

Approved by

Protocol of Academic Council
Chairman of Academic Council, Rector

№ 01, 15.01.2024

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Batumi Navigation Teaching University Ltd.

Research Activity Development Strategy 2024-2030

Batumi
2024

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1. General provisions

Research Development Strategy (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy) is based on Batumi Navigation Teaching University Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as - BNTU) mission, vision, values and 7-year Strategic Development Plan.

Legal frameworks of elaboration of the Strategy:

- Law of Georgia on Higher Education;
- Authorization/Accreditation Standards;
- Batumi Navigation Teaching University mission and 7-year development strategy;
- This strategy aims to define the main directions of development of researches of BNTU.

Article 1 - Basic approaches to strategy

Batumi Navigation Teaching University Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as the "University") Research activity development strategy defines institutional approaches related to the research activity, principles, mechanisms and tools for evaluating research activity;

2. The Strategy aims to develop research activity and increase its quality, as well as to improve the processes of research activity integration in teaching/learning processes;

3. When conducting research activity, the University considers academic freedom, academic and research integrity as a guiding principle;

On the other hand, persons involved in research activity (academic/affiliated staff, invited expert, student, master's student) should carry out their activities by following the principles of academic integrity, focusing on the quality of research, internationalization of research activity, motivation to strengthen the abilities of young scientists/researchers.;

4. The University, according to the profiles of its main educational units - faculties, determines research priority areas once a year; when determining the research priorities, it should take into account and satisfy the interests of the society and the specific problems facing it, within the bounds of possibility. In order to develop research priorities, the University allocates financial, material and human resources;

5. The research activity carried out by the University should serve the interests of students/master's students. Thus, the results of the research activity should be actively used in the teaching and learning process;

6. For the effectiveness of research activities, the University plans to cooperate with other local and international higher educational institutions, research institutions, private and public organizations in order to be able to carry out joint research or participate in them.

Article 2 – Main goals of the research strategy

1. Main goals of the research activity strategy:

1.1. Development of the University's research activity, quality enhancement and effective use of scientific and research potential;

1.2. Carrying out research activity with effective, efficient and targeted use of financial resources, which means achieving the set goals within the budget planned according to the activities of the University's development strategy and action plan, and the concentration of resources on priority areas for the University;

1.3. Evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of research activity, and usage of evaluation results for further development of the University's research activity;

1.4. Motivation of academic/affiliated staff to carry out research activities etc.

1.5. Using the results of activities in the educational process, in order to ensure the unity of research and educational activities;

1.5. Identifying, motivating and comprehensive support for students/master's students interested in research activity; supporting the research activities of young employees;

1.6. Supporting research skill enhancement of academic/affiliated staff;

1.7. Creating conditions for the commercialization of intellectual potential of the University.

2. Main tasks of the Strategy

2.1. Improvement of research activity organizing and management mechanisms;

2.2. Planning and conduction of research events (conferences, seminars, research projects, commercial researches etc.);

2.3. Provision of publication of collections of scientific works, monographs, journals;

2.4. Provision of informational and consulting services to academic/affiliated staff regarding current and planned scientific events, including local and international scientific fund programs/projects;

2.5. Increasing the administrative (promoting the preparation of programs, projects) and financial support of scientific activities for academic/affiliated staff;

2.6. Creating a system of encouraging academic/affiliated staff for scientific activity;

- 2.7. Elaboration of targeted research project development, competition and internal grant obtaining rules; Announcement of competitions, selection of projects;
- 2.8. Increasing the quality of bachelor's and master's theses, involving students in research activities and increasing administrative and financial support;
- 2.9. Implementation of mechanisms/criteria for evaluating the quality of research activity.

Article 3. Types of research activity, implementing structures

3.1. Types of research activity: The following types of research activity, defined by the revised UNESCO classifier (ISCED-2013) can be carried out in the University:

- 1) Theoretical/academic;
- 2) Practical/professional.

3.2. Research activity implementing entities and supporting structures. Faculties are the University research activity entities, which, together with academic activity represent the main entities implementing research activity and academic/affiliated staff;

3.3. Academic/affiliated staff is obliged to be involved in the process of determination and implementation of research topic of the faculties; This does not limit them to carry out individual activities independent of this topic, which should also be useful for the main directions of the University's research activity (logistics, navigation, marine sciences);

3.4. The implementer of research activity is responsible for the quality of the research work; In case of financing - for the economical distribution of financial resources;

3.5 Research activity supporting units: Within the scope of their competencies, the following entities are responsible for supporting research activity: Managerial board; University Administration; schools; library; Research Centre, all other structural units of the University, which must support academic staff in conduction of planned researches and improvement of infrastructure; establishing appropriate contacts for the development of scientific research; provides trainings regarding legal issues, grant application preparation and submission; preparation and signing of memoranda, contracts; support in the process of effective grant administration and reporting (technical support).

Article 4 Planning and organizing scientific activities of the university

4.1. Planning: The unified plan of the research activities of the University is drawn up in accordance with the educational directions of the University, based on the plans of the faculties, and is submitted to the Academic Council for approval; The student/master's student should be involved in the process of developing the main issue/topic of the research; Identifying, motivating and all-round support for students interested in research activities is the most important task of planning the scientific activities of the faculties.

4.2. Organization: In the University research activity is organized as follows:

4.2.1. Annual scientific research of the faculty: The faculty choses the priority direction of the annual scientific research independently, which at the same time should be adapted to the profile of the University and the interests of the students. Faculty academic/affiliated staff and students must be involved in the annual scientific research; it is possible to involve invited staff as well. Th research is supervised by the University professor;

Individual research: Individual research is carried out in accordance with the profile and interests of the academic staff, which at the same time should be in line with the profile of the University;

4.2.3. Targeted grant project: Research activity can be carried out in the form of a targeted scientific-research project, by a group, which is an important activity, introduced at the University and is additionally financed by the University grant. The targeted research project is led by the affiliated professor of the University. The procedure for submitting a research project and the requirements for the project, the procedure for selecting the project and financing it with a grant are regulated by the document "Regulations of the targeted research project grant competition".

4.2.3. Financial, administrative, material and technical support mechanisms: Financial support of the research activity is described in the document: "Research activity support mechanisms", and can be implemented from the following sources:

- University budget;
- Various scientific foundations, grant project foundations;
- Funds of economic agents, non-governmental organizations and international organizations;
- Internal scientific grant.

Article 5. Integration of learning and research

5.1. Part of the Research activity development strategy is to deepen the University's intellectual experience and integrate its results into the educational process. Integrating research into academic educational programmes is ensured by:

- a. Academic/research component of the Bachelor's (in case of selection) and Master's educational programmes;
- b. Annual Research-to-Practice Conference of Students;

- c. reflecting the results of modern international researches and research activity at the University in the syllabi of educational programmes and study materials.
- d. Involvement of students in internal/external grant projects of the faculties;
- e. Extracurricular activities of students (trainings and seminars, conducted for them);
- f. International scientific electronic databases, periodicals, literature available for students.
- g. Exchange programs for students and, etc.

Article 6. General problems of evaluation of research activity

1. Evaluation of the quality of scientific activity/research of HEIs is, as is known, a relatively new idea, and the definition of evaluation criteria is a complex topic and is still a subject of active debate in scientific community.

1.1. Academic institutions, state structures, non-state structures, foundations have different attitudes towards quality standards, indicators, evidence-based evaluation policies and practices, financial expression of research value.

1.2. The University has elaborated the institutional rule of evaluation of research activity, and measurable indicators/criteria of evaluation, for which the University conducted analysis of approaches of ¹ESQR and other relevant international organizations regarding research quality standards, evaluation and determination of ratings of universities, as well as, the requirements, defined according to the authorization and accreditation standards, developed by LEPL National Center for Education Quality Enhancement.

Article 7 Research activity evaluation goals and tasks

7.1. The main goal of the evaluation of research activity is to evaluate the contribution of faculties and academic/affiliated staff to the research activity of the University using a formal and systematic approach, which in turn serves to improve the quality of researches;

7.2. Faculties and their academic staff are the main structural units, implementing research activity;

7.3. Evaluation of research activity is carried out for the following:

- Identification of strengths and weaknesses;
- Detection of defects and problems, in order to prevent them;
- Outlining the priority areas of development and planning future researches;
- Intra-university funding management

Article 8 Research activity evaluation system and procedure

8.1. Within the framework of the evaluation of the research activity in the University, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the research activity of the academic staff of the relevant faculty is decisive and important;

8.2. Evaluation of research activity of the academic staff includes the following stages:

Stage I: Every year, the academic staff fills out a self-evaluation form, which reflects the activities carried out by them during the year;

Stage II: By the order of the Rector, a Commission is established to evaluate the research activity of the staff in accordance with the rules provided by this Strategy.;

Stage III: The results are reported to the staff and deans of the faculties, heads of the relevant educational programme.

8.3. In addition, when filling out the self-assessment form provided for in this rule, they are obliged to submit evidence confirming the existing information; This is also regulated in the eqe.gms.ge database.

8.4. In the case of non-submission of the self-evaluation provided for in this rule by the academic staff, 0 points will be assigned in the mentioned indicator.

8.5. The University Administration, together with the HR Service, coordinates the sharing and encouragement of the best practices identified as a result of the evaluation of the research activity of the academic staff in the University. This will enable the University to effectively use supporting mechanisms for the development of the quality of research activity.

8.6. The evaluation process of the academic staff, provided for in this Rule is coordinated by University Quality Management Service in coordination with Research Center.

Article 9. Evaluation of the involvement of BNTU affiliated academic staff in research activities and of effectiveness of such activities

9.1. Requirements to the research activity of BNTU affiliated academic staff are described by individual workload scheme of the staff, and the results of the staff activity are described by annual report on fulfillment of individual workload by them. Also, for the evaluation of research activity, the minimum mandatory standard (requirement criterion) of the research activity to be performed can be used, for example, all or one of the following:

- 1) Scientific/research/innovative work/project/product/etc. - for example, peer-reviewed (refereed peer-reviewed) monograph/scientific work prepared in Georgian/foreign language (authorship/co-authorship) and/or

¹ (European Society for Quality Research), IDRC (The International Development Research Center), HCERES (High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education), AUBR (Assessment of university-based research), THE (Times Higher Education's)

monograph/scientific work published in Georgia (having issn or isbn code) and/or publication/article in international referable peer-reviewed journal/ collection with an impact factor (indexed by web of science or scopus or google scholar) and/or duly registered invention/patent etc.;

- 2) Research grant - Research grant funded by BNTU partners or by an international organization or by LEPL Shota Rustaveli Scientific Foundation or by BNTU or a scientific project of high international importance that will be submitted for the purpose of obtaining funding;
- 3) Participation in the scientific conference as a speaker, with publishing theses (indexed by web of science or scopus or google scholar).

9.2. The system of research activity efficiency indicators can be, for example, as follows:

	Activity	High rate (implies one of the options)		Medium rate	Minimum standard
		1	2		
1.	Peer-reviewed (refereed peer-reviewed) monograph/scientific work prepared in Georgian/foreign language (authorship/co-authorship)	More than one activity every year	All activities every 2 years	More than one activity every 2 years	One activity every 2 years
	Monograph /scientific work published in Georgia (having issn or isbn code)				
	Publication/article in international referable peer-reviewed journal/ collection with an impact factor (indexed by web of science or scopus or google scholar)				
2.	Research grant - Research grant funded by BNTU partners or by an international organization or by LEPL Shota Rustaveli Scientific Foundation or by BNTU or a scientific project of high international importance that will be submitted for the purpose of obtaining funding	One activity every year		More than one activity every 2 years	One activity every 2 years
3.	Participation in the scientific conference as a speaker, with publishing theses (indexed by web of science or scopus or google scholar)	One activity every year			

9.3. Requirements to the research activity of the affiliated academic staff shall be fulfilled in case of performance of annual individual workload (scientific-research field) and of above-mentioned standard (requirement criterion)/other established standards.

9.4. Publications/works of the affiliated academic staff shall be considered if the person who is the author or co-author of the published scientific article indicates that he/she belongs to the academic staff of BNTU, and submitted the original/copy of the publication (in physical or electronic form) to the Research Center. The Center shall be obliged to verify the authenticity of the information and to transfer the documents submitted to it to the BNTU HR Service in order to keep them in the person's personal file;

9.5. BNTU shall be entitled to use abovementioned scheme for the evaluation, or make changes thereto, or develop and use other system for the evaluation of effectiveness.

9.6. For the purpose of evaluation of the research activity provided for in this rule, the Rector creates an annual evaluation commission of research activity, which may include the following persons:

- a. University Head of the Quality Assurance Service;
- b. Head of Research Center;
- c. Head of HR Service;
- d. Invited expert, with the degree of doctor;
- e. Heads of educational programmes, currently implemented in the University. In individual cases, the commission may be staffed with persons (including invited experts/specialists) whose experience allows for a thorough assessment of the research activity. The commission reviews the self-assessment of each staff member and assigns an appropriate assessment. The work of the commission is carried out on a collegial basis; the commission makes a decision by a simple majority of votes.

9.10. In BNTU, this procedure is governed by the document, developed in the University: **“The rule for evaluation of scientific, research, and practical activities”**.

Article 10 Management/response to research activity evaluation results

10.1. Non-performance of research activity by academic staff two successive times may be the basis for termination of individual employment contract with said staff. At the same time, in such a case, the staff is also given an appropriate warning.

10.2. After reflecting the final points of the academic staff and sending the mentioned information to the deans, the deans prepare a report on the response to the results of the study, where the significant results identified and the activities planned and/or implemented for the purpose of response are reflected. The response is monitored by the deputy rector (in the academic field).

Article 11 Final provisions

1. Research activity development strategy shall be approved by the Rector's Order;
2. Modifications to this document shall be made on the basis of the Rector's Order;