

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION

Developed within the scope of the Erasmus+ CBHE Project
IROconnect - Modernization and Digital Transformation for International Relations Offices in HEI's

Georgian American University

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Executive Summary

Founded in 2005, Georgian American University (GAU) is one of the most dynamic and internationally oriented private higher education institutions in Georgia. GAU comprises five schools and 24 educational programs, including bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and one-cycle medical (MD) programs.

According to the latest academic year's data, GAU enrolls:

- Bachelor's programs: 1,542 students
- One-cycle Medical Doctor (MD) program: 1,285 students
- Master's programs: 141 students
- Doctoral programs: 23 students

The university employs 605 academic and 175 administrative staff members. Notably, 41% of the total student body are international students, placing GAU among the leading universities in Georgia and the wider region. This reflects GAU's strong global network, multicultural academic environment, and commitment to supporting international learners.

Alongside these achievements, the university remains committed to its continuous development. In line with this commitment, the Strategic Plan for Internationalization 2025–2027 outlines a strategic roadmap for integrating GAU into the global higher education landscape. By 2027, GAU aims to achieve measurable progress in key areas: at least one international program accreditation (such as AMBA, BGA, ABET or ASIIN), one dual degree program, a 15% increase in international mobility participation, strengthened visibility in international university rankings, and a 10% increase in the number of international students enrolled at the university.

Complementing the Strategic Development Plan (2021–2027) and the university's Internationalization Policy, this plan identifies internationalization as a key institutional priority. It functions both as a developmental framework and a monitoring tool, ensuring GAU's continued evolution into a modern, internationally recognized university aligned with its vision of global recognition and its mission to embed a global perspective across all activities. The plan establishes a structured framework to strengthen GAU's global engagement and to integrate international perspectives across academic, research, and administrative domains.

These guiding documents emphasize cooperation with local and international partners, English-taught programs, student and staff mobility, and active participation in international networks. Within this context, internationalization is not treated as an isolated initiative but rather as an essential component of GAU's academic excellence and institutional growth.

The plan further highlights the importance of institutional capacity building, expansion of global partnerships, enhanced research collaboration, and the alignment of quality assurance mechanisms with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015).

Strategic Context

Over the past four years (2021-2025), Georgia has witnessed a significant increase in the number of international students - from 10,000 to over 37,000. According to Galt & Taggart's 2028 projection, the country may host around 48,000 international students, contributing nearly 500 million USD to the national economy.

Within this dynamic environment, Georgian American University stands out for its strong international engagement, robust academic partnerships, and English-taught programs. The university remains committed to its mission of advancing education quality, fostering research excellence, and promoting Georgia's integration into the global higher education space.

Strategic Orientation

GAU's institutional strategy focuses on ensuring:

- effective organizational, financial, and academic support for its schools and programs;
- strengthened positioning within the national, regional, and global educational landscape;
- internationally competitive academic and research offerings.

GAU's strategic plan unites the achievements of individual schools with broader institutional goals that transcend internal boundaries. The university aspires to be a modern, unified, and globally recognized academic institution, utilizing its intellectual and organizational capacity to serve both educational and societal missions.

The present Strategic Plan for Internationalization represents an organic continuation of GAU's overall Strategic Development Plan (2021–2027). It builds upon the same principles, values, and objectives that define the university's long-term vision - translating them into specific directions, activities, and performance indicators that ensure the systematic development of international cooperation, mobility, and global engagement.

Strategic Priorities for Internationalization

GAU's internationalization efforts are focused on:

1. Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Digital Transformation
2. Expanding and Diversifying International Partnerships
3. Enhancing International Mobility and Exchange
4. Developing Dual Degree Programs
5. Obtaining International Accreditations and Recognitions

Methodology

The plan was developed through a phased, participatory, and evidence-based process, combining institutional self-assessment, analysis of partner universities' experience, and alignment with international standards.

Key stages included:

1. Situation analysis (SWOT, training, digitalization, international cooperation)
2. Needs identification and prioritization
3. Strategic planning and action design

The final version was prepared through close collaboration between the Strategic Development Office and the Office of International Relations, with active engagement from GAU's management. This ensured the document's relevance, realism, and sustainability, providing a strong foundation for implementing internationalization objectives.

1. Current State of Internationalization

Georgian American University is recognized as one of the most international universities in Georgia. It holds a leading national position in Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) projects, ranking first in the country for the number of partnerships and mobility opportunities.

GAU currently maintains over 260 international partnerships, including 120 Erasmus+ partner universities and an additional 140 partner institutions through bilateral and other programs such as Mevlana.

On average, each semester GAU sends approximately 55 students and 50 staff members abroad, while hosting 35-40 incoming staff members and 3-5 students from partner universities.

A major strength of GAU's international profile is its student body composition. While the national average of international students in Georgia slightly exceeds 20%, GAU's international student ratio is 42%, meaning that nearly every second student is an international learner from over 30 countries. This demonstrates GAU's strong global appeal and inclusive academic culture. The university also offers a broad range of English-taught programs across multiple schools, enhancing accessibility for international students and promoting cross-border learning and collaboration.

These achievements highlight GAU's long-term commitment to internationalization through active partnerships, diverse student enrollment, and continuous development of high-quality, globally oriented academic programs.

2. SWOT ANALYSIS

2.1 Strengths

- **High Level of Internationalization:** GAU stands out as one of the leading universities in Georgia in terms of Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) projects, demonstrating a strong network of global academic partnerships.
- **Diverse Student Body:** With nearly every second student being a full-time international student, GAU benefits from a multicultural and globally minded learning environment.
- **English-Taught Programs:** A wide range of programs taught in English attracts international students and facilitates cross-border academic collaboration.
- **Reputation and Experience:** GAU has a well-established reputation for high-quality education, international engagement, and successful project implementation, making it a reliable partner in global initiatives.
- **Agile and Student-Centered Approach:** The university's flexible organizational structure allows it to adapt quickly to international trends and student needs, enhancing its appeal to both students and partner institutions.
- **Project Management Capacity:** GAU has extensive experience in managing international projects, ensuring financial and administrative compliance, and meeting EU reporting standards.
- **Institutional Commitment:** The university's leadership and Strategic Development Office actively prioritize internationalization, ensuring alignment between global and institutional objectives.

2.2 Weaknesses

- **Limited Financial Resources:** As a private institution operating within a developing economy, GAU faces financial constraints that may limit the scale and sustainability of its internationalization activities.
- **Dependence on External Funding:** The university relies significantly on international programs (such as Erasmus+) and national funding sources, which may fluctuate due to donor priorities or budgetary changes.
- **Political Uncertainty:** Although Georgia is generally stable, periods of political tension can affect long-term planning, international partnerships, and mobility programs.
- **Global Instability:** Broader geopolitical developments-such as regional conflicts, international sanctions, or visa restrictions-may impact student and staff mobility, cooperation opportunities, and international recruitment.
- **Resource Allocation Challenges:** Limited internal resources can restrict investment in infrastructure, research, or international marketing efforts that would deepen global engagement.
- **International Accreditation and Rankings:** Further strengthening research output and expanding international partnerships are needed to enhance GAU's visibility and participation in global rankings.

2.3 Opportunities

- **Expanding Global Partnerships:** There is significant potential to grow GAU's network of international partners, particularly within Erasmus+ and beyond Europe, including Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas.
- **Rising Demand for English-Taught Programs:** As global demand for English-medium education increases, GAU can expand its English-language offerings to attract a broader international audience.
- **Attracting International Faculty and Researchers:** Georgia's improving academic reputation and relatively low cost of living make it an appealing destination for foreign academics and researchers.
- **Digitalization and Virtual Exchange:** Growing global acceptance of online and hybrid learning provides new opportunities for international collaboration, virtual mobility, and joint academic programs.
- **Positioning as a Regional Hub:** Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, GAU has the potential to position itself as a regional hub for international education, research, and policy dialogue.
- **Support from International Organizations:** Continued backing from the EU, UN agencies, and other international bodies presents opportunities for funding, capacity building, and policy alignment with global standards.
- **Improving International Rankings:** By strengthening research and collaboration, GAU can enhance its international profile and attract more global talent.

2.4 Threats

- **Political Instability:** Domestic and regional political tensions pose risks to the continuity of international partnerships and mobility programs. Political polarization and uncertainty in Georgia can also influence education policy and funding priorities.
- **Risk of Suspension of Visa-Free Regime:** Any potential suspension of Georgia's visa-free travel arrangement with the EU—due to political developments or lack of reforms—would severely hinder student and staff mobility and reduce GAU's attractiveness to European partners.
- **Geopolitical Tensions:** Ongoing instability in the wider region, particularly due to Russian aggression, may discourage international students and faculty from choosing Georgia as a study or work destination.
- **Global Uncertainty:** Broader global issues such as armed conflicts, economic downturns, or restrictive immigration policies in partner countries could affect cooperation and mobility.
- **Brain Drain and Talent Migration:** Economic and political uncertainties may encourage top students and academics to seek opportunities abroad, making talent retention more difficult.
- **Competition from Regional Universities:** The growing international engagement of other Georgian and Eastern European universities could intensify competition for funding, students, and academic partnerships.

3. Main Objectives of the Strategic Plan for Internationalization

The Strategic Plan for Internationalization aims to position the institution as a globally connected, research-driven, and innovation-oriented higher education institution. The following strategic objectives define the key directions and expected outcomes for the period 2025–2027.

1. Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Digital Transformation

Objective:

To build a strong, digitally empowered institutional framework capable of implementing and sustaining internationalization activities efficiently.

Key Directions:

- Modernize GAU's International Relations Office (IRO) through digital transformation and automation (*IROconnect Project*).
- Develop internal policies, data systems, and management tools for international partnerships and mobility.
- Conduct continuous staff training on international cooperation, digital tools, intercultural communication, and project management.
- Ensure that internationalization processes are embedded across all administrative and academic structures.

Expected Outcomes:

- A digitally integrated international relations office operating through data-driven systems.
- Staff with enhanced global competencies and digital efficiency.
- Faster and standardized internal processes for mobility and partnership

2. Expand and Diversify International Partnerships

Objective:

To establish and maintain a wide network of high-quality, mutually beneficial international collaborations.

Key Directions:

- Build strategic partnerships with universities, research centers, and organizations aligned with GAU's mission and vision.
- Focus on developing long-term cooperation, not only for mobility but also for joint research and dual degree programs.
- Strengthen participation in *Erasmus+*, *Horizon Europe*, and other international academic and research initiatives.

- Promote school exchanges, joint workshops, and academic events hosted by GAU.

Expected Outcomes:

- Expanded portfolio of active and diverse international partners.
- Increased engagement in European and global projects.
- Enhanced institutional reputation and capacity for cooperation.

3. Enhance International Mobility and Exchange

Objective:

To increase the participation of students, academic and administrative staff in international academic and cultural exchanges.

Key Directions:

- Expand and diversify mobility programs under Erasmus+ and bilateral agreements.
- Ensure transparent credit transfer, academic recognition, and institutional support systems.
- Promote short-term exchanges, internships, and research visits abroad.
- Utilize digital tools to streamline mobility application, tracking, and reporting processes.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased outgoing and incoming mobility across programs.
- Broader international exposure and intercultural competence among GAU community members.

4. Develop Degree Programs

Objective:

To internationalize GAU's academic offerings and increase student competitiveness by creating dual/joint degree programs with reputable foreign institutions.

Key Directions:

- Identify priority programs (Business Administration, IT, Law and diplomacy, English language and communication).
- Align curricula with the *European Qualification Framework (EQF)* and *ECTS* standards.
- Establish agreements on mutual credit recognition and quality assurance mechanisms.

Expected Outcomes:

- Launch of new international dual programs.
- Growth in international student and academic participation.
- GAU graduates with internationally recognized and competitive qualifications.

5. Obtain International Accreditations and Recognitions

Objective:

To align GAU's academic quality and institutional standards with recognized international frameworks and agencies.

Key Directions:

- Pursue accreditation from respected international bodies such as AMBA, BGA, ABET or (ASIIN).
- Use accreditation outcomes to inform institutional improvement and benchmarking.

Expected Outcomes:

- International recognition of GAU's academic programs.
- Strengthened academic credibility and trust among global partners.
- Improved program quality, accountability, and governance.

3.1 Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Digital Transformation

3.1.1 Abstract

Over the past decade, the Georgian American University has developed a solid institutional foundation for managing academic and administrative processes, supported by a modern governance structure and a clear distribution of functions between the President's, Vice Presidents' Offices, Schools Management, the Office of Strategic Development, Research Development and Support Office, the Quality Assurance Office, and the International Relations Office, etc. These units jointly coordinate strategic planning, quality management, and international cooperation.

While GAU demonstrates consistent progress in its strategic and operational management, the overall institutional capacity for digital transformation and internationalization is still developing. Processes related to international mobility, partnerships, and data management are functional but not yet fully automated or unified within a single digital platform.

Digitalization Status

Although Georgian American University has made progress in incorporating digital tools into its academic and administrative operations, the overall level of digitalization in support of internationalization remains limited. The university does not yet operate fully integrated platforms for managing international mobility, partnerships, or student services, which creates challenges in maintaining efficiency, scalability, and data consistency.

Nevertheless, GAU is actively working to improve its digital infrastructure. Efforts are underway to introduce more advanced systems for international collaboration - including online application platforms, digital learning environments, and enhanced communication tools that enable virtual mobility and cross-border joint projects. There is a strong institutional awareness of the strategic importance of digitalization for enhancing global engagement, and this remains a priority area in GAU's long-term development agenda.

The IROconnect Project - currently being implemented - represents a major step toward a unified, mobile-friendly system that can automate key internationalization processes such as application tracking, document evaluation, communication, and data analysis. This system will also incorporate digital signatures and improve security, transparency, and real-time decision-making. By digitizing International Relations Office workflows, GAU aims to reduce manual work, enhance operational efficiency, and ensure smoother mobility management.

Digital transformation is expected to substantially improve the experience of international students and staff, simplify administrative procedures, and strengthen GAU's ability to manage and expand global partnerships.

Despite challenges such as limited resources and the need for customized software solutions, investment in digitalization is viewed as essential for advancing the university's internationalization efforts and institutional effectiveness.

Institutional Capacity and Human Resources

In parallel with digitalization, GAU continues to strengthen its human capital. The International Relations Office, in collaboration with the Offices of Human resources management, Strategic Development and Quality Assurance, organizes and participates in a range of professional development initiatives aimed at improving staff competencies in digital management, project coordination, and international collaboration.

Each year, GAU hosts an Erasmus+ Staff Week, bringing together representatives from partner universities to conduct training sessions and share experience on topics such as:

- International project management and quality assurance;
- Intercultural communication;
- Digital tools in mobility management;
- Development of internationalization strategies.

Additionally, GAU staff regularly participate in Staff Weeks abroad and in training events organized by the Erasmus+ National Office (NEO), EACEA, Horizon Europe, and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

These activities enhance institutional expertise, expose staff to international best practices, and contribute to the modernization of internal processes.

Despite these advances, GAU acknowledges several challenges:

- Limited financial and technical resources for digital infrastructure development;
- The lack of a permanent, institutionalized staff training framework;

Needs Assessment for Training

The assessment of staff training needs related to internationalization at Georgian American University is designed to be a continuous and adaptive process, guided by surveys, internal evaluations, and feedback

from both staff and partner institutions. This ensures that training priorities remain aligned with the university's evolving goals, global higher education trends, and long-term strategic objectives.

While the digital literacy of GAU's staff is relatively high, the lack of an integrated digital platform means that many operational tasks are still performed manually - making them time-consuming and potentially prone to errors.

Future training therefore needs to emphasize digital tools, automation, and data-driven decision-making, which will improve both institutional efficiency and the quality of international operations.

Key Focus Areas for Capacity Building

- Project management and data analysis;
- Communication and intercultural competence;
- Technical and digital skills;
- Dual-degree and joint program management;
- Quality assurance and international accreditation.

Expected Institutional Benefits

By developing competencies in these areas, GAU aims to:

- Streamline academic and administrative processes for improved efficiency;
- Strengthen dual-degree program management and compliance mechanisms;
- Enhance quality assurance and accreditation capabilities;
- Build overall institutional capacity for internationalization and partnership development;
- Improve understanding of international rankings and global benchmarking.

Training Implementation Approach

Training activities will be delivered through a structured, multi-modal framework, combining:

- Interactive workshops and seminars;
- Online and blended learning modules;
- Mentorship and peer-to-peer learning;
- Staff exchange and job-shadowing opportunities.

A **continuous evaluation mechanism** will monitor progress, allowing for ongoing adaptation of training content, methods, and priorities. Through this systematic, feedback-based training model, GAU seeks to:

- Consolidate institutional knowledge;
- Promote professional growth;
- Ensure the sustainable and effective implementation of its internationalization strategy.

3.1.2 Actions regarding Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Digital Transformation

Specific Activities	Target Groups	Timeline for Implementation	Responsible	Estimated Resources Required	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Launch and integrate IRO connect digital system for managing partnerships and mobility	International Relations Office; Schools.	2025–2026	International Relations Office; IT Office; Strategic Development Office.	Developed as part of the IROconnect project	System fully operational by end of 2026; ≥75% processes digitalized; quarterly system performance reports
Develop institutional regulations and workflow for internationalization procedures	International Relations Office; Quality Assurance Office; Vice President Office.	2025-2027	Quality Assurance Office; Vice President's Office; Strategic Development Office.	Administrative coordination and staff time	Efficient workflow in terms of time and resources by 2027
Conduct capacity-building training (digital skills, intercultural communication, project management)	International Relations Office; Schools.	2025–2027	IRO, Human Resources Management Office; Strategic Development Office.	Trainers, training materials, online modules	≥ 3 training held totally; ≥60 participants trained; post-training feedback average ≥85% satisfaction
Establish digital data dashboard for monitoring internationalization KPIs	Senior management; Quality Assurance Office; International Relations Office.	2026–2027	Strategic Development Office; IT Office.	Software tools, analytical staff support	Operational dashboard by 2027; biannual KPI reports generated; ≥80% data accuracy rate
Enhance coordination mechanisms among administrative units (IRO, QA, Strategic Development, HR)	Administrative Offices; Senior Management.	2025–2027	Vice President's Office; Strategic Development Office.	Administrative resources coordination meetings	Quarterly coordination meetings held; improved workflow communication index ≥90%

3.1.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation Mechanisms

The implementation of Objective 1 will be monitored through continuous review and feedback mechanisms coordinated by the Vice President's Office, Human Resources Management Office and Office of Strategic Development.

Progress will be tracked quarterly using both quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as training participation rates, system usage data, and efficiency metrics.

Annual evaluations will be conducted to assess the sustainability and institutional impact of digital transformation initiatives. Adjustments to implementation timelines, resource allocation, and staff training content will be made based on performance results and feedback from stakeholders.

Key monitoring activities include:

- Quarterly review meetings with IRO, IT, HR and Strategic Development Offices.
- Annual institutional report on digitalization and international capacity development.
- Annual surveys of staff satisfaction and system usability.

This integrated monitoring and evaluation system ensures that GAU's progress in institutional capacity and digital transformation remains measurable, adaptable, and aligned with its long-term strategic vision.

3.2 Expand and Diversify International Partnerships

3.2.1 Abstract

Building upon Georgian American University's strong record of international collaboration and global engagement, this objective focuses on expanding and diversifying the university's network of high-quality and mutually beneficial international partners. With more than 260 existing collaborations - including over 120 Erasmus+ agreements - GAU seeks to transition toward a more strategic, sustainable, and geographically balanced model of partnership development.

The university aims to strengthen relationships with institutions that share GAU's mission and values, broadening cooperation beyond Europe to include new regions such as Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas. These partnerships will emphasize academic collaboration, mobility, and global exchange opportunities that enrich both students and staff.

Key areas of focus include:

- Expanding student and staff mobility through Erasmus+ and bilateral cooperation agreements;
- Organizing international events, workshops, and academic visits to enhance intercultural engagement;
- Facilitating academic exchanges and short-term mobility programs to promote global experience and institutional visibility.

Through these actions, GAU will:

- Broaden its portfolio of diverse and active partners;
- Strengthen participation in European and global collaboration programs;
- Enhance its reputation, institutional capacity, and visibility in the international higher education landscape.

Ultimately, this objective supports GAU's vision of becoming a globally connected and collaboration-driven university, capable of sustaining meaningful international relationships that contribute to both institutional growth and the global academic community.

3.2.2 Actions regarding Expand and Diversify International Partnerships

Specific Activities	Target Groups	Timeline for Implementation	Responsible	Estimated Resources Required	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Expand the portfolio of international partners through targeted outreach and regional diversification.	International Relations Office Schools, senior management.	2025–2027	International Relations Office; Strategic Development Office	Administrative resources, communication budget, travel funds.	≥20 new MoUs signed totally; partnerships established; quarterly progress reports.
Develop a structured framework for evaluating and renewing existing partnerships.	International Relations Office; Strategic Development Office; Quality Assurance Office.	2025–2027	International Relations Office, Quality Assurance Office; Vice President's Office.	Staff time, analytical tools, partner feedback surveys.	Annual review of all active MoUs; non-performing partnerships discontinued;
Promote GAU-hosted international events, workshops, and mobility weeks to strengthen institutional visibility.	Staff; students; international partners.	2025–2027	International Relations Office, Strategic; Development Office Communications Office.	Event organization budget, logistical support.	At least 1 major international events per year; ≥50 participants; post-event satisfaction ≥85%.

3.2.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation Mechanisms

Progress under Objective 2 will be monitored jointly by the Vice President's Office, Office of Strategic Development, and the International Relations Office (IRO) to ensure efficient, sustainable, and goal-oriented implementation.

Key Monitoring Activities:

- Quarterly coordination meetings to track new and active partnerships, mobility figures, and international events.
- Annual review of partnership quality, reciprocity, and regional balance.
- Digital tracking via IROconnect, providing real-time data on cooperation outcomes.

Evaluation and Adaptation:

- Findings integrated into updated targets, mobility plans, and partnership strategies.

This streamlined system ensures that GAU's partnership development remains evidence-based, adaptive, and strategically aligned with its internationalization goals.

3.3 Enhance International Mobility and Exchange

3.3.1 Abstract

Building on GAU's previous objectives that strengthened institutional capacity, partnership diversification, and international accreditation, this objective focuses on advancing international mobility and exchange as a fundamental pillar of GAU's global engagement strategy. Mobility is one of the most visible indicators of successful internationalization and serves as a mechanism for fostering intercultural understanding, academic cooperation, and the development of globally competent graduates.

The Georgian American University aims to increase both outgoing and incoming participation in Erasmus+ and bilateral programs, ensuring transparent academic recognition, effective credit transfer, and strong institutional support services. A key component of this objective is GAU's close collaboration with the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), which plays an essential role in supporting the integration of incoming international students, organizing cultural activities, and improving student mobility experiences. By strengthening this partnership, GAU enhances its capacity to provide inclusive, high-quality international experiences for all participants.

This objective aligns with findings from GAU's SWOT analysis that emphasize the need to broaden participation in mobility programs, enhance the visibility of international collaboration, and create a more supportive environment for global academic engagement.

Key directions include:

- Expanding Erasmus+ and bilateral mobility partnerships with universities in Europe and Asia;
- Increasing student and staff participation in mobility and exchange programs;
- Ensuring transparent credit transfer and academic recognition processes;
- Promoting short-term exchanges, internships, and research visits abroad;
- Strengthening cooperation with ESN to support incoming student integration and cultural exchange.

3.3.2 Actions regarding International Mobility and Exchange

Specific Activities	Target Groups	Timeline for Implementation	Responsible	Estimated Resources Required	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Increase awareness and participation in mobility opportunities through targeted promotion and training sessions.	Students, Staff	2025–2027	International Relations Office; PR Office; Human Resources Management Office.	Promotional materials, training sessions, communication tools	10% annual growth in applications for mobility programs.
Ensure transparent credit transfer and academic recognition procedures aligned with ECTS and partner standards.	Schools; Academic Coordinators; Quality Assurance Office,	2025–2026	Quality Assurance Office; Academic Council.	Administrative resources, training workshops.	100% compliance with ECTS standards; improved credit recognition efficiency.
Sharing the list of incoming students with ESN.	ESN team, incoming international students	2025-2027	International Relations Office	Staff time, administrative coordination	On-time list delivery, improved student onboarding.
Providing space for ESN national & international events.	ESN, international and Georgian students	2025-2027	University Administration; International Relations Office	Venue allocation, logistical support	Number of events hosted, student attendance.
Co-financing selected ESN activities.	ESN volunteers, international students	2025-2027	International Relations Office; Financial Office, Marketing Office.	Small budget for events/support	Number of co-financed activities, ESN feedback.
ESN participation in GAU international events.	ESN representatives, incoming students	2025-2027	International Relations Office	Event space, coordination support	Number of events attended by ESN, student engagement & feedback.

3.3.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptation Mechanism

The International Relations Office, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance and Strategic Development Offices, will oversee the implementation and monitoring of all international mobility and ESN partnership activities. Progress will be evaluated semi-annually based on quantitative indicators (number of participants, agreements, and activities) and qualitative feedback (participant satisfaction, ESN evaluations).

- Annual mobility and ESN collaboration reports will summarize achievements and identify improvement areas.
- Surveys of incoming and outgoing participants will provide insights for refining procedures and support systems.
- The Vice President will review results annually to ensure continuous alignment with GAU's internationalization strategy.

This integrated monitoring process ensures that GAU's mobility and ESN activities remain cohesive, measurable, and strategically impactful.

3.4 Develop Dual Degree Programs

3.4.1. Abstract

Georgian American University aims to enhance the international relevance and competitiveness of its academic offerings through the development of dual degree programs with reputable foreign institutions. This initiative aligns with GAU's broader internationalization strategy and its commitment to providing students with globally recognized qualifications that strengthen employability and cross-cultural competence.

GAU will prioritize programs in Business Administration, Information Technology, Law, and English Language & Communication, as these areas have strong international appeal and alignment with global academic standards. The university will ensure full compliance with European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) principles, fostering academic transparency and mutual recognition.

Key steps include:

- Identifying suitable partner institutions with compatible curricula and quality assurance systems;
- Establishing mutual credit recognition frameworks and harmonized learning outcomes;
- Developing clear operational guidelines for dual program administration in line with national and partner regulations.

Through these measures, GAU seeks to:

- Launch at least one international dual programs by 2027;
- Increase participation of foreign students;
- Award degrees that are internationally recognized, enhancing graduates' competitiveness in global education and labor markets.

This objective represents a crucial step toward integrating GAU's academic system into the global higher education space and reinforcing its reputation as a modern, collaborative, and internationally connected university.

3.4.2 Actions regarding dual degree programs

Specific Activities	Target Groups	Timeline for Implementation	Responsible	Estimated Resources Required	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Conduct market and academic analysis to identify priority programs for dual degrees (Business, IT, Law & Diplomacy, English Language & Communication, etc.)	Strategic Development Office; Deans of the Schools; Quality Assurance Office	2025-2027	Vice President's Office; Strategic Development Office; Academic Affairs; Quality Assurance Office;	Staff time, analytical tools	Report identifying at least 4 potential programs and 6 candidate partner universities
Negotiate and formalize MoUs and academic agreements with selected institutions	International Relations Office; Deans of the Schools; Legal Services Office	2025-2026	International Relations Office; Vice President's Office; Legal Office	Administrative and legal costs	Minimum 3 signed program-specific MoUs; approved academic frameworks
Align curricula with ECTS standards and partner requirements	Schools; Program Coordinators	2026-2027	Quality Assurance Office, Deans, Academic Committees	Curriculum redesign and training costs	Full compliance with ECTS; mutual credit recognition established
Pilot implementation of first dual degree programs	Students; Staff; Partner Universities	2026-2027	IRO, Deans, Quality Assurance Office	Implementation support, promotion budget	Launch of at least 2 dual programs; ≥20 enrolled students per program

3.4.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation Mechanisms

The implementation of Objective 3 will be supervised by the Vice President's Office, in coordination with the Vice President's Office, Office of Strategic Development, International Relations Office (IRO), Quality Assurance Office and Schools Management.

Monitoring:

- Quarterly review meetings to track progress on partnership agreements, curriculum alignment, and system development.
- Regular coordination among academic and administrative units to ensure procedural and regulatory compliance.

Evaluation and Adaptation:

- Annual evaluation of progress toward program launch goals and student outcomes.
- Integration of evaluation results into future program development and partner selection processes.

This monitoring system ensures that GAU's efforts in developing dual degree programs remain measurable, adaptive, and fully aligned with both institutional priorities and international academic standards.

3.5 Obtain International Accreditations and Recognitions

3.5.1. Abstract

Georgian American University aims to strengthen its global standing and academic credibility through obtaining international accreditations and recognitions from leading quality assurance agencies. This initiative reflects GAU's commitment to aligning its internal academic standards with internationally recognized frameworks, fostering institutional excellence and global trust.

The university intends to apply for accreditation from organizations such as the Association of MBAs (AMBA), the Business Graduates Association (BGA), the Accreditation Agency for Degree Programs in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics (ASIIN), and Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Furthermore, GAU will align its internal quality assurance system with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015), ensuring transparent, student-centered, and evidence-based practices.

Key steps include:

- Conducting institutional readiness assessments for international accreditation;
- Strengthening internal quality management and documentation procedures;
- Implementing targeted staff training and workshops related to accreditation standards;
- Preparing self-evaluation reports and facilitating external review visits;
- Using feedback from accreditation outcomes to guide continuous improvement and benchmarking.

Through these actions, GAU aims to move toward international accreditation of key programs by 2027, increase its global visibility, and build lasting partnerships with internationally recognized institutions. This initiative will contribute to GAU's reputation as a transparent, accountable, and high-quality higher education institution, well-integrated into the global academic community.

3.5.2 Actions regarding International Accreditations and Recognitions

Specific Activities	Target Groups	Timeline for Implementation	Responsible	Estimated Resources Required	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Conduct institutional readiness analysis for AMBA, BGA, ABET and ASIIN accreditation; identify programs for initial submission.	Strategic Development Office; Quality Assurance Office; Schools	2025-2027	Vice President Office; Schools Management; Strategic Development Office; Quality Assurance Office	Staff time, analytical tools, consultation with experts	Comprehensive readiness report and accreditation roadmap prepared.
Align internal QA systems with ESG 2015 standards; update policies and procedures accordingly.	Quality Assurance Office; Deans of the Schools; Human Resources Management Office	2025–2027	Quality Assurance Office	Administrative time, training resources	Updated QA policy manual; 2 staff training sessions completed.
Mid-evaluation address feedback from accreditation bodies.	Quality Assurance Office; Vice President Office; Schools	2027	Vice President Office; Quality Assurance Office	Staff time, expert consultations, documentation analysis	Successful completion of review visits; corrective action plan implemented.
Integrating received recommendation into programs	Quality Assurance Office; Deans of the Schools	2026-2027	Quality Assurance Office; Strategic Development Office; Schools	Staff time, Staff time, curriculum development resources	Recommendations integrated; improvements reflected in curricula and program documentation

3.5.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptation Mechanism

The implementation of this objective will be coordinated by the Quality Assurance Office under the supervision of the Vice President. Progress will be reviewed quarterly based on predefined indicators and documented milestones.

- Annual progress reports will be prepared to assess advancement toward accreditation readiness and compliance with ESG 2015.
- Feedback from accreditation agencies and external experts will be systematically analyzed to refine processes and address gaps.
- The Quality Assurance Office will integrate accreditation progress into GAU's institutional performance dashboard.

Through continuous monitoring and adaptive management, GAU will ensure that international accreditation activities remain aligned with institutional strategy and global higher education trends.