

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Overall objectives: To support the LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) in developing the evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning for higher education institutions in Georgia.

Location: Tbilisi, Georgia (online mode)

Timing and Duration: September 1, 2020 – October 31, 2020

Date of issue: August 5, 2020

Closing date: August 21, 2020

International Consultants who meet qualifications are invited to submit an updated CV and a cover letter outlining their previous experience and interest in presented call. The cover letter should include a financial offer for the assignment (i.e. Daily rate) as well as expected availability for the assignment period. Documents should be sent by email to info@eqe.ge, putting in cc rvespi@ewmi.org specifying within the email's subject "***Evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning***". Request for clarification on TOR should be sent in writing by email to l.giorgidze@eqe.ge putting in CC info@eqe.ge.

Background:

COVID-19 global pandemic and state of emergencies throughout the world and in Georgia created a lot of challenges for higher education systems. Higher education institutions in Georgia shifted to online modes of education delivery. However, there are concerns in relation to the quality of online and blended learning. This is because in most cases face-to-face teaching and learning have been mechanically copied to online lectures that does not really exploit all the potential of innovative and online teaching and learning.

Currently, higher education institutions in Georgia are passing through the transition period and planning to resume studies with blended mode of teaching; institutions will be retaining some components of online teaching and learning. The NCEQE considers it important to accelerate this transition and offer the guidance to institutions so that they can fully exploit the opportunities of online/blended modes of delivery and at the same time encourage institutions to keep track with international developments in higher education and maintain the quality of online provision of studies.

Purpose of Assignment:

The purpose of the assignment is for an international expert to assist the NCEQE in developing the ***Evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning*** that will guide institutions in maintaining quality of online/blended teaching and learning in post-COVID period and/or when resuming studies from the next semester.

The developed product should also provide guidance to experts and institutions on evaluating institutional strategies to support innovation and online mode of teaching and learning and cover topics of ease of access, new forms of interaction (student-to-students, teachers-to-teachers and student-teacher interactions, flexibility and personalization etc.), development of online teaching and learning activities, online formative and

summative assessments, development of new skills for supervisors for online context, learning analytics for online learning environment that can be used as a tool for improvement of students' learning as well as a tool for quality enhancement.

Methodology:

For the purpose of developing the evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning, it is envisaged that the consultant will closely work with the NCEQE Quality Enhancement Department for Higher Education, USAID-funded program "Promoting Rule of Law in Georgia" administered by East-West Management Institute (EWMI/PROLoG) as well as conduct on-line focus groups with higher education institutions/students in Georgia to understand the current status of the on-line mode of teaching and the related key obstacles.

Estimated Level of Effort:

The level of effort includes 15 working days of distance work on developing evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning for Georgian higher education institutions.

Expected Outputs/Deliverables

The Expert will provide the following deliverables:

1. Online working meetings/focus groups with PROLoG team, NCEQE management and higher education institutions/students (September - October 2020)
2. Evaluation criteria and Guidelines on online/blended teaching and learning (October 2020)
3. Online workshop for Higher education institutions (1) and accreditation experts (1) on developed guidelines (October 2020)

Requirements of Experience and Qualifications for International Expert:

- a minimum qualification of a master's degree in Education Studies. A PhD qualification will be a distinct advantage
- a strong experience (from 7 to 10 years) in development of evaluation criteria and guidelines on online/blended teaching
- knowledge and experience to design the guidelines for assessment of the implementation of online programs
- excellent written and oral communication skills in English
- knowledge of the higher education system in Georgia, external QA mechanisms and prior work experience in conducting evaluations in line with ESG-2015¹ will be an asset.

¹ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf