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# WP3: Establishment/Enhancement of the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services (CEES)

## D 3.1 Report on graduate's employability support through careers, employability, and enterprise services at Termez State University in Uzbekistan

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# 1. General information on Termez State University

The Termez State University has 17 Faculties and 1 pedagogical Institute. There are more than 20000 students, including master's degree students and doctoral studies. More than 1300 employees work at the University, 600 of them are administrative and technical, and 717 academic staff and researchers.

The executive body of the university consists of the Rector, five vice-rectors in several directions (academic issues, scientific issues, international affairs, financial issues, and youth issues), and deans for each faculty and director for the pedagogical institute. Each dean has at least one or more vice-deans. Each dean has the same head of departments, according to the number of chairs in the faculty.

The legislative body of the university is the scientific board. Rector is the chairman of the scientific board. Further, the scientific board consists of all vice-rectors, all deans, almost heads of departments and chairs,s and outstanding professors in various spheres.

Termez State University is situated in the City of Termez, in the far south of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the administrative center of the southern region Surkhandarya of the Republic. There is more than 3 million population in the region Surkhandarya. The region stands first of all for agro-industrial complexes and products. Agriculture has played a leading role in the regional economy in the recent past. In recent years, new networks have emerged. The natural geographical location of the region is favorable, and labor resources are sufficient. Industrial production (light and food industries), agriculture (cotton and wheat growing, cattle breeding, and sheep breeding), transport (especially rail and road transport) play a significant role in the development of the regional economy.

The leading industries are cotton ginning, cotton processing. In the region operating more than 4,000 small and private enterprises. The main branches of industry are cotton growing, grain growing, horticulture, silkworm breeding, lemon growing, industrial production (light and food industries), agriculture (cotton and wheat growing, cattle breeding and sheep breeding), transport (especially rail and road transport), educational sector (schools, pre-schools, professional colleges, HEIs, and others) and construction sector. One of the dynamically developing sectors is tourism.

The average unemployment rate in Uzbekistan amounts to 9,3%, while this indicator is in the region Surkhandarya amounts 9,9% (2020).

In addition to the industries and sectors listed above, our graduates will find jobs in other sectors and industries of the economy, in particular, finance, banking, taxation, treasury, insurance, culture, education, health, sports, and others. In the past, graduates traveled to enterprises and organizations in search of work, but now employers and industry representatives have facilitated the process of recruiting graduates. Happily, the staff of the commission, consisting of personnel staff of employers, conducts work related to the recruitment process (interviews, surveys, written work, logical thinking, etc.) and their results at Termez State University.

## 2. Information on audit

All local project-team members were actively involved in the CEES survey process. The respondents were 29 university employees, including 1 top manager, 19 deans of faculties, 9 professors/teachers. In the survey took part 1 top manager, 19 deans of faculties, 9 professors/teachers. The most of respondents, who were involved in the survey, were experienced in the field of CEES because of their job positions and years of experience. Only some of the respondents, also the teachers, do have not enough experience in CEES. The survey was conducted from May 1 to May 30, 2021.

The local project-team manager Gafur Togaev explained the conditions of the survey among project participants, appointed a responsible person then and all responsible persons sent the link of the questionnaires via Telegram and Instagram to the potential respondents. Furthermore, the link of the questionnaires was also sent to the official internal telegram channel of the University. The project team members monitored the process of filling out the questionnaire. At the end of the survey, all project participants took part in the formation of the report.

Sometimes the respondents had difficulty answering the questions clearly due to the different structures at the university. For example, some points do not exist in the form questioned but exist in other forms. The main observation from the audit was that the term has not enough infrastructure to support graduates' employability properly. Moreover, the University has to work out a systematic and strategic plan for how to support the graduates through careers, employability and enterprise services, and HEI-business cooperation.

# 3. Analysis of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services and HEI-business cooperation.

## 3.1 Framework of Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in the Republic of Uzbekistan on country level

It exists no Framework of CEES at the country level for the graduates of HEIs. However, there is a Ministry of Employment and Labour relations, which is responsible for the employment not only for HEI graduates but also for all people of Uzbekistan. In the frame of the Ministry of Employment and Labour relations there so-called led "national vacancy database" (http://ish.mehnat.uz/vacancy) where all employers have to or can announce their vacancies and potential employees can apply for this job. Nevertheless, this service works not well enough. This framework is open for all people and the University could use this service to enhance graduates' employability.

## 3.2 Current Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in HEIs in the country on HEI level

**Services and activities relating to enhancing student and graduate employability.**

**Organisational structure, number of staff, scope, and main activities of the career and liaison office of TerSU**

The university has a department of marketing and management. This department works for the whole university. The staff consists of 6 people. One of the main activities of the marketing department is promoting the employment of graduates and it cannot be defined as a career and liaison office. However, since this department also has other tasks to do and because of the small number of employees, they do not manage their tasks with the employment support of graduates. The main activity of this department is mostly to distribute study contracts and controlling of payments of study fees, which are not connected with CEES. This department should promote the employment of the graduates through liaison activities with the employers and companies. In fact, this department does not promote the Employment of the graduates, conducts on the contrary only the statistic information and percentage of employability of the graduates in certain study

fields, and the statistic information about the employability of the graduates are provided to this department from responsible chairs.

**TerSU strategy on matters of employment and career of students and graduates**

There is no exact strategy on matters of employment in written or paper-based form. Nevertheless, the University is aimed at employing all their students and graduates. Because the employment indicator of the graduates is included in the anniversary rating of the HEIs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and further in the attestation and accreditation process of study programs, which is conducted every five years.

**Support offered to students and graduates on their professional development**

Every year the university organizes at least one job fair for its graduates for the employees at the regional level. All main employees would personally be invited to these job fairs. Sometimes the chiefs of educational institutions and other companies visit the university to find competent staff for their institutions. Especially the private banks do this practice in recent years quite often. Such kinds of practices are however isolated and not systematically.

The University has no staff on job consulting. Generally, the University did not conduct consulting sessions for their graduates. However, deans, head of departments, and competent teachers provides job consulting sessions individually, depending on the demand from graduates.

The University provides occasionally consulting services on individual career planning of graduates through various activities like internships, meetings with employers, and others.

The University holds one or two open days every year, in which potential employers and students of the 3rd and 4th study year take part. The choice of employers is open, as the Open Day is advertised in the mass media. The large and potential employers are also notified by official letter

Unfortunately, the university does not offer an online database of potential employers. Nevertheless, the vacancies are posted on the website of the national vacancy database, which is belonging to the Ministry of employment and labor relations and could be used by the graduates of the university as well.

Support offered to students and graduates on their educational development

The information about further national and international courses and national and international scholarships is provided by the international department as well as by the lecturer of the responsible chair. The International relations office informs faculties about available scholarships at the national and international level and distributes them among students and teaching staff through announcements on the official website of the university, as well as on the official pages of social networks of the University.

The University supports students and graduates in their academic and professional development through various activities like consulting, teaching, internships, meetings with employers, and others.

**Measures of tracking academic and professional progress of students and graduates**

The University's Marketing and Management department carries out extensive monitoring of graduates about their employment for up to one year. After one year, however, there is no further employment monitoring of university graduates.

The employment monitoring results are primarily used for the rating of the universities, but also further decision-making processes about their study programs. The employment rate of graduates is also an important indicator for the attestation and accreditation of relevant study courses, which are conducted every 4-5 years.

**Additional information of services currently offered by the HEI on Careers, Employability and Enterprise cooperation**

From the 2021-2022 academic year students are supposed to spend 3-4 days at university with auditory classes, the rest of days, as interns, at enterprises and organizations where they are going to work in the future. The duration of internships for students at educational establishments (at schools, lyceums) will be lengthened as well.

**Services and activities relating to the development of employability skills**

**Activities on employability skills development of students and graduates as part of the curriculum**

The University did not conduct systematically soft skill seminars for employment. But in the curriculum of each study course, there are so-called elective subjects and additional subjects, in which soft skills are often taught

**Activities on employability skills development of students and graduates as part of organized social activities**

The university holds one or two open days every year, usually in Spring, in which potential employers and students of the 3rd and 4th year take part. The open days are open for all employers and the Open Day is advertised in the mass media. The large and potential employers are also notified by official letter

The university did not conduct any research on the situation in the labor market (for example, on the required skills, salary dynamics, personnel practice, etc.) and the admission of graduates for the employment

**Support offered to students and graduates on national or international mobility programs**

The information about mobility programs at the national and international level is provided by the international relations office as well as by the responsible chair. The International relations office informs faculties about available mobility programs at the national and international level and distributes them among students through announcements on the official website of the university, as well as on the official pages of social networks.

**Services and activities relating to the development of innovation and entrepreneurial skills**

**Organizational structure, number of staff, scope and main activities of innovation and entrepreneurship office**

There is a Department of Commercialization of Scientific Innovations at the University with 3 staff members (head of the department, marketer, and co-worker). This department is not only

responsible for academic staff, for students also too. If the teachers or students have an innovation idea or initiatives or start-up ideas that could be commercialized, they can just turn to this department, where they will receive financial and professional support. The main condition of financially supporting is the market economy profitability of the ideas.

**Services offered to students and graduates to develop their entrepreneurial skills**

The University organizes seminars on innovation and entrepreneurship but not systematically. These seminars will be held often in the frame of various projects, guest lectures, and guest visits of entrepreneurs and policymakers to the university.

Not the University, some teachers, who teach subjects like innovation or entrepreneurship, organize the students' clubs, where students can gain relevant materials on entrepreneurship, such as a guide to developing business plans. This club is open for every student, who is interested in business. Students clubs are evening courses or extracurricular classes organized by the teachers, professors, or even by outstanding students to develop the students' various skills and competencies. Usually, each chair offers at least two students club.

**Activities to support innovation and entrepreneurship of students and graduates**

In cooperation with other institutions such as banks, construction companies, the Ministry of Innovation, and local government, various competitions are held for students, including one on the subject of entrepreneurship and innovation. Nevertheless, such events are not systematic and they will also include a manageable audience of students

The University did not, unfortunately, support innovation and entrepreneurship activities of students and graduates personally and further did not involve the business sector too.

**Services and activities relating to establishing cooperative relationships with businesses**

**Liaison activities of TerSU with employability organizations**

The University holds liaison activities with great organizations at the regional level through personal contacts. These liaison activities are mostly not formal and the scope of these activities restricts on the regional and local level on greatest employability organizations.

**Networking activities with businesses**

Unfortunately, the university does not participate in networking events with business structures. Furthermore, the networking events to link several structures are in this region not common.

Many degree programs have compulsory internships in their curriculum and as part of these practices, many students visit companies.

The university facilitates the establishment of contacts between students/alumni and business representatives through several meetings with employers, for example at the open days or job fairs.

**Mentoring program offered by TerSU**

There is a mentorship program at the university, but this program does not aim to support business ideas, business administration courses for students. The mentorship program aims, first of all, the outstanding students' scientific skills like how to write scientific articles, how to search on certain themes, how to restrict the research topics.

**Services offered to employers**

The HEI offers to employers some services like graduate fairs, meetings with students/graduates, guest lectures, masterclasses.

Moreover, the University provides year innovation and entrepreneurship fairs, where students can participate with their business ideas, start-ups, and innovative ideas. Large companies and investors from the private sector are then invited to these fairs. The best ideas for businesses and start-ups are then financed by external investors or organizations.

**Additional information on cooperation procedures with companies**

From 2021-2022 academic year students are allowed to work part-time from 2nd year. This increases the chance of getting job-related skills from the early years of university studies.

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| With the help of the Agency of Youth Affairs university students are involved in volunteering activities in orphanages, special schools, youth service centers, nursing homes, kindergartens, schools, and other organizations. |

### 3.3 SWOT analyses of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at TerSU.

| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** |
|---|---|
| – With the initiative of government and ministries, fairs for business ideas and start-ups of talented students are held every year<br>– Yearly open days and job fairs for employers<br>– Existence of Department of Commercialization of Scientific Innovations at the University<br>– Meetings with employers<br>– Availability of extra-curricular students clubs<br>– Support of graduates and students about national and international mobility programs | – Universities have different priorities and goals than the entrepreneurship development of their students<br>– Seminars on entrepreneurship conducts not systematically<br>– Less emphasis on developing soft skills of graduates<br>– Department of marketing and management did not manage to promote employment<br>– No availability of HEI strategy on employment and career matters<br>– No availability of job consulting position at the University<br>– Individual career planning service not systematically<br>– Limited employment monitoring of university graduates<br>– Lack of research on the situation in the labor market |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| – The management in all Uzbek universities is very centralized (top-down) and the university ministry or government can change everything in this regard with a single regulation | – The disinterest of chiefs and students. Because many students who start their business and want to be self-employed do not study<br>– Emergency market rules – the market conditions change very fast |

| | |
|---|---|
| – Possibility of stock up the staff members of Department of Commercialization of Scientific Innovations at the University only for students<br>– To offer targeted CEES courses in the frame of extra-curricular students clubs<br>– Implementation of entrepreneurship consulting service at the university with the help of business representatives | – Mismatches between university study programs and labor market rules because of lack of scientific reports on labor market needs<br>– No availability of financial resources for business ideas and start-ups<br>– Risk of losing business ideas secret |

### 3.4 SWOT analyses of TerSU cooperation with institutions outside HEIs.

| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** |
|---|---|
| – With the help of personal contacts from the rector, vice-rectors, deans and outstanding professors many deals and initiatives can be made<br>– Short-visiting possibility of companies<br>– Yearly open days, job fairs, and various meetings with employers | – Cooperation with institutions outside HEI is not systematically and often not formal<br>– Liaison activities of the HEI with employability organizations not satisfactory<br>– No networking activities with business structures<br>– Services offered to employers are not enough |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREADS** |
| – The management in all Uzbek institutions and state companies are very centralized (top-down) and the ministry or government can change everything in this regard with a single regulation<br>– To install and organize networking events with business structures<br>– Enhancement of liaison activities with employability organizations<br>– Wide-ranged services for employers like business-couch, business lecturer, business-consultant | – As the Uzbek market economy belongs to the emergency market category, it is very difficult to carry out the market analysis and to plan related activities<br>– The disinterest of companies business structure, as they all work profit-oriented |

### 3.5 The suggestions for improvement of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at TerSU

1. Create a career and communication office for students at the university
2. Create an online portal or online database where students can find information on labor market issues (e.g. job openings, company contact information, employment statistics, etc.)
3. Organize seminars on innovation or entrepreneurship for students and interested teachers
4. Offer a mentoring program (where representatives of the business world offer voluntary support to students in developing business ideas and plans)
5. Offer a mentoring program for individual career planning for students

### 3.6 The suggestions for improvement of HEI cooperation with institutions outside TerSU

1. To sign bilateral cooperation agreements with potential institutions outside of HEI
2. Systematically organization of alumni work for former university graduates
3. Invitation of large and successful entrepreneurs as guest lecturers
4. To survey employers concerning the university graduates and their hard- and soft skills
5. to involve employers and practitioners in the educational process, in the development of training programs and conducting classes
6. To install the position of business consultant at the university with the help of business representatives

## 4. Analyses of Internship

### 4.1 Institutional framework of internships on country level

There is no direct internship framework at the country level. However, each study field has state educational standards and curriculum, proofed and confirmed by the HE ministry. All internships conducted strictly according to the state educational standards and curriculum of a certain study program. In other words, the framework of internships given at the national level indirectly.

## 4.2 Current internship on HEI level

### Management and administration of internships

**Measures and requirements for student internships**

All internships are conducted according to the curriculum of certain study programs. Responsible teachers and professors at the chair develop and prepare internship programs for students and all internship programs are proofed and confirmed by the Head of the Chair, Head of the department of academic affairs, and the rector.

**Internships´ duration, focus, and credits offered**

To distinguish generally between 3 types of internships. Firstly, passive internship, secondly active internship, and thirdly production internship or field internship. The passive internships last from 1 week up to 4 weeks. Active internships or field internships last from 4 weeks up to 12 weeks. A 1-week internship is according to curriculum between 30 and 36 hours and amounts to 1 credit point.

**Management of internships**

Internships at the university are managed in both ways, centralized and decentralized at the faculty/ chair level too. Centralized there is a responsible person at the department of academic affairs. Also, this person manages all internships and their administration procedures. Decentralized, a responsible teacher or professor at the department manages the whole internship process. In addition, there is a responsible person at the internship organizations, who are working in this organization. Moreover, these persons are for students a mentor/ tutor during the internship period and the first contact person at the internship place. Moreover, the heads of departments, the deans, and other authorities from the administration of the university were also authorized to control the internship process.

**Administration procedures**

All students must go to the internship because the internships are often compulsory. There is a process of preparing for the internship before starting it. A person, who is responsible for the internship at the department level, prepares all necessary documents like an internship plan,

internship contracts, internship program, measurement criteria, and assessment methods of the internship.

**Additional information on management and administration of internships**

The students' practice is assessed and if they get an unsatisfactory grade in the internship or if the student does not participate regularly in the internship, the student cannot continue his studies and he is expelled from the number of students or he has to repeat the semester again

**Support given to students**

**Training activities to support internships**

Before the students are going to the internship, it would be held an internship conference for students at each responsible department for the study program. At this conference have to participate all students, the responsible teachers and professors of the department, the head of the departments, and at least one person from the dean's office or the administration of the university. This conference aims to prepare the students for an internship. All documents for the internship like internship programs, internship plans, internship contracts, internship guidelines, the contact persons at the internship organizations are given to students.

**The support is given to students on finding internship positions**

Mainly the place of the internship is chosen according to the permanent place of residence or on existing internship contracts of the department or the objects of internships found by the responsible teachers for the internship

**Development of entrepreneurial skills through internships**

The development of students' entrepreneurial competencies and skills during the internship will be supported. Especially in the production and field internships are students' entrepreneurial competencies and skills will be supported. Moreover, the different short visits to companies develop students' entrepreneurial competencies and skills.

### Monitoring and evaluation of internships

**Management procedures during internships**

For each type of internship, students are assigned managers from the educational institution and the enterprise (institution, organization) – the internship base. If necessary, consultants are appointed.

Deans of faculties, heads of departments at the faculty, as well as the internship managers at the department, the head of the internship appointed at the partner organization are responsible for the management and quality control of internships.

**Procedures for evaluation of internships**

A commission, consisting of the responsible teachers of the department and faculty, will evaluate the internships of students. Students must write a report and present their activities during their internship in front of this commission. In the internship program is written, which tasks have the students to do during their internship and how would the internship be accessed. The students have to submit to the commission at least 3 documents: the detailed report on the internship, the recommendation letter about the trainee from the internship organization, written by the internship mentor at the organization, and internship portfolio, consisting of several documents of the internship like internship diary and others.

### 4.3 SWOT analyses of internship

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|
| – Internships are conducted strictly according to the curriculum and all students know when and where they undergo practice and what they should do in the internship | – Students have no choice due to strict curriculum<br>– No internship office/department at the HEI- or Faculty-Level |

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|---|---|
| – Possibility to undergo the internship according to the permanent place of residence<br>– No need to find the internship organization due to existing internship contracts of the department | – Only ONE person responsible for all internships of the university at the department of academic affairs<br>– No enough training activities for students before going to the internship |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREADS** |
| – Signing contracts with major companies and enterprises in the region for internships<br>– To develop internship guidelines for internships at HEI-Level<br>– To organize an alumni network office to find more internship places, since a lot of chefs of companies and organizations are former students of the University | – The disinterest of private companies for the interns<br>– The disinterest of public and state companies for the interns<br>– Skills and knowledge mismatches between companies and university study<br>– the mentors and tutors for interns in the organization are not financially compensated and the students simply kill time during the internship and come back without learning anything |

### 4.5 The suggestions for improvement of internship at TerSU

1. Elaboration of the system of payment for employee-mentors from the enterprise to motivate the private companies
2. To give the students to choose the internship places and internship time
3. Creation of a department or sub-department with enough staff that is only responsible for internship matters inland and abroad
4. Signing contracts with major companies and enterprises in the region for internships
5. Acceptance of the possibility of staying abroad as a compulsory internship, if these correspond to the internship program or the future profession of the graduates.
6. To organize an alumni network office to find more internship places

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