2025 / ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

# SDG 4 | Quality Education

*Khazar University · Baku, Azerbaijan*

**REPORTING PERIOD JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025**

## Institutional Approach

Khazar University supports inclusive, high-quality education not only through formal degree programmes but also through educational research, teacher preparation, public learning resources, professional development and community outreach. The University's 2025 activities connected its teaching expertise with school teachers, research professionals, other universities, schools and youth services. Standing institutional policies on open access and non-discrimination provide a framework for these activities.

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|---|---|---|
| **Nearly 30**<br>Teachers joined the Teacher development programme in January | **8 azerbaijani universities**<br>Participated in DIRNA network training | **4 main activities**<br>Documented education outreach beyond campus |

## 4.1 Research on early years and lifelong learning education

In 2025, Khazar University continued to advance educational research through international scientific collaboration and interdisciplinary scholarship. University-affiliated researchers contributed to **14 final-status Scopus-indexed research articles classified under SDG 4 (Quality Education)**, addressing educational innovation, digital learning, inclusive education, teaching effectiveness, student development, and educational well-being. These research contributions reflect the University's engagement with contemporary challenges in improving educational quality, accessibility, and learning experiences across diverse educational settings.

**Digital transformation and technology-enhanced learning** represented a significant area of research. Imran et al. (2025) examined teachers' experiences with digital learning following the COVID-19 pandemic, exploring how educational technologies have influenced teaching practices and professional adaptation. Khatami et al. (2025) investigated mindfulness and student engagement in online English language learning, contributing to research on learners' psychological and educational experiences in digital environments. In another international collaborative study, Bashir et al. (2025), including a Khazar University-affiliated researcher, examined the influence of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and multimodal pedagogy on learner motivation and willingness to communicate in English. Together, these studies contribute knowledge relevant to more engaging and responsive digital learning environments.

**Inclusive education, critical thinking, and student learning** also featured prominently in the University's research activities. Karadag et al. (2025) investigated the potential of virtual reality technologies to support motor skills development among children with special educational needs, drawing on expert perspectives from five countries. Shaber et al. (2025) explored the relationship between critical thinking and creativity among university students, while Gharib et al. (2025) applied mathematical modelling to examine educational outcomes and pandemic-related challenges in secondary and high school mathematics education. Dogar et al. (2025) further contributed to literacy research through an investigation of oral reading fluency among learners of English as a second language.

Research addressing **teacher effectiveness and professional well-being** provided additional insights into educational quality. Dilekçi et al. (2025) examined the relationship between teachers' positive instructional emotions, work engagement, and job performance. Mirzapour et al. (2025) explored teachers' well-being in digital educational environments, considering the opportunities and challenges associated with technology-supported teaching. These studies highlight the importance of educators' professional experiences and well-being in supporting effective teaching practices.

Alongside internationally indexed research, Khazar University contributed to scholarship addressing **national educational development and teaching methodology**. Sevinj Qambarova's 2025 study, *Organization and Characteristics of Essay Writing*, published in *Azerbaijani Language and Literature Teaching* (Volume 71, Issue 2), examined the organisation of essay-writing activities and their relevance to developing schoolchildren's written expression, critical thinking, and creativity. Another study, co-authored by Telman Nusratoglu of Khazar University and Mehdi Ganjali of Marmara University, was published in *Milli Eğitim* (Issue 245, 2025). Drawing on Azerbaijani and Turkish archival sources, the article examined the historical development of teacher education in Azerbaijan, with particular attention to the educational contributions of Muallim Cevdet in early twentieth-century Baku.

Together, these publications demonstrate Khazar University's contribution to educational research at both national and international levels. By addressing digital transformation, inclusive teaching practices, student competencies, teacher development, and the historical foundations of education, the University contributes scientific knowledge relevant to improving educational quality and supporting lifelong learning.

**Selected Research Publications (2025)**

**Scopus-indexed research**

1. **Imran, M., Almusharraf, N., & Abbasova, M. Y. (2025).** *Digital learning transformation: A study of teachers' post-Covid-19 experiences.* Social Sciences & Humanities Open. DOI
2. **Karadag, E., et al. (2025).** *Exploring the potential of virtual reality for motor skills training in children with special educational needs: Perspectives from experts from five countries.* Education and Information Technologies. DOI
3. **Shaber, N., Shah, S. K., Imran, M., & Almusharraf, N. (2025).** *Exploring the Relationship Between Critical Thinking and Creativity in University Students: Gender Differences and the Assessment of Skills.* Education Sciences. DOI
4. **Gharib, S. I., Kaymakamzade, B., Karahan, A., & Tezer, M. (2025).** *Mathematical Modeling Approach to Assessing Math Education Levels in Secondary and High Schools: Pandemic Impact and Post-Pandemic Projections.* Systems. DOI
5. **Khatami, M., et al. (2025).** *Exploring Bangladeshi English as a foreign language learners' mindfulness and engagement in the online learning context.* Acta Psychologica. DOI
6. **Dilekçi, Ü., et al. (2025).** *The association between teachers' positive instructional emotions and job performance: Work engagement as a mediator.* Acta Psychologica. DOI
7. **Dogar, M. F., Shah, S. K., Imran, M., & Almusharraf, N. (2025).** *Evaluating oral reading fluency in English as a Second Language: A quantitative analysis.* Reading & Writing. DOI
8. **Mirzapour, F., Şengül, M., & Curle, S. (2025).** *The tone of teachers' melody and wellbeing in digital space.* Frontiers in Education. DOI

**Additional educational research**

9. **Bashir, A., Aziz, A., Imran, M., & Almusharraf, N. (2025).** *Effect of CALL-based multimodal pedagogy on learner motivation and willingness to communicate in English: A study from university students' perspective.* Contemporary Educational Technology, 17(2), ep568. DOI
10. **Qambarova, S. (2025).** *Organization and Characteristics of Essay Writing.* Azerbaijani Language and Literature Teaching, 71(2). University Publication News
11. **Nusratoglu, T., & Ganjali, M. (2025).** *An Ottoman in Baku: Muallim Cevdet's Activities in the Society for the Spread of Education and His Role in Azerbaijan's Educational Life.* Milli Eğitim, Issue 245. Publication

1. **Khatami, M., et al. (2025).** *Exploring Bangladeshi English as a foreign language learners' mindfulness and engagement in the online learning context.* Acta Psychologica. DOI
2. **Dilekçi, Ü., et al. (2025).** *The association between teachers' positive instructional emotions and job performance: Work engagement as a mediator.* Acta Psychologica. DOI
3. **Dogar, M. F., Shah, S. K., Imran, M., & Almusharraf, N. (2025).** *Evaluating oral reading fluency in English as a Second Language: A quantitative analysis.* Reading & Writing. DOI
4. **Mirzapour, F., Şengül, M., & Curle, S. (2025).** *The tone of teachers' melody and wellbeing in digital space.* Frontiers in Education. DOI



## 4.2 Proportion of graduates with teaching qualification

Khazar offers degree pathways for the teaching profession, including the Elementary School Teaching bachelor's major. In 2025 the Department of English Language and Literature delivered Pre-Service Teacher Training (27–28 January) with Michael Collins, covering classroom management, teacher identity, lesson planning, classroom discussion and vocabulary instruction. The session was designed for Khazar's English Language Teaching students and is described here as part of teacher preparation, not an unrestricted public course.

The existence of teaching programmes and delivered training demonstrates educational provision; the relevant annual graduate statistic is a distinct measure requiring verified primary-school teaching qualifications and the overall number of 2025 graduates.

## 4.3 Lifelong learning measures

Khazar's Open Access webpage describes educational resources and designated learning facilities available free of charge to non-enrolled learners, independent researchers and visitors. At the Neftchilar Library and Information Center, the University identifies study areas, books, computers and headphones; other libraries describe reference materials, computers or Wi-Fi. The webpage also lists libraries associated with the Downtown and Buzovna locations and the Dunya Education Complex. Access conditions may differ by branch.

Digital access is supported by the Open Access Policy (revised September 2024), which encourages institutional archiving of scholarship where permitted by copyright. The University signposts its research repository and external open educational collections, including OAPEN, the Open Textbook Library and the World Bank Open Knowledge Repository. These links expand routes to learning; they should not be interpreted as a claim that all licensed digital collections, printed books or certificate courses are freely available to everyone.

The University advertised a range of educational events welcoming interested members of the public in 2025, including World Civil Defense Day (28 February), Duolingo versus TOEFL/IELTS (14 March), a neuroscience lecture series (3 December) and a rabies research seminar (19 December). Invitations provide evidence of intended public access, while delivery and actual external attendance require separate event records.

A completed Business and Science Forum on 27 February brought together researchers, entrepreneurs, business representatives and medical specialists. Although external attendance is documented, the announcement does not establish unrestricted admission. In a school setting, a 10 March session on AI, sustainability and green skills was publicly advertised at Dunya School; this invitation is distinguished from an on-campus event report.



Publicly accessible online learning opportunities also included a history and international relations seminar (20 February), research-oriented university models (28 May), curriculum and student agency (30 July), written feedback in second-language writing (15 December), and reservoir simulation methods (17 December). Unlike an invitation alone, a subsequent news report confirms delivery of the 12 December AI-in-Education seminar. These online events are identified separately from on-campus educational events.

On 21–22 January 2025, the University delivered Teacher Professional Development led by English Language Fellow Michael Collins. Its public announcement invited educators from beyond the University. Nearly 30 teachers attended, exploring




classroom management, differentiated instruction, classroom dialogue, constructive feedback, vocabulary teaching and supplementary learning materials. Two-day participants received certificates endorsed by the U.S. Embassy in Azerbaijan.

A second substantive two-day practical programme, Analysis of Molecular Marker Data: Genetic Diversity and Population Structure (22–23 December), was delivered by Professor Abolghasem Mohammadi of the University of Tabriz. The course combined conceptual teaching with hands-on demonstrations using Cervus, MEGA, GenAlEx and STRUCTURE. Attendance included researchers and students from other higher education institutions and specialised scientific institutes; the invitation welcomed interested participants.



Additional completed capacity-building included the Erasmus+ DIRNA network's inclusive-education and copyright/plagiarism training on 27 February, which engaged staff from eight Azerbaijani universities. The University also delivered a Web of Science training session on 16 April, while the Department of English Language and Literature records a September workshop on challenges in ESL/EFL teaching attended by more than 25 teachers. Some courses served staff or project-partner audiences; these are not automatically equivalent to unrestricted public enrolment.




In 2025, Khazar educators shared university expertise in four documented educational sessions outside its campuses, addressing learning strategies and the well-being of children and young people. These activities took place in schools and a youth centre, in some cases through events organised by partner institutions.

29 April — Kaspi Lyceum: Psychology Center Director Malak Karimova advised pupils on effective study techniques, time management and managing exam anxiety. Lecturer Ulvi Babasoy explained university study and educational opportunities. The educational guidance complemented the information provided to prospective students.



7 October — Baku Youth Center: Psychology Department specialist Mirsadiq Mukhtarov contributed to an early-marriage awareness seminar organised by IPSYSO Azerbaijan, addressing psychological, physiological and social consequences. The exchange included participants' questions and discussion.



16 December — Secondary School No. 138: At an event organised by the Baku City Main Police Department's preventive work unit, Mukhtarov explained substance-dependency risks, psychological impacts and prevention. Pupils, teachers and partner professionals participated.

24 December — Secondary School No. 42: At a separate school seminar organised by the police preventive work unit, Mukhtarov discussed substance-dependency prevention, family responsibilities and the educational environment with pupils and teachers.

Khazar's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was revised in January 2025 and applies to students, employees and visitors. It prohibits discrimination based on race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, socio-economic circumstances and nationality or citizenship status. The policy also addresses accessible learning materials, facilities, support services, and public events open to the wider community wherever possible.




Together with the Open Access Policy, these commitments provide an institutional basis for participation beyond enrolled students. The policies set expectations; actual accessibility arrangements and the operation of particular facilities or events depend on delivery and local conditions.

## 4.4 Proportion of first-generation students

A commitment to widening participation is reflected in the University's inclusive access and community-learning activities. First-generation participation is a specific enrolment measure distinct from scholarship availability or general first-time university entry. This report describes the policy framework without presenting an unverified 2025 first-generation enrolment percentage.

### Selected Activities in 2025

| 2025 | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|
| 21–22 Jan | Teacher Professional Development |
| 22 Jan | DIRNA AI for education/research webinar |
| 27–28 Jan | Pre-service teacher-training session |
| 27 Feb | DIRNA inclusive learning and research-integrity |
| 27 Feb | Business and Science Forum |
| 14 Mar | Language testing seminar |
| 16 Apr | Web of Science training |
| 29 Apr | Kaspi Lyceum study skills and exam-anxiety outreach |
| 28 May | Research-oriented university models webinar |
| 30 Jul | Curriculum and student agency webinar |
| 11 Sep | English-teaching challenges workshop |
| 7 Oct | Baku Youth Center early-marriage awareness |
| 25 Nov | Corpus linguistics and AI research seminar |
| 3 Dec | Neuroscience lecture series |

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| **12 Dec** | AI in Education: Responsible Use |
| **16 Dec** | School No. 138 prevention seminar |
| **22–23 Dec** | Molecular-marker analytical training |
| **24 Dec** | School No. 42 prevention seminar |

## 2025 Overview

During 2025, Khazar University combined teacher education, practical professional development, public-facing scholarly opportunities, cross-university training and community learning. The strongest documented results include completed multi-day training, classroom-focused teacher development and four separate educational contributions beyond campus. The University's access and inclusion policies support this engagement as part of a continuing institutional commitment to quality education.