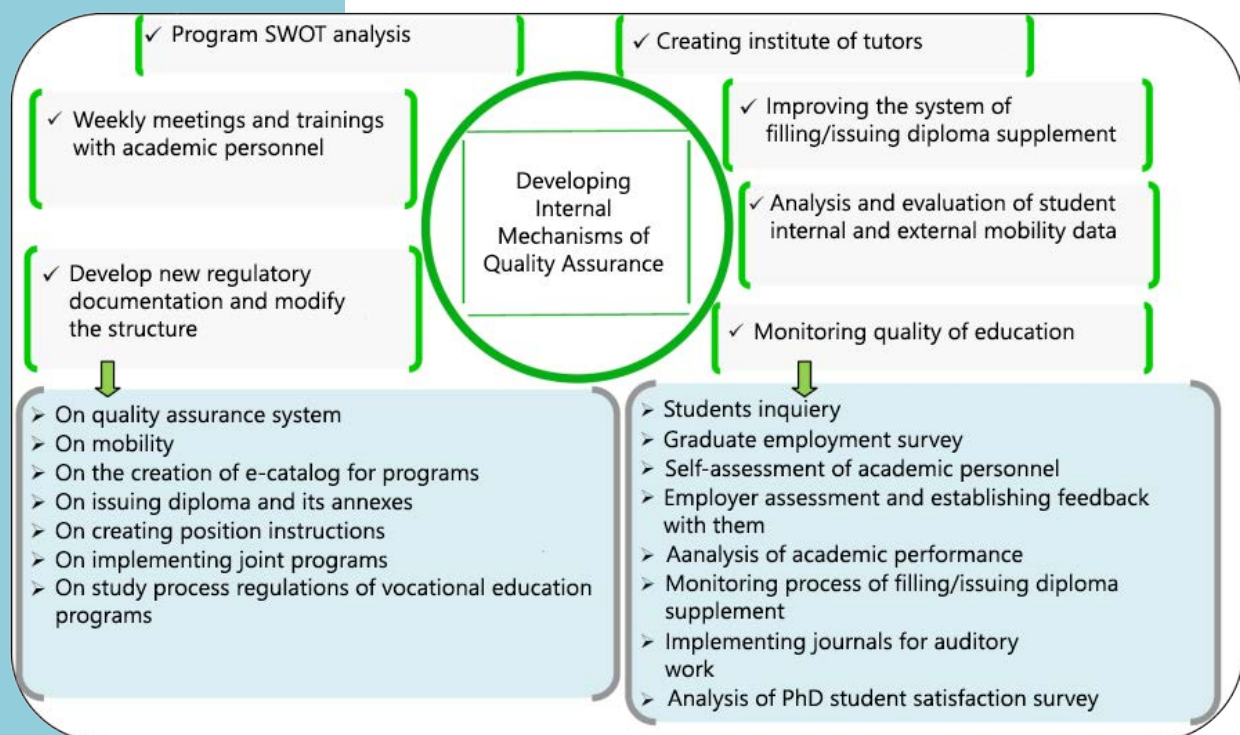




3. Developing internal quality assurance mechanisms

Works of internal quality assurance were initially concentrated on examining formal parties and documents and less attention was paid to the assessment of content, real results and processes.

Since 2015, ATSU QAS has been concentrating on improving and developing internal quality assurance mechanisms. It is focused on the following issues: educational policy and regulatory documents to be in order;

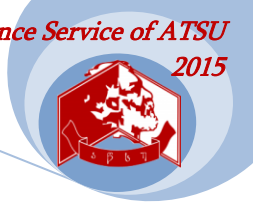


Activities already implemented:

- ❖ Developing new regulatory documentation and modifying the existing ones;
- ❖ Weekly meetings and trainings with academic personnel, program coordinators and other implementing entities;
- ❖ Improving the system of filling / issuing diploma supplement;
- ❖ Establishing tutor's institute;
- ❖ SWOT analysis of ATSU programs;
- ❖ Analysis and evaluation of student internal and external mobility data;
- ❖ Monitoring quality of education.

Procedures for submitting and approving new educational programs; Periodic assessment of educational programs and annual reports; Student survey on teaching process, academic personnel and considering their opinions; Caring for the development of academic personnel; Developing learning resources, information technologies and mechanisms of student services, etc.





❖ Developing new regulatory documents and modifying the existing ones

The following regulatory documents were created and modified by the initiative of QAS in 2015:

1. Quality Assurance System → <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/xarisxi/geo/xarisxis%20sistema-15.pdf>
2. Mobility → <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/xarisxi/geo/mobiloba.pdf>
3. Creating electronic catalog of programs
 - http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/gancxadebebi/ATSU_Catalogue.pdf.
 - <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/gancxadebebi/profeskat.pdf>.
 - <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/gancxadebebi/axali%20profesiulebi-%20samagistro.pdf>.
4. Issuing diplomas and its annexes → ATSU order #01-04/33; 24.06.2015
5. Creation of job instructions
 - Tutor and Specialist's rights and responsibilities
 - Program manager's rights and responsibilities (Resolution of Academic Councils of ATSU) № 78 (14/15))
6. Implementation of joint programs → <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/xarisxi/geo/ertoblivi%20programebis-wesi.pdf>
7. Regulatory rules of vocational education study process → <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/xarisxi/geo/profesiuli%20wesi.docx>

Motivation, willingness and full implementation of the rights of program coordinators significantly defines the development of internal quality assurance mechanisms at the primary levels. Consequently, according to the regulation No. 78 (14/15) of ATSU Academic Council defining the rights of the program coordinator is a step forward to the development of quality culture and internal mechanisms. Here is the extract from the following resolution: "Program Coordinator/Coordinators:





12.1. The program has a coordinator who in the specific field can be a university professor, associate professor, Emeritus; In case of the program specificity, if the program is interdisciplinary or has modules of different scientific directions it may have several coordinators.

12.2. The program may be coordinated by an invited person with the relevant qualification. The decision on inviting the program coordinator should be adopted by the Academic Council on the basis of the recommendations of Faculty Council's to prove the need of inviting them.

12.3. Program coordinator is responsible for the compliance of standards to the program and for the quality of syllabus. The program implementing staff is responsible for the degree of syllabus together with the program coordinator.

12.4. The program coordinator together with the faculty and university quality assurance service is the main contact person who will be informed about the internal and external evaluation of the program, technical monitoring and academic expertise and is responsible for reacting to improve the program.

12.5. The program coordinator is responsible for providing information on curriculum for the students, arranging organizational issues related to the implementation of the program.

12.6. One and the same person cannot lead more than one educational program at one level of teaching (BA (additional), MA, medical doctor / dentist, PhD)."





❖ **Weekly meetings and trainings of academic staff, program coordinators and other executives**

By the initiative of Akaki Tsereteli State University Quality Assurance Service has planned and implemented a cycle of meetings for faculty deans, heads of departments, program coordinators and other stakeholders on how to elaborate, assess and improve educational programs and prepare self assessment report of higher education programs.

In the framework of the above mentioned 10 meetings were held on the following topics:

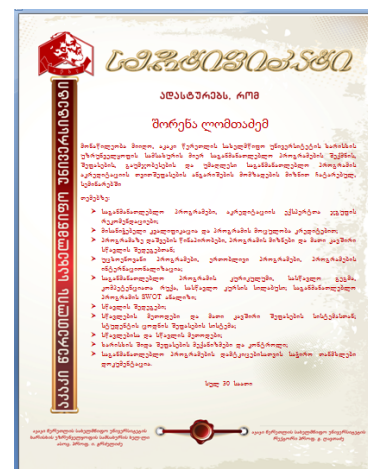
1. Educational programs, recommendations of accreditation experts groups;
2. Qualification and program volume in credits;
3. Program prerequisites, aims of the program and their connection with learning outcomes;
4. Foreign language programs, joint programs, internationalization of programs;
5. Curriculum of educational program, study schedule, map of competencies, syllabus; SWOT analysis of educational program;
6. Learning outcomes;
7. Teaching methods and their connection to the assessment system; Assessment system of student knowledge;
8. Teaching and learning methods;
9. Internal quality assessment mechanisms and control;
10. Accompanying documentation required for approving educational programs. Access to the basic literature indicated in the syllabus at the library.





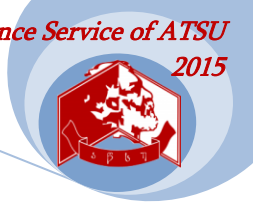
These meetings were led by local and invited experts. During the meetings, unified university forms of educational program, curriculum and syllabus were developed. In December 2015, intermediate reports of ATSU faculty heads of quality assurance services were presented. About 150 participants attended the meetings in the interactive mode and they received all the attached material of meetings.

Participants of the summary meeting were provided with questionnaires through which the analysis were conducted. The questionnaires included the following segments: actuality of the topics, relevance of the material delivered and the efficiency of facilitators leading the meeting.



The questionnaire also included the possibility of indicating the desired topic for consideration, which should be taken into consideration by ATSU Quality Assurance Service in planning the next stage of the meetings. All participants and facilitators were awarded with relevant certificates.





❖ Improving the system of filling / issuing diploma supplement

By the initiative of ATSU Quality Assurance Service, for the Faculty Quality Assurance Service representatives, seminar was conducted on the base of Maritime Faculty in Poti. There the issues of modifying diploma supplement and the peculiarities of their filling were discussed.

As a result of the seminar, by the initiative of QAS, simultaneous issuance and preparation of diploma and diploma supplement of ATSU Graduates was approved. This was reflected in the order № 01-04 / 33; 24.06.2015. Persons responsible for the above mentioned process and the deadline for the implementation of the processes were defined.

❖ Establishing Tutor's Institute

In September 2015, Akaki Tsereteli State University established tutoring institute that aims to assure student's active involvement in the academic, scientific and creative work of the university and faculty.

Tutor is a person selected by the Faculty Quality Assurance Service, who offers consultantces to thr BA students. Tutor is accountable to the Faculty Quality Assurance Service.



Tutor may be: PhD, master of senior student who is competent in the study process management processes, has experience in working with students and has a foreign language competence.

In the beginning of each semester, the number of tutors is determined by the Faculty Quality Assurance Service. Dean of the faculty is monitoring their activities.



University quality assurance service regularly meets the tutors and they elaborate general strategy to improve and implement.





Tutors are supervised by faculty quality assurance service, who:

- Facilitates their work, defines working priorities and is responsible for their implementation;
- Plans and distributes the work among tutors in accordance with their competences and functions;
- Provides thematic trainings for faculty tutors together with the staff of the university departments.

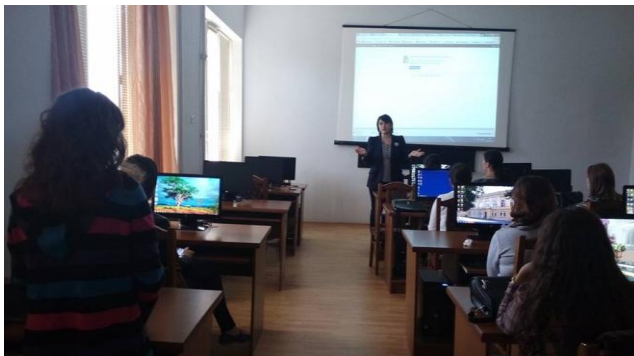


Tutor's objective are:

- Focusing on the educational program and student's study process.
- Promoting students intellectual development.

Tutor's functions and obligations are as follows:

1. Intentionally involving student in the study process;
2. Searching and processing information related to study process;
3. Organizing informational meetings and presentations with students at the beginning of each semester;
4. Assisting students while forming individual time tables;
5. Conducting consultations about the status of the courses offered and the sequence of choosing them;
6. Selecting training courses while considering their structural and content compatibility and student's interests;
7. Providing information about the learning process for the freshmen on:
 - ✓ Administrative and academic registration procedures;
 - ✓ Bachelor educational programs;
 - ✓ Basic (major) and additional (minor) specialties;
 - ✓ Credit accumulation and transfer system - mandatory and free credits, the amount of credits that may be implemented during the semester and on credits granted to a specific discipline;





- ✓ Assessment system;
 - ✓ Students' rights and duties;
 - ✓ Faculty and university student life;
8. Recognize the gaps produced during the academic registration and take action to eliminate them;
 9. Participating in the Open Door Day of the Faculty;
 10. Promoting integrating the students with disabilities in the learning process;
 11. Promoting foreign students integration in the learning process;
 12. Promoting mobility student's integration in the learning process;
 13. Participation in elaborating questionnaires for students on teaching disciplines in cooperation with Quality Assurance Service.



Currently 52 BA and MA students are involved in the Tutoring Institute at ATSU. 5-10 students work on each faculty.

The first meeting of tutors was held on September 11, 2015 by the head of ATSU QAS. Associate Professor Irma Grdzeldze introduced the planned activities to the tutors.

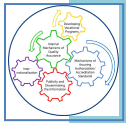
Under the supervision of quality assurance service, tutors intensively introduce interesting details of the programs to the freshmen, provide information on specific practical issues of credit system, on exchange programs, grant projects and on using university library books and materials.



In order to facilitate understanding of necessary information, they prepared appropriate animated videos, use special pages in social network for identifying and mutually exchanging the problems.

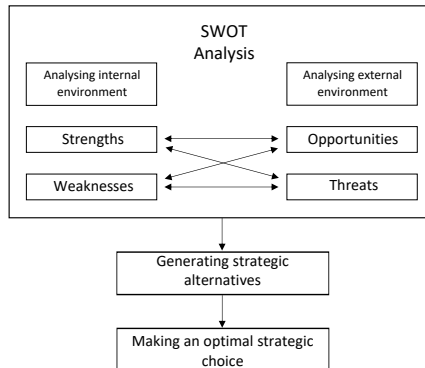
Under the supervision of Quality Assurance Service, tutors were actively involved in organizing and implementing student surveys.





❖ SWOT analysis of educational programs

ATSU QAS uses cyclic process of "plan - do - check - act" while implementing quality assurance mechanisms.



As one of the important methods of strategic planning, in order to improve the quality, making SWOT analysis was planned.

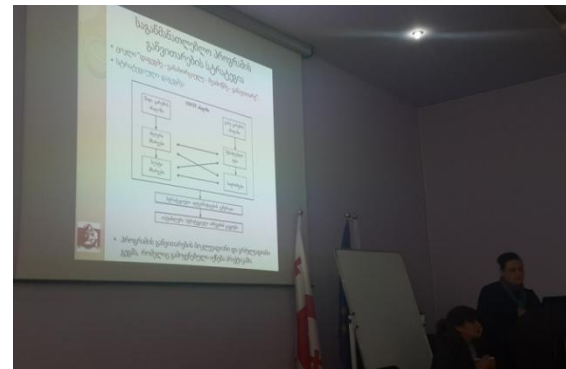
While making SWOT analysis, educational programs were evaluated by the following questions:

- What are the strengths of the educational program?
- What are the weaknesses of the educational program?
- What opportunities are being created for the future educational programs?
- What threats can disturb to achieve the set-out goals?

For making SWOT analysis, basic documents of accredited programs created during the 4-year working process were used:

- ✓ Annually improved curriculums;
- ✓ Program self-assessment questionnaires (annual);
- ✓ Internal university assessment of educational programs.

For the further working process short-term and long-term plans for development of educational programs were elaborated based on SWOT analysis.





❖ Analysis and evaluation of student internal and external mobility data

The mobility process is regulated with “The rule of mobility from one higher education institution to another” approved by Order №10 /N; February 4, 2010 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia.

The student mobility process is administered by the Legal Entity of Public Law - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement.

Mobility is carried out twice a year - during autumn and spring semesters, in the timeframes established by the director of the center.

External mobility is the transition process from one higher education institution to another. During internal mobility student uses the right to move to another educational program within the same university.

Mobility process at Akaki Tsereteli State University is carried out in accordance with the "Rule of Mobility at Akaki Tsereteli State University and Recognition of Education Received During Learning", adopted on June 24, 2015 (Order 01-04 / 33 ATSU).

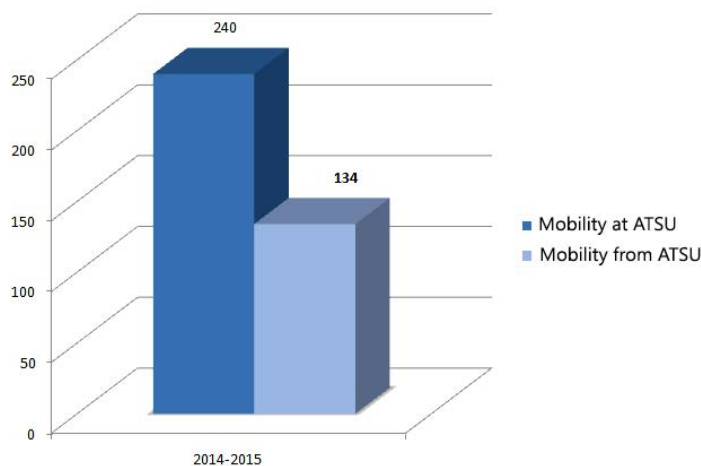
The rule regulates procedures of external student mobility, internal university mobility and the processes of activating the status suspended/**shewyveta** by ATSU. According to the rule, except for external mobility, the student of ATSU is entitled to use the right of internal mobility (from one educational program to another).

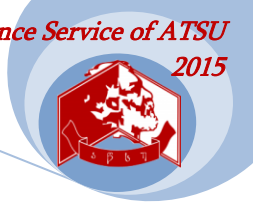
Internal mobility, like external mobility, is announced twice a year and its dates are determined by the order of ATSU Rector.

ATSU Quality Assurance Service, within the involvement of Mobility Support and Credits Recognition Sector administers internal and external mobility processes at ATSU and regaining the student status suspended / terminated.

Mobility Support and Credits Recognition Sector regularly performs both statistical and comparative analysis of the internal and external mobility of spring and fall periods by recruiting the status of paused / terminated students. Based on the results and after takes into account regional principles it makes strategic decisions.

Data of students doing outer mobility, ATSU, 2014-2015 academic year





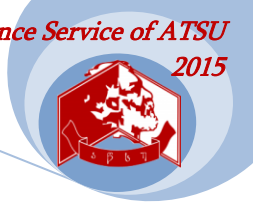
During 2014-2015 academic year, 240 students did mobility to ATSU and 134 students did mobility from ATSU.

Sector of Supporting Mobility and Recognition of Credits recording correspondence regarding the authenticity of diploma. In 2015 72 incoming and 45 sent correspondences have been registered.

During the working period:

- ✓ Forms of student mobility, regaining the student status and students applications have been improved;
- ✓ Exact dates were defined for smoothly conducting processes of mobility and regaining the student status;
- ✓ The mobility process was carried out via newly created e-flow system at ATSU.





❖ Monitoring quality of education

Implementation and assessment of quality of education by the University Quality Assurance Service is directly related to the collection and analysis of information. Monitoring focuses on specific and predetermined tasks.

In 2015 the monitoring and evaluation of the ATSU Quality Assurance Service included the following activities:

- Student inquiry;
- Surveys on graduate employment;
- Self-assessment of academic staff;
- Assessment of employer and establishing feedback with them;
- Analysis of academic performance;
- Monitoring of diploma attachments / issuance procedures.

Students Inquiry. Studying students' opinions and needs is important for the development of quality assurance.

The Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of ATSU independently planned and conducted a student survey. Students' interview questionnaires were updated on the faculties. Students' survey was conducted in electronic format at the faculty of business, law and social sciences. Together with the head of the Faculty Quality Assurance Service Professor Nana Shonia, she said that by this method the students received more honest answers and it was much easier to process results. The Faculty Heads expressed their willingness to use this practice in the course of planning and implementation of their research in the future.

Common weaknesses and specific deficiencies have been identified at the University's Quality Assurance Service to review and analyze the outcomes of each faculty. Faculty Quality Assurance Officers discussed these issues during the meeting with the faculty leadership, departments and academic personnel.

According to the student survey analysis, Faculty Quality Assurance Officers, with the help of successful lecturers, expressed their positive attitude towards their achievements and on the other hand, the relevant recommendations were elaborated and relevant departments were developed.





Employment Survey of the graduates: Permanent communication with the university and graduates is one of the most important issues. With the initiative of University Quality Assurance Service, 2014-2015 academic year graduates contact information base was created. Analysis of graduate employment of 2014-2015 academic year was completed. Heads of Faculty Quality Assurance Service presented the graduate employment monitoring data.

Employment rate for the Graduates of Exact and Natural Sciences and Technological-Engineering Faculties

Employment rate analyses after conducting students survey				
Bachelor				
Speciality	Number of Students	Employed	Unemployed	Could not contact
Mathematics	22	11	4	7
Informatics	48	9	8	20+11
Physics	7	3	2	2
Chemistry	9	1	8	-
Ecology	14	2	3	9
Biology	22	8 (6 - Pursues studies in MA)		7
Geography	20	6 (7 - Pursues studies in MA)		10
%	142	28%	37%	35%
Bachelor/100%				
Master				
Mathematics	7	3	1	3
Information Technologies	1	-	1	-
Computer Sciences	3	3	-	-
Geography	2	-	-	-
%	13/100%	46%		

Employment rate for the Graduates of 2014-2015				
BA program	Totally	Number of Graduates Among them		Rates of Employability and Pursuing Studies
		Employed	At MA program	
1. Environmental Protection Engineering and Applied Ecology	5	-	5	100 %
2. Chemistry and technology of pharmaceutical preparations	26	100 (According to all professions)	5	58 %
3. Food technology	5	-	3	60 %
4. Applied Design	18	6 (3 Among them by profession)	1	39 %
5. Textile design	8	5 (2 Among them by profession)	-	63 %
Totally	62	15 (15 Among them by profession)	13	57% 45% Among them by profession

The aim of self-assessment of the academic staff of ATSU is to facilitate each of the employees in the effective implementation of their functions, to demonstrate "good practice" examples, the strengths and weaknesses of the learning process, based on which the individual goals and objectives are developed.

Establishment of self-assessment of academic personnel should improve the quality of education according to the following issues:

- Facilitate the development of university staff and their further development;
- Identify the needs of the university employees' professional development;
- Assessment of the activities of university personnel in teaching, research and administrative / organizational fields;
- Involvement of academic personnel in the development of the objectives of the relevant faculties, scientific-research and supportive structural units;





- Elaborate individual professional goals and objectives by academic staff;
- Determining the resources that are needed for the goals and objectives set out in the Department and Faculty Development Plans;
- Identify potential challenges and define strategies for their solution.

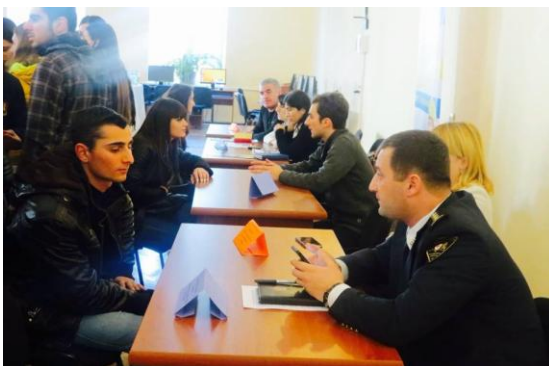
In 2015, the self-assessment process of academic personnel was conducted by faculty quality services. They analyzed the information received, reviewed and analyzed the identified problems.

It should be noted that the mechanisms for analyzing the results of self-assessment of the academic personnel and planning of appropriate measures require further improvement, which is one of the future work of the Quality Assurance Service.

Employer assessment and establishing feedback with them. The Quality Assurance Service of the ATSU marks the importance of the graduates' employment mechanism, recognizing the need to improve the research and evaluation system in this field. One of the important issues is to improve information on vacancies in the labor market and improve the graduates' awareness mechanisms.



University Quality Assurance Service promotes Faculty Quality Assurance Officers and Program Leaders initiatives - Improve the involvement of employers in educational programs and professional training, as well as the study of the labor market. In this direction, good practice and interesting initiative for 2015 was to research labor market and to engage employers' engagement, which was implemented by the Department of Engineering Technologies at the Faculty of Engineering and Technology.



It is also a good example of the "Career Day" practice in 2015 at ATSU on December 14, 2011, with the support of the Czech Government, the project "Improvement of Education Quality at Akaki Tsereteli State University" was held.





The event was organized for the students of business, law and social sciences and agricultural faculties. Participants of the event were students of Akaki Tsereteli State University, private and

non-governmental organizations, local media productions, successful businessmen. information corners, introductory meetings, presentations and discussions were held. The students personally met with employers and received information about their practices and employment.



Analysis of academic performance. Analysis of students' academic performance is an important indicator that allows evaluation of the learning process, the degree of complexity of educational programs and individual courses, adequacy of teaching methods and assessment systems, pedagogical qualities of academic personnel, level of student training and etc.

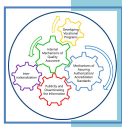
The ATSU Quality Assurance Service has been working on each of them Regular analysis of students' academic performance at faculty. Such analysis is conducted in the 6th and 12th week of interim assessment and completion of each semester.

Analysis of academic performance in each faculty is reviewed at the Faculty Council and Departments, Faculty Quality Assurance Service will present the improvement of the identified issues during the meeting with the lecturers.

Monitoring of diploma attachments / issuance procedures. At the time of issuing the diploma and diploma annexes, the university's order on issuing of diploma is necessary. The Faculty Quality Assurance Service has been tasked to observe the procedures set in time for filling the diploma attachments and giving them the numbers.

Introduction of register for audit work. Introduction of register is an university novelty of 2015. The journal is a teacher's register that preserves the relevant departments.



A small map of Georgia is located in the top left corner of the page, showing the country's borders and major cities.

Analysis of the doctoral satisfaction survey at the existing conditions for research at Akaki Tsereteli University. In April-May 2015, analytical department of Quality Assurance Service of Akaki Tsereteli State University conducted a survey of the third level students of higher education. The goal of the research was to study the quality of doctoral satisfaction with the conditions available for research in ATSU. The survey was administered online, the electronic poll was sent to the e-mails for the PhD programs of the ATSU without any preliminary selection, regardless of their status (active / status suspended). While similar studies are quite common in other countries, however, there is a likelihood that students are more motivated and more actively involved in the study, which may have a negative impact on the representation of research results.

At the time of research at Akaki Tsereteli State University there were 183 PhD students, including 111 active and 72 status suspended. During the research 116 doctorates were contacted. For more information about this research, see: <http://doc.atsu.edu.ge/geo/xarisxi/geo/2015.pdf>.

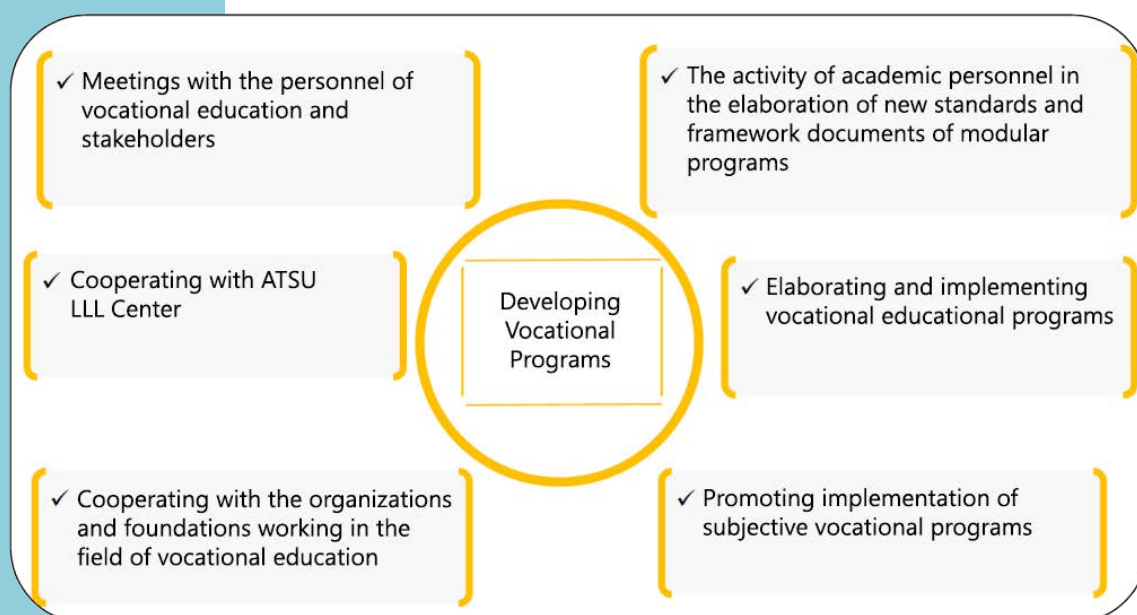




4. Developing vocational programs

Implementation of modular and subjective vocational programs is an important challenge for ATSU. Enhancing and developing the quality of these programs is an important task of the university Quality Assurance Service.

By 2015, subjective vocational programs include 54 fifth Level vocational programs, including 22 from Technological Engineering Faculty, 10 from Agrarian Faculty, 19 from Technological Engineering Faculty, 2 from Faculty of Maritime and 1 program from the Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences.



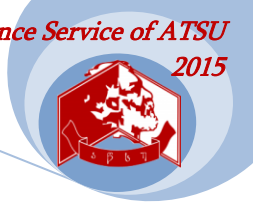
Implemented activities:

- ❖ Elaborating and implementing modular vocational programs;
- ❖ Facilitating implementation of subjective vocational programs;
- ❖ Meetings with vocational education personnel and stakeholders;
- ❖ Cooperation with ATSU Lifelong Learning Center;
- ❖ Cooperation with NGOs and Funds working in the field of Vocational Education.

New vocational (3 subjective and 11 modular) programs have been elaborated by 2014-2015 self-assessment report.

Deputies of faculty deans were ordered monitoring of implementation of vocational programs, in cooperation with the sector of vocational programs and faculty quality assurance services.





❖ Developing and implementing modular vocational programs

Since 2013, according to "Reform strategy for vocational education" National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement is facilitating "Program of developing vocational qualification", which aims to reform vocational education, elaborating and implementing flexible vocational educational programs for the introduction of economical career development and personal growth considering labor market requirements.

Academic and invited staff of ATSU actively involved in the development of new standards and framework documents of modular vocational education. Head of Quality Assurance Service - Irma Grdzeldze is a specialist of external monitoring and support group of Vocational Program Qualification Development, and Head of Educational Programs Development Department -Nato Alavidze is a facilitator of Vocational Program Development.

11 modular programs were developed at ATSU within the framework of promoting modular vocational programs by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia:

1. Specialist of custom service, program coordinator - Associate Professor - S. Svanadze;
2. Specialist of hotel case, program coordinator - Associate Professor - N. Sharabidze;
3. Advertising agent, program coordinator - Associate Professor - T. Kuprashvili;
4. Nursery school teacher, program coordinator - Associate Professor - N. Qobuladze;
5. Librarian, program coordinator - G. Chichinadze;
6. System administrator, program coordinator - Professor - A. Dzneladze;
7. Specialist of clothes artistic design, program coordinator - Professor - N. Dolidze;
8. Specialist of shoe and leather accessories, program coordinator - Professor - M. Grdzeldze;
9. Specialist of decorative-applied tissue, program coordinator - Associate Professor - T. Moseshvili;
10. Specialist of furniture design, program coordinator - Associate Professor - V. Tsiqvadze;
11. Operator of transport logistics, program coordinator - Professor - T. Kochadze.





❖ Promoting implementation of subjective vocational programs

Up to 200 students are enrolled in the 2015 vocational courses at ATSU. As for new subjective vocational programs, the following programs were developed in 2015 at ATSU:

1. Electric technician of motor engineer (fourth step);
2. Technician of constructing roads and aerodromes (third step);
3. Engine repairer (fifth level).

New vocational (subjective and modular) programs have been developed by the 2014-2015 self-assessment report. By the decision of authorization board of 18 January 2016, ATSU obtained the right to carry out these 11 modular and 3 subjective vocational programs.

Students' enrollment in new modular programs will be available in the spring semester of 2016.

❖ ❖ Meetings with the personnel of vocational education and with the stakeholders

Meetings and consultations with vocational program implementors are regularly undertaken by the direct management of sector of vocational programs, which is a structural unit within ATSU Quality Assurance Service.





Within the framework of promotion of vocational programs at ATSU, in 2015 by the initiative and support of ATSU Quality Assurance Service following seminar was organized: **"Improving vocational education, national and international experience"**.

The seminar was led by Tea Siphashvili, consultant of National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement. Target group of the seminar was staff of Quality Assurance Service of ATSU, vocational and modular vocational program coordinators, the staff participating in vocational programs and other interested persons.



The following presentations were presented: "Facilitating Projects for Developing Vocational Qualifications" and "System of Vocational Education in Georgia - Challenges and Perspectives".

The following issues were emphasized at the meeting:



- ✓ Aims of vocational education, reform, already conducted and upcoming changes to be done;
- ✓ Sharing experiences in the field of vocational education based on the analysis of experience and needs of vocational education, especially in teaching-learning and industrial practice;

- ✓ Studying and introducing European instruments in the selected vocational fields;
- ✓ Improving the ability of university staff in the development of existing vocational education programs and standards based on updated methodology and international experience.
- ✓ Creating opportunities for cooperating with Georgian and foreign institutions of the exact field.

53 participants attended the meeting. The speaker provided a detailed answer to the questions asked from the participants.





❖ Cooperating with ATSU Lifelong Learning Center

ATSU Quality Assurance Service considers relationship between ATSU lifelong learning center and vocational education department as the way of improving both directions. Consequently, cooperation with ATSU lifelong learning center is one of the sub-directions of 2015 and future work of the service.

❖ Cooperating with NGOs and Funds working in the field of Vocational Education

Memorandum of understanding was signed in 2014 by ATSU and Czech NGO "People in Need - PIN". The organization "People in Need" has been operating in Georgia since 2005. Projects of the organization include three main areas: agriculture development, increasing civic engagement and teaching via documentary films.

Quality Assurance Service cooperates with PIN and facilitates the organization to implement projects planned in Imereti region. This kind of project is "The growth of cooperatives and productivity among small farmers of Imereti and Racha region" aimed at realizing agricultural potential and eradicating poverty in rural areas. Students of the university agrarian faculty actively participate in it, which increases their motivation, provides developing necessary skills and employment. Counseling and Training Center (CTC) was established as a result of close cooperation established via implementing the projects in 2015, CTC represents partner organization of PIN. Counseling and Training Center on the one hand, is an adult education institution, which supports development of contemporary leadership and working competencies of human capital; on the other hand, however, it is - counseling center, which is assisted by a variety of organizations and organizational structures to strengthen the systems, adequate strategies of management and development.

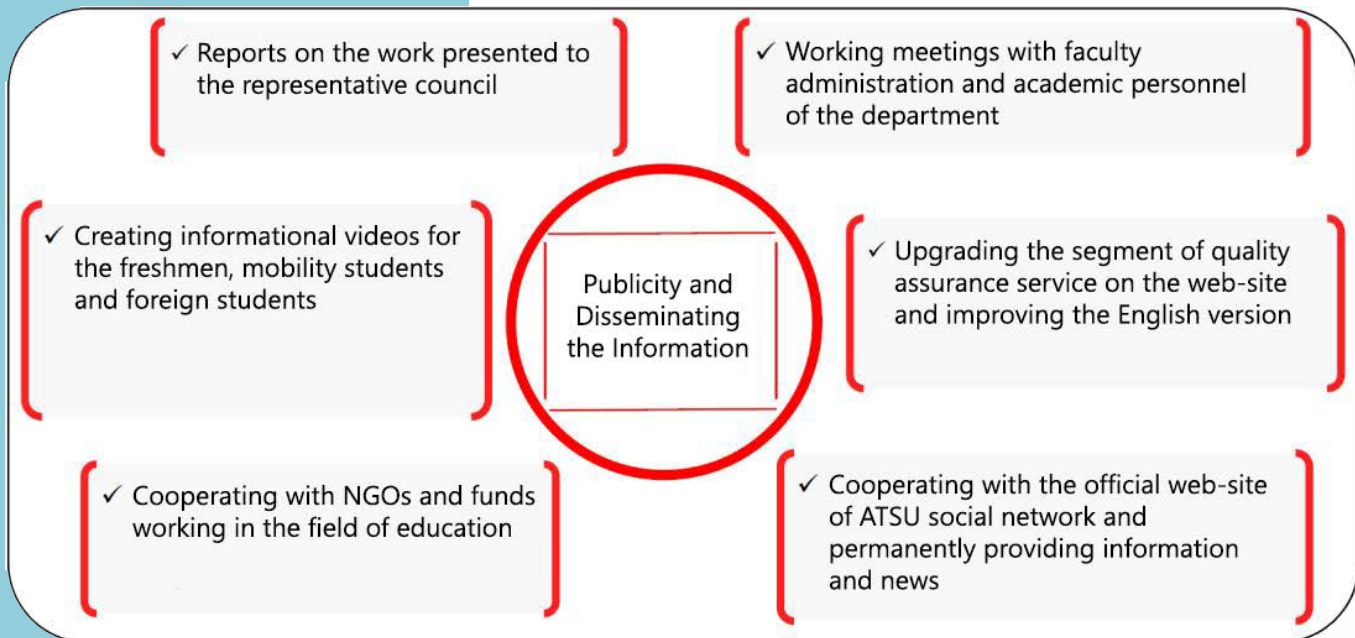
By 2016, for the academic staff of Akaki Tsereteli State University trainings on the following topics are planned to be conducted: Methods of Adult Learning and Applied Research for Managing Educational Institutions; Consultancies for establishing strategy of ATSU vocational education.





5. Publicity and information dissemination

Disseminating information while implementing quality assurance mechanisms and protecting principles of publicity is a segment that will be carried out through the daily work of quality assurance service. In this regard, the service started effectively using ATSU corporate e-mail.

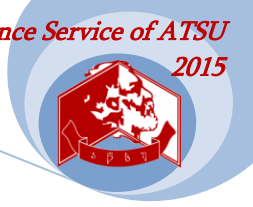


Implemented activities:

- ❖ Accounts represented to academic and representative councils;
- ❖ Working meetings with the faculty administration and academic staff of departments;
- ❖ Creating informational videos for freshmen, mobility and foreign students;
- ❖ Cooperating with NGOs and Funds working in the field of Education;
- ❖ Updating segment of the Quality Assurance Service web-page and improving English version of it;
- ❖ Cooperation via social network with the official site of ATSU and providing information and news in a permanent manner.

One of the approaches is to provide access to information and solutions for all stakeholders, target groups (program coordinators, representatives of faculty quality assurance services, interested persons participating in the meetings) through the creation of corporate mail service. Representatives will be provided with relevant information, reports and recommendations by the University Quality Assurance Service. At the same time, all individuals of these groups have opportunity to participate in electronic discussions on quality assurance, ask questions and get answers.





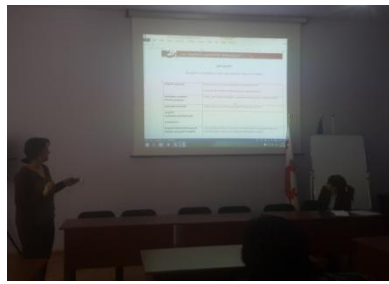
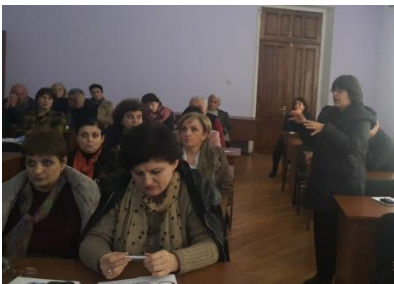
❖ Submitting the report to the academic and representative councils on the work done

Quality Management Service of ATSU, as one of the governing bodies of the University, is closely cooperating with other management bodies: Rector, academic and representative councils.

Quality Assurance Service regularly presents information on current events, performed assessments and recommendations within the framework of accountability to the academic council.

❖ Working meetings with the faculty administration and academic personnel of departments

Quality Assurance Service closely cooperates with program coordinators, administrative and academic staff of the faculty departments. Workshops are often conducted in each faculty to discuss (reports on academic performance, discussion of employment indicators, analysis of student surveys) and find solutions for different issues. However, it is one of the priorities to solve the existing problems. Faculty Quality Service meetings with academic staff of the departments were focused on the creation of field related "Committees for curriculum" and on elaborating new programs.

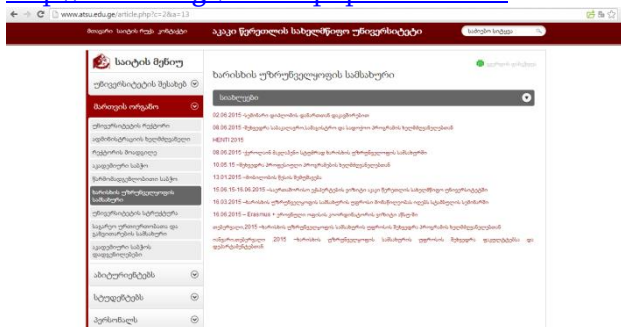




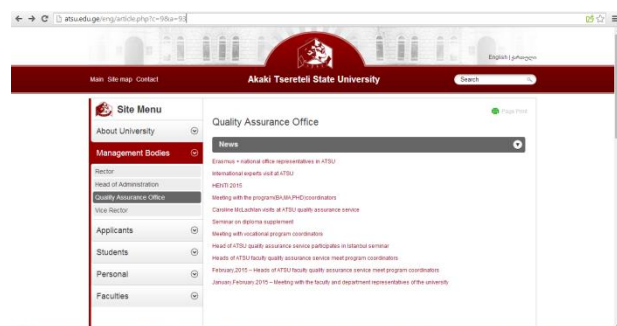
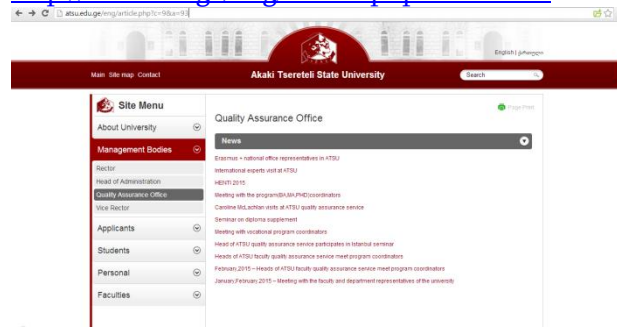
❖ **Updating the segment of Quality Assurance Service on the official website and improving English version of it**

Upgrading the segment of Quality Assurance Service website and improving the English version of it is a part of effectively disseminating information and publicity. Activities, reports and regulatory documents were being uploaded to the official website of the university in Georgian and English languages. We hope that "friendly" content and structure of the website will facilitate enhancing internationalization opportunities in a wide range of directions.

<http://atsu.edu.ge/article.php?c=2&a=13#>



<http://atsu.edu.ge/eng/article.php?c=9&a=93>



❖ **Creating informational videos for the freshmen, mobility students, foreign students**

Creating informational videos and placing them on the Internet is a good way to explain the teaching-learning process and existing regulations of the university. Goga Gorelishvili, undergraduate student of MA program in Computer Sciences, contributed greatly to the creation of videos.

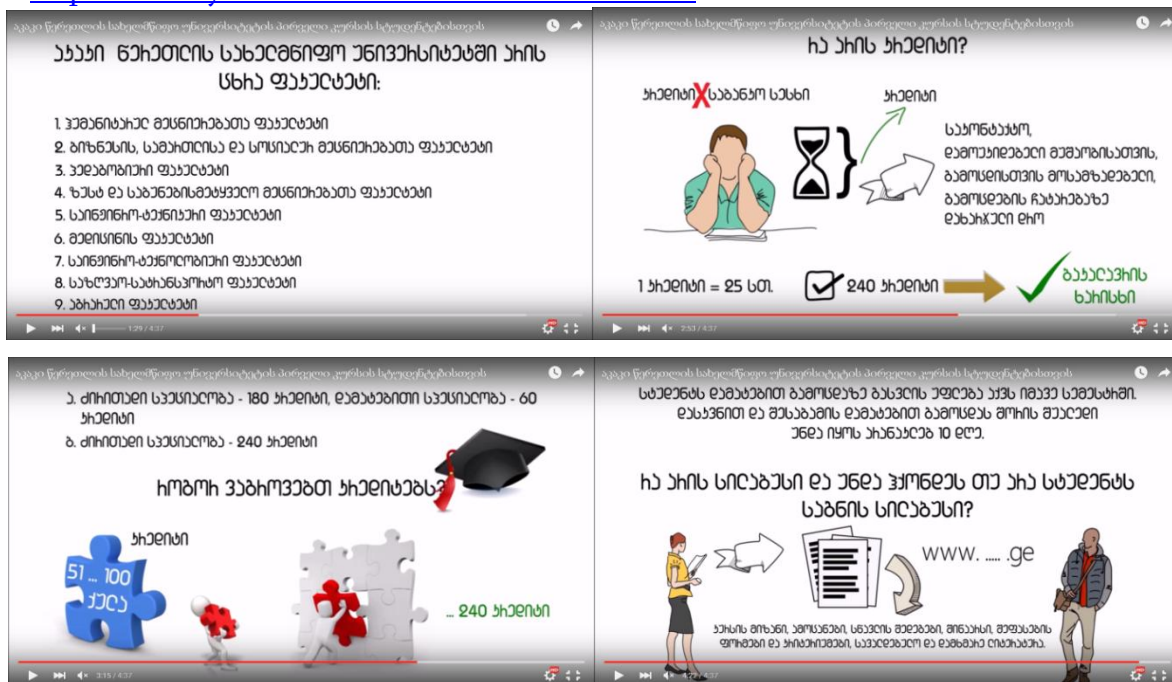
The first video was created for the freshmen of ATSU, which provides the minimum required information for quick adaptation to the learning environment.





The video was presented to the meetings with the freshmen, on the screen installed in the hall of the university central building, was placed on the internet and in social networks and was effectively used by the tutors.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Es3sWi9h6I>



There is a growing tendency in the number of foreign students at ATSU. Quality Assurance Service has prepared video in English language for such students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXPfUxOAeu4>





Quality Assurance Service of ATSU has created a video on the rule of mobility process based on the student's high interest in the rules and procedures of the mobility process. The rules enhanced possibility of perceiving students' mobility implementation procedures and the use of its mechanism.

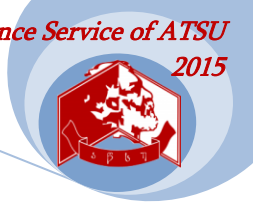
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=683qDzhKZjY>



❖ Cooperation with the official site of the ATSU and providing information and news in a permanent manner

ATSU Quality Assurance Service permanently provides news to the administrator of official website. This cooperation is important because Facebook page allows us to get feedback from students, academic and supporting staff, from interested individuals and to have everyday connection with public.





❖ Psychologist for foreign students

In 2015, Quality Assurance Service invited Dutch professor - Marjanne Dagers as a psychologist-consultant for foreign students. She is an invited teacher at ATSU, at MA program - "Higher Education in Leadership and Management".

Since October 2015, Marjanne Dagers has been conducting consultations with Nigerian and Iraqi students on managing depression caused while studying, planning career, communicating with society and while adapting with environment.

❖ Cooperation with the organizations and funds working in the field of education

In 2015, ATSU Quality Assurance Service participated in the project "Promoting student-centered university education" implemented by Found of Levan Mikeladze, with the support of "Open Society Georgia". The project aimed at identifying and analyzing problems in the field of student-centered education among Georgian universities.

Within the framework of the project the research was conducted at four universities: Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Akaki Tsereteli State University, Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University and at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University.

Quality Assurance Service of ATSU has effectively cooperated with the persons implementing the project.

Several reports have been prepared within the project. Final report summarized the results obtained at different stages of the research, in which the significant place was dedicated to the description and analysis of the problems while leading student – centered teaching-learning process at the above-mentioned universities.

This analysis have significantly helped Quality Assurance Service to assess the existing problems in the field of student-centered higher education and to understand the possibilities of their solution.

In the following diagrams, we provide the results of the project "Promoting student-centered university education", which is noteworthy for planning the future activities of ATSU Quality Assurance Service.





Project "Promoting student-centered university education"

Research: Fund of Levan Mikeladze, with the support of "Open Society Georgia" Fund.

Diagram N29 Students' impact on the processes going on at the faculties according to universities

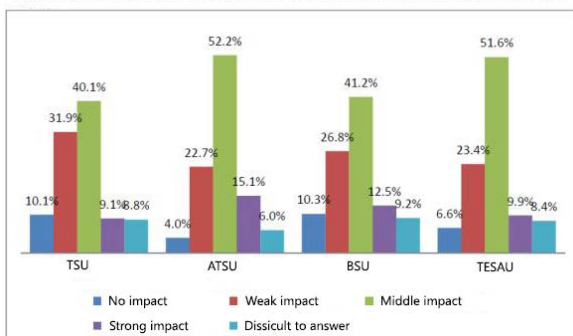


Diagram N25 Student service level assessment by universities

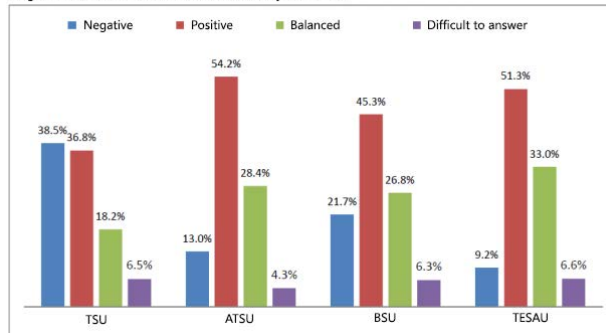


Diagram N24: Assessing quality of teaching foreign languages according to universities

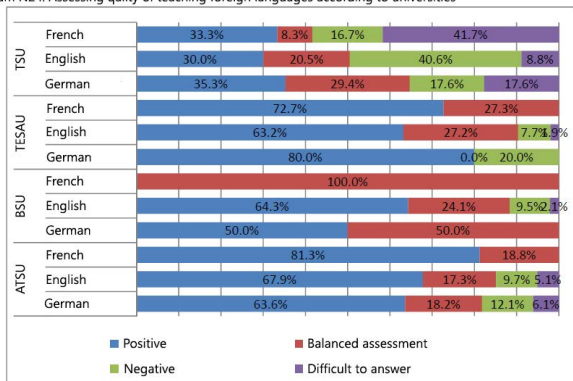


Diagram N15: How much enough is master's education for entering doctoral studies

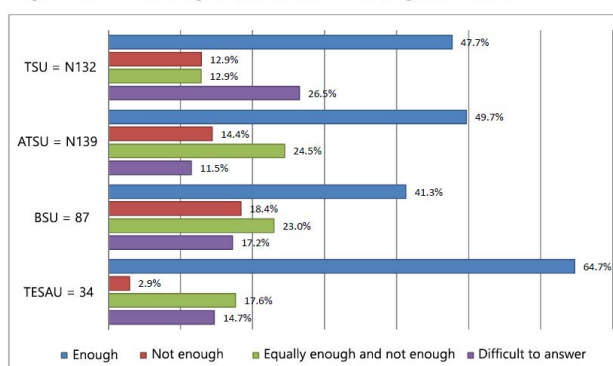


Diagram N8: Transparency indicators of assessment system/procedures (N=1151)

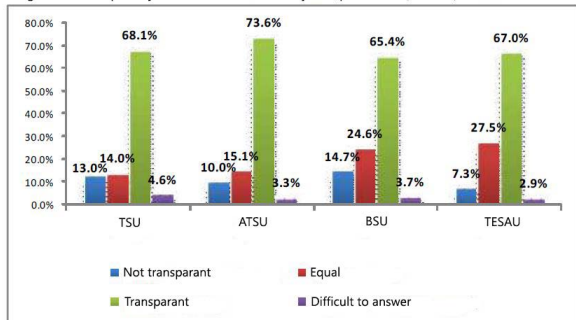


Diagram N5: Assessing BA programs (N=1151)

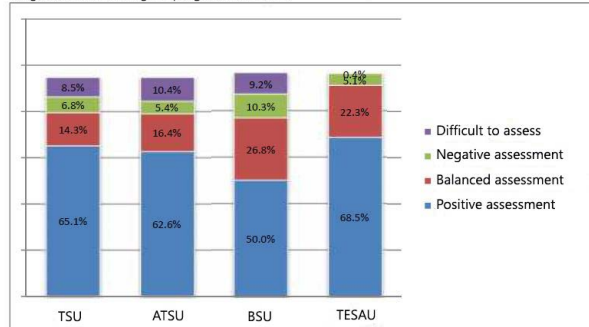


Diagram N7: Indicator of students' objective assessment (N=1151)

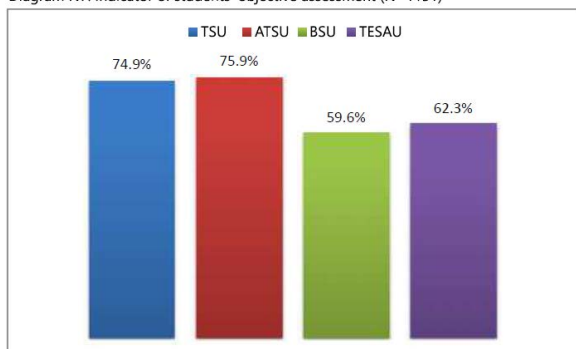
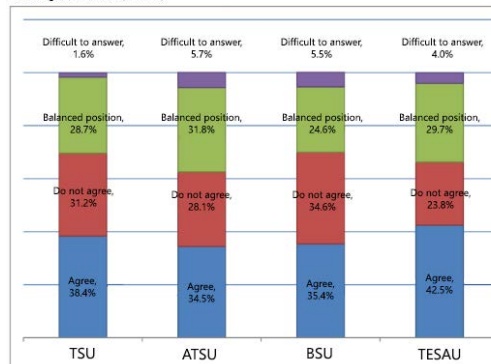


Diagram N3: Teaching - learning process at the university is student centered or not - distributing responses according to universities (N=1151)

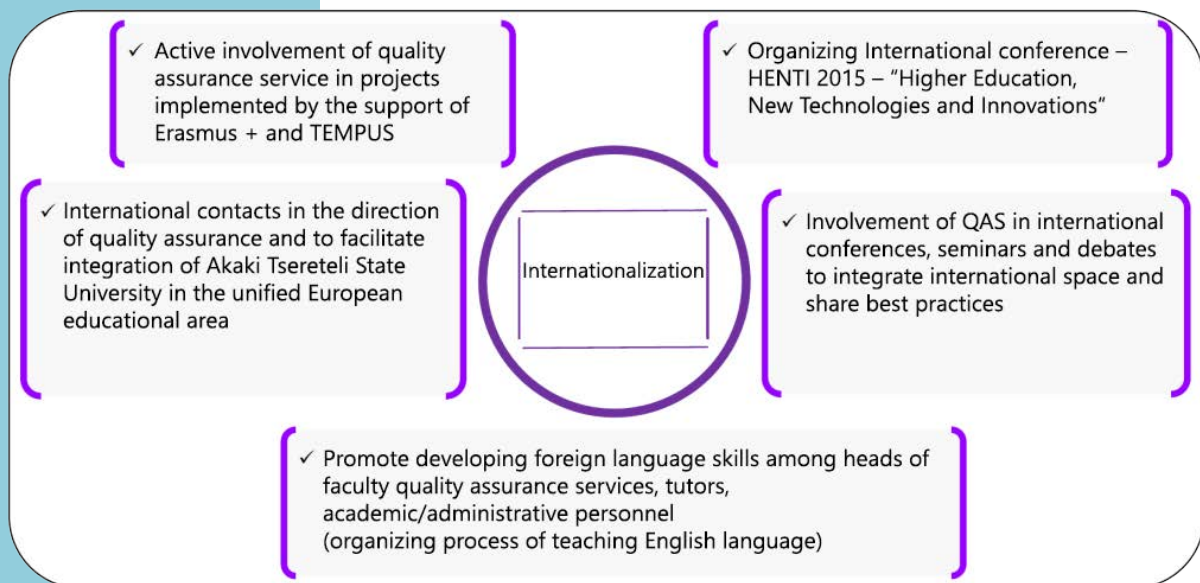




6. Internationalization

Internationalisation of higher education is of great importance in improving the quality of education and increasing competitiveness of higher education institutions. Internationalization includes mobility of students and academic staff and international cooperation within joint educational programs and research projects.

ATSU aims to integrate into the international educational area, for this purpose it actively cooperates with educational institutions from different countries.



Implemented activities:

- ❖ Active participation in the projects implemented by Erasmus+ and Tempus;
- ❖ International contacts in the direction of quality assurance and for integrating ATSU in the European educational area;
- ❖ Integration in the international conferences/seminars/debates in order to integrate within international area and for sharing best practices;
- ❖ Organizing international conference – HENTI 2015 – “Higher Education, New Technologies and Innovations“;
- ❖ Promoting developing foreign language skills among heads of faculty quality assurance services/tutors/academic/administrative personnel.

In order to support internationalization of education and according to one of the important activities of Bologna process - to promote mobility process, ATSU permanently seeks for partner institutions.

Active participation in the process of internationalization is an important current and further challenge for ATSU quality assurance service.

ATSU aims at integrating in the international higher educational area. To develop quality of higher educational and vocational programs it actively cooperates with different educational institutions from different countries.

ATSU permanently sets contacts with partner universities for internationalization of education and for promoting one of the most important activity of Bologna process – mobility.

Fruitful participation in the process of internationalization is an important current and further perspective.





❖ Active participation in supporting projects conducted by Erasmus + / Tempus

ATSU is actively involved in implementing international projects in the directions of educational and vocational programs. On the bases of these cooperations, important activities for improving educational programs were being planned and implemented, in terms of increasing opportunities of interested parties (academic/administrative personnels, students) and for improving knowledge about international practice.

In terms of internationalization ATSU QAS conducted following activities:

- Project on improving education management – MAHATMA – master of managing higher education; Preparing leaders for managing Educational changes;
- TNE_QA -"Promoting Quality and Recognition of Transnational Education in Armenia and Georgia";
- Elaborating joint degree program – “Biomedical engineering “.

Within the framework of the project following activities were conducted:

- ✓ Guidelines and principles for enhancing quality of transnational education: Within the framework of Tempus project - "Promoting Quality and Recognition of Transnational Education in Armenia and Georgia" by coordinating NCEQE document –“Transnational education – case of Georgia“ was elaborated. International practice, definitions of terms related to transnational education, types of transnational education providers and mobility types of programs and international principles of developing transnational education are described in the document. The document describes current situation in transnational education, the issue of assuring quality of international joint programs, existing tasks of accreditation are being analyzed and their relation towards European standards, guidelines and European approaches of quality assurance of joint degree programs. ATSU QAS was actively involved within the processes.
- ✓ Within the framework of Tempus project - "Promoting Quality and Recognition of Transnational Education in Armenia and Georgia" on June 23,24 at Batumi State Maritime Academy working meeting was held. Internal quality assurance mechanisms and instruments of transnational education were discussed at the meeting. Partners of the project are: Quality Assurance Agency, European Foundation for Management Development, National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation(ANQA), UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning, Georgian and international higher education institutions. After the theoretical part working meetings were held at the groups. The aim of the meeting was to elaborate concrete indicators on the bases of quality assurance guidelines of transnational education by UNESCO.



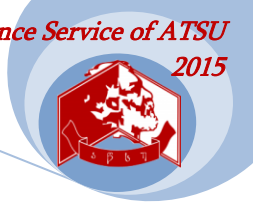


- ✓ On September 21-22, within the framework of Tempus project - "Promoting Quality and Recognition of Transnational Education in Armenia and Georgia" working meeting was held in Paris, at UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning. During the meeting issues on regulating transnational education and assuring quality in Georgia and Armenia were discussed. Guidelines prepared within the working groups were presented at the meeting. Within the three-year partnership project elaboration appropriate methodology for the joint project and doing pilot accreditation is being planned within partner universities.
- ✓ On June 15-16, group of international experts visited Akaki Tsereteli State University within the framework of Tempus project – “Master program in education management: upbringing leaders for educational reforms “. It was organized by National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement. During the visit experts met academic personnel of the program Education Management, students, stakeholders and also the university



administration, representatives of quality assurance service and international relations. Group of national and international experts received detailed information on the existing educational programs about education management and looked through the appropriate documentation. After their visit the group of international experts prepared the report. Concrete activities conducted within the framework of the project were precious experiences for us to work with a group of international experts, to gain international experience in the exact field, to raise the competitiveness of our projects on the national and international areas.





- ✓ Within the framework of Tempus project - “Biomedical Engineering Education Tempus Initiative in Eastern Neighboring Area“ joint degree program – “Biomedical Engineering“ was created with partner universities(Tbilisi State Medical university, Georgian Technical University).



Though, there was no regulatory document for joint degree programs. After participation of quality assurance services of the partner universities relevant regulatory document was created. It promoted adding the above-mentioned program by authorization.

❖ **International contacts in quality assurance and for promoting integration of ATSU in the European higher education area**

Integration of ATSU in the European higher education area and widening contacts in the direction of higher education is one of the priorities of quality assurance service.

On June 8, 2015 Caroline McLachlan – professor at the university of Wales and honored professor at Akaki Tsereteli State University visited quality assurance service. During the meeting following tasks were discussed – problems and perspectives of quality assurance service, internationalization and promoting quality assurance procedures on the bases of cooperation between these two universities.





❖ Engagement in conferences / seminars / debates in order to involve in international space and share "best practices"

On October 6, 2015 discussion on "Public debates on the issues of Georgian higher education internationalization" was held at Akaki Tsereteli State University within the framework of joint project of Foundation - "Open Society – Georgia" and "International Education Center".

The reports were presented by the head of International Center for Migration and Development, Consultant in Migration and Diaspora - Irma Tsereteli, Director of international education center - Nino Chinchaladze and head of quality assurance service at ATSU – Irma Grdzeldze.



Following the presentations made by the rapporteurs there was a discussion which was actively involved in by ATSU professors, representatives of Kutaisi University and from international education center of Imereti region.

The aim of the project is to promote making interest of wider number of people in higher education internationalization issues, in the challenges caused by internationalization of higher education and developing public and university policies in this direction.

On June 16, 2015 coordinator of national Erasmus + office held training-presentation on www.progeorgia.ge at ATSU. The target audience were representatives of the universities working on fundraising, developing projects and on students consultancy, precisely – representatives of international development department, career and student support centers and so on.





The event is aimed at creating data base of donor organizations and ensures improving their competences for searching centers. Namely, for the ones searching for information for implementing educational and scientific projects it ensures accessibility to the relevant information and improving peoples competences for applying this knowledge. Aims of the project are as follows: mobilizing academic and administrative potential in the field of higher education of the country and science to increase efficiency of working with donor organizations and access to all the available information.



Ms. Lika Glonti offered another innovation to the audience - a guide for students - for those who want to study abroad and therefore needs to gather documents and participate in interviews.

გზამკვლევი სტუდენტებისათვის

მათთვის, ვისაც საზღვარგარეთ სწავლა სურს და ეტებს სტიპენდიას



Students received comprehensive answers to their questions. At the end of the meeting guidebooks were distributed to them. The results of the meeting were disseminated within the group of tutors.

The guide can be found at:

http://progeorgia.ge/data/image_db_innova/Student%20guideline%202015.pdf





❖ International Conference "Higher Education - New Technologies And Innovations - HENTI 2015 "



On May 1-2, 2015, Akaki Tsereteli State University with the support of Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, National Center of Educational Quality Enhancement of Georgia and Erasmus + - National Office held the conference - "Higher Education - New Technologies and Innovations - HENTI 2015 ".

<http://atsu.edu.ge/Conferences/HENTI2015/>

Within the framework of the international conference the following sections worked:

- Global issues and modern challenges in education;
- Teachers training (TT) / Training of trainers (TOT) / Lifelong Learning (LLL);
- Curriculum design: modern principles, methods and technologies;
- Accreditation - authorization and quality assurance in education;
- Integration of teaching / learning process and researches;
- Internationalization and multicultural projects in the educational area;
- New technologies and innovations in the process of learning / teaching / research;
- Philosophical and psychological aspects of education.



Participants of the conference shared their own experiences of teaching / learning, innovations in education, e-learning, implementing modern technologies in education, conducted presentation of new projects, participated in discussions and working meetings on the interesting issues of them.





We can freely say that scientific conference - HENTI 2015 supported academic staff with opportunity for open dialogue, communication and ideas for setting future perspectives. In this context internationalization was the most important issue.

It is a new challenge for Georgian higher education and sets new opportunities in the corresponding area. This is a kind of crossroad. Crossing it requires making strategic decisions and attractiveness of ideas must obtain its peculiarities without setting any doubts. Educational policy of Akaki Tsereteli State University is a part of this strategy.

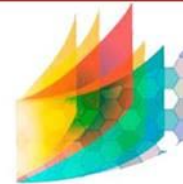


Ideas generated within HENTI 2015 will be implemented in practical activities. Conference platform (services for electronic registration and materials, workshops dedicated to modern issues) was further successfully used by other faculties.





1st International conference High Education - New Technologies and Innovation



HENTI 2015





❖ **Promoting development of foreign language skills among heads of faculty quality assurance services, tutors, academic and administrative staff (Organizing English language teaching process)**

One of the interesting initiatives, which was initiated in 2015, is **teaching English for communication by the tutors**. Author of this idea is Elizabeth Schawermann from University of Graz, who is an Erasmus + exchange student at ATSU. Elizabeth presented the project while being at ATSU about teaching English for communication to the students. It will promote internationalization.

The project implies enrolling tutors in the project of developing knowledge and skills in English language. In particular, it means training group of tutors composed of students from English Philology and training other students from different specialities by them. After training English tutors they will be able to lead English Language courses for the tutors from other specialities, will be able to held open lectures and debates in English language.

The project was supported by the administration of ATSU and quality assurance service, English language department and the center for teaching foreign languages. Department of English Philology supported in selecting motivated students and the center for teaching foreign languages supported in choosing future trainers in language teaching methods. As a result the cooperative chain was developed: Tutors - Foreign Students - Quality Assurance Service - English Philology Department - Foreign Language Center - Other Tutors.

In 2015, by the support of university quality assurance service and the rector-ate, decision was made on organizing 4 month course in English language for the heads of faculty quality assurance services.





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Quality Assurance Service, 2015

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