

To the Accreditation Council  
of the Eurasian Center for Accreditation  
and Quality Assurance  
in Higher Education and Health Care  
November 27 2025

**REPORT  
OF THE EXTERNAL EXPERT COMMISSION  
ON THE RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL  
PROGRAMME 70910206 OPHTHALMOLOGY  
OF TASHKENT STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH  
THE STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION:  
POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION (MASTER'S DEGREE)  
OF THE EURASIAN CENTER FOR ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY  
ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE**

**external expert assessment period: November 3-5, 2025**

**Almaty, 2025**

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## LIST OF DESIGNATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Designation</b>
ECAQA	Eurasian Center for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
WFME	World Federation for Medical Education
MH RU	Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Uzbekistan
RLA	Regulatory and Legal Acts
EP	Educational Programme
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area
TSMU	Tashkent State Medical University

## 1. Composition of the External Expert Commission

In accordance with ECAQA Order No.24 dated October 16, 2025, an External Expert Commission (hereinafter referred to as the EEC) was formed to conduct an external assessment of the Master's degree educational programme in “Ophthalmology” from November 3 to 5, 2025, consisting of the following members:

No.	EEC membership	Full name	Academic degree/title, position, place of work/study, year, specialty
1	Chairman	Turgunov Yermek Meiramovich	Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Surgical Diseases at NJSC “Karaganda Medical University”
2	International Expert	Milena Staneva Staneva	PhD, Honorary Professor of the Faculty of Medicine at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Head of the Angiology Unit of Acibadem City Clinical Hospital of Tokuda University, Sofia, Bulgaria.
3	Academic Expert	Myrzabekova Gulshara Turebekovna	Doctor of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Childrens’ Diseases named after N.A. Barlybayeva at NJSC “S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University”, Almaty
4	Academic Expert	Burkutbayeva Tatyana Nuridenovna	Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, Head of the Otolaryngology Department at KMU “HSPH”, Almaty
5	Academic Expert	Trynkin Alexey Viktorovich	Candidate of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Surgical Diseases with the Course of Anesthesiology and Resuscitation at NEI “KRMU”
6	Academic Expert	Kudabayeva Khatimya Ilyassovna	Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Internal Diseases No.1 at NJSC “West Kazakhstan Medical University named after M. Ospanov”
7	Academic Expert	Mukhambetova Gulnar Amerzayevna	Candidate of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Nervous System Diseases at NJSC “S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University”, Almaty
8	Academic Expert	Akhenbekova Aida Zhaksybayevna	Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Childrens’ Diseases at NJSC “S.D. Asfendiyarov KazNMU”, Almaty
9	Academic Expert	Doshakanova Assel Baidauletovna	Candidate of Medical Sciences, Ophthalmologist of the highest category, Head of the Postgraduate Education Department at LLP “Kazakh Research Institute of Eye Diseases”
10	Academic Expert	Marat Aizada	PhD, Associate Professor of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology No.1 at NJSC “Astana Medical

			University”, Obstetrician-Gynecologist
11	Employer Expert	Ermetov Aziz Tashmetovich	Doctor of Medical Sciences, Director of the Tashkent Regional Branch of the Republican Scientific Center for Emergency Medical Care, Tashkent
10	Student Expert	Sartay Nurila Nurmakhankyzy	Third-year postgraduate doctor in “Obstetrics and Gynecology” at NEI “KRMU”

The EEC report includes a description of the results and conclusions of the external assessment of the educational programme “Ophthalmology” for compliance with the Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Education (Master's Degree) (developed based on the 2023 WFME International Standards for Quality Improvement in Postgraduate Education Programmes) and conclusions (hereinafter referred to as the Accreditation Standards), along with the EEC recommendations for further improvement of the approaches and conditions for implementing the aforementioned educational programme and recommendations on accreditation to the ECAQA Accreditation Council on accreditation.

## 2. General Part of the Final Report

### 2.1 Presentation of the Master's Degree Educational Programme in “Ophthalmology”

Organization name, legal form of ownership, BIN	Tashkent State Medical University
Full name of the first head	Boimuradov Shukhrat Abdujalilovich
Date of establishment	September 7, 1972
Location and contact information	Republic of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Almazar District, Farobiy Street, 2, postcode: 100109 Phone: +998 (78) 150 78 01 Fax: +998 (78) 250 78 28 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@tma.uz">info@tma.uz</a>
State license for educational activities in master's programmes (date, number)	License for educational activities in the Master's programme in “Ophthalmology”, issued in 2004.
Year of commencement of the accredited educational programme (EP)	2004
Duration of study	3 years
Total number of graduates since the beginning of the EP	138
Number of master's students in the EP since the beginning of the current academic year	21
Full-time/part-time faculty involved in the EP	Total number of teachers: 17, including 14 full-time and 3 part-time.  Academic degree holder rate: 65% Categorization: 90%
Website Instagram Facebook with active pages	Website: <a href="http://www.tma.uz">www.tma.uz</a> <a href="https://tashpmi.uz">https://tashpmi.uz</a>

## **2.2 Information about Previous Accreditation**

The State Inspectorate for Quality Control in Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan issued a Certificate for the accredited educational programme, No. 5000011, on October 23, 2019.

## **2.3 Brief Description of the Analysis Results of the Self-Assessment Report for the Master's Degree Educational Programme in “Ophthalmology” and Conclusions on its Completion**

The self-assessment report for the Master's Degree Educational Programme in “Ophthalmology” (hereinafter referred to as the report) is presented on 92 pages of the main text, 14 pages of annexes, and copies or electronic versions of 29 documents located at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1594p2b31C3jURDGwytbwip1h013oOvHA?usp=sharing>.

The report is characterized by completeness (this wording is included in this section of the report as an example, since an educational organization can only be admitted to the external assessment stage if the self-assessment report is complete and content-complete) of responses to all 8 key accreditation standards and criteria, structured in accordance with the recommendations of the Guidelines for Conducting Self-Assessment of Educational Programme provided to the educational organization by the accreditation center - ECAQA, and internal unity of information. A cover letter signed by Rector Shukhrat Abdujalilovich Boymuradov, confirming the accuracy of the quantitative information and data included in the self-assessment report, is attached to report.

The report includes a list of 38 members of the internal self-assessment commission, indicating the responsibilities of each employee, and information about the representative of the organization responsible for conducting the self-assessment of the educational programme – Zhamoliddin Bakhranovich Sattorov, Head of the Education Quality Assurance Department at TSMU, Doctor of Science, Associate Professor.

The self-assessment of the Master's educational programme in “Ophthalmology” was conducted based on the University Rector's Order No.84 dated February 10, 2025, "On the Establishment of a Working Group to Conduct a Specialized Self-Assessment and Write a Report".

All standards outline the University's actual practices for training master's students in “Ophthalmology”, taking into account the start of student admission in 2004. These standards also include substantiated data, examples of the educational programme's objectives, national and international events, and methodological support, confirming compliance with accreditation standards. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and up-to-date in terms of the the number of master's students, teachers and administration, information on selection and admission, learning outcomes, knowledge and skills assessment results, the University's physical facilities and clinical sites, contractual obligations with partners (universities, associations and facilities), financial information, development and improvement plans, and more.

The report was submitted to the ECAQA in its final form, with data adjusted according to the above recommendations. It is written in a competent language, the wording for each standard is clear and understandable, and is described in accordance with the criteria of the standards. Tables and diagrams contain references in the text and are numbered sequentially.

## **3. Description of the External Expert Assessment**

The external expert assessment of the “Ophthalmology” educational programme was organized in accordance with the Guidelines for Conducting External Assessment of Educational Organizations and Educational Programmes of the ECAQA. The dates of the visit to organization: November 3-5, 2025. The detailed schedule for the 3-day visit is presented in Annex 3 to this report.

To obtain objective information, the EEC members used the following methods and their results:

- conversation with management and administrative staff – 21 people;
- interviews with master's students – 19 people;
- website review [www.tma.uz](http://www.tma.uz)
- interviewing 10 staff members, 21 teachers and 3 supervisors;
- surveying 58 teachers and 200 master’s students, respectively;

- observing master's student training: attending 1 practical lesson ("Fundamentals of Microsurgical Techniques in Ophthalmology", teacher L.S. Khamrayeva, first-year master's students, classroom at the Ophthalmology Unit of Clinic No.2 of Tashkent State Medical University);
- reviewing resources in the context of accreditation standards compliance: visiting 3 practice/clinical training centers, including the private clinic "Nano Medical Clinic" and the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center of Endocrinology named after Academician Ye.Kh. Turakulov, Clinic No.2 of Tashkent State Medical University, where training is conducted in 2 educational programmes with the participation of 12 full-time/part-time faculty members;
- review of 14 learning and teaching documents both before the visit to the organization and during the visit to the divisions (the list of documents reviewed is in Annex 2).

The accredited organization's staff ensured the presence of all persons specified in the visit programme and in the lists of interview and conversations sites (Table 1).

**Table 1 - Information on the number and categories of participants in meetings, interviews and conversations with EEC members**

No.	Position	Quantity
1	Rector	1
2	Vice Rector for Research and Innovation	1
3	Head of the Finance and Economics Department	2
4	Head of the Career and Employment Center	1
5	Head of the Educational and Methodological Department	1
6	Head of the Educational and Simulation Center	1
7	Head of the Faculty Development Department	1
8	Responsible for Multidisciplinary Clinics	1
9	Head of the Digital and Innovative Technologies Center	1
10	Head of the Complaints, Control and Monitoring Department	1
11	Master's Degree Graduates in Surgical Specialties	36
12	Master's Degree Teachers	21
13	Employers	13
14	Master's Degree Students of All Years in Surgical Specialties	87
15	Head of the Testing Center	2
16	Head and Employee of the Information and Resource Center ( <i>Library</i> )	2
17	Head and Employee of the Social Assistance Center	2
18	Employee of the TSMU Museum	1
19	Head and Deputy Principal of the Department of Public Healthcare and Healthcare Management No.2	2

On the final day of the visit to organization, a meeting of the EEC members was held to discuss the external assessment. A final discussion was held regarding the external assessment of the educational programme, document review, conversation, interview and questionnaires results. The EEC members began drafting the final EEC report. The external assessment results were summarized. The experts individually completed the "Quality Profile and Criteria for External Assessment of the Educational Programme "Ophthalmology" for Compliance with the Standards for ECAQA Accreditation". The EEC members made no comments. Recommendations for improving the educational programme were discussed, and Chairman Yermek Meiramovich Turgunov held a final open vote on the recommendations for the ECAQA Accreditation Council.

Comfortable conditions were created for the EEC, with access to all necessary information and material resources. The commission notes the high level of the University's corporate culture and the team's high level of openness in providing information to the EEC members.

*In a survey of master's students, 93% rated the work of the External Expert Commission on Accreditation as positive, while 7% rated it as satisfactory. The majority of respondents (93%) believe that educational institutions or educational programmes should be accredited.*

*According to 77.6% of teachers, the survey conducted by the ECAQA is useful for developing recommendations for improving key areas of the accredited educational institution's activities.*

At the end of the visit programme, the EEC chairperson presented recommendations to the educational institution's management and staff based on the results of the external assessment as part of the specialized accreditation.

### **3. Analysis of Compliance with Standards for Accreditation Based on the External Assessment of the Master's Degree Educational Programme in “Ophthalmology”**

#### **Standard 1: MISSION AND VALUES**

##### **1.1 Stating the mission**

During the implementation of the programme's activities, namely, through conversation with the organization's first head, members of the advisory body (Academic Board), and interviews with master's students and teachers, compliance with the criteria of *Standard 1* was established. All participants in the educational process are aware of the educational programme's mission and participated in developing proposals for formulating the mission. The mission has been communicated to potential master's students through the website, social media and informational letters to medical organizations. The organization's strategic plan (Action Plan for the Master's Degree Programme) for the period 2025-2026 was reviewed, including areas such as national priorities, intellectual property and legal literacy. This confirms compliance with the accreditation standard and demonstrates the organization's goals, objectives and prospects. Interviews with master's students revealed that before classes begin, teachers inform students about the institution's mission and work plans, and advise them on where to obtain necessary information about the educational programme, teachers and training facilities.

During their visits to TashSMU divisions, experts noted the educational institution's strengths in relation to the accredited educational programme, including: developing scientific and pedagogical potential and focusing on training pediatric specialists with an emphasis on emergency medical care.

The institution has divisions directly related to the “Ophthalmology” educational programme, which can be considered best practices in education, namely, the educational and simulation center and the career and employment center. This conclusion is drawn because the digital platform integrated with the Himex system at TashSMU expands capabilities for managing the educational process, interaction between students, teachers and administration, as well as for storing and analyzing data.

The documentation review demonstrates that the organization's mission and the educational programme's mission are embodied in specific educational outcomes, and the educational process is structured in accordance with the State Compulsory Educational Standard and current regulatory legal acts (RLA) in postgraduate education and healthcare. At the same time, during meetings with the Vice-Rector for Research and Innovation and the Head of the Department of Master's Degrees and Clinical Residency, the experts determined that the master's programme in “Ophthalmology” lacks a goal for the training of academic and teaching staff.

The educational organization conducts master's degree training at the following clinical sites and units: Tashkent State Medical University Clinic, 1st City Children's Clinical Hospital, Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Eye Surgery, 77th Specialized Boarding School for Blind Children, and private eye clinics: JE LLC “Ziyo-Baxsh”, JE LLC “Private LAZEROPTIKA – DMC”, LLC “Vedanta Medical”, “Tibbiyot Dunyosi” and “Nur Med Servis”. The organization provides a patient-centered approach through personalized therapy, information

technology and the integrated interaction of various specialists and services. The educational organization pays due attention to patient safety and autonomy through the development and implementation of diagnostic and treatment standards and protocols, the active operation of a simulation center, and training in ethics and legal issues.

Experts found that master's students have appropriate working conditions to support their own health, as the educational institution supports mental health with a social (psychological) support center, and physical health with a sports complex, along with comfortable learning environments, nutritious meals and recreation. Master's students also have access to mentoring support at the university, including during their research.

Basic competencies of master's students in the accredited specialty, such as critical thinking, analytical skills and independent problem-solving, as well as specialized competencies including skills in using modern technologies, help the educational institution implement innovative learning forms. This will allow master's students to develop skills and qualities such as innovation, critical evaluation of information and the ability to work in interdisciplinary teams.

The educational organization encourages master's students to engage in research in their chosen specialty through participation in scientific projects, conferences and seminars, and also ensures their participation in academic events such as scientific conferences, roundtables, master classes, seminars and trainings.

At the same time, experts found that the mission of the Master's EP in "Ophthalmology" does not include specialist training in research and teaching.

## **1.2 Participation in Mission Formulation**

The experts found that master's students, teaching staff and representatives of practical healthcare participated in the development of the goals and objectives (mission) of the "Ophthalmology" educational programme; however, no supporting documentation was provided. Analysis of the self-assessment report revealed that the Master's EP in "Ophthalmology" was developed based on the standard programme of the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as taking into account the principles and approaches of best international practices in the training of healthcare professionals.

When updated regulatory legal acts and orders in education and healthcare are released, educational programme developers make corresponding changes.

When interviewing master's students and employers, experts did not receive a clear answer to the questions "Are you involved in formulating the mission and goals of the organization and educational programme?" and "What is the personal contribution of master's students to improving the educational programme?" To these questions, both master's students and employers responded affirmatively that they participate in improving the educational programme.

*In a survey of 200 master's students (on the resource <https://webanketa.com/>), several of the 22 questions were devoted to the quality of the educational process and the educational programme. It was found that 85% of master's students would recommend studying at this educational institution to their acquaintances, friends and relatives. And 92% of respondents believe that educational programme heads and teachers are aware of students' learning needs. In response to the question "Do you think this educational institution allows you to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in your chosen specialty?", 92% of master's degree students responded positively, 3.5% were unsure, 2.5% could not yet answer this question, and 2% were willing to believe so.*

*The 58 teachers surveyed (21 survey questions) also responded that 87.9% were satisfied with the work and workplace organization at this educational institution, and 6.9% partially agreed. The experts determined that the institution has a healthy work environment, as the head is readily accessible to both master's degree students and employees, responds promptly to requests, and ensures timely support for the educational process, providing students with advisory and methodological support. In the survey, 81% of teachers were satisfied with the institution's work environment, and 10.3% were partially satisfied. According to 87.9% of respondents, teachers at educational institution*

have the opportunity to develop as professionals in their field. A total of 58 respondents (in total) responded, with 20.7% having less than 5 years of teaching experience, 27.6% having less than 10 years, and 51.7% having more than 10 years of teaching experience.

**EEC findings by criteria.** Compliant with 6 standards: fully - 5, partially - 1, not compliant - 0.

Standard	Standard Compliance	Recommendations for Improvement
1.1.3	Partially Compliant	Define the goal of the master's degree programme in ophthalmology, taking into account the training of academic and teaching staff.

## Standard 2: CURRICULUM

### 2.1 Curriculum and certification

Experts have established a correlation between the content and the required qualifications of master's students upon completion of the "Ophthalmology" programme, which is expressed in the alignment of the graduate's professional competencies with the content of the educational programme. Upon completion of their studies, master's students are admitted to the State Examination, which is conducted in 2 stages: Stage 1 - 2 oral exams (humanities disciplines and an exam in the specialty of "Ophthalmology"); Stage 2 - the State Defense of the Master's Thesis. Thus, graduates of the master's programme receive a specialist certificate in ophthalmology and are admitted to clinical practice in medical institutions. They are also awarded the academic degree of "Master" in the educational programme in the field of 70910206 "Ophthalmology".

In 2024, 66.7% of graduates of the master's programme in "Ophthalmology" passed the independent assessment with an "excellent" grade, and 33.3% with a "good" grade. There were no failures.

Experts reviewed documents confirming the fulfillment of this criterion of the Accreditation Standard: educational documentation, assessment materials and local regulations of TashSMU.

### 2.2 Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes are defined and included in the document on the basic educational programme, which was developed by the department's working group and *approved by the Academic Board* of TashSMU. Stakeholders are informed about the intended learning outcomes of master's students in "Ophthalmology" by publishing information on the educational institution's official website and communicating it through information and reference materials. Experts have confirmed that master's students' professional behavior and communication skills are developed by incorporating relevant competencies into their curriculum and practical training.

Teachers and master's students have been informed of the Code of Ethics (<https://tashpmi.uz/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/eticheskoe-povedenie-magistrov.docx>) (**ESG II Part 1.2**).

It has been established that the expected learning outcomes meet the requirements of national professional standards for the specialty "Ophthalmology" (the graduate's qualification level corresponds to Level 7 of the National Personnel Programme, which is related in accordance with Order No.647 of the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 31, 2015. <https://gov.uz/oz/edu>) and the requirements of the State Educational Standards of Higher Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The educational programme defines learning outcomes for the specialty "Ophthalmology", which include knowledge, skills and professional behavior. Oral feedback is regularly provided to master's students after each lesson, and a survey is conducted once a year. To improve the educational programme in ophthalmology, the educational organization did the following in the 2024-2025 academic year: the network of clinical sites - private clinics - has been expanded, and professionals with extensive practical experience have been engaged to supervisor in the master's programme.

A mandatory component of master's degree training is their participation in providing medical care to the public. Master's students are trained at medical organizations such as the JE LLC “BL LAZEROPTIKA – DMC”, which houses the Uzbek-Russian Center for Myopia Control and Vision Therapy, and the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Eye Microsurgery. For example, at “BL LAZEROPTIKA – DMC”, master's students learn to manage patients with refraction anomalies using spectacle and contact lens correction (including orthokeratology lenses). Independent study includes access to scientific literature, library visits, a simulation center, and work with ocular pathology simulators.

Master's students' professional conduct is ensured by adhering to professional ethics. When surveying employers, experts inquired about their satisfaction with master's students' behavior. Overall, master's students maintain ethical behavior toward teachers, fellow students and healthcare staff. An ethics council (or disciplinary committee) is in place, which any employee of the educational institution can appeal to resolve conflict situations. No such situations occurred during the period 2021-2025. During their meeting with experts, the master's students themselves confirmed that teachers adhere to ethical standards. When asked whether conflict resolution studies had been held for teachers in recent years, the answer was negative.

When determining the intended learning outcomes, the Department of Master's Studies considered previous undergraduate and internship learning outcomes, as well as the goals and objectives of subsequent continuing professional development in the chosen specialty. The educational institution provides continuing professional development, including programmes in the specialty of the accredited educational programme.

Experts established a clear continuity between the intended outcomes of master's students' prior learning (prerequisites) and their master's degree programme and subsequent continuing professional development programmes.

77.6% of teachers-respondents believe that students at this educational institution possess a high level of knowledge and practical skills after completing the programme, and 19% partially agree.

Teachers-respondents in the external assessment responded that 53.4% were fully satisfied with the level of master's students' prior training, and 36.2% were partially satisfied.

The qualification obtained upon completion of the educational programme in "Ophthalmology" corresponds to Level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Uzbekistan (**ESG 1.2**) and has the code 70910206. Completion of the master's programme results in the issuance of a master's degree diploma in ophthalmology, which is in demand in clinical institutions, research and educational medical organizations.

### **2.3 Curriculum organization and structure**

The educational programme organization for "Ophthalmology" is based on the intended learning outcomes of master's students and therefore includes the following: structured modules in clinical ophthalmology, a research component, practical training at clinical sites and simulation training. The duration of the programme is 3 years. The systematic and transparent nature of the education is guaranteed by the educational programme's clear modular structure, approved curriculum, standardized syllabuses and uniform criteria for assessing the knowledge, skills and professional competencies of master's students.

For the implementation of the educational programme in the specialty "Ophthalmology", the organization's documents include teaching materials that define the programme's goal and take into account the integration of practical and theoretical components and independent work. Compliance with the State Compulsory Educational Standard and standard requirements has been established, including requirements for the programme's structure, credit volume, learning outcomes, competency assessment methods and the organization of master's students' clinical practice.

On the day of the EEC visit to the clinical site, no practical classes were scheduled. The experts received convincing evidence that the learning was being conducted according to plan; before the start of the class, master's students completed quizzes, received feedback from the teacher and had the

opportunity to hone their skills in the relevant subject matter. The organization ensures ethical compliance in the implementation of the educational programme, as experts reviewed the code of ethics, and during interviews, master's students indicated that they were informed of this document's contents.

An analysis of educational activities revealed that the scientific foundation and all scientific advances in the relevant disciplines have been taken into account, additions have been made to the teaching materials and syllabuses, and teachers use them in the classroom.

"The supervising system described in the 'Regulations on Supervising Master's Students at TashSMU' was evaluated. There are 5 supervisors in total; their tasks include supporting the clinical and research activities of master's students, developing professional competencies, monitoring the implementation of their individual plans, ensuring the continuity of practical skills and developing a culture of safe clinical practice.

The procedure for informing master's students of their rights and responsibilities is reflected in the 'Regulations on the Master's Programme' and the Code of Academic Honesty".

Teachers use learning methods for master's students, including problem-based learning, clinical discussions, simulation training, supervising, case studies and practice-oriented clinical sessions. These methods enable master's students to participate in providing medical care to patients. Teachers can provide master's students with approximately 2-3 specialized patients per day and 5-10 per month. For example, upon completion of their studies, master's students in the "Ophthalmology" educational programme can perform procedures such as anterior and posterior segment biomicroscopy, ophthalmoscopy, tonometry, perimetry, corneal foreign body removal, lacrimal duct irrigation, parabolbar and subconjunctival injections and minor surgical interventions.

Experts have determined that the educational institution fully implements the principles of academic honesty and anti-plagiarism. This is reflected in Cabinet of Ministers Order No.27/8, 50 dated August 7, 2024, and Order No.381 of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation dated October 14, 2024, "On Improving the Quality of Education to Prevent Plagiarism and Comply with Copyright" at Universities. Academic honesty applies at such stages of master's degree training as completing written assignments, passing midterm and final exams, conducting clinical discussions, completing research projects and defending their master's thesis. Anti-plagiarism measures are also applicable when master's students are preparing scientific articles, project reports, written papers and their master's thesis. Master's students are trained to promptly collect informed consent from patients for any diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Experts noted that the patient's medical records contain a corresponding document signed by the patient.

Thus, by the end of the 3-year programme, master's students will acquire the fundamental skills and competencies of an ophthalmologist, enabling them to work in institutions such as public and private ophthalmology clinics, specialized eye microsurgery centers, multidisciplinary hospitals, outpatient clinics, research institutes and diagnostic centers (**ESG 1.2**).

The experts did not identify any violations of the principle of equality in postgraduate education and continuing professional development, as the educational institution complies with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education", the National Qualifications Framework, state educational standards, and the internal regulations of Tashkent State Medical University, which ensure equal access to educational programmes, non-discrimination, transparency of competition procedures and equal conditions for all students.

The educational institution has a mechanism for regularly adapting teaching and learning methods to the requirements of modern science and education, as well as the current needs of practical healthcare. This mechanism includes monitoring the educational programme, analyzing feedback from master's students and supervisors, teachers' participation in scientific and practical conferences and trainings, updating the teaching materials, and implementing modern clinical protocols and treatment standards.

This demonstrates compliance with Standard 2 in terms of adapting education to the needs of master's students. At the same time, in addition to the principles of quality and academic honesty,

Internal Order No.594 dated November 18, 2024, "On the review of master's theses using the "Anti-plagiarism"" was issued.

## 2.4 Curriculum content

There are documents containing requirements for the structure and content of educational programmes, including the State Educational Standard and the Regulation on the Organization of the Educational Process in the Master's Programme at TashSMU. The Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology, together with the Educational and Methodological Department of TashSMU, are responsible for the selection and implementation of innovations in the educational process.

The curriculum and catalog of elective disciplines reflect the needs of the healthcare system, including modern clinical protocols and priority areas for the development of ophthalmology services, as well as the specifics of research and the scientific achievements of teachers. These include electrophysiological studies in pediatric ophthalmology practice, congenital glaucoma, and retinoblastoma. To successfully implement the educational programme in "Ophthalmology", the organization has resources for organizing the assessment of master's students' practical skills (a simulation center, ophthalmology simulators, equipped clinical sites and modern diagnostic equipment). However, there are challenges in planning, developing and approving educational programmes, including limited time for expert review and the need to regularly update the content in accordance with current clinical guidelines. "The experts determined that the educational programme takes into account legal requirements, including those related to the structure and content of the master's degree programmes, the scope of the academic workload, the implementation of clinical practice, occupational health and patient safety.

The theoretical component of the educational programme includes 5 disciplines. The practical component consists of clinical classes at ophthalmology units, simulation training, work under the control of supervisor, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, and patient management in inpatient and outpatient settings.

Potential future roles for master's degree graduates, namely medical expert and manager, are developed through topics such as "Clinical Ophthalmology", "Organization of Ophthalmology Services" and "Clinical Discussions". Legal aspects of physician practice are discussed in bioethics classes. The scientific component of master's degree programmes is developed through the completion of a research project, participation in departmental research, clinical trials, and preparation of a master's thesis.

The educational organization guarantees adjustments to the structure, content and duration of the educational programme in the event of any changes in various sciences, demographics, and in response to the needs of the healthcare system. To this end, a mechanism for periodic monitoring and revision of the educational programme is in place with the participation of the department, the Academic Board and the Graduate academic office.

The educational organization guarantees adjustments to the structure, content and duration of the educational programme in the event of any changes in various sciences, demographics, and in response to the needs of the healthcare system. To this end, a mechanism for regular monitoring of the educational programme, analysis of feedback from employers and clinical sites, and consideration of department proposals by educational and methodological committees is in place.

*Teachers provide master's students with teaching and methodological materials, as well as additional literature to prepare for classes. 88% of students were completely satisfied, 10.5% were partially satisfied, and 1.5% were dissatisfied.*

The organization has several in-house clinical sites, one of which is Tashkent State Medical University Clinic No.2, which can handle 105,760 outpatient visits and has a 25-bed pediatric ophthalmology unit. The organization also has agreements with 9 ophthalmology medical organizations.

*To the survey question "Is there sufficient time for practical training (patient management, etc.)?", 92% of master's students fully agreed, 6.5% partially agreed, and 1% disagreed. Furthermore,*

91.5% of master's students stated that their teacher provides feedback after classes (listening to their opinions, conducting a mini-survey and an error analysis session). At the same time, in response to the question, "Do master's students' representatives participate in the development of educational programmes?", the experts received the following response: master's students' representatives participate in educational programme discussions at department meetings and the Council of Young Scientists. 92.5% of the surveyed master's students are completely satisfied with the class schedule.

The master's degree programme includes 60-hour components on the fundamentals and methodology of scientific research. Teachers use a methodology for critically evaluating scientific literature and medical research data, which is confirmed by studying documents such as course syllabuses, research guidelines, attendance records and work with scientific databases (Scopus, Web of Science, etc.).

Master's students confirmed that evidence-based medicine is incorporated into their study. Specifically, by using clinical protocols in patient management, master's students are familiar with evidence-based bibliographies.

A survey of master's students revealed that their educational institution provides access to student participation in research, 85.5% fully satisfied with this, 9% partially satisfied, and 1.5% dissatisfied. Master's students should engage in research, and in their responses to the survey, 84% indicated that they were already engaged in research, 14% planned to start, 1% were searching for a research topic, and 1% were not engaged.

## 2.5 Learning methods and experiences

The primary learning methods in the master's programme are clinical discussions, practical sessions at the patient's bedside, simulation learning, small group work, independent work by master's students and participation in research activities. During conversation with master's students, experts found that teachers most often organize clinical discussions, practical sessions with patients and discussions of complex clinical cases. The clinical supervisor is responsible for master's students' practical training, their implementation of procedures, patient management and the development of professional competencies. Feedback is provided daily, and master's students can ask their supervisor any questions and also access medical records and the patient management information system through the supervisor's account (under their control).

Virtual learning methods are used, including online video lecture platforms and remote clinical case studies (live broadcasts or viewing videos of ophthalmic surgical procedures in the unit).

Simulation-based learning technologies are implemented at the Simulation Center for Practical Skills at Tashkent State Medical University. The following simulation equipment is available to master's students in the accredited educational programme: ophthalmological phantoms for practicing ophthalmoscopy skills, models of the anterior and posterior segments of the eye, and an operating microscope for coordinating hand and instrument movements, as well as for mastering ocular microsurgery skills. Simulator learning is included in the educational programme from the first to third years.

The principles of quality, academic honesty and anti-plagiarism (**ESG II Part 1.3**) are documented in the "Anti-Plagiarism" programme (approved by internal order of Tashkent State Medical University No.594 dated November 18, 2024). The experts asked master's students, "What do they understand by academic honesty?" and received the following answer: "independent completion of assignments, avoidance of plagiarism, honesty and reliability of submitted data". The experts concluded that the principles of academic honesty in the master's programme primarily relate to areas such as written assignments and research, accurate citations, compliance with anti-plagiarism measures, objectivity in examinations, and adherence to ethical standards in clinical practice.

Master's students are informed of their rights and responsibilities through familiarization with university regulations posted on the TashSMU website, introductory briefings, and explanatory work at department meetings. The head of the graduate academic office and the department head are responsible for this.

Master's student ethics are based on the TashSMU Code of Ethics, as well as the rules of student conduct and the standards of professional and clinical ethics.

The experts conclude that the educational organization provides master's students with the necessary skills and abilities that can impact their personal development and can be applied in their future careers **(ESG II Part 1.3)**.

This is confirmed by the results of a review of documents such as course syllabuses, individual plans and master's degree portfolios. It is also confirmed by the results of class visits, meetings with teachers, clinical supervisors and a survey of master's degree students.

Principles of equality, including gender, cultural and religious ones, are observed with respect to master's degree students and teachers, as enshrined in the following documents: the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" dated September 23, 2020, No.ZRU-637, the "Academic Policy of TashSMU" and the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 7, 2022, No.UP-87 "On Measures to Further Accelerate Systemic Support for Families and Women". A visit to the educational institution revealed no instances of non-compliance with these principles. The primary documents for the educational institution are the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education", where Article 47, Chapter 6, establishes the principle of equal rights for all citizens to education, regardless of gender, age, social status and other factors.

Teaching and learning methods are regularly adapted to changing conditions **(ESG II Part 1.5)** and the requirements of practical healthcare. For example, the "Ophthalmology" educational programme's management has included elective courses on "Oncology" in the curriculum, developed based on the results of a research project studying the clinical characteristics of retinoblastoma. The choice of clinical training site for master's students was also based on an analysis of the needs for training pediatric ophthalmologists capable of providing qualified diagnostic and therapeutic care to patients with common and complex ophthalmic pathologies.

*Of the 200 master's students surveyed, 87.5% responded that teachers use active and interactive learning methods quite often in their classes, while 11.5% said they use them rarely or sometimes.*

## **2.6 Curriculum delivery and training facilities**

Master's students in the accredited educational programme are trained at TashSMU's own clinics, including national centers, ophthalmology units and clinics. This includes training at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of medical care. Master's students can work in laser technology laboratories, functional vision diagnostics units, ultrasound diagnostic rooms and optical coherence tomography rooms. An agreement has been signed with each clinical site for the period 2024-2025. The Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology is responsible for this. A total of 10 agreements have been signed for the current year.

The experts visited the following clinics: TashSMU Clinic No.2, which has 10 classrooms and five supervisors are involved in the educational process. Currently, 4 third-year master's students are enrolled in the accredited programme, and they are fully provided with clinical training (a sufficient number of patients in their specialty).

The selection of clinical sites was based on the structure of the educational programme and related disciplines. The relevant department and graduate academic office have the authority to select/determine the clinical site for master's degree students' training. These medical organizations are accredited (Annex to the self-report - Table 6.1).

Experts ensured that master's degree students have access to the resources of the medical organizations. During the survey, master's degree students confirmed that they have the opportunity to work with patients, participate in diagnostic and treatment procedures, use clinical unit equipment and receive consultations from clinical supervisors.

The following employees and stakeholders participated in the planning, development, discussion and approval of the educational programme: **(ESG II Part 1.2)** the graduate academic office, department head, master's degree teachers, clinical supervisors and representatives of the clinical sites.

Approval of the master's programme includes its review at a department meeting, coordination with the graduate academic office and the Center for Education Quality Assurance, and review and approval of the educational programme at a meeting of the TashSMU Academic Board.

The educational process management reflected in the self-assessment report (*Standard 2*) and the general management approaches were confirmed in a conversation with the head of the graduate academic office. At the same time, verification of Standard 2 revealed that not all processes were sufficiently documented, and certain procedures required more precise regulation and systematization.

The experts reviewed the work of divisions, including the graduate academic office, the Center for Education Quality Assurance, the specialized department and clinical sites. A total of 8 meetings were held. Cross-examination revealed that interaction between divisions is regular and information is shared consistently. However, a number of processes require further formalization.

The training of master's students in "Ophthalmology" is aimed at meeting the needs of practical healthcare, as a 2024 specialist shortage analysis revealed an insufficient number of ophthalmologists (including pediatric ophthalmologists) in primary care in the regions. During conversation with the organization's management, experts received information about the need to increase the number of qualified ophthalmologists, and teachers confirmed that master's students are trained directly in clinical units (inpatient, outpatient, functional diagnostics and surgery). Master's students in this specialty can manage patients with conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases, keratitis, conjunctivitis, uveitis, refractive errors and other common ophthalmological pathologies.

During a visit to the clinical site, experts observed that the organization promotes the development of master's students' practical competencies, including using simulation equipment. At the same time, master's students deepen their theoretical knowledge and develop communication skills.

## **2.7 Opportunities for higher degrees and research**

The educational institution offers the following research opportunities: electronic library resources and databases, clinical research opportunities within specialized units, participation in departmental research projects and the availability of scientific supervision and methodological support for the preparation of publications and research papers.

As part of the accredited master's programme, department staff are conducting 3 research projects: "Clinical and Genetic Criteria for Predicting the Course and Treatment Tactics of Primary Congenital Glaucoma", "Clinical Features of Retinoblastoma" and "Optimization of Pathways to Reduce Blindness and Low Vision in Children". Master's students may be informally involved in research. For example, a 2-year master's student has been collecting clinical data on patients with congenital glaucoma as part of a departmental research project. During the 2024-2025 period, master's students prepared 7 articles and 5 abstracts, as well as 2 presentations at scientific conferences. The results of their research are presented as scientific articles and conference abstracts.

The interviewed master's students confirmed that they are provided with access to equipment for conducting scientific research and to scientific events held at the training facilities. For example, in the ultrasound room, they perform measurements on an OCT scanner.

***EEC findings by criteria.*** Comply with 28 standards: 28 - fully, 0 - partially, 0 – not compliant.

## **Standard 3: ASSESSMENT**

### **3.1 Assessment Policy and System**

A review of control and measurement equipment (tests, case problems, checklists) revealed that the organization has implemented an appropriate assessment policy that allows for a comprehensive assessment of master's students' academic achievements. During interviews, master's students described assessment methods, such as testing, oral interviews, practical skills assessment and medical record management, and stated that they were satisfied with all of them. They also stated that they receive regular feedback from teachers. There have been no appeals since the organization's operation. Assessment covers not only knowledge and skills but also professional behavior and communication

skills, as evidenced by the following: clinical skills assessment checklists, portfolios and feedback from clinical supervisors **(ESG II Part 1.3)**.

Validation and reliability assessment of master's degree assessment methods (tests, tasks and cases) are carried out through the following: expert review of assessment materials by subject-cycle committees (external and internal reviews), analysis of test items (difficulty index, discrimination and consistency), regular updating of the test bank (annually by 10%), comparison of results from various assessment forms and discussion of the results with teachers to confirm the objectivity and reliability of the instruments used.

The educational institution has a practice of engaging external examiners in master's degree assessments, which ensures the independence and objectivity of assessment results. **(ESG II Part 1.3)**

For example, to verify Standard 3 data, experts questioned the Head of the graduate academic office and reviewed documents and methods for master's degree assessment.

The control and measurement equipment are reviewed by external and internal experts. The Head of the graduate academic office responded that additions and updates to the control and measurement equipment are made annually.

The results of master's degree students' assessments are documented as follows: in examination reports, minutes of State Certification Commission meetings and an electronic progress journal in the learning management system.

Moreover, in 2024, in the "Ophthalmology" Master's programme, 4 students received "excellent" grades on the final exam, 2 received "good" grades, and no "satisfactory" grades.

To date, there have been no appeals from master's degree students.

During a visit to organization and a conversation with Azizova F.Kh., an employee of the Educational and Methodological Department, the commission confirmed that a documentation system is in place that is transparent and accessible to all teachers and staff. This system includes documents such as annual operational plans, annual reports, division regulations, agreements with teachers and master's students, minutes of Academic Board and Educational and Methodological Council meetings, learning and teaching documentation (work program, curricula, syllabuses, gradebooks), assessment tools (checklists, reports), certificates, verifications and credentials. A review of the website revealed that the documents required for master's students posted on its pages are subject to updating and supplementation.

During the visit to organization, management was asked, "Are external examiners engaged to improve the fairness, quality and transparency of the assessment process?" A positive response was received: leading specialists from other medical universities and research institutes.

During interviews with 21 teachers regarding assessment methods, experts obtained convincing evidence that the assessment methods used are transparent, aligned with the course curricula, ensure objectivity, and allow for a comprehensive assessment of master's students' knowledge, clinical skills and professional competencies. Master's students also shared their opinions on the timeliness of testing, pre-exam counseling and the clarity and fairness of the entire assessment process. For example, master's students reported that consultations are held in advance of exams, and assessment criteria are available in syllabuses.

The 13 employers surveyed also indicated that graduates' training is aligned with current developments in medical practice and science, as most graduates demonstrate strong clinical skills, are proficient in modern diagnostic methods, and their knowledge of a foreign language allows them to navigate current scientific data and apply evidence-based medicine in their practice. Employers stated that they themselves participate in the assessment of master's students, as they are included on the final certification committees. However, the educational institution did not provide systematic feedback to them. Employers believed that master's degree graduates' skills, such as medical judgment, diagnostic interpretation and knowledge of patient management and basic surgical skills, were the strongest.

At the same time, there are challenges in developing control and measurement equipment, including regularly updating test materials in accordance with current clinical guidelines.

### **3.2 Assessment in support of learning (formative assessment)**

The assessment system regularly identifies the strengths and weaknesses of master's students, including formative and midterm assessments, portfolio analysis and competency assessments by clinical supervisors. Formative assessment is typically conducted after the completion of a seminar and using case problems or tests. Formative assessment of master's students also includes observation of practical skills, oral quizzes, feedback from a clinical supervisor and self-assessment. Formative assessment is recorded in individual journals, which are reviewed by experts.

Teachers regularly provide feedback to master's students based on their assessments. In interviews, master's students confirmed that they receive feedback after completing their training.

During the feedback process with master's students, a decision was made to purchase a virtual simulator and fund master's students' participation in international scientific and practical conferences.

Experts inspected the resources for organizing the assessment of knowledge and practical skills, namely, the testing center's classrooms, computer labs, simulation rooms, a surgical microscope simulator and phantoms for practicing ophthalmological procedures.

The experts determined that the selection of assessment methods for master's degree students is based on a competency-based approach and practice-oriented training, as the practical component of training is the main component. For example, formative assessment methods such as direct observation of clinical skills and case studies facilitate interprofessional learning. A method such as the OSCE demonstrates integrated learning and a focus on clinical skills. Established assessment methods ensure that master's degree students have mastered all sections of the educational programme and acquired the necessary practical skills.

According to master's degree students, their teachers provide them with information on the results of their assessments. **(ESG II Part 1.3)**

### **3.3 Assessment in support of decision-making (summative assessment)**

The summative (final) assessment of master's degree students includes testing, OSCE, a final clinical examination and the defense of the master's thesis.

The criteria for admission to the final assessment are full completion of the curriculum, successful completion of formative and midterm assessments, a completed portfolio and the absence of failed subject. This is documented in the Regulation on the State Certification of Master's Graduates, approved by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In practice, master's degree students (including those in other specialties) pass an independent examination with an average score of 76 to 90 (an average of 80 points over 3 years).

Assessment of master's students' clinical decision-making is conducted through clinical case reviews and OSCEs. It reflects the student's ability to analyze complaints and examination data, formulate a diagnosis, select optimal patient management strategies and justify clinical decisions.

The fairness and objectivity of the summative assessment is confirmed through the engaging external examiners, assessment checklists and uniform assessment criteria. This assessment is documented in the "Procedure for Monitoring and Assessing Students' Knowledge at TashSMU" (Annex to Order No.432 dated September 11, 2025).

The reliability and validity of quantitative data from master's students' assessments is ensured by the Department of Ophthalmology and the Educational and Methodological Department **(ESG II Part 1.3)**.

### **3.4 Quality assurance of the assessment system**

The mechanisms that guarantee the quality of all assessment methods applied and the existing master's degree student assessment system as a whole are supported by the following: regular evaluation of assessment tools, participation of external experts, periodic updates of assessment materials, monitoring of academic performance and systematic collection of feedback from master's

degree students and teachers. The educational organization engages independent examiners to assess master's degree students.

The results of formative and summative assessments are discussed at department meetings, and conclusions are drawn regarding the assessment methods and content.

The master's degree student assessment includes questions on patient safety. For example, verification of patient identification, infection control, verification of the correctness of medical documentation and adherence to medical error prevention algorithms.

The Department of Ophthalmology reviews formative and summative assessment methods annually. These reviews are documented in the department meeting minutes. In 2024, the Educational and Methodological Department conducted a survey of teachers, which resulted in changes to the assessment materials. A 2024 employer survey showed that programme graduates demonstrate sufficiently confident mastery of practical skills and the ability to make independent clinical decisions. **(ESG II Part 1.3).**

*EEC findings by criteria* Comply with 15 standards: 15 - fully, 0 - partially, 0 - not compliant.

## **Standard 4: MASTER'S STUDENTS**

### **4.1 Selection and progression policy**

The main regulatory act governing admission to master's programmes in the Republic of Uzbekistan is Resolution No.261 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Procedure for Admission to Master's Programmes" and the Order of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In addition, the additional regulatory framework includes: Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No.261 dated 2022 "On additional measures to support gifted youth", Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 7, 2022 No.UP-87, providing for reimbursement of costs for contractual training for women admitted to the master's programme of state higher educational institutions", internal regulations and orders of the Tashkent State Medical Institute, according to which bachelor's degree graduates awarded the State Scholarship of the President, named after Ibn Sino, Navoi, Beruni and other named prizes, have the right to targeted admission to the master's programme without entrance examinations on a budgetary (state-financed) basis. Transparency of the selection process and equal access to master's programmes are achieved by posting information about admission rules, quotas, selection criteria and application deadlines on the official TashSMU website, as confirmed by the document "Regulations on Admission to the TashSMU Master's Programme".

This document reflects approaches to the admission of master's students with disabilities, the so-called "Admission under Targeted Quotas, Including for Disabled Students and Orphans".

Approaches to the admission and transfer of master's students from other educational institutions are reflected in: Resolution No.824 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 31, 2020, "On the Procedure for Transfer, Readmission, Expulsion and Granting Academic Leave to Students of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan"; and the "Regulations on the TashSMU Master's Programme".

The following points are taken into account:

- Transfer (from other universities in Uzbekistan): is only possible between related or similar master's programmes.

- The student must successfully complete at least one semester of the master's programme.

- Transfer is possible on either a state-funded or fee-paying basis, subject to availability.

- The receiving university has the right to conduct an internal conversation or assess the compliance of the curriculum.

In the case of transferring from foreign universities:

- The university from which the transfer is made must be accredited and recognized in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

- The nostrification (recognition) procedure for completed courses and academic hours is

required.

- Official documents translated into Uzbek or Russian and notarized must be submitted.
- An exam in the relevant subject or a conversation to confirm the applicant's level of training may be required.

The appeal procedure following admission to the master's programme is outlined in the Resolution of the President and Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "Mechanisms for the Periodic Review of the Admission and Selection Policy for Master's Students". At the Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology at TashSMU, no appeals were recorded from master's students during the 2020–2025 academic year, including the master's programme admissions phase.

The total number of master's students graduating in “Ophthalmology” during the master's programme admissions start dates was 138.

Therefore, experts validated the self-assessment report data according to *Standard 4*.

In general, all criteria are met, but there are minor comments regarding the absence of a number of statistical indicators.

#### **4.2 Performance improvement and exit from the programme**

Processes and opportunities for improving the academic performance and professional development of master's students, as well as the conditions under which a master's student may be expelled from the programme, are documented in the Master's Programme Regulations, approved by order of the Rector of TashSMU.

Academic advising for master's students is based on monitoring their academic performance and is aimed at ensuring a high-quality education and successful research activities for students in accordance with the “Master's Programme Regulations” and the “TashSMU Academic Policy”. The practice of academic advising, personal support for master's students and the development of not only professional skills were assessed by experts through documentation analysis, class visits and interviews. Interviews with master's students and graduates revealed the following: master's students regularly receive consultations from curators and clinical supervisors, assistance in planning their individual learning path, support with research and psychological (social/psychological support center) and organizational support when learning difficulties arise.

Teachers prevent situations involving unforeseen incidents by master's students that could potentially cause harm to patients. This includes conducting safety and infection control briefings, requiring the presence of a clinical supervisor during invasive procedures, gradually introducing students to practical skills as they become more prepared, and regularly discussing clinical errors during case reviews. According to teachers, no such situations were observed during the 2024-2025 period. Each master's student is familiar with and applies informed patient consent for examinations, treatment and medical procedures in their clinical practice. Before classes begin, master's students are instructed by their teacher on how to comply with the rules of conduct in a medical organization. This was confirmed by master's students during their meeting with experts.

Social, financial and personal support for master's students includes the opportunity to receive the State Scholarship of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and personal scholarships awarded on a competitive basis, in accordance with the procedure approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, with the participation of commissions from the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan. During 2020-2021, 2 master's students in ophthalmology were awarded the Ibn Sina Presidential Scholarship, allowing them to continue their studies free of charge. Psychological support for master's students is provided through consultations at the psychological/social support center. The confidentiality of this assistance is regulated by this center's internal document.

A career and employment center operate to assist master's graduates in career planning, and a unified medical information and analytical system for graduate advancement and employment, the "CAREER CENTER", is being implemented. The employment rate for graduates of the Master's programme in “Ophthalmology” was 100% in 2024 and 100% in 2025. **(ESG II Part 1.4). 0**

### **4.3 International medical graduates**

Admission of international applicants to the Master's programme is carried out in accordance with Resolution No.12 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 6, 2022, the Law "On Education" and the Procedure for the Recognition of Educational Documents, approved by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation.

Bilateral agreements exist with a number of countries (e.g., Russia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, etc.), which expedite the recognition of diplomas and academic results.

The recognition policy for qualifications in the Master's programme in Uzbekistan is based on international principles of comparability of education and is aimed at ensuring the quality and transparency of the admission of international students and graduates of foreign universities. Admission of foreign master's students is governed by special regulations and is carried out on an equal basis with nationals, taking into account language, academic and legal requirements governing the recognition policy for master's degree qualifications.

For the period 2021-2025, no foreign master's students were admitted to the accredited programme in "Ophthalmology".

### **4.4 Master's student work and study**

Master's students are provided with a programme that defines their goals, objectives, overall workload and work hours, their areas of responsibility, and the intended learning outcomes. Master's students are informed of their supervisors. Currently, 5 clinical supervisors at 6 clinical sites are involved in the training of master's students in the accredited programme. Master's students are informed of the number and timing of formative assessments and final examinations. Information about the examinations is published on the university's official website. The experts reviewed the information on the website in the "Master's Programme" section.

Master's students participate in events organized by the clinical sites, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan for the Joint Continuity of the Clinic's Educational Organization. The experts reviewed this plan for 2024-2025 and found that master's students participate in research conferences, webinars, seminars, master classes and screening events. The Department of Ophthalmology is responsible for developing the plan. The clinical training programme for master's students requires management of 10 patients per month, participation (assistance) in 10 surgeries, and at least 4 calls. All of this is regulated in the "Academic Policy" document.

If a master's student is forced to interrupt their studies (due to pregnancy, maternity leave, illness or military service), the educational institution provides for academic leave for pregnant and breastfeeding master's students, an individual work plan is developed. Currently, there are no such students in the accredited programme.

### **4.5 Master's Student Safety**

The legal status of master's students in Uzbekistan can be characterized as medical personnel in training, participating in the provision of medical care under the direct supervision and guidance of certified physicians. This ensures a balance between the need for practical training for future specialists and the guarantee of safety and quality of medical care for patients.

At TashSMU, significant attention is paid to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of master's students. Occupational health and safety measures are aimed at creating a safe educational environment and preventing potential risks.

The psychological safety of master's students is ensured through the Department of Psychology and the Psychological Support Center.

#### 4.6 Master's Student remuneration and fees

Scholarship amounts may vary depending on academic performance. For example, at Tashkent State Medical University, the scholarship is 518,000 sums, while for students with excellent academic performance (90% or higher), it is 621,600 sums.

The procedure for assigning and paying scholarships is regulated by the following documents:

Resolution No.226 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 13, 2008, "On the Promotion and Material Incentives of Students of Higher Education Institutions". This document defines the terms and procedure for awarding state scholarships, including scholarships of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Resolution No.276 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 21, 2005, "On Approval of the Improved Remuneration System for Medical and Pharmaceutical Workers in State Institutions". Annex No. 2 of this resolution contains provisions on the procedure and conditions for remuneration of medical and pharmaceutical workers, including aspects related to scholarship for medical workers.

Master's students may work at a rate of 0.5 of their full-time salary, beginning in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study, in accordance with the Regulations on Master's Programme. This year, there are 3 master's students in the accredited programme.

#### 4.7 Master's Student health and welfare

Master's students are provided with professional and personal support focused on physical health, personal welfare and psychological health, including "professional burnout", through medical and psychological services, sports clubs and a psychological support center.

*EEC findings by criteria.* Comply with 19 standards: 19 - fully, 0 - partially, 0 - not compliant

### Standard 5: TEACHERS AND CLINICAL SUPERVISORS

#### 5.1 Teacher and clinical supervisor establishment

There are 17 employees in total, including 14 full-time and 3 part-time faculty members. Requirements for master's degree teachers include an academic degree, the highest category of ophthalmologist and at least 3 years of continuous teaching experience. There are 5 clinical supervisors. The HR department is responsible for hiring teachers in accordance with the Regulation "On the Procedure for Hiring Teaching Staff in Higher Education Institutions" approved by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The academic degree holder rate of teaching staff is 65%, 70.6% have the highest category, 29.4% have the first category, and none have the second category.

The experts reviewed the department's teacher job descriptions and department regulations.

The experts were familiarized with TashSMU's human resources policy and the Supervisor Regulations. The ratio of teachers to master's students should be 1 to 4.

The incentive system for teachers and clinical supervisors includes a "Teaching Staff Performance Assessment" based on a 110-point rating system implemented by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education. The primary document regulating this assessment system is Resolution No.164 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 1, 2008, "On Approval of an Improved Remuneration System for Employees of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic".

The principles of teachers' ethics and academic honesty are reflected in the "Code of Ethics for Teachers of Uzbekistan". During conversation with teachers, they confirmed their awareness of this issue, noting that they are familiar with the Code's provisions and adhere to it in their professional activities.

To verify the *Standard 5* self-assessment report data, external experts obtained opinion of teachers on the HR policy, which included staffing of clinical departments, requirements for practicing physician-teachers, and the terms and procedures for concluding contracts with clinical sites. The

discussion with teaching staff included topics such as criteria for physician admission to teaching, clinical site staff participation in research and educational projects, and the incentive system for the talent pool. The experts learned about approaches to recruiting clinical site staff for teaching (there are 13 such teachers in total), the strategy and tactics for enrolling master's degree students, and the information support for the educational programme. They also identified challenges in human resource management and development, as most part-time faculty members lack knowledge of teaching methods.

Technical and administrative staff are available to support the educational programme (**ESG II Part 1.5**), including specialists from the educational and methodological department, IT specialists and dean's office staff.

A meeting was held with staff from support divisions such as the academic department, the simulation training center, the technical service and the human resources department.

*A survey of teachers revealed that the majority (87.93%) were completely satisfied with the work and workplace organization at this educational institution, while 6.9% were partially satisfied. At this educational institution, teachers have the opportunity to engage in research and publish their research results – 93.1% completely agree, 5.17% partially. 70.69% completely satisfied, 22.41% partially satisfied with the HR department. Salaries were satisfactory – 56.9% completely agree, 3.45% partially agree.*

## **5.2 Ethics and conduct of teachers and clinical supervisors**

The HR policy defines the responsibilities and obligations of teachers in the high-quality education of master's students.

The responsibilities and obligations of clinical supervisors are described in the Supervisor Policy.

The principles of ethics and academic honesty for teachers are described in the "Code of Ethics for Teachers of Uzbekistan" and the "Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan 'On the Status of Teachers'." Teachers surveyed confirmed that they were aware of the Code.

The monitoring system and process for improving the performance of teachers (**ESG II Part 1.5**) and clinical supervisors, including teachers' certification, are regulated by the document "Performance Assessment of the Teaching Staff" and Resolution No.164 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 1, 2008, "On Approval of an Improved Remuneration System for Employees of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic".

A teacher survey is conducted annually by the Department of Internal Education Quality Assurance.

## **5.3 Continuing professional development for teaching and clinical supervisory staff**

During a meeting with the head of the HR department and during interviews with teachers, the experts obtained feedback on approaches to developing faculty pedagogical competence, motivation to work with master's students and supervising, which includes a planned system of advanced training, participation in methodological seminars and trainings, sharing experiences within the department, regular assessment of teaching skills, as well as supervising support and individual support for young teachers.

The experts determined that teachers and master's students have sufficient time for teaching, supervising and learning. Teacher work schedules are set forth in the Internal Regulations. Hours: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Teachers conduct weekly three-hour seminars.

The experts received feedback on the teacher advanced training programme, which is conducted annually. 12 teachers from the accredited educational programme in "Ophthalmology" completed the training during 2020-2025. These activities are funded by the educational organization. The expert verified the teachers' certificates for the following topics: "Wetlab in Ultrasound Cataract Surgery" by A.Z. Toshpulatova and D.U. Narzullayeva, from March 6, 2023, to March 17, 2023, Ufa, Russia.

Experts found that teachers initiate research topics for master's students, stimulating the need for additional learning and independent work with literature and medical documentation.

The personnel policy (**ESG II Part 1.5**) and approaches to engaging clinical supervisors are reviewed annually in accordance with the changing needs in postgraduate medical education.

The educational institution provides opportunities for career growth and competency development for teachers – 87.93% of surveyed teachers responded, and 8.62% partially agreed. 37.93% attended professional advanced training programmes less than 1 year ago, 32.76% during the current year, 15.52% more than 3 years ago, 3.45% more than 5 years ago, and 0% answered "I don't remember when it was".

The organization implements social support programmes for teachers - 63.79% responded "yes, such programmes exist", 3.45% "I have already used them", 1.72% responded "no such programmes exist" and 24.14% were unaware of them.

**EEC findings by criteria.** Comply with 8 standards, 8 - fully compliant, 0 - partially compliant, 0 - not compliant.

## **Standard 6: EDUCATION AND TRAINING RESOURCES**

### **6.1 Physical facilities for teaching and learning**

Training of master's students in the accredited educational programme in “Ophthalmology” is provided by the Pediatric Ophthalmology Unit of Clinic No.2 of Tashkent State Medical University. There are 25 beds in total. There are 2 classrooms, 1 conference room for seminars and journal clubs, and 1 reading room.

Before beginning the relevant course of the educational programme, master's students receive a syllabus from their teacher, indicating the skills they should acquire and develop during their studies.

The educational organization provides master's students with opportunities for practical and theoretical training through classroom sessions at clinical sites, a simulation center, specialized laboratories and units.

Access to the latest professional literature and international sources is ensured by access to electronic library systems, international abstract and full-text databases (including foreign scientific journals), and the internal resources of the library and information center.

Access to simulation equipment is provided in a simulation room with a total area of 32.0 m<sup>2</sup>. The simulation room is designed for 10-15 learners.

The simulation room is equipped with a WETLAB microscope for high-quality minor surgery on bovine eyes, a slit lamp, an autokeratorefractometer, a perimeter, an electric ophthalmoscope, an indirect ophthalmoscope, a Belostotsky color test, and a Golovin and Sivtsev chart.

A safe learning environment in the functional/instrumental diagnostics laboratories/rooms (**ESG II Part 1.6**) is ensured by familiarizing master students with safety and health regulations before class, as well as by providing them with personal protective equipment, adhering to sanitary and hygienic requirements, and monitoring the correct use of equipment. The experts reviewed the Safety Regulations. The Safety Familiarization Log is located in the department head's office. The master's students interviewed confirmed their awareness of this document.

The educational institution conducts research in the following areas: "Optimization of ways to reduce blindness and low vision in children", "Clinical features of retinoblastoma" and "Clinical and genetic criteria for predicting the course and treatment tactics of primary congenital glaucoma".

Master's students in their second and third years of study are involved in the research work (or parts thereof). They perform tasks such as literature analysis, epidemiological and statistical indicators for the nosologies under study, work with medical documentation, including archives, and joint examination and testing of specialized patients with a supervisor. All information about the research work is included in the master's student's portfolio.

The educational programme includes topics in which master's students study research methods in medicine (research methodology). The total number of hours is 60.

Master's students conducting scientific and practical research are provided with access to instrumental and laboratory equipment.

The physical facilities, including the library collection, are updated every 1-2 years. The library collection includes leading electronic foreign, Russian and domestic medical publications and, as of 2024, comprised 215 printed publications and 33 electronic textbooks.

## **6.2 Postgraduate medical education based on clinical training**

Experts assessed the master's students' record-keeping, including outpatient and inpatient records.

A review of resources demonstrated that they are aligned with the goals and objectives of educational activities. A visit was made to the clinical site: Clinic No.2 of Tashkent State Medical University (with a total capacity of 325 beds) with a 25-bed pediatric ophthalmology unit. The educational institution's staff ensures collegial and ethical relationships with medical staff and clinical site management to achieve master's degree students' intended outcomes. A sufficient number of specialized patients (e.g., cataracts, glaucoma, eye injuries, inflammatory and degenerative diseases of the vascular and retinal membranes and optic nerve) are provided. Modern equipment is demonstrated to be accessible to students. Teachers ensure high-quality teaching while adhering to ethical and deontological principles.

To validate the self-assessment report and obtain evidence of programme quality, interviews with master's degree students were conducted. Experts asked questions about satisfaction with the training, sufficient time for patient management, working with medical records, satisfaction with teaching methods and teacher qualifications, social and moral support for master's students in need, and access to international professional literature databases. Overall, master's students were satisfied with the training and assessment methods. They specifically entered this institution because they believed the educational institution had good resources, a strong reputation and international connections. At the same time, they would like more independence in patient management and the organization of international events.

A simulation room is available, with equipment, including a surgical microscope, microsurgical instruments and suture material. Master's students in the "Ophthalmology" educational programme can practice practical skills in providing care to patients with various eye injuries, which is included in the curriculum. Thus, master's student training in the simulation room is an integrated part of clinical training.

The master's students demonstrated their commitment to the educational organization, actively responded to questions from external experts, and demonstrated their judgment on the organization of training, assessment of their skills, advisory support, opportunities to participate in research projects and funding. They also demonstrated a broad range of knowledge. The experts reviewed the master's students' documents (portfolios, master's student assessment checklists and master's student survey results).

To develop master's students' teamwork experience, the educational organization conducts activities such as joint clinical discussions, including in interdisciplinary teams. Interprofessional collaboration is also achieved through joint clinical discussions and calls with colleagues from related specialties. Master's students can conduct health education events for patients and training sessions for interns. For example, master's students in the Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology at Tashkent State Medical University participate in the student scientific society (SSS) "Olmos", where they hold departmental meetings with undergraduate students to discuss their research. This increases interest in ophthalmology, which subsequently influences their choice of future specialty.

*In the survey, master's students noted that they have free access to patients at clinical sites and all the conditions for improving their practical skills. 93.5% of teachers completely agreed, 5% partially agreed, and 1% were undecided.*

Regular updates to clinical facilities and equipment and other educational resources are carried out in accordance with the changing needs of master's degree training. The planned and current number of master's degree students is taken into account to ensure a 4:1 ratio of master's degree students to teachers. The profile of clinical supervisors is determined by the Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology, and the graduate academic office evaluates their compliance with the goals and objectives of the master's degree programme, their level of education and their proficiency in teaching methods. Thus, from 2020 to 2024, 12 clinical supervisors were trained in pedagogical competencies. Clinical supervisors are provided with the following materials for master's degree training: work programmes, competency assessment instructions and methodological materials for conducting clinical discussions.

### **6.3 Training master's students at alternative clinical sites**

The academic policy for master's degree training includes the possibility of training at organizations if the existing clinical sites do not cover all the topics of the educational programme. Meanwhile, master's students majoring in "Ophthalmology" are trained at 10 sites with different practical areas (a specialized boarding school for visually impaired children and the Republican Center for Eye Microsurgery). Scientific publications are prepared under the supervision of a teacher and do not require additional training sites. However, master's students can participate in academic mobility within the country, but over the past 5 years, no ophthalmology master's students have participated.

There is a document on the transfer and academic recognition of learning outcomes between educational institutions: Resolution No.824 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 31, 2020, "On the procedure for transfer, readmission, expulsion and granting academic leave to students of higher educational institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan"; and the internal regulations of the university (Regulations on the Master's Programme at Tashkent State Medical University). For example, in the 2021–2022 academic year, ophthalmology master's student Oydin Achilovna Akhatkulova transferred from Tashkent State Medical University to Samarkand State Medical Institute to continue her studies in the corresponding master's programme (**ESG II Part 1.2**).

155 agreements and memorandums have been signed with organizations, universities and associations, including 79 with non-CIS organizations. This collaboration allows for the introduction of the following learning methods and technologies into master's programmes: interdisciplinary simulation scenarios, clinical case-based learning, project-based team learning, digital learning platforms, the use of virtual simulators and international online courses, and the integration of evidence-based approaches into teaching.

The institution's teachers actively participate in national and international events. Thus, on October 15, 2022, Department Head B.T. Buzrukov participated in the conference "Restoration of the Anatomical Integrity of the Lacrimal Canaliculi and the Medial Canthus in Cases of Lacrimal Injuries". On October 14-15, 2022, in partnership with the Turkish Ophthalmology Association (TCOD) and the Azerbaijan Ophthalmology Association (AOC), in the International Ophthalmology Symposium and the 14th International Conference of Young Ophthalmologists of Azerbaijan with International Participation. Such participation allows for the application of the information gained in the educational process. For example, on March 10, 2025, the Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology at Tashkent State Medical University held an international conference on "Current Issues of Pediatric Glaucoma" within the "Ophthalmology" specialty. The department's master's students were directly involved in the preparation and conduct of the conference. (Annex 4.4.2).

Over a 5-year period, 4 teachers were trained abroad on the following topics: "Wetlab on Ultrasound Cataract Surgery", "Glaucoma" and "Myopia and Habitual Excessive Accommodation Strain".

#### 6.4 Information sources, resources and use

Experts assessed master' students' and teachers' access to essential web resources, including [www.tma.uz](http://www.tma.uz) and <https://tashpmi.uz>, as well as access to electronic media, international databases (Scopus and Web of Science) and the "GEOTAR-Media" electronic library system (<https://www.studentlibrary.ru>), as well as to the digital resources of the universal database <https://dlib.eastview.com/>.

The experts visited the library. The collection features leading international, Russian and domestic electronic medical publications, which are accessible to master' students and staff, including the journal "Bulletin Ophthalmologii", providing up-to-date information on ophthalmology.

The total number of publications in the accredited specialty includes 215 printed publications and 33 electronic textbooks. Master' students are familiar with this information.

Information and communication technologies are represented by the following: computerized workstations, electronic library resources, access to specialized medical databases and multimedia equipment. The educational programme uses technologies such as simulation technologies, interactive teaching methods and testing systems. During independent study, master' students use electronic educational materials, clinical guidelines, medical reference databases and online courses. Access to patient data and the healthcare information system is provided through the integrated medical information system of the clinical database and secure operational terminals. A master's student manages 2-3 patients per day, including completing the necessary documentation under the supervision of a teacher.

Distance learning methods such as webinars and educational videos *are used to teach master's students on topics* such as clinical protocols, diagnostic data interpretation and modern treatment methods. Ethics documented in university regulations are adhered to.

Thus, the educational organization provides master's students, teachers and clinical supervisors with access to information and the use of innovative information and communication technologies (**ESG II Part 1.8**).

Over the past 2-3 years, the following information and communication technologies have been implemented: electronic educational platforms, distance learning systems and updated versions of medical information systems.

Electronic educational materials, online libraries and interactive clinical cases are used to organize independent learning for master's students.

Corporate messengers, electronic groups on the educational platform and the university's internal communication systems are used to ensure seamless information exchange with fellow students.

Access to relevant patient data and healthcare information systems is organized through secure workstations of the clinical database's medical information system and authorized access to electronic medical records (**ESG II Part 1.6**).

**EEC findings by criteria.** Comply with 15 standards, 15 - fully compliant, 0 - partially compliant, 0 - not compliant.

### Standard 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT IN POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

#### 7.1 The Quality improvement system

A quality improvement system has been implemented, documented in the "Regulations on the Internal Quality Assurance System of Education at TashSMU", which includes procedures aimed at monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving master's degree educational programmes, including in "Ophthalmology".

The decision-making and change management process related to master's degree programmes is regulated by the organization's Charter and Action Plan. This document was developed by the Education Quality Assurance Department and approved by the Rector of TashSMU. (**ESG II Part 1.1**)

The experts evaluated the programme for monitoring the processes and results of the master's degree educational programme, which includes a programme review stage: internal approval at the Academic Board level, followed by an external review at the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan. After receiving a positive conclusion, the programme is submitted to the Central Methodological Council for review and approval. The development, review and approval of the programme are coordinated annually and are governed by the institute's internal regulations. The responsible division is the graduate academic office. In addition, feedback is collected on various elements of the master's degree educational programme through surveys of master's students, teachers, clinical supervisors, graduates and employer representatives using questionnaires and online surveys. For example, a survey of 393 teachers conducted in the 2024-2025 academic year showed that 44.2% of teachers believe that conducting the educational process in accordance with modern requirements depends primarily on the knowledge and qualifications of the teacher, while 15.8% believe that this is hampered by the large amount of "paperwork".

Approaches to master's degree admissions are assessed by examining selection criteria, admissions rules and analyzing actual admissions practices.

Assessing master's degree students' knowledge and skills is conducted through an analysis of OSCE materials, tests and conversations. This assessment demonstrates a focus on a competency-based approach and objective assessment, as well as demonstrates their transparency, objectivity and alignment with stated competencies.

The adequacy and quality of educational resources is assessed through an analysis of the clinical facilities, simulation center, library and electronic resources, as well as interviews with supervisors. This assessment demonstrates that these resources provide comprehensive theoretical and clinical training for master's degree students.

During the assessment of the quality of master's degree programmes, it was established that, along with achievements (effective operation of clinical facilities, implementation of simulation training, development of supervising), there are a number of problems and shortcomings, including insufficient documentation of some clinical processes.

Feedback from clinical supervisors includes reports on the dynamics of clinical skill acquisition and an analysis of widespread mistakes.

Thus, stakeholders are involved in the educational programme's monitoring and evaluation activities (**ESG II Part 1.9**), including master's degree students, clinical supervisors, departmental teachers, employers and representatives of professional associations.

The results of the clinical practice assessment of master's degree students and graduates are communicated through the publication of annual analytical reports and announcements at department and academic board meetings. Therefore, stakeholders such as clinical supervisors, unit heads, teachers and employer representatives are informed of the monitoring results and feedback.

*Interviews with 13 employers were conducted online and offline and included questions such as: knowledge of the university's mission, participation in developing the mission and strategic plan proposals, participation in advisory bodies, satisfaction with master's students' basic knowledge and skills, participation in master's student training through supervising, providing the department and master's students with the necessary resources for practical training and developing medical judgment, problems with interactions with departments and universities in general, the 90-95% employment rate of master's degree graduates in practical healthcare organizations, and 5-10% who decide to enroll in the next level of postgraduate education.*

Employers also valued graduates' proficiency in a foreign language (English) and, accordingly, extensive access to international literature, guides and clinical protocols/recommendations. However, weaknesses of graduates were also noted: graduates of surgical specialties require more time (at least 3-5 years after completing their master's degree) to master certain surgical skills.

The performance of master's students and graduates is an indicator of the quality of educational programmes. The intended assessment results for ophthalmology master's students in the 2024-2025

academic year show the following: 66.6% of graduates achieved "excellent" grades, and 33.4% achieved "good" grades.

The experts noted the following achievements in the clinical training of master's students: good foreign language proficiency, a large number of clinical sites offering various levels of medical care, the presence of a simulation center, the high academic degree holder rate of teaching staff working in the master's programme, and the involvement of specialists with extensive practical experience (over 20 years) in supervising. At the same time, the experts also identified shortcomings in the clinical training of master's students: incomplete documentation of clinical skills, subjective assessment of practical skills and a formal portfolio.

The master's degree programme's curriculum, programme structure and content, master's degree competencies, and knowledge and skill assessment methods are analyzed annually based on the results of educational and clinical process monitoring, formative and summative assessment data, reports from clinical site heads and feedback from master's degree students, teachers and supervisors.

The experts reviewed the portfolio of a third-year master's degree student.

The department, in collaboration with clinical site heads, evaluates educational resources and the compliance of clinical sites with the goals and objectives of the master's degree programme in "Ophthalmology" annually. This evaluation is based on an analysis of the programme's material and technical support, human resources and the conditions for developing master's degree students' clinical competencies. This evaluation is documented in department reports.

Deficiencies identified during educational programme quality monitoring are documented in an internal assessment report of education quality, and the department develops a plan to address them.

The curriculum update is based on prospective studies, including an analysis of practical healthcare needs, a review of global experience and current clinical guidelines, and an analysis of feedback from master's students, teachers and employers (**ESG II Part 1.10**). Over the past 2-3 years, the master's programme has undergone the following changes: updated curricula, expanded pool of master's theses topics. Benchmarking of postgraduate education (master's programme) is underway with educational institutions such as medical universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. As a result of the 2022 benchmarking, an expanded module on ocular microsurgery was introduced into the curriculum.

Teachers participate in international and national educational events. Based on this participation, updated clinical module content and modern diagnostic and treatment protocols have been incorporated into the master's programme.

## **7.2 Patient's safety**

A quality assurance system has been implemented, including analysis of master's student errors and patient safety assurance, and is reflected in the document "Regulations on the Internal Quality Assurance System of Education at TashSMU". Analysis of master's student errors is the responsibility of the relevant department and the clinical supervisor.

The Quality and Patient Safety Committee identifies risks to patient safety, including clinical audits, incident reviews and analysis of high-risk clinical cases.

**EEC findings by criteria.** Comply with 10 standards, 10 - fully compliant, 0 - partially compliant, 0 - not compliant.

## **Standard 8: GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **8.1 Governance**

The experts reviewed the governance structure of postgraduate medical education, which includes the rector, the first vice-rector for academic affairs, the graduate academic office, relevant departments, and the educational and methodological department. The structure was approved in 2025. The graduate academic office and the relevant department are responsible for supervising, selecting clinical sites and concluding contracts with them.

The department also has a work plan for the current year. Having reviewed the annual reports of the Department of Ophthalmology and Pediatric Ophthalmology, experts concluded that work is being conducted in 3 areas: teaching, research and clinical.

The rector and vice-rectors are responsible for reputational risks and the educational institution's image, and experts met with each of them.

The main document regulating the activities of the master's programme and the master's student performance monitoring system is the Regulation on the Master's Programme, approved by Resolution No.36 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 2, 2015. Knowledge and skills are assessed based on:

- formative assessment,
- midterm assessments
- clinical competency assessments
- student portfolios,
- final state certification, which includes a comprehensive assessment of theoretical and practical preparedness, as well as the defense of the master's thesis.

To implement the educational programme, the educational institution has an organizational structure in which the educational sector is represented by the graduate academic office, specialized departments and the university's clinical sites, as well as the educational and methodological department, research center, simulation training center, international relations department and other structural divisions that ensure the organization, methodological support, clinical training and quality control of the educational process.

The experts reviewed the Master's degree completion documents, including the Certificate of Completion of the Master's Degree, which is issued to master's students who have successfully completed the educational programme and passed the final state certification. This certificate contains information about the assigned Master's degree qualification, the specialty of "Ophthalmology", the scope and duration of the training, the final certification results, and the compliance of the training with established state educational standards.

The quality assurance programme for postgraduate education at Tashkent Medical University was developed by the academic services office in collaboration with the relevant departments and the Faculty of Master's Degree and approved by order of the Rector of Tashkent Medical University.

The following participated in the development of the programme: The academic services office, the graduate academic office;

the relevant departments, the Research Department, the Simulation Training Center; internal and external experts, including representatives of clinical sites and employers.

Teachers, master's students, clinical site heads and other interested parties are informed about the programme through information posted on the university's official website, communicated through learning and teaching meetings, mailing lists to departments and publications in the information and methodological resources of Tashkent State Medical University.

The educational programme in "Ophthalmology" is supported by relevant learning and teaching documents and teachers.

Completion of master's students' studies is documented by the issuance of a certificate of completion of the master's programme and a master's diploma, which are recognized by the national authorized body in healthcare.

Therefore, Tashkent State Medical University complies with the recommendations of national authorized bodies, including the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is confirmed by the compliance of its educational programmes with current state educational standards, regulatory requirements and certification procedures.

## **8.2 Shared governance**

The responsibilities and obligations of the management and staff for postgraduate medical education are defined and assigned to the graduate academic office, specialized departments, the

academic services office and the Research Department. These responsibilities are codified in the document "Regulations on the Master's Degree Programme" of Tashkent State Medical University. Transparency of management and decision-making in the educational process is ensured through regular meetings of the Academic Board and learning and teaching sessions, decision-making protocols and open communication to teachers and master's students via the official website, internal information platforms and rector's orders. This is reflected in the document "Regulations for the Organization of the Educational Process in the Master's Degree Programme at Tashkent State Medical University".

In response to the survey question "Do the organization's management consider your opinion regarding issues related to the educational process, research and clinical work?", 75.86% of teachers responded "systematically", 15.52% answered "sometimes", 3.45% - "rarely" and 1.72% - "never".

Funding for master's programmes is provided by the state budget, student contributions (paid tuition), and other extra-budgetary sources stipulated by the university's regulatory documents.

The divisions of finance and economics is responsible for planning and allocating funds for master's programmes. The scope of duties, responsibilities and authorities are reflected in the job descriptions of heads of structural divisions, teachers and staff involved in the implementation of master's programmes, approved by the Rector of TashSMU.

Today, experts are confident that the educational institution is financially and organizationally sustainable, as it has stable funding sources (state budget, extra-budgetary funds and income from paid tuition), a functioning financial planning system and a stable governance structure that ensures the effective allocation of resources.

The organizational structure update is being implemented in accordance with the university's strategic development plan for 2022-2027, based on the results of internal monitoring and taking into account the recommendations of national authorized bodies. In 2025, changes were made, including structure optimization of the graduate academic office, expanding the staff of the learning and teaching sector, and introducing digital tools for governing the educational process.

Master's student training has been updated by increasing the number of clinical sites, implementing digital platforms for competency assessment, structuring programmes based on a competency-based approach and strengthening the research component.

Updates are being implemented through regular curricula reviews, coordination with clinical site heads and consideration at Academic Board meetings. These updates are accompanied by the development of updated teaching materials, assessment tools and regulatory documentation.

For example, in 2025, the simulation center equipment was updated, clinical sites were expanded, teaching materials were purchased, and an electronic information and educational environment was implemented.

To specifically improve the educational process, sociological research is being conducted, including a survey of master's students and teachers, a survey of clinical supervisors, an analysis of satisfaction with the educational process, and a review of literature on postgraduate medical education (WHO and WFME guidelines, national regulatory documents and current publications on medical education). The following methods have been implemented in the course of this analysis: simulation training, team-based learning, clinical discussions on evidence-based practice, patient communication skills and interprofessional learning.

### **8.3 Master's student and staff representation**

The following advisory and consultative bodies operate within the educational institution: The Academic Board, the Public Council, the Student Council and the Youth Union, each of which includes a representative from among the master's students. Mechanisms for rewarding master's students for their community service at TashSMU include the presentation of honorary certificates and letters of gratitude from the rector, recommendations for participation in scientific conferences and internships, support for publication activity, and opportunities to participate in the university's project initiatives. In a survey of master's students, experts found that master's students positively evaluate the

conditions for participation in community and scientific activities, confirming that an active role expands their academic opportunities and promotes professional growth.

TashSMU implements a master's student development programme aimed at developing advanced clinical competencies, research skills and the professional qualities of an ophthalmologist.

Regarding ophthalmology, the programme includes:

- in-depth training in the diagnosis of eye diseases using modern equipment (OCT, perimetry, ultrasound biomicroscopy);
- training in microsurgical skills using a simulator;
- participation in clinical rounds and consultations in the ophthalmology unit;
- mastering algorithms for surgical and medicated management of patients in accordance with approved clinical diagnostic and treatment protocols;
- participation in procedures under the control of supervisors (parabulbar, subconjunctival injections, laser procedures, minor surgeries).
- training in the design of clinical trials in ophthalmology, methods of collecting and analyzing clinical data (starting from the first year of the master's programme) at clinical sites;
- preparation of articles and abstracts for national and international ophthalmology conferences;
- participation in department projects in pediatric ophthalmology.
- training in communication with patients with visual impairments;
- developing skills for multidisciplinary collaboration with endocrinologists, neurologists, neonatologists, etc.;

Master's students are included in advisory bodies such as the Council of Young Scientists and accreditation working groups (including third-year ophthalmology master's student, Sarvinov Abdullayeva).

**EEC findings by criteria.** Comply with 8 standards, 6 - fully compliant, 2 - partially compliant, 0 - non-compliant.

Standard	Standard Compliance	Recommendations for Improvement
8.3.1	Partially Compliant	Develop a policy and procedure for master's student participation in educational management
8.3.2	Partially Compliant	Determine a procedure for master's student involvement and participation in advisory bodies

**CONCLUSION:** An external assessment of the educational programme revealed that 106 of the 109 accreditation standards demonstrate full compliance. 3 standards are partially compliant. No non-compliance was identified.

#### **5. Recommendations for improving the master's degree educational programme in “Ophthalmology” at Tashkent State Medical University:**

Standard	Recommendations for Improvement
1.1.3	Define the purpose of the master's degree programme in ophthalmology, taking into account the training of academic and teaching staff.
8.3.1	Develop a policy and procedure for master's degree student participation in the management of the educational process.
8.3.2	Define a procedure for master's degree student involvement and participation in advisory bodies.

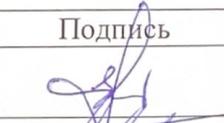
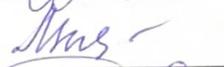
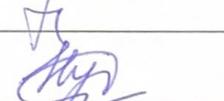
## 6. Recommendation to the ECAQA Accreditation Council

The EEC members determined that the master's degree educational programme of the Tashkent State Medical University in specialty “Ophthalmology” complies with the Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Medical Education (Master’s degree) and unanimously recommended that the ECAQA Accreditation Council accredit this programme for a period of 5 years.

	Full Name	Signature
Chairperson	Yermek Meiramovich Turgunov	/signed/
International Expert	Milena Staneva Staneva	/signed/
Academic Expert	Gulshara Turebekovna Myrzabekova	/signed/
Academic Expert	Tatyana Nuridenovna Burkutbayeva	/signed/
Academic Expert	Alexey Viktorovich Trynkin	/signed/
Academic Expert	Khatimya Ilyassovna Kudabayeva	/signed/
Academic Expert	Gulnar Amerzayevna Mukhambetova	/signed/
Academic Expert	Aida Zhaksybayevna Akhenbekova	/signed/
Academic Expert	Assel Baidauletovna Doshakanova	/signed/
Academic Expert	Aizada Marat	/signed/
Employer Expert	Aziz Tashmetovich Ermetov	/signed/
Student Expert	Nurila Nurmakhankyzy Sartay	/signed/

### 6. Рекомендация Аккредитационному совету ЕЦА

Члены ВЭК установили соответствие образовательной программы магистратуры Ташкентского Государственного Медицинского Университета по специальности «70910206 - Офтальмология» Стандартам аккредитации программы последипломного медицинского образования (магистратура) и пришли к единогласному мнению рекомендовать Аккредитационному совету ЕЦА аккредитовать данную программу на период 5 лет.

	ФИО	Подпись
Председатель	Тургунов Ермек Мейрамович	
Международный эксперт	Милена Станева Станева	
Академический эксперт	Мырзабекова Гулшара Туребековна	
Академический эксперт	Буркутбаева Татьяна Нуриденовна	
Академический эксперт	Трынкин Алексей Викторович	
Академический эксперт	Кудабаева Хатимья Ильясовна	
Академический эксперт	Мухамбетова Гульнар Амерзаевна	
Академический эксперт	Ахенбекова Аида Жаксыбаевна	
Академический эксперт	Дошаканова Асель Байдаулетовна	
Академический эксперт	Марат Айзада	
Эксперт-работодатель	Эрметов Азиз Ташметович	
Эксперт-обучающийся	Сартай Нурила Нурмаханқызы	

## Профиль качества и критерии внешней оценки образовательной программы (обобщение)

Standard	Критерии оценки	Количество стандартов	Оценка		
			Полностью соответствует	Частично соответствует	Не соответствует
1.	<b>МИССИЯ И ЦЕННОСТИ</b>	6	5	1	-
2.	<b>ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ ПРОГРАММА</b>	28	28	-	-
3.	<b>ОЦЕНКА МАГИСТРАНТОВ</b>	15	15	-	-
4.	<b>МАГИСТРАНТЫ</b>	19	19	-	-
5.	<b>ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛИ И КЛИНИЧЕСКИЕ НАСТАВНИКИ</b>	8	8	-	-
6.	<b>ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫЕ РЕСУРСЫ</b>	15	15	-	-
7.	<b>ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЕ И УЛУЧШЕНИЯ КАЧЕСТВА ПОСЛЕДИПЛОМНОЙ ПОДГОТОВКИ</b>	10	10	-	-
8.	<b>УПРАВЛЕНИЕ И АДМИНИСТРИРОВАНИЕ</b>	8	6	2	-
	<b>Всего:</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>
			<b>109</b>		

**Список документов, изученных членами ВЭЖ в рамках проведения внешней оценки образовательной программы магистратуры**

<b>№</b>	<b>Наименования документов/дата утверждения</b>	<b>Количество</b>
1.	Постановление Кабинета Министров РУз об утверждении Положения о магистратуре, № 36 от 02.03.2015	1
2.	Список главных внештатных специалистов Республики Узбекистан	1
3.	Об организации деятельности главных специалистов, консультантов (координаторов НПР) Министерства здравоохранения Республики Узбекистан, приказ №310 от 06.12.2023	1
4.	О порядке формирования и утверждения базы тестовых заданий по предметам в Ташкентском государственном медицинском университете, приказ №560 от 17.09.2025	1
5.	Список соглашений с зарубежными ВУЗами (155)	1
6.	Список научных журналов медицинского университета	1
7.	Порядок контроля и оценки знаний студентов в Ташкентском государственном медицинском университете, Приложение 1 к приказу N 432 от 11 сентября 2025 г.	1
8.	Положение о технике безопасности для магистрантов	1
9.	Положение о лечебной работе клинических кафедр	1
10.	Силлабусы по офтальмологии	5
11.	Модульные программы по офтальмологии	13
12.	Годовой отчет «О проводимой работе и предстоящих задачах по организации учебного процесса на основе кредитно-модульной системы обучения»	1
13.	Постановление Кабинета Министров РУз «Об утверждении нормативных правовых актов, регулирующих порядок приема в организации высшего образования	1
14.	Номенклатура дел на 2023-2027 гг	1
15.	Организационная структура ТашГМУ	1
16.	Опросник для магистрантов	1
17.	Опросник для работодателей	1
18.	Опросник для педагогов	1
19.	Протокол заседания координационной комиссии ташкентской медицинской академии, от 09.01.2024	1
20.	Протокол заседания комиссии по изучению деятельности ППС по итогам 2024 года, от 15.10.2025	1
21.	План публикации учебных и научных материалов преподавателей в течение календарного года	1
22.	План мероприятий по образовательному направлению подготовки студентов, обучающихся в магистратуре Ташкентского государственного медицинского университета в 2025/2026 учебном году, от 28.08.2025	1
23.	Постановление Кабинета Министров «О контроле знаний студентов высших и средних учебных заведений» № 3069 от 26.09.2018г	1
24.	Приказ министерства высшего образования №3515 «Об утверждении перечня национальных и международных сертификатов,	1

	определяющих уровень знаний иностранных языков и общеобразовательных предметов», от 29.05.2024	
25.	Академическая политика на 2022-2023 гг., от 31.08.2022	1
26.	Закон «Об образовании» РУз, от 19.05.2020	1
27.	Сертификат об аккредитации № 10 от 23.10.2019	1
28.	Положение об учебно-методическом совете, утверждённый приказом №124-ОД от 18.07.2019	1
29.	Этические правила поведения обозначены в Положении для студентов ( <a href="https://ssv.uz/uploads/pages/buyrug88-23032022.pdf">https://ssv.uz/uploads/pages/buyrug88-23032022.pdf</a> ).	1
30.	Кодекс поведения, утвержденный приказом Министерства здравоохранения Республики Узбекистан от 24 марта 2022 года за № 88 ( <a href="https://ssv.uz/uploads/pages/buyrug88-23032022.pdf">https://ssv.uz/uploads/pages/buyrug88-23032022.pdf</a> ).	1
31.	Постановление Президента РУз № 149 «Программа мероприятий по комплексному развитию Ташкентского государственного медицинского университета на 2025 год», от 22.04.2025	1
32.	Сертификат ТашГМУ на образовательную деятельность №000375 от 05.01.2007	1