NAKHCHIVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

20 24

SDG PROGRESS REPORT

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

THE GLOBAL GOALS

Introduction

As a higher education institution committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, NSU prioritizes SDG 4: Quality Education as a foundation for individual empowerment and sustainable progress. SDG 4 seeks to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities by 2030.

In alignment with this global mission, NSU has consistently expanded access to education, enhanced academic quality through rigorous assurance systems, and deepened its international academic partnerships. In 2024, the university advanced this goal through:

- Implementation of an enhanced Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) framework
- Engagement with foreign academic professionals from partner institutions in Turkey, Japan, the United States, Hungary, and Poland
- A growing portfolio of dual-degree programs that bridge local and global learning environments
- Strengthened student support services, including digital tools and inclusive surveys to measure satisfaction, equity, and outcomes

NSU's strategic focus for 2024 centered on building a learning ecosystem that is student-centered, research-informed, and globally connected. This report outlines the measurable progress achieved under SDG 4 throughout the year.

Key Achievements in Academic Quality and Assurance

In 2024, Nakhchivan State University made substantial progress in ensuring academic quality by reinforcing its internal mechanisms and aligning institutional practices with international standards. These efforts were coordinated under the university's updated Internal Quality Assurance framework.

1. Alignment with International Standards
NSU's IQA strategy was restructured to align with globally recognized benchmarks, including:

- ESG 2015 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- TKTA Accreditation Criteria as part of Azerbaijan's national higher education framework

All academic units were reviewed under these principles to ensure compliance with teaching quality, program relevance, and student-centered learning.

2. Academic Monitoring and Feedback Systems
To assess teaching effectiveness and overall student experience:
- NSU conducted systematic student satisfaction surveys across all faculties
- The surveys focused on curriculum quality, teaching methodologies, digital access, and student support services
- In 2024, over 1,200 students participated, marking a 27% increase from 2023

Key finding:
- 86% of respondents were satisfied with teaching quality
- 91% expressed satisfaction with their overall academic experience
- 88% found digital resources adequate for course needs

3. Teaching Excellence Initiatives
- NSU offered pedagogical training modules for staff focusing on active learning, digital pedagogy, and inclusive education
- Over 70 academic staff members completed training sessions in 2024

Additionally, teaching evaluations were integrated into the faculty performance review system, contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.

4. Program Review and Continuous Improvement
- Regular curriculum reviews were conducted to ensure academic programs reflect market needs and labor force expectations
- A new Program Evaluation and Development Committee was formed under the Rector's office

Quality Assurance Office	Quality Assurance Committee	Sub-committees
•General Coordination •Policy Making •Training and Awareness •Liaise with External Quality Assurance Agencies •Data Analysis and Reporting •Continuous Improvement and Benchmarking •Digital Transformation and Data Management	•Policy Analysis •Audit and Evaluation •Risk assessment •Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback	•Evaluation of Training Programs •Evaluation of student support services •Evaluation of academic staff •Infrastructure assessment •Curriculum Innovation and Compliance

Student and Institutional Feedback Surveys
In 2024, Nakhchivan State University expanded its internal quality assurance mechanisms through a series of targeted surveys designed to collect feedback from students, faculty, and administrative staff. These surveys provided valuable insights into academic satisfaction, teaching effectiveness, institutional governance, and training needs.

English Title	Link
NDU Colleges through Students' Eyes	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSch7OIjM2K7f_2BYwJ3Lfvzx_QjuN_Ad1gvy8hEtCRPQz2XEQ/viewform?usp=sf_link
Student Satisfaction Survey on Subjects	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeiohVfigCeioyULfMH_sTuvjxVykUUXbLWPdiMLoM985Dl7Q/viewform?usp=sf_link
Student Satisfaction Survey on Teachers	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScgdNxzM52YOW8xITbL5or7rcDRPJgYhtqZIFfAl27nAMkdkw/viewform?usp=sf_link
NDU through Students' Eyes (Distance Learning)	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDvy9pOjnYzXR26xaTy-UPcV3UY62SjG1n06wJAtzDOZZJew/viewform?usp=sf_link
NDU through Students' Eyes	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScN3o3MyHb_Zio9EejEnfqaXqmQEi4lhBYiVj9rtDHRXtikUA/viewform?usp=sf_link
University Leadership Evaluation Survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdiiOXmzHPiBPtTDywoZE0xXGMMYkywRpRC42vBFi22PtAsDg/viewform?usp=sf_link
Manager Satisfaction Survey with Employees	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8c0xljptB_cxq76NwNblH06gZ4AOagZoupUwTRZLr044FMw/viewform?usp=sf_link
Quality Assurance Needs Assessment Survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd9zfDkrKLZIgXDDI46mLRfVPmkQgzIlNSLHFyEtjMCr9GT3A/viewform?usp=sf_link
Quality Assurance Survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScroLTAVlYu6yYHx9m7lPktJ8OxuvSIiYPv0gL4DYH0QuceSA/viewform?usp=sf_link
Satisfaction with Foreign Teachers	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfASfMMy5fsUvtBK5uaQesbR4gjbp4hYw-2-ogb8CgbQXGP2g/viewform?usp=sf_link
Training Needs Assessment Survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7Kmos34BOFgoCc7GTlQJdbQm1NtKbERuIEfawXZsWzO5LjQ/viewform?usp=sf_link
Technical College Satisfaction Survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd77WI3_923ORj15x62Qg6kYKSjHm-pYLcXHQxb7YOQ6tOZaQ/viewform?usp=sf_link
Evaluation Survey of the Nakhchivan State University Strategic Development Plan	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZRK48reMaH4ZeNF2TQ2AkYgQ-VQNrgWgALektuN72PWvdtg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Tohoku University (Japan)
Prof. Dr. Khalil Kalanturi

Yeditepe University
Prof. Dr. Erkut Attar

Inonu University
Prof. Dr. Cengiz Ara

Kafkas University
Prof. Dr. Isa Ozaydın

Ege University
Prof. Dr. Yasemin Erac

Dijle University
Prof. Dr. Ilyas Yolbash

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Karadeniz-Technic University
Assoc. Dr. Mehmet Uğur

Ege University
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mesut Arıcı

Igdır University
Dr. Murat Karakilich

Igdır University
Dr. Fethi Shermet

In 2024, Nakhchivan State University (NSU) strengthened its academic internationalization by hosting 20 visiting professors and researchers from five countries, including Turkey, Japan, the United States, Hungary, and Azerbaijan. These international scholars brought expertise in diverse disciplines, contributing to a richer academic environment and a more globalized learning experience for NSU students.

Compared to 2023, the number of foreign academic staff increased by 11%, reflecting NSU's steady efforts to internationalize its curricula and strengthen cross-border partnerships.

Academic Fields Represented:
- Medicine and Public Health
- Psychology and Education Sciences
- Language and Translation
- Engineering and Environmental Technology
- Law and Social Sciences

Key Contributions in 2024:
- Over 1,000 students attended classes, lectures, and practical sessions led by visiting faculty
- NSU hosted 12 thematic lectures, 5 modular workshops, and 3 joint research presentations with international guests
- These exchanges supported the development of new curriculum modules, enhanced international recognition, and enriched classroom diversity

Dual Degree Programs

Nakhchivan State University continued to expand its international academic network through strategic dual degree collaborations. These initiatives are aligned with SDG Targets 4.3 and 4.B, focusing on equitable access to quality higher education and international learning pathways.

During the year, NSU established and maintained dual degree agreements with the following universities:

- John von Neumann University (Hungary)
- İstanbul University (Turkey)

The cooperation with John von Neumann University was launched as a new dual degree initiative in 2024, representing the university's first such partnership with an institution from Hungary.

These programs provide students with the opportunity to benefit from joint academic curricula, mobility options, and mutual degree recognition between partner institutions.

Inclusive Education and Digital Access
We made significant progress in advancing SDG Target 4.5 — eliminating gender disparities and ensuring equal access to education — as well as Target 4.A, focused on creating inclusive, safe, and effective learning environments. These efforts reflected NSU's ongoing mission to make education accessible and empowering for every student, regardless of background or circumstance.

1. Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment
NSU worked hard to ensure that its campus remained a welcoming place for all students, especially those from underrepresented and vulnerable groups:
- Physical accessibility on campus was improved through the installation of ramps, elevators, and specially adapted classrooms for students with disabilities.

- Dedicated support services offered academic guidance, mental health counseling, and inclusive extracurricular opportunities to help all students thrive.
- The Gender Equality Committee remained active throughout the year, monitoring equity across admissions, hiring, and student engagement.
- International students and learners from rural areas received tailored support, including language assistance and peer mentorship programs to ease their academic transition.

2. Expanding Digital Tools and Access

As part of its broader digital transformation efforts, NSU continued to modernize how teaching and learning happen across the university:

- By 2024, all faculties had fully integrated their courses into NSU's Learning Management System (LMS), making 100% of degree program materials available in digital format.
- The digital library grew by 15%, now providing access to more than 12,000 e-books and 1,500 open-access journals — a vital resource for students and researchers alike.
- Campus-wide high-speed Wi-Fi was upgraded, and four modern computer labs remained open daily to ensure students had the tools they needed.
- Over 3,000 students actively engaged with digital platforms, including video lectures, interactive quizzes, and online discussion forums that enhanced their learning experience.ə

Importantly, 740 students from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds were among the most active users of these digital resources — a clear sign that NSU's efforts are making a difference where it matters most.

Figure 6. Student Access to Digital Resources (2023 vs 2024)
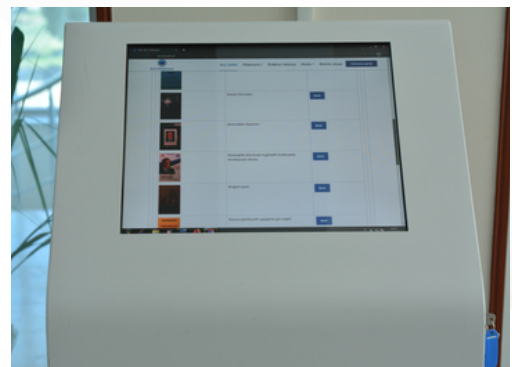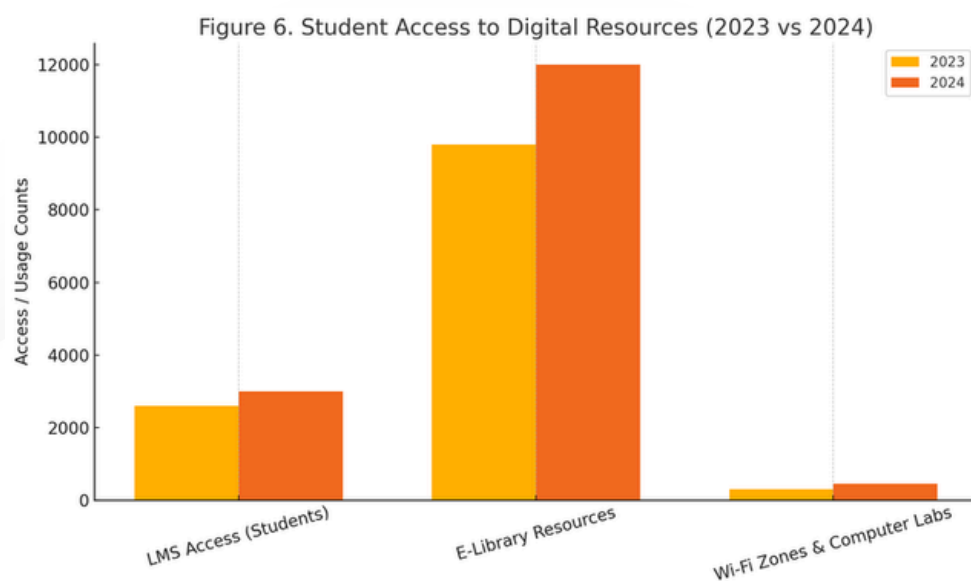
Inclusive Education and Digital Access

In alignment with SDG Target 4.5 (eliminating gender disparities and ensuring equal access to education) and Target 4.A (building inclusive and effective learning environments), NSU continued to prioritize equitable access and digital transformation across all levels of teaching and learning in 2024.

1. Inclusive Learning Environment

NSU maintained a welcoming and supportive learning environment that accommodated the diverse needs of students, including those from marginalized, rural, and underrepresented groups. The university's approach to inclusivity was both infrastructural and programmatic:

- Campus infrastructure saw meaningful improvements, including ramps, elevators, and adapted classrooms designed for students with physical disabilities, making academic spaces more universally accessible.
- A comprehensive student support system was in place, providing academic advising, mental health counseling, and social engagement initiatives tailored for at-risk groups.
- The Gender Equality Committee, which operated year-round, closely monitored policies to ensure balance in faculty recruitment, student admission, and participation in university life. Special attention was given to empowering female students through workshops, leadership programs, and scholarship opportunities.
- International students, as well as those from remote or disadvantaged regions of Azerbaijan, benefited from language preparation courses, peer mentorship, and customized integration support programs.

These efforts collectively aimed to reduce dropout risks and improve academic retention among vulnerable groups, contributing to a fairer and more inclusive university culture.

2. Digital Tools and Online Access

Building on its digital transformation strategy, NSU advanced its investment in educational technologies to reduce digital divides and support flexible learning for all students:

- All faculties successfully transitioned to the university's Learning Management System (LMS), enabling full digital access to course materials, assignments, and interactive content. This transformation allowed for 100% digital coverage of undergraduate and postgraduate curricula.
- The digital library expanded its collection by 15%, providing access to over 12,000 e-books, 1,500 open-access journals, and a variety of multimedia resources.
- High-speed Wi-Fi connectivity was enhanced campus-wide, and four state-of-the-art computer labs were maintained for daily student use, particularly for those without personal devices.
- Over 3,000 students utilized online learning platforms actively—accessing video lectures, submitting digital assignments, and participating in virtual discussions, peer assessments, and online office hours.
- A total of 740 students from rural or economically disadvantaged backgrounds were identified as active beneficiaries of digital tools and services, highlighting NSU's success in bridging digital gaps.

In addition to formal instruction, several training workshops on digital literacy, responsible internet use, and online safety were conducted throughout the year, ensuring students not only had access to technology but also the skills to use it effectively.
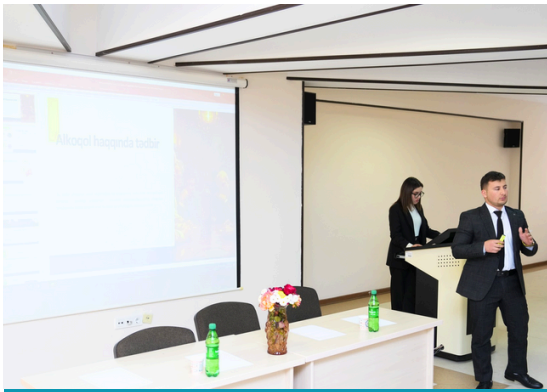
Choose Strength, Not Substances

Say No Today — Own Your Tomorrow

Healthy Mind, Healthy Choices, Healthy Future