

Prof. Marek Martyniszyn  
Queen's University Belfast  
Northern Ireland

## External Evaluator Report

8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

I was requested to reflect on the Programmes in European Studies developed at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. These are the Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes. I was provided with their detailed outlines, which I have reviewed. I also had opportunities to ask follow-up questions to clarify various queries. Furthermore, through engagement in various events organised by the Institute for European Studies—I had possibilities to engage with some of the colleagues teaching on and responsible for organizing these Programmes, as well as with students taking part in them.

On the above basis I am very pleased to report that the Institute developed very strong offerings. All three Programmes are well-structured and include highly relevant courses, giving students unique educational opportunities. The most sophisticated of offered Programmes—the PhD Programme—includes the best international practice of requiring candidates to publish work in reputable outlets prior to their doctoral competition. Moreover, students are examined by experts, during a viva voce examination. Again, this is international best practice. I understand that subsequently there is some further examination taking place, which is much wider and largely ceremonial in nature. My recommendation is to discontinue that practice as I do not see it bringing any educational value, while surely causing stress to candidates and unnecessary administrative work.

Prof. Nino Lapiashvili, the Institute's Director, deserves every recognition for her hard and highly successful work in relation to these Programmes and the wider development of the Institute for European Studies. The adopted approach is very progressive and open-minded—willing to consider and absorb good practices, reflect on own performance to date. In many ways the work of the Institute for European Studies, both on these Programmes specifically and also more broadly, constitutes important public service to Georgia and the wider Caucasus region.

Going forward I would warmly encourage the Institute to continue its engagement with external colleagues from a range of universities and jurisdictions with a view to sustain and further develop the Institute's excellence, and support the Institute in maintaining the high standards which it achieved and aspires to maintain.



Prof. Marek Martyniszyn