



**Methodology for drawing up and reviewing a complaint submitted
against an authorized higher educational institution**

This methodology determines the procedures, methodology of drawing up and reviewing the complaint submitted against the higher educational institution in connection with the fulfillment of the standards of authorization and accreditation of educational programmes at the LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter referred to as the Center). Methodological guidelines are designed to inform stakeholders of the stages and terms of the process.

Tbilisi, 2023

Compliance with the standards of authorization of higher education institution(s) and accreditation of higher education programme(s):

A higher educational institution and an educational programme must meet the requirements of the authorization/accreditation standards established for it on an ongoing basis.

Authorization standard for the higher education institutions:

- a) Mission and strategic development of the higher educational institution;
- b) Organizational structure and management of the higher educational institution;
- c) Educational programmes;
- d) Staff of the HEI;
- e) Students and their support mechanisms;
- f) Research, development or/and other creative activities;
- g) Material, information and financial resources.

Accreditation standards for the higher education programmes:

- a) Objectives and learning outcomes of the educational programme and the programme's compliance with them;
- b) Methodology and organisation of the study process, adequacy of evaluation of mastering the programme;
- c) Achievements of pupils/students, and individual work with them;
- d) Provision with study resources;
- e) Opportunities for the development of teaching quality.

In order to get acquainted with the requirements of the standards, visit the following link: [Authorization](#), [Accreditation](#).

The center reviews a complaint if it reflects the alleged violation of authorization/accreditation standard(s).

The goal of the process of reviewing a complaint submitted against the authorized higher education institution:

The goal of the process is for the center to ensure protection of authorization and accreditation standards at the higher education institutions, within the scope of supporting the establishment of student-oriented environment and observing the principles of autonomy guaranteed for the higher education institutions.

Who can submit a complaint and how:

- A complaint can be submitted by a student, personnel employed at the HEI or/and by other stakeholders.
- The complaint can be registered electronically through the complaint form¹ posted on the center's website (info@eqe.ge) in case of confirmation of the letter by a qualified electronic signature or it can be registered on site at the building of the center, address: - Tbilisi M. Aleksidze st.N2, 2nd lane, the first floor.

A complaint shall include:

- the person's identity and contact information;
- The name of the institution whose legal act or action is appealed;
- The content of the complaint, the claim and the circumstances on which the claim is based, as well as the list of attached documents (if any).

Suggestions for the claimants:

- For efficient and timely review of the complaint, it is necessary to explain the issue/case in as much details as possible and in a reasoned manner. Please attach evidence (if any) to the complaint;
- Before submitting a complaint to the center, it is recommended to use the institution's internal appeal mechanisms and submit the results together with the complaint filed in the center (in case of non-receipt of a response from the higher education institution within the set period, reflect relevant information in the complaint).

Personal Data Protection:

When reviewing a complaint, the center is guided by the fundamentals and principles of data processing defined by the Law of Georgia "On Personal Data Protection". The personal information provided by you (name of a claimant and details of the complaint, based on which the claimant can be identified) won't be sent to the institution without your consent. While exchanging the information with the institution, the personal information shall be coded according to the requirements provided for by the law.

Your personal information presented in the complaint, upon your informed consent, will be transferred to the institution only if it is impossible to investigate the circumstances presented in the complaint by other means.

It is worth noting that sharing personal data with the institution upon your consent will help us to clarify the specific details surrounding the issue and ensure a faster and more effective resolution of the case.

¹ <https://eqe.ge/ka/page/static/835/apelatsia-da-sachivrebi>

The results of the complaint review:

The result of the review of the complaint cannot entail providing compensation for any tangible and intangible damage (if applicable) caused to the claimant by the institution's actions.

The purpose of the complaint review is to identify a shortcoming related to the institution and to issue appropriate recommendation(s) to correct the said shortcoming, which automatically includes preventive measures and the possibility of avoiding similar violations in the future. Also, the claimant and the institution are continuously informed during the complaint review process and the materials of the proceedings are introduced to both of them. In some cases, discovered violations may result in appropriate legal consequences, which are defined by the Regulation for Authorization of Education Institutions approved by the order N99/n October 1, 2010 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia (hereinafter referred to as the authorization regulation) and by the "Regulation on Accreditation of Educational Programmes of Higher Educational Institutions" approved by Order No. 65/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated May 4, 2011 (hereinafter referred to as the accreditation regulation).

Possible outcomes of the complaint review are presented in the table below:

Goes beyond the scope of the center's competence	Violation not detected Violation detected	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The center reviewed the complaint within its competence and established that the issue goes beyond the scope of its competence. ▪ An explanatory letter was sent to the complainant, where the center's position is substantiated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The center reviewed the complaint and the position of the institution in relation to the said complaint. ▪ Based on the analysis of the proceedings materials, no violation of the authorization/accreditation standard was detected. ▪ A letter of explanation was sent to the complainant and a time was set to submit additional evidence. ▪ Upon failure to present evidence and/or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The center reviewed the complaint and the position of the institution in relation to the said complaint. ▪ Based on the proceedings materials, a suspected violation of authorization/accreditation standard(s) has been identified that requires further

	<p>presentation of unsubstantiated evidence within the predetermined time limit by the person submitting the complaint, the authorization/accreditation council shall consider the matter at an oral hearing and terminate the administrative proceedings initiated on the basis of the complaint. In case of presentation of substantiated evidence, the Council shall make a motion on the necessity of monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The center/authorization council/accreditation council may issue suggestions/recommendations to the institution.	<p>investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A monitoring group was established to visit the institution and elaborate respective recommendation.
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Terms of proceedings:


While establishing the term of proceedings, the Center is guided by the rules established by the General Administrative Code of Georgia.

Furthermore, the center aims at speedy and effective response to any complaint, which, itself includes provision of respective suggestions/recommendations if necessary or/and evaluation by a monitoring group in order to resolve a specific issue at the institution. The process is purposefully targeted at the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the institution.

Please refer to the terms for the complaint review:

0 day	Submission of a complaint by the claimant²
1-3 business day	Review of the complaint by the representative of the center: The representative of the center reads the complaint and if it fits within the scope of the center, they start to examine the complaint.
4-15 business days	If necessary, an additional information is requested from the institution or from the claimant.
	If the complaint lacks argumentation, the center will give the author of the complaint at least 5 business days to fill in the information; The center requests the institution's position on this issue and gives it 5-10 business days to provide the position;
16-21 business days	Introduction of the results to the claimant and the institution: The results of the proceedings are introduced to the claimant and the institution, the proceedings move to the monitoring phase, if necessary; In the case of creation of a monitoring group, the administrative proceedings continue for no longer than 90 calendar days after the order on the monitoring is issued.

² It is advisable to submit the complaint as soon as possible after the violation takes place or after completion of the last stage of an appeals process of this issue at the HEI.



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