



International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

### **Bachelor of Arts in Translation**

College of Humanities and Sciences

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**March 2023**

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High Council for evaluation of research and higher education

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International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION REPORT

### **Bachelor of Arts in Translation**

College of Humanities and Sciences

Prince Sultan University

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**January 2023**

The Prince Sultan University has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of its Bachelor in Translation program. The evaluation is based on the “External Evaluation Standards” of foreign study programs, adopted by the Hcéres Board on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. These standards are available on the Hcéres website ([hceres.fr](http://hceres.fr)).

On behalf of the experts committee<sup>2</sup> :

Annick Rivens-Mompéan, President of the committee

For the Hcéres<sup>1</sup> :

Thierry Coulhon, President

In accordance with the decree n°2021-1536, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021,

<sup>1</sup> The evaluation reports "sont signés par le Président du comité". (Article 13) — “are signed by the President of the committee”(article 13).

<sup>2</sup>The President of Hcéres "contresigne les rapports d'évaluation établis par les comités d'experts" (Article 8, alinéa 8) — “countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees” (article 8, alinea 8).

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## I. STUDY PROGRAM IDENTITY SHEET

- **University/institution:** Prince Sultan University
- **Component, faculty or department concerned:** College of Humanities and Sciences, Department of Linguistics and Translation
- **Program's title:** Bachelor of Arts in Translation

- **Year of creation and context:**

Since its creation in 1998, as the first non-profit private college in Saudi Arabia, PSU has grown significantly.

Today, the University is composed of 6 colleges: College of Law, College of Humanities and Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Business Administration, College of Computer and Information Sciences, College of Architecture and Design.

For academic year 2021-2022, 7495 students were enrolled at PSU: 3463 male students and 4032 female students.

More specifically, the Bachelor of Translation was created in Fall 2011. From its beginning, the program distinguished itself in two ways. Firstly, it was only open to female students. On the other hand, it was a bilingual program. The choice to open the Bachelor to female students "reflected the new orientation of granting women a major role in all the State affairs". Indeed, there was a need to educate female students to enter the job market in various sectors.

- **Site(s) where the program is taught (Town and campus):**

The campus is located in Riyadh. As in other universities in the Kingdom, the campus is divided into two parts, one for male students and the other for female students. The Translation program is taught only on the women's campus.

### PROGRAM DIRECTOR

- **Surname, First name:** El Dakhs, Dina
- **Profession and grade:** Associate Professor / Chair of the department
- **Main subject taught:** Linguistics.

### METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

- **Methodology and Agency:** The University has been fully licensed by the Ministry of Education since 1998 and has achieved accreditation twice from the local accrediting body: The National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA).  
In 2016, the Bachelor program was assessed by NCAAA.
- **Results:** The Bachelor received its full accreditation by NCAAA for 7 years (2016-2023).

### HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAM

- **Human resources**

The faculty members dedicated exclusively to the BA in Translation is composed as follows:

Full professors	Associate professors	Lecturers
1	4	5

All of them are full-timers. Most faculty members are also engaged in research and professional translation activities. The program is supported by an administrative assistant.

– **Material resources**

A variety of material resources is available to both students and staff members.

1. The **IT Center** provides computer facilities, employs various platforms, and provides a wide range of software and applications, as well as programming and system support to staff, lecturers, and PSU departments.
2. The **Translation and Authoring Center (TAC)** is a specialized translation center that caters to the translation and language solutions of PSU and provides translation and editing services to local and regional entities.
3. The **E-Learning Center (ELC)** offers various E-learning platforms and tools for teaching and learning purposes, a PSU room/lab booking system. All classrooms are provided with either interactive boards or traditional boards and projectors and are equipped with PCs for the instructors. The Translation Program has a specialized interpreting lab to train students on different forms of interpretation (e.g., consecutive, simultaneous, and sight). The facilities also allow monitoring and assessing students' learning.
4. An additional available resource is the **Central Library** that offers a variety of services and facilities. Among the most important services are the new arrivals display, access to the library catalog and materials using a QR code, access to books on Kindle, the use of E-dictionaries, and the provision of plagiarism detection services. The library also provides referencing and citation services and several digital tools. Additionally, the Digital Library allows access to databases on and off campus.
5. The **Research and Initiatives Center (RIC)** documents the research output of all the university programs. The RIC's website (<https://ric.psu.edu.sa/>) contains several dashboards that monitor the faculty members' publications, conference participation, internal and external grants, research labs, collaborations at the national and international levels, internal and external awards, etc.

## STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

The program is open for female high school graduates, Saudi or non-Saudi.

Students apply for the preparatory year program<sup>1</sup> (PYP) and only after passing the PYP can they join their academic major, including Translation. Students can get exempted from the English language courses at the PYP stage if they score 5.5 on IELTS or its equivalent score on TOEFL or an English Proficiency Test that the Saudi National Center for Assessment administers.

According to the figures presented in the Annual Program Report (2020-2021), the number of new enrollments seems to be decreasing, from 14 initial enrollments in 2017-2018 to 10 in 2020-2021. Numbers for 2021-2022 have been provided after the visit<sup>2</sup> and show a slight increase (13 new students enrolled) that stabilizes the program. As a general trend, the overall number of students and new enrollments seems to be decreasing due to a series of factors analyzed in the various reports provided by the institution, like the suppression of government scholarships and the choice of more financially rewarding career paths.

Evolution of enrolled and graduated students in the program			
	New students enrolled	Total number of students enrolled	Students graduated
2017-2018	14	39	27
2018-2019	11	30	28
2019-2020	11	18	11
2020-2021	10	26	10

<sup>1</sup> The preparatory year program (PYP) is a one-year program for students preparing for a full multi-year degree curriculum at a university. It offers a bridge between high school and university-level studies.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Program Report (2021-2022)

## II. VISIT DESCRIPTION

### COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

- Dr. Annick Rivens Mompean, Chair of the panel - Full professor of English didactics - University of Lille, France
- Dr. Marie-Hélène Côté - Full professor of Linguistics - University of Lausanne, Switzerland
- Dr. Antonia Cristinoi - Full professor of Translation Studies – ESIT, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, France
- Ms. Elissa Lattouf - PhD student in Translation Studies - Inalco/ISIT, Paris, France.

Hcéres was represented by Ms. Michelle Houppé, Head of project, Europe and International Department.

### VISIT DESCRIPTION

– **Date of the visit:**

The visit took place from Tuesday October 25 to Thursday October 27, 2022. The committee carried out the visit on site.

– **Summary of the proceedings:**

Before the visit took place, the report of the exploratory mission (exploratory visit in March 28, 2022), the self-assessment report and many appendices had been received by the experts. The self-evaluation report was sent according to the agreed schedule. It was very clear and supplemented by numerous documents in the appendix.

A preparatory meeting between the Hcéres Head of project, the Director of the Europe and International Department and the panel of experts was held in Paris (October 6, 2022).

The on-site visit took place over two days, according to a schedule agreed between PSU and the experts' panel.

Once written by the panel chair, the report was submitted to all panel members for review.

– **Organization of the visit:**

**Day 1: Tuesday October 25, 2022**

Time	Session	Audience
9:00 - 9:30	Opening session with top management: <i>Presentation of PSU University challenges</i>	Dr. Ahmad Yamani, PSU President Dr. Mohammad Aljibreen, Vice President, Academic Affairs Dr. Heba Khoshaim, Vice President, Campus for Women Dr. Nasser Alsadoun, Assistant to the Vice President, Administrative and Financial Affairs



**Day 2: Wednesday October 26, 2022**

Time	Session	Audience
9:30-10:30	Presentation of the Bachelor & Discussion	Dean of College, study program director and his/her team 1. Prof. Mahmoud Almahmoud, Dean, College of H&S 2. Dr. Alia Mitchell, Vice Dean, College of H&S 3. Dr. Dina El-Dakhs, Chair, Linguistics & Translation Depart. 4. Dr. Shaista Rashid, Assistant to the Chair 5. Dr. Nada AlMazrooa, Accreditation Team Leader
11:00 - 12:00	Bachelor Faculty members	Representative panel of professors from the program 1. Prof. Hadeer Aboelnagah, Professor, Full time, Literature & Translation, Egyptian 2. Dr. Orchida Fayez, Assistant Professor, Full time, Literature, Egyptian 3. Dr. Nada Almazrooa, Assistant Professor, Full time, Translation, Saudi 4. Dr. Mona Salem, Assistant Professor, Full time, Linguistics and Translation, Egyptian 5. Dr. Faten AlArjani, Assistant Professor, Full time, Applied Linguistics, Saudi 6. Ms. Asma AlOtaibi, Lecturer, Full time, Translation, Saudi 7. Ms. Rawan Shaaban, Lecturer, Full time, Foreign Language Education, Saudi
12:00-2:00pm	Lunch & Campus Tour	
2:00-3:00 pm	Bachelor Students	Meeting with a representative panel of students from the program under evaluation in terms of gender, nationality, year of studies, learning arrangement, etc. 1. Judy Alotaibi-Sophomore-Palestinian 2. Taif Mohammed-Senior-Sudanese 3. Habiba Bin Hethlien-Senior-Saudi 4. Bajdaa Bin Homaid-Senior-Saudi 5. Rawah Abdel samed-Senior-Saudi 6. Samiha Koukom-Senior-Saudi 7. Afnan Alotaibi-Junior-Saudi
5:00-6:30 pm	Debriefing	

**Day 3: Thursday October 27, 2022**

Time	Session	Audience
9:00 - 10:00	Quality assurance	Quality Assurance Directors & Chairs of Program Quality Assurance Committees 1. Mr. Reda Aloufi, Director of Quality Assurance Center – Male Campus 2. Ms. Roohi Jan, Director of Quality Assurance Center – CW 3. Dr. Alia Mitchell, Chair, CHS Quality Assurance Committee 4. Ms. Suhad Subhi, Co-Chair, CHS Quality Assurance Committee 5. Dr. Hala Ismail, Chair, LTD Quality Assurance Committee 6. Dr. Nada Almazrooa, Member, LTD Quality Assurance Committee 7. Prof. Hadeer Aboelnagah, Member, LTD Quality Assurance Committee
10:00-11:00	Alumni & Employers of the 2 Bachelor programs	Representing different sectors of activity (employment or internships) 1. Reema Almadhon (TR), Creative Marketing, content manager 2. Maale Almazroa (TR), Banking, Senior Specialist 3. Jeeda Almejaish (AL), Theater & Performing Arts Commission/Ministry of Culture, Higher Education Vocational Programs Assistant Specialist 4. Lubna Al-Labboudy (AL), Hwadi Ltd Creative Copywriter 5. Hadia Hadid (AL), Scalars Learning and Development Associate 6. Abdulaziz Aldossary (employer), Ministry of Tourism 7. Atheer Alsuwailem (employer), Advertising, Zan agency
11:00-13:00	Preparation of the closing session	
2:00 - 3:00 pm	Closing session	Dean or Study program director only Prof. Mahmoud Almahmoud, Dean, CHS

The visit included several interviews with the actors involved (PSU President, Dean of College, quality assurance directors, faculty members, students, alumni and employers) and a tour of the campus with the presentation of the facilities (library, research labs, classrooms and equipment, Translation center).

– **Cooperation of study program and institution to be accredited**

The College of Humanities and Sciences at PSU, supported by the Evaluation and Academic Accreditation Center (EAAC), has been collaborative throughout the process.

During the discussions, all the participants were very cooperative and eager to answer the questions of the experts. The interviews provided the complementary information needed to assess all the aspects of the program. The panel of experts is absolutely satisfied that the conclusion reached is based on fair and full disclosure of all relevant information.

During the visit, the committee had a close look at PSU's campuses, especially the Women Campus where the evaluated program is offered. The committee also had the opportunity to tour the campus library as well as different computer laboratories and facilities at the university.

### III. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

#### 1 – PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

The Translation program at Prince Sultan University, which is a 133-credit undergraduate program offered over a 4-year span, is licensed by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. It was the first undergraduate program in Translation to obtain national accreditation from the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA) in 2016. The program matches the Saudi National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the Saudi Standard Classification of Educational Levels and Specializations. The program is offered under the Linguistics and Translation Department (LTD); it is developed in a coherent and complementary manner to the Applied Linguistics program, the two sharing a number of courses, especially in linguistics. PSU is the only private university in Riyadh to offer an undergraduate program in Translation; the other translation programs in Riyadh are offered at public universities. The program's objectives aim at enabling students to understand the varied translation approaches and their professional applications in the translation of texts in different fields. Additionally, it develops their communication skills, critical thinking and analytical skills, research and professional development skills.

Since the demand for translators and interpreters is now growing at a faster pace in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the large numbers of incoming expatriates, the program aims at providing the community with graduates apt to bridge the divide between languages and cultures. Students are trained in English and Arabic and translation methodology for various types of texts, both written and oral. Their translation competence is developed by refining their language proficiency and building up the knowledge and skills needed for interlingual communication. Students' career readiness is also an important component of the Translation program. Employability skills, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, are integrated into the program's learning outcomes and thus the courses. Additionally, students enroll in Cooperative Education for seven months before graduation, where they serve as interns in several institutions relevant to their program and receive supervision from these institutions and the program supervisors. The program courses prepare students for their Cooperative Program (Co-Op) experience, which, in turn, prepares them for a life-long career.

#### 2 - PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM'S SELF-EVALUATION APPROACH

The program's self-evaluation approach is based on Hcéres' evaluation guidelines. The four fields present in Hcéres guidelines are thoroughly tackled, and compliance with each standard is showcased. The self-evaluation report submitted by the university also includes documented evidence for each evaluated standard. A SWOT analysis is also provided, tackling what the university sees as strengths and weaknesses in its Translation program. The evidence is completed by precise references to the university website and additional data are also provided by the annual report.

The documents provided are in line with the university's self-evaluation approach and based on its continuous evaluation and reporting policies. The self-evaluation process is monitored by the department's Curriculum Review Committee and the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee alongside the College Quality Committee and PSU's Deanship of Quality Assurance and Development and PSU's Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee.

### IV. EVALUATION REPORT

#### 1 - TRAINING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION

The Translation program is in line with the institution's missions: both the University and the program outcomes are determined according to nationally approved standards and categories of knowledge, skills and values. In fact, the university values are at the core of its programs: Proactive, Service, Up-beat. PSU aims at maintaining academic and personal integrity, as well as effectively managing operations. Lifelong learning is also encouraged among students, faculty and staff as well as the respect for individuals in the community. Aiming also at high-quality services and efficiency, positive interpersonal relationships among members are encouraged. The academic environment at PSU targets the nurture of excellence in learning, teaching and research, underlined by the importance of personal development and personal growth. PSU aims to provide the Middle East region with quality education through the integration of modern technology, pedagogy, and

human values for the advancement of scientific research, productivity, and leadership towards a more meaningful role in society.

The Translation program is also in line with the approaches followed in the Kingdom, where most public universities offer translation programs that include interpretation courses. PSU is the only private university in Riyadh to offer an undergraduate program in translation; the other translation programs are offered at public universities such as King Saud University, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, and Imam Mohammad Bin Saud Islamic University.

Additionally, the program is developed in a coherent and complementary manner to the Applied Linguistics program, as some of the courses are shared by the two programs. Academic partnerships are formalized through memoranda of understanding and agreement with different institutions, such as Durham University, with which PSU organizes different programs, forums and symposiums.

Although the program is open to international students, non-Arabic speakers do not apply because Arabic is an active language that students translate both from and into. However, the university offers Arabic courses for beginners, for students in other branches. The situation is partly a consequence of the national policy rules which did not allow universities to enroll foreign students since student visa did not exist until now. The newly introduced long-term student visa for university studies (in force since October 2022) may increase the number of international students who choose to come to Saudi Arabia to study at PSU. International student exchanges should be promoted and developed since studying abroad and having contact with different cultures and languages is essential for translation and interpreting.

Concerning research, all faculty members are encouraged to conduct research, whose results are to be applied in the classroom. Depending on the nature of the research, there are different ways to feed back the results into the university system, such as peer training for example. It is important to note that the department gives special attention to research as it accounts for 20% of its PhD holders' annual evaluations, and incentives are also provided to encourage faculty members in this area. The Translation program also makes sure students are developing research skills through their courses, honing their critical thinking, learning how to reference, quote and use citations, and being aware of reliability issues throughout the research. The translation and interpretation laboratory was of particular interest for the Translation program evaluation. During the visit to this laboratory, the staff made a quick demonstration of the different tools used for the Translation program, and there were also exchanges concerning the tools used specifically for interpretation courses. This particular laboratory can be considered as an added value to the program, especially since it allows students to keep up with the technologies in this field.

As for the links with the socio-economic world, most alumni stated that they got hired because they met the job market requirements, which was also confirmed by employers. A mandatory 7-month Cooperative Program also allows students to get hands-on experience in the market. During this Co-Op, students are closely followed by an academic advisor and a company advisor and are then requested to submit a report that they defend as their senior project. The ties between the program and the companies and institutions taking in Co-Op students are maintained and often lead to long-term cooperation actions.

**In conclusion, the Translation program is developed in line with the University's missions, visions and values. Students are well-prepared to meet the market demands and teaching staff members are encouraged to conduct research. Students are also introduced to research techniques in addition to the development of their skills in the translation and interpretation field. The Co-Op undertaken by the students guarantees ties with the socio-economic world, exposing future translators and interpreters to the real world and the market.**

## 2 – PEDAGOGICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

The BA in Translation is a four-year program including a total number of 133 credit hours, with the following components:

- University requirements,
- College requirements,
- Department requirements,
- program requirements,
- free electives and program electives
- a Co-Op program.

Curricular activities are supplemented with co-curricular activities linked to assignments and classes and extra-curricular activities that students are encouraged to engage in, in order to develop a number of skills that prove

to be very appreciated by employers, as interviews have shown. The program complies with the institutional principle of pedagogical alignment and has a program specifications form which outlines the program's learning outcomes (PLO) in addition to a description of the curriculum, student admission and support, teaching and administrative staff, learning resources, program management, and program quality assurance. A specification form is available for every course and allows the course instructor to prepare the syllabus, which informs the students of the course description, learning outcomes, teaching methods, educational resources, and assessment methods.

The pedagogical methods used in class are varied and there is a true concern with pedagogical relevance and positive feedback within the department. Students are constantly encouraged to give feedback on their courses either formally (specific forms) or informally. During the interviews, they insisted on the fact that their comments were always taken into account.

At the end of every course, the course instructor completes a course report that includes an evaluation and analysis of the achievement of the learning objectives and further details about the delivery of the course in terms of content, teaching methods, assessment methods, and educational resources. The course report also allows room for the instructor to reflect on the course as a whole and make recommendations for improvement. Based on feedback in all course reports, the program director prepares the annual program report to analyze and assess the performance of the program as a whole, including all courses.

The structure of the program allows students to progress at their own pace while building a gradual specialization in the field of translation and interpreting through courses that are constantly renewed in accordance with the evolution of the market.

One of the most relevant aspects in ensuring the pedagogical relevance of the course choice and progression is the presence of an appointed advisor whose role is to assist students in course registration, guide them in developing and clarifying their academic goals, and provide them with information and help in solving their potential problems. Students can also get additional support when needed by registering at the Tutoring Center. In terms of international exchanges, PSU's International Affairs Office provides students with opportunities for outgoing mobility and manages the necessary equalization with the different credit systems, including the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). PSU has strong connections with several international partners, particularly academic universities, which may provide a variety of international collaboration opportunities, such as holding joint international conferences and arranging student exchange programs. Pedagogical international exchanges take place via online events and very few students take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad for a semester.

The Translation program prepares students to meet the needs of the socioeconomic sector through a variety of translation and interpretation courses: Public Service Interpreting, Translation for Office Communication, Business and Media Translation, Consecutive Interpreting, and Simultaneous Interpreting. In addition to these, students receive training on additional skills that are relevant to the job market through various courses: Communication Skills, Computer Applications in Translation, and Editing and Publishing. Translation and interpreting is bidirectional, which is in accordance with market requirements. Despite the variety of courses proposed, it should be noted that the number of Program specific courses does not allow students to have enough practice both for translation and interpreting strictly within curricular hours. In order to develop translation and interpreting skills in various fields and settings (which would improve immediate efficiency on the work market), the curriculum should include more translation and interpreting courses, also introduced earlier in the training program.

More interpreting and translation practice opportunities should also be added to the curriculum (real projects, advanced levels for existing courses) so as to offer equal training opportunities for all students (not only for those involved in extracurricular activities).

Students' readiness to engage in the socioeconomic sector is enhanced through co-curricular and extracurricular activities and especially through the mandatory seven-month Co-Op. Furthermore, as an extra-curricular activity, outstanding students can join the Fullbridge program, which is a three-week Bootcamp to enhance their career readiness. The program maintains strong links with several industrial partners and with the alumni and encourages their input to add value to the program.

**To sum up, the Translation program is built in coherence with the competencies and skills required for students to successfully integrate the job market or various graduate programs that complete their training. Students are advised and accompanied throughout their university training, both pedagogically and personally, as interviews and presentations of pedagogical practices have shown. The program has developed quality enhancement procedures that allow constant monitoring and thus adaptability of the learning process.**

**However, an insufficient number of translation courses as well as mandatory translation and interpreting practice are included in the study plan. The curriculum could be enriched with more practice opportunities presently provided by a large range of extracurricular activities designed to develop an array of complementary skills that increase employability rates. There is also a clear desire to develop an international direction and open to an international audience that needs further encouragement and a clearly defined strategy.**

### 3 – ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

The Translation program monitors its attractiveness by measuring the evolution of the enrolment rates, which have been diminishing due to the cancellation of scholarships provided by the Ministry of Education and to the COVID period, with a visible recovery rate in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. It is also worth noting that the attractiveness of the program depends on the presence of public programs on the same market, with definitely lower tuition fees.

The program has developed a number of strategies to attract the relevant audience (women interested in studying languages, generally with a good level of English), listed in the Self-Evaluation Report and also discussed during the interviews:

- A website including relevant information about the program vision, mission, learning outcomes, the structure of the program, the study plan, course descriptions, and relevant career options (<https://www.psu.edu.sa/en/CHS/acd-eng>);
- Recordings of the events organized by the department for the faculty members, students and the public;
- Program news regularly posted on Twitter (including competitions won by students and certificates awarded);
- New brochures and take-away gifts for potential applicants;
- Large banners at the time of admission on the outside walls of the university to alert high-school students to apply;
- Recent competition for high-school students to introduce them to the importance of language studies;
- Events in collaboration with the Cooperative Education Unit and Alumni Coordinators to showcase the success of the Translation graduates (the series "Meet our Inspiring Graduates");
- Interviews with alumni and existing students who share their satisfaction with the program;
- 50% scholarships to excellent Translation applicants;
- Curriculum revision to ensure its compatibility with the job market.

The program has also developed a strategy for closely monitoring student success, in line with the institutional quality measures. The success rates in all courses are analysed in the Annual Program Report taking into account the number of registered students and the rates of completion, failure, withdrawal, and grade inflation/deflation. A cohort analysis of the graduating batch is also included in the annual program report. All the figures are analyzed to examine reasons for variation in performance and to report on the action(s) taken or to suggest actions to be taken to enhance student success. Another element taken into account is the impact of the curriculum on students' success. Students' performance in every course is reported and analyzed in the course report, completed at the end of every semester by the course instructor. In this report, the instructor offers an interpretation of the students' grades and proposes suggestions to improve the course. The interviews with the students have shown that this is a really effective measure and that their progress is closely monitored and action taken if needed (such as tutoring, for example). It is worth noting the teacher/student ratio, considerably lower than in public programs, makes this process possible.

The program analyzes its graduates' integration into the job market and/or further studies through surveys administered by PSU's Center for Statistics and Information (CSI). The employability rate is defined as the rate graduates get employed and/or enroll in post-graduate studies within six months of graduation and is monitored and reported in the Annual Program Report. Figures show that employability rates vary between 66% and 85%. In addition to this quantitative approach, the program attempts to get a more detailed account of its graduates' experience by inviting them to participate in interviews published in the University newsletter and/or share their success stories through talks that are open to the public. Indeed, the program maintains contact with employers and companies training Co-Op students and interviews with employers have shown that PSU translation students are an asset on the job market.

**To sum up, the program closely monitors both attractiveness and student success, and employability through specific surveys and individual monitoring. The process is facilitated by a very favorable student/teacher ratio that is a real asset for the program. Close monitoring makes it easier to adopt rapid measures to rectify problematic situations: demand for more scholarships in the case of lower enrolment rates, curriculum adjustments in the case of lower success rates. The program leaders are aware and proactive on each of these topics.**



## 4 – ACADEMIC PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Linguistics and Translation Department is managed by a chairperson and an associate chairperson. They closely collaborate with four committees:

1. the Curriculum Review Committee,
2. the Marketing Committee,
3. the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee,
4. the Recruitment Committee.

A department council is also convened once a month to discuss new policies and to inform faculty members on changes taking place. The roles and responsibilities of the teaching staff are defined in the Faculty Governing Policies and Regulations Handbook. As for the staff members assuming administrative posts as well, their roles and responsibilities are defined on an institutional level in the PSU's Handbook of Organizational Structure; it is worth noting that five faculty members from the Linguistics and Translation Department hold administrative positions. Students and stakeholders can access PSU's staff online faculty profiles at any time.

Although the Translation program does not include any professional participants in the curriculum, this is made up for by the extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that include seminars and interventions from experts in the field. The program also benefits from a clearly defined recruitment policy to maintain a good student/teacher ratio and to provide the needed human resources, taking into account the number of existing faculty members as well as the number of students. The University also offers all kinds of facilities and resources, allowing staff and students to achieve the program's objectives: a rich library is available both on-campus and online, and different computer laboratories and centers can be accessed by students and staff.

As for the program evaluation process, it is clearly defined and considers the students' input as one of its most important factors. At the end of each semester, students are asked to complete a survey evaluating each of the courses they were enrolled in. The evaluation covers the instructor's performance, coursework, assessment methods, etc. Students and alumni did highlight this matter during the visit, stating that whenever they suggested an amendment or raised a problem, their voices were heard and a solution was proposed to meet their needs. The results of the surveys undertaken by students are analyzed by different managing parties in order to improve the final outcomes of the courses. These evaluations are also part of the faculty member's total evaluation score, and they account for 10%. A course exit survey is also put in place to assess the achievement of the course learning outcomes, and this serves as an indirect assessment measure in the program assessment plans.

The program also seeks input from other stakeholders such as employers and alumni who can help in understanding the market needs and adjusting the courses accordingly. External evaluation of the program is also regularly conducted by the Saudi Ministry of Education, and the recommendations provided by any evaluating institution are always taken into account. It is worth noting that the translation curriculum is undergoing a revision to set a study plan that incorporates the stakeholders' input.

As for PSU students' recruitment procedures, they are defined on the website of the Deanship of Admission and Registration: students apply for the preparatory year program (PYP), and only after passing the PYP they can join their academic major, including Translation. Students who are admitted to PSU often explore options for scholarships available for academically excellent as well as financially struggling students.

The program's evaluation process supports continuous improvement. The acquired knowledge and skills in all courses are evaluated in accordance with the Student Assessment Policy.

The assessment plan is part of the course specifications form, which is a form that is revised, monitored, and approved by the Curriculum Review Committee. Thus changes to the content of the course specifications form go through a formalized process. The course instructor includes these details in the course syllabus available through Moodle.

The PSU policy requires all of its community to adhere to academic honesty, maintain the highest levels of academic integrity and report any incidents of academic dishonesty or violations of the policy. A plagiarism detection software, Turnitin, is also included in Moodle and helps raise students' awareness of plagiarism by allowing them to run similarity checks and see which parts of their work display a high similarity index with other texts. Support is available for students at the Writing and Tutoring Center (WTC) if needed.

To sum up, PSU is highly invested in its students and staff, always looking to provide them with the right sets of skills. As such, a strong evaluation and improvement process is put in place. Different university bodies are involved in the program management and its continuous evaluation. There are also standards that guide the curricula development and review, but also the implementation of strategies and ways of support to maintain academic integrity. The Translation program is currently being revised as per the said process, taking into consideration students' inputs and requests, as well as the market needs as advised by alumni and employers.



## V. CONCLUSION

The review of the documents provided, the onsite visit and the interviews allowed the committee to fully grasp the structure and operating methods of the Translation program. The professional dimension of the program, ensured by the long cooperative education program and co and extracurricular activities is underlined by both alumni and employers. It is also constantly developed by the teaching staff, through feedback from the companies welcoming Co-Op students. The program, which shares a series of courses with the Applied Linguistics program is rather well balanced and can ensure a fair disciplinary progression with the help of the academic advisor. It also offers multiple opportunities for students to practice and develop complementary skills through activities that complement the curriculum.

Still, in order to ensure full effectiveness on the translation market after graduation, translation and interpreting practice within curricular hours should be seriously reinforced, both through adding for example a second level to existing translation and interpreting courses and through diversifying the offer of translation and interpreting courses in other domains. Translation courses should also be proposed earlier in the curriculum. These measures would allow all the students to have a fixed minimum number of translation/interpreting hours regardless of co and extracurricular activities.

Also, in accordance with the desire of the institution to train "global citizens" and in line with potential developments of the market, intensive training for a second foreign language, not only as an elective but as part of mandatory courses could prove to be an effective strategy to improve employability. Another aspect that deserves attention is student mobility, which is definitely a must in translator and especially interpreter training. If physical mobility is sometimes difficult to achieve, it is nevertheless the most efficient way for students to be exposed to foreign languages and cultures in their real context. More effective strategies to attract more foreign exchange students should also be designed, with the benefit of the new international visa student recently implemented in the Kingdom.

In terms of student success, the program's teacher/student ratio ensures effective monitoring of student progress and it is worth noting that the teaching staff is really enthusiastic and invested in the training process. This is one of the most relevant characteristics of the program that was salient throughout the visit. Nevertheless, the overall process of quality assessment at various levels seems relatively time consuming and may be lightened so as to allow the teaching staff to get more time for research and for adapting the courses to new market demands. Although the program has developed an employability measuring strategy, it would be interesting to separate the two indicators composing it (actual employment and enrolment in graduate programs) in order to accurately assess graduates' immediate success on the work market.

Another issue to be addressed is the loss of attractiveness of the program, due to several factors: the availability of public equivalent programs, the lack of economic attractiveness of the field as compared for example to engineering and the cancellation of scholarships by the Ministry of Education. As far as the last point is concerned, providing 50% scholarships for outstanding students (a scholarship scheme initiated in the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021 in order to increase enrolment, as explained in the Self Evaluation Report) has already had positive results but progress is still possible.

## STRENGTHS

- Learning friendly environment and dynamic, involved faculty
- Good professor/student ratio
- Permanent quality assessment
- Well balanced curriculum in line with market demands and the evolution of the field
- Supervised mandatory Co-Op (7 months) as a unique opportunity for employability
- Very rich offer of co and extra-curricular activities in line with the program which complete and are even articulated with the curriculum.

## WEAKNESSES

- Insufficient number of translation courses in the curriculum
- Insufficient mandatory translation and interpreting practice included in curriculum activities
- Few international exchanges directly related to the field of study
- Fragility of the program due to loss of attractiveness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to develop translation and interpreting skills in various fields and settings (which would improve immediate efficiency on the work market), the curriculum should include more translation and interpreting courses, also introduced earlier in the training program.
- More interpreting and translation practice opportunities should also be added to the curriculum (real projects, advanced levels for existing courses) so as to offer equal training opportunities for all students (not only for those involved in extracurricular activities).
- International student exchanges should be promoted and developed since studying abroad and having contact with different cultures and languages is essential for translation and interpreting.
- Learning a second foreign language should not only be encouraged but also included in the curriculum as this is an essential asset for employability.
- In order to improve attractiveness (and in addition to the scholarship policy) it would be recommended to communicate on the new aspects of the profession with emphasis on the diversity of skills and activities involved (subtitling, localization, multilingual community managing, interpreting and translation for institutions and social services).

## VI. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION



March 05, 2023

To: Dr. Bonnafous-Boucher, M. Director of the Europe & International Department, HCERES

From: Prof. AlMahmoud, M. Dean, College of Humanities and Sciences (CHS)

Dr. Mitchell, C. Vice Dean, College of Humanities and Sciences (CHS)

CC: Ms. Houpppe, M. Head of Project, HCERES

Subject: Response to the Translation Program Evaluation Report

Dear Dr. Bonnafous-Boucher,

On behalf of the College of Humanities and Sciences and the Linguistics and Translation Department, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the HCERES team and the Panel of experts for the evaluation of our Translation program. The professionalism and communication with which the evaluation process was conducted are truly appreciated. The constructive feedback we have received will be beneficial in our continuous improvement of the program.

The meetings with the Panel of experts were fruitful and helpful for the program leaders, faculty members, administrative staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders from the perspective of the HCERES standards. The meetings were important in that they were able to demonstrate and support the details addressed in the evaluation report. The interviews showcased the commitment and quality of education offered to the students. Lastly, we learned about our strengths, activities that should be continued and supported, as well as areas for improvement.

The program's leaders and faculty members welcome the comments received from the Panel of experts in the evaluation report. The comments will encourage the development of the program in order to continuously improve its effectiveness and efficiency.

We are truly appreciative of the strengths of the program that were mentioned by the Panel of experts: learning-friendly environment and dynamic, involved faculty; good professor/student ratio; permanent quality assessment; well-balanced curriculum in line with market demands and the evolution of the field; supervised mandatory Co-Op (7 months) as a unique opportunity for employability; and a very rich offer of co and extra-curricular activities in line with the program which complete and are even articulated with the curriculum.

In response to the Panel of Experts' recommendations, we would like to make the following comments:

- 1. In order to develop translation and interpreting skills in various fields and settings (which would improve immediate efficiency on the work market), the curriculum should include more translation and interpreting courses, also introduced earlier in the training program.**



Thank you for this important recommendation. The Curriculum Review Committee at the Linguistics and Translation Department has revised the Translation Program and submitted an updated study plan to the University Council in which the number of written translation credit hours has doubled from 9 to 18. The number of interpreting credit hours has increased from 9 to 15 credit hours. Many of these courses will be offered earlier in the training program than they are currently. Furthermore, the core courses of the program start from the first semester in the updated program. The University Council approved the new study plan in its meeting on January 11, 2023. The plan is expected to be implemented during the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024. Thus, the HCERES recommendation has been successfully addressed.

**2. More interpreting and translation practice opportunities should also be added to the curriculum (real projects, advanced levels for existing courses) so as to offer equal training opportunities for all students (not only for those involved in extracurricular activities).**

Thank you for your valuable recommendation. The new study plan of the Translation Program, which has recently been approved by the University Council, includes advanced levels for existing courses (e.g., Simultaneous Interpreting I and Simultaneous Interpreting II / Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting I and Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting II). Concerning the inclusion of real projects in the training program, the instructors currently engage students in several authentic projects in the classes in addition to those projects that are made available in the extracurricular activities. For example, students prepare dubbed/subtitled videos and translate a Wikipedia article that gets published in the ETRA353 Computer-Assisted Translation course (See evidence 1a & 1b) , and they also translate parts of books in written translation courses in order to apply for the annual student translation competition at PSU, in which a financial reward is offered (<https://psu.edu.sa/en/TAC-award>). This will be further strengthened in the new study plan in which a capstone course has been introduced. The course will allow students to have extensive practice in translation/interpreting under faculty supervision, where they have to undertake a semester-long translation project of a written or spoken text. Hence, the HCERES recommendation has been addressed. Yet, the Department will ensure the continuous implementation of authentic projects in the relevant courses through coordination with the translation faculty members and the follow-up of the Curriculum Review Committee and the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee.

**3. International student exchanges should be promoted and developed since studying abroad and having contact with different cultures and languages is essential for translation and interpreting.**

Thank you for your valuable recommendation. Prince Sultan University has a study abroad program in place that is overseen by the International Affairs Office <https://www.psu.edu.sa/en/international-affairs>. You can refer to the attached flyer for the 2023 announcement (evidence 2). The Linguistics and Translation Department always encourages students to participate in the program. Additionally, several intercultural events and programs are regularly held on campus, reflecting the multicultural nature of PSU. You may see the attached flyer for a Korean Cultural Day that is organized by the King Sejong Korean Institute in PSU (evidence 3). More efforts will be taken to increase the number of students making use of this opportunity. Furthermore, students are engaged with several online intercultural communication programs, including Stony Brook University, Durham University, Illinois University, and Konkuk University. Please also refer to a recent event with Stony Brook University, and the letter is attached (evidence 4). Lastly, PSU has future plans for accepting international inbound student exchanges as the process for obtaining student visas is now available.



**4. Learning a second foreign language should not only be encouraged but also included in the curriculum as this is an essential asset for employability.**

Thank you for your important recommendation. The Translation Program encourages students to study the French language as part of the elective courses in the program. Additionally, the Community Language Center at Prince Sultan University <https://www.psu.edu.sa/en/ce-language> offers several foreign languages that students can enroll in at discounted rates. However, the HCERES recommendation will be examined by the Curriculum Review Committee once the new study plan is implemented. Potential modifications will be proposed through the relevant channels as required by the university's policies (once approved at the department level, it will be raised to the College Council, then to the Institutional Curriculum Review Committee, and from there to the University Council for approval).

**5. In order to improve attractiveness (and in addition to the scholarship policy), it would be recommended to communicate on the new aspects of the profession with emphasis on the diversity of skills and activities involved (subtitling, localization, multilingual community managing, interpreting and translation for institutions and social services).**

Thank you for your valuable recommendation. We would like to highlight that there are actual efforts being made by the marketing committee with workshops and training opportunities. For example, prominent guest speakers have been invited to highlight the diversity of skills and activities involved in the Translation program (please see a sample flyer as evidence 5). Additionally, the diversity of skills and activities will be highlighted in our upcoming contacts/visits with high schools (please, see the attached flyer for a competition that involves 13 high schools visiting our campus on March 13, 2023, as evidence 6). Furthermore, the marketing committee will pursue its efforts to increase the program's attractiveness while promoting our updated study plan, which includes a focus on the recommended skills and activities, such as localization, subtitling, and interpreting courses for institutions and social services.

Once again, we sincerely thank you for your valuable comments and constructive feedback, which will greatly contribute to the success of our Translation Program.

Sincerely,

Prof. Mahmoud AlMahmoud, Dean  
College of Humanities and Sciences  
Prince Sultan University

*Connie Mitchell*

Dr. Connie Mitchell, Vice-Dean  
College of Humanities and Sciences  
Prince Sultan University





Europe and International department

## ACCREDITATION DECISION

### **Bachelor of Arts in Translation**

College of Humanities and Sciences

Prince Sultan University

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**

## SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCÉRES

HCÉRES has based its evaluation process on a set of objectives that higher education institution study programs must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into four fields among which are the accreditation criteria.

The Accreditation Commission issues an opinion about the accreditation of the program after examining the file. The Hcéres President takes the decision based on the Commission's opinion and the final evaluation report of the program. This accreditation decision, taken in plenary session, is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The decision issued by Hcéres regarding the accreditation of the program corresponds to the awarding of a label to the evaluated entity.

This decision is independent of the accreditations carried out by the French State and therefore does not entail recognition in France of the Institution's diplomas

**Decision No.2023- 19 on the accreditation of the Bachelor of Arts in Translation delivered by Prince Sultan University - College of Humanities and Sciences - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**

**The President of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education,**

Considering the Research Code, in particular Articles L. 114-3-1 to L. 114-3-6;

Considering the Decree No. 2021-1536 of November 29<sup>th</sup> 2021 on the organisation and operation of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the Board's deliberation No. 2022-5-02 of September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022 on the accreditation criteria for international study programmes (Except for doctorates/PhDs);

Considering the Decision No. 2023-9 of March 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 on the international accreditation procedure of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the agreement No. 20220223 – Prince Sultan University – College of Humanities & Sciences - for the evaluation/accreditation of the Bachelor of Arts in Translation ;

Considering the opinion issued by the Accreditation Commission on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2023,

**Decides:**

**Article 1**

Noting that the Bachelor of Arts in Translation delivered by Prince Sultan University meets the four accreditation criteria, voted by the Board of the High Council on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022, as follows:

**ACCREDITATION CRITERIA 1: TEACHING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION**

The Translation program is developed in line with the University's missions, visions and values. Students are well-prepared to meet the market demands and faculty members are encouraged to conduct research. Students are also introduced to research techniques in addition to the development of their skills in the translation and interpretation field. The co-op undertaken by the students guarantees ties with the socio-economic world, exposing future translators and interpreters to the real world and the market.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERIA 2: THE PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM**

The Translation program is built in coherence with the competencies and skills required for students to successfully integrate the job market or various graduate programs that complete their training. Students are advised and accompanied throughout their university training, both pedagogically and personally, as interviews and presentations of pedagogical practices have shown. The program has developed quality enhancement procedures that allow constant monitoring and thus adaptability of the learning process.

However, the curriculum could be enriched with more practice opportunities presently provided by a large range of extracurricular activities designed to develop an array of complementary skills that increase employability rates. There is also a clear desire to develop an international direction and open to an international audience that needs further encouragement and a clearly defined strategy.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERIA 3: ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY PROGRAM**

The Translation program closely monitors both attractiveness and student success, and employability through specific surveys and individual monitoring. The process is facilitated by a very favorable student/professor ratio that is a real asset for the program. Close monitoring makes it easier to adopt rapid measures to rectify problematic situations: demand for more scholarships in the case of lower



enrolment rates, *curriculum* adjustments in the case of lower success rates. The program leaders are aware and proactive on each of these topics.

#### ACCREDITATION CRITERIA 4: MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

PSU is highly invested in its students and staff, always looking to provide them with the right sets of skills. As such, a strong evaluation and improvement process is put in place. Different university bodies are involved in the program management and its continuous evaluation. There are also standards that guide the curricula development and review, but also the implementation of strategies and ways of support to maintain academic integrity. The Translation program is currently being revised as per the said process, taking into consideration students' inputs and requests, as well as the market needs as advised by alumni and employers.

#### Article 2

The Bachelor of Arts in Translation delivered by the College of Humanities and Sciences of Prince Sultan University is fully accredited for a period of 5 years as from the present decision.

#### Article 3

The decision is accompanied by the following recommendations and comments :

The Accreditation Commission underlines that the main weaknesses of this Bachelor's degree are its lack of international exposure and its insufficiency in terms of translation practice and recommends:

- To include more translation and interpreting courses in the curriculum, also introduced earlier in the training program.
- To further develop more interpreting and translation practice opportunities in the curriculum (real projects, advanced levels for existing courses) so as to offer equal training opportunities for all students (not only for those involved in extracurricular activities).
- To communicate on the new aspects of the profession with emphasis on the diversity of skills and activities involved (subtitling, localization, multilingual community managing, interpreting and translation for institutions and social services).


#### Article 4

The Director of the Europe and International Department is responsible for the execution of this decision, which will be published on the Hcéres website.

Paris, March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023



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The President  
  
Thierry COULHON



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