



Ken Walker International University

Research Development Strategy

Approved by the resolution #0121-01 of Academic Council, dated February 8, 2021.

Introduction:

Ken Walker International University llc (hereinafter: the University) Research Development Strategy is based on the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, the University Mission and Vision, the University Strategic Development Plan for 2021-2027. With this document, the University presents a vision for the implementation, promotion and development of research in the institution.

The challenge of the University is to become one of the leading medical educational institutions at the national level that will offer students a comprehensive, innovative and internationally recognized standard education.

Mission:

To provide high quality education and research in the healthcare field based on international standards of higher education, to promote the development of students as competitive professionals and leaders who, by sharing the principles of continuing education and the idea of lifelong learning, will be able to contribute to the community by caring for the physical, mental, and social well-being of human beings, upholding ethical and moral principles, and acknowledging universal values.

Values:

- Personal and Intellectual Development of the Students
- Pursuit of Knowledge
- Internationalization of Academic, Professional and Research Cooperation
- Inclusivity and Equity
- Diversity and Educational Opportunities
- Academic Freedom
- Ethical Engagement
- Social Responsibility
- Responsible Stewardship

Vision:

The vision of KWIU is to be a globally recognized higher education institution with a reputation as a competitive and reliable partner in the healthcare and higher education field by 2027. KWIU will focus on the implementation of educational programs harmonized with international requirements through continuous development and improvement; promotion of research activities; internationalization of

educational, research and administrative processes and the development of a student-centered environment through scientific, cultural, creative and cognitive development.

Goal, Objectives, and Activities of the Research Development Strategy

The Goal of the Research Development Strategy is to

- Define approaches related to scientific research activities by the University;
- Establish public, transparent and equitable internal funding procedures for research;
- Support the scientific-research activities of the academic staff;
- Develop students' scientific-research skills and their interest in engaging in research projects;
- Collaborate with local and international partners to share best research practices.

Activities defined for 2021-2027:

1. Carrying out university support activities for research

- 1.1 Establish and develop organizational structures to support research
 - 1.1.1. Establishment of an advisory board;
 - 1.1.2. Establishment of a research center;
 - 1.1.3. Identify and develop research priorities;
- 1.2 Sign memoranda and agreements with medical research bases, Georgian and foreign universities for the implementation of research to initiate partnerships.
- 1.3 Internationalization of research:
 - 1.3.1 Implementation of joint scientific projects with the participation of foreign researchers, in cooperation with international partners;
 - 1.3.2 Supporting the participation of affiliated academic staff and students in international scientific conferences, symposia, congresses, etc., publishing papers in sources belonging to international scientific databases;
- 1.4 Arranging in-university scientific conferences, seminars, workshops.
- 1.5 Development of a university grant system and internal funding mechanism for research;
- 1.6 Support for academic staff research activities;
 - 1.6.1 Attract and encourage young researchers
 - 1.6.2 Allocation of funds to the budget to carry out research activities, to finance the publication of scientific papers, in sources belonging to international scientific databases

in accordance with their scientific significance. (For example, publishing a paper in international impact factor, peer-reviewed journals in Georgia, submitting a grant project to international donor organizations, etc.);

1.6.3 Introduction of research information support: to acquaint the academic staff with the specifics of the work of international and national scientific foundations and the conditions of the competition, to organize trainings to fill in the grant applications; Invite recognized scientists of the field to carry out consulting activities;

1.7 Ensuring the development of students' research skills through the implementation of a research component in educational programs.

2. Development of master's programs and preparing for accreditation:

2.1 Development of master's programs to attract young staff to research activities, which will involve the involvement of master students in the University's research activities and the effective support of their initiatives;

2.2 Finding and attracting partners to develop joint master's programs;

2.3 Obtaining international accreditation for master programs.

3. Develop and introduce an anti-plagiarism policy

Ken Walker International University ensures the objective implementation of scientific research activities at the University within the framework of academic freedom. According to the document on plagiarism detection, prevention, plagiarism response procedures and mechanisms, the University seeks to establish the principles of academic freedom. The goal of anti-plagiarism policy is to: Establish high academic standards and establish a culture of responsibility and accountability. The requirements for this purpose apply to the academic and visiting staff and students of the University.

4. Evaluate the existing research potential of the University and identify new scientific-research priority areas.

The evaluation of the scientific-research work and productivity of the academic staff is carried out by the Quality Assurance Service in coordination with the Medical Education and Science Development Service and the International Relations, Strategic Development and Human Resources Service. Evaluations will be made according to scientific publications, participation in scientific research projects, conferences, symposia, congresses, etc..

5. Introduction of research information support

The University, on the one hand, cares about raising the awareness of the academic staff and students on local and international scientific grants, conferences, symposia, research seminars, webinars, etc. by providing information about, on the other hand, it periodically plans relevant trainings and consulting meetings on issues such as: "How to write a research project?", "How to get a research grant?", "How to manage a research grant?" and so on.

Concept of Research Priorities at Ken Walker International University

The research priorities of Ken Walker International University identify two main directions:

- Public health
- Medical education

In addition to these priorities, the University accepts the challenge of promoting fundamental and clinical research in the country.

Defining research priorities does not limit other types of research activities. Any employee of the University (academic, invited staff) has the right to submit and receive appropriate assistance from the University (given the feasibility and relevance of the research topic) in terms of idea implementation.

Joint research activities and cooperation with international partners

One of the research priorities of Ken Walker International University is medical education, the research value of which is gradually increasing in the world. The experience of the academic and administrative staff of Ken Walker International University provides a very good basis for conducting extensive and at the same time in-depth research in this area.

The second research priority is public health, which combines a wide range of interventions in the physical and social environment, health habits and biomedical methods, as well as healthcare organization and funding. It combines traditional public health issues such as - sanitation - contagious disease control and epidemiological research - maternal and child health - epidemiological research on non-infectious diseases - clinical services - health care management issues - promoting healthy living; In addition, involvement in the study of global epidemiological processes in the world;

Additionally, during the educational-research activities of the University, it is important to conduct research in the field of biosafety, to study, discuss and apply related issues in practice.

Description of activities:

- Establishment of an Advisory Board with the Department of Medical Education and Scientific Research Development, which will include Georgian scientists working in Georgia and abroad (including, first of all, in the USA) together with foreign colleagues;
- Clearly define the directions of research (especially in the field of fundamental and clinical research);
- Active cooperation with international associations of medical education (eg AMEE, AMSE), research organizations, public health centers and agencies, organizations working on medical education and public health, both within the country and abroad;
- Plan and conduct joint research with American and European partners;
- Identify and attract funding sources;
- Actively involve students in this type of research at the level of the educational program and beyond;
- Ensure the active involvement of the academic and invited staff of the University in the research;
- Promote the reports of the results obtained by the academic and invited staff of the University at international conferences, congresses, etc., as well as support the publication of their work in international sources;
- Development of master programs in the field of medical education and public health and obtain international accreditation;
- Establishment of a research center.

In addition to the two main areas mentioned above, Ken Walker International University will be actively involved in the development of fundamental research. To this end, the development strategy includes:

- Attracting local and foreign scientists;
- Determining the direction of fundamental research;
- Signing agreements and cooperation with various research organizations / laboratories both within the country and abroad;
- Developing relevant research infrastructure within the University;
- Taking care of students' interest and ensuring their active involvement;
- Attracting funds from existing resources in the country and abroad (grants, projects, etc.);

- Developing master programs and obtaining international accreditation;
- Ensuring the active involvement of the university's academic and invited staff in the research;
- Promote the reports of the results obtained by the academic and invited staff of the University at international conferences, congresses, etc., as well as support the publication of their work in international sources;

Initiation, planning and monitoring of scientific activities

A specific scientific idea can be initiated by any academic staff (or group), which is submitted as a project to the Medical Education and Science Development Service, with the support of which the project is perfected; The developed project will be submitted to the Quality Assurance Service, which will provide project expertise by industry experts and budget agreement with the Head of Administration. In case of a positive conclusion, the completed project will be submitted to the Academic Council for consideration and approval. Involvement of students in the research process is desirable.

The subject of scientific activity is affiliated and, possibly, non-affiliated academic staff (Professor, Associate Staff, Assistant Professor, Assistant);

It is the responsibility of the affiliated academic staff to be involved in the process of defining and implementing the research topic; this does not restrict other staff from engaging in such research activities.

The Department of Medical Education and Scientific Research Development is responsible for the progress of the work planned by the research project. The researcher conducting scientific activity is responsible for the quality of the scientific work, its purposefulness, effectiveness; in case of financing - on the economic distribution of financial resources.

At the end of each calendar year, **the Department of Medical Education and Scientific Research Development** summarizes the scientific activities carried out and submits a unified report on the results of the plan implementation to the Rector.

Mechanism for evaluating the quality of research activities

Evaluation procedures and criteria

Summary evaluation of the scientific-research activity of the staff is carried out by the Quality Assurance Service in accordance with the rules developed herein.

Quality Assurance Service, in coordination with the Medical Education and Science Development Service and the International Relations, Strategic Development and Human Resources Service, based on the specifics of its work (P (plan); D (do); C (check); A (act)), defines the aspects of the scientific-research activity of the staff to be examined, develops the evaluation criteria, ensures the evaluation in accordance with the developed plan and criteria, checks and / or creates a group of evaluators with relevant competencies, processes and analyzes the results, identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the academic and research activities of the staff, develops recommendations and defines the mechanisms for the improvement of the identified weaknesses and the maintenance of the strengths, in addition, monitors the implementation of planned activities and achieved results.

Plan. The Quality Assurance Service determines the work to be carried out for each academic year according to the regulatory documents in force at the University (University Strategic Development Plan, Research Development Strategy, etc.). The decisions made are reflected in the annual action plan.

Do. The implementation phase is preceded by a preparatory phase, during which the sequence of evaluation steps is determined, the object to be evaluated is defined; the evaluation criteria are developed; a form of evaluation procedure, evaluation and results analysis is developed; a group of evaluator(s) is created) based on the definition of relevant competencies of its potential members.

The Quality Assurance Service annually evaluates the scientific research activities of the staff with the participation of the Medical Education and Scientific Research Development and International Relations, Strategic Development and Human Resources Services.

- Develops a self-evaluation questionnaire on research activities carried out by academic staff;
- Develops survey forms and conducts surveys of students and staff regarding their participation in research activities;
- Checks the involvement of academic staff in research activities;
- Checks the degree of internationalization of research conducted by academic staff;
- Examine the involvement of young staff (including students) in research projects;
- Examine research funding statistics.

Check. The main goal of this stage is to determine the compliance of the existing activities to be evaluated with the legislation in force in the specific field and with the university regulatory mechanisms/documents. The evaluation is carried out according to the following criteria:

1. Create an environment appropriate to the research priorities set by the University;
2. Create the appropriate infrastructure for the research priorities defined by the University;
3. Support provided by the university to the idea, planning and implementation stages of the research of the academic and invited staff;
4. Provide relevant information on research priorities and interests of staff determined by the University, offer training courses, etc.
5. Evaluate the quality of research conducted by academic and visiting staff through developed questionnaires;
6. Indicators of organizing in-house university grant competitions;
7. Number and relevance of projects submitted for grants;
8. Evaluate the support of the research center in the research process in terms of finding information, conducting trainings, finding potential partners (including foreign ones), etc. ;
9. Existence of a mechanism to encourage researchers

Responding to evaluation results

At this stage, the data obtained as a result of the evaluation are analyzed, the compliance with the requirements set by the University is determined, conclusions are drawn, recommendations are developed and further measures are planned together with the Department of Medical Education and Scientific Research. The internal evaluation conducted by the Quality Assurance Service is aimed at identifying the strengths, strengthening and maintaining them, on the one hand, and identifying the weaknesses and eliminating the existing shortcomings, which serves to improve the quality of research at the University and bring it in line with established standards.

The Quality Assurance Service submits its conclusions and recommendations to the Faculty / Academic Council in written and verbal form. The updated document will be submitted (sent) to the Medical Education and Scientific Research Service and other responsible structural units for the implementation of the planned activities.