



Assessment Report
to the Application of the
University of Maastricht; Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences,
on accreditation postulate of
Bachelor Study Program "European Public Health"
(Bachelor of Science)

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This report is confidential. Disclosure to third parties without the consent of the applicant institution or the office of the AHPGS is not allowed.

The AHPGS used in the interest of readability, the masculine noun in the following forms representing the feminine and the masculine forms.

1. Introduction

The assessment of the present study program by the accreditation experts and the decision taken by the accreditation commission (without the awarding of the official seal of the accreditation trust for study programs in Germany) are based on the "Criteria regarding the Accreditation of Study Programs" predetermined by the Accreditation Board (decided on the 17.07.2006 and modified on the 08.10.2007 and the 29.02.2008; Drs. AR 15/2008). This implies, among other things, evaluating whether the study program offers a clear and coherent insight with respect to its final goals .

The examination and accreditation process is carried out in 3 stages:

I. The University's application:

The AHPGS agency verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the university, namely the application and its corresponding annexes. Moreover, these are to fulfill the AHPGS standards and the Criteria established by the Accreditation Board. As a result, the agency produces a summary (see 3.-5.), which is to be approved by the university and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II. On-site-assessment (Peer-Review)

During the on-site visit at the university discussions with various members of the institution will take place, such as university administration, degree program management and students. This will offer the expert group further details regarding the degree program, which the written documents might have omitted. The task of the review experts during the on-site-assessment will be the verification and evaluation of the objectives of the program and projected study results, the structure of the program, the staff, the material resources, the course of studies and its methods of examination, as well as of the program management, the study quality and regulations set by the university. After the on-site review, the expert group will issue an expert report based not only on the results of the on-site-assessment, but also on the analysis of the application and other documents submitted (see Chapter

6). The expert report, together with the submitted documents, will serve as basis for the accreditation decision of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS (see Chapter 7.).

III. The resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS

In order to come to a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program, the Accreditation Commission will be considering the following documents: the documents submitted by the applicant university, the summary compiled by the agency, the shared expert opinion, as well as the university's written position regarding this, and any other documents subsequently submitted.

2. General

The Bachelor program "European Public Health" submitted by the University of Maastricht for accreditation was conditionally accredited by the NVAO (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie) on the 26.10.2005. The accreditation is valid 6 years and ends on the 26.10.2011. Overall, the study program fulfills the effective rights of a Dutch degree program.

The university's application was submitted in the present form also for Dutch accreditation and is thus organized according to the NVAO standards. These are to be found in the "Accreditation Framework" from 14.02.2003 (cf. <http://www.nvao.net/accreditation>). The following criteria - listed and described in the afore-mentioned "Accreditation Framework" - serve as basis for the accreditation of the study program: Aims and Objectives, Curriculum, Staff, Services, Internal quality assurance system, Results.

The aim of the examination and subsequent accreditation of the study program (without the awarding of the official seal of the accreditation trust for study programs in Germany) on the part of AHPGS is to ensure the compatibility of the program in question with the German educational system. The Criteria established by the German Accreditation Board function as the framework for this decision.

The Application (file of information) submitted for examination and accreditation of the Bachelor Studies program “European Public Health” of the University of Maastricht (without the awarding of the official seal of the accreditation trust for study programs in Germany) was sent to the Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Science (AHPGS e.V.) on the 25.03.2010 in electronic format. The contract between the University of Maastricht and the AHPGS was signed on the 17.04.2009. This stipulates the review and accreditation of the Bachelor study program “European Public Health”.

The approval of the AHPGS summary by the university took place on the 14.01.2009.

Together with the application request for evaluation and accreditation of the Bachelor study program “European Public Health”, the following documents are to be found (the documents submitted by the applicant are numbered in the present order and dated after the newest version - in order to allow easier referencing):

	Annex	Date
1	Overview Bachelor Programmes on the European Continent	25.03.09
2	Overview Master’s Programmes on the European Continent	25.03.09
3	Description of Bachelor Level (‘Dublin Descriptors’)	25.03.09
4	Description of Master’s Programme in Public Health at UM-FdGW ¹ (Maastricht University - Faculty of Health Science)	25.03.09
5	Nominal Plan 2008 - 2009	27.04.09
6	Outline and description of the horizontal and vertical trajectories	25.03.09
7	Provisional List of Literature B-EPH ² Programme	25.03.09
8	Foreign Pre-University high School Diploma Equivalent to a Dutch VWO Diploma	25.03.09
9	Supportin Arguments for the Choice of Target Countries	25.03.09

¹Maastricht University, Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

²Bachelor “European Public Health”

10	Caphri: The Maastricht University Care and Public Health Research Institute	25.03.09
11	Profile Core Staff Members B-EPH Programme	25.03.09
12	Costs and Revenues B-EPH Programme	25.03.09
13	Letter of Approval by the Faculty Board FdGW	25.03.09
14	Brief Description of the third year of the programme and the placement	09.07.09
15	Guidelines for Theses, Bachelor of Science in European Public Health	09.07.09
16	Information and rules on placements for Bachelor of Science in European Public Health	09.07.09
17	Overview Semester	14.12.09
18	Job Opportunities for the Bachelor in European Public Health Students	09.07.09
19	The Dutch education system	07.01.10

The evaluation and accreditation procedure (without the awarding of the official seal of the accreditation trust for study programs in Germany) will be carried out on the basis of the "Criteria regarding the Accreditation of Study Programs" predetermined by the Accreditation Board (decided on the 17.07.2006 and modified on the 08.10.2007 and the 29.02.2008; Drs. AR 15/2008).

The on site-assesment took place on the 04.02.2010. The present assesment report is based on the university's application, the additional comments and the result of the on-site assesment.

Following the recommendation of the experts and of the Accreditation Commission, the AHPGS has reached a positive decision regarding the application towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program "European Public Health" of the University of Maastricht, Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences. Thus, the agency issues the accreditation of the present study program without further requirements. This is valid five years, namely until 20.05.2015.

3. Layout

The application for the examination and accreditation procedure (without the awarding of the official seal of the accreditation trust for study programs in Germany) submitted by the University of Maastricht complies to the requirements listed in the Criteria Catalog (Directions regarding the organization and contents of the application and the documents to be submitted). The above concerns the Bachelor study program “EPH”, with the final degree Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.). The AHPGS evaluated the documents provided and has divided the information in the following sections: Content issues (see Chapter 3), Personnel and spatial equipment (see Chapter 4). These are summarized consecutively. The layout bears no significance (see Ch. 6 in this regard), as it solely reflects the standards within the university.

4. Content issues

4.1. The structure of the program and content requirements

In the Netherlands, Bachelor degree programs (as well as Master degree programs) are divided, according to the educational system, in program studies with “professional orientation” (hbo-bachelor) and program studies with “academic orientation” (wo-bachelor). The present bachelor Program in “European Public Health” falls under the category of a “bachelor with academic orientation”, which is defined as follows: “These programmes are aimed at obtaining academic subject-/discipline-specific knowledge and preparing students for continuation of their studies at master's level. This type of bachelor's programme has only recently been considered a final qualification as well. These programmes require a minimum of 180 ECTS and generally can be completed within three academic years” (cf. <http://www.nvao.net/higher-education-system-in-the-netherlands>, 20.12.2009). An overview of the Dutch educational system can be found under Annex 19.

The aim of the Bachelor program "EPH" is described in the following words: "The programme Bachelor European Public Health intends to bridge the gap between public health science on the one hand and international, European and national public health developments and policies on the other. The programme is not limited to academic and theoretical notions only, but also concentrates on the activities of international and European public health institutions. Real-life authentic events and challenges are the point of departure within the programme.

The mission of the programme is to train students to become allround specialists in European Public Health, specialists capable of appreciating, analysing and comprehending the impact of European and transnational integration on public health, health systems, health services, and the changing role of citizens, clients and patients. The overall aim of the bachelor programme is to provide students with cutting-edge knowledge, academic insights and entrepreneurial skills, in the field of public health and health care systems within a broad international and European perspective. Graduates will be able to make a positive and constructive contribution to dealing with the issues raised by a European Agenda for Public Health and/or by intentions at national level to adopt or anticipate that Agenda. They will be able to take up employment within the wider public health field in an internationally oriented labour market" (cf. Annex 5, p.4).

The subject matters covered by the study program are also summarized: "The themes to be dealt with within the curriculum reflect current public health issues, namely the international themes that determine the international policy agenda both outside Europe and particularly within it. Given the focus on topical international issues, the curriculum is an adaptive one, in the sense that its content is not static but dynamic. The BEPH programme focuses upon public health as collective action for sustained population-wide health improvement, concentrating on the European dimension of public health, as it appears within local, regional, national and global public health arrangements. It applies a contemporary and adaptive European Agenda for Public Health, listing current and future public health issues, problems and challenges".

The courses of the Bachelor study-program “EPH” will take place in English and will terminate with awarding the degree of “Bachelor of Science”. The program is worth 180 credits according to the ECTS (European Credits Transfer System). The program will be available in the full-time form, reaching a total study period of 6 semesters (cf. file of information, iii and p.32). Each term has 30 credits allocated, which amounts to a total of 60 credits annually. Each semester covers 20 weeks. The earliest beginning of the Bachelor study program was in September 2006. The first-year students were admitted to the winter term. Initially, the study program was designed for an average of 40 applicants. However, this number increased gradually, in 2008 reaching 100 entrants (cf. file of information, p. 43). The study program is funded not only through mandatory Dutch tuition fees (between the years 2009-2010 these amounted annually to 1.597 Euro, and 1.620 Euro respectively.), but also through a program of the Dutch “Ministerie”

The workload equivalent with one credit point differs depending on the module (cf. Annex 5, p. 25ff). For example, there are, on the one hand, modules for which no amount of credits is allocated. On the other hand, some modules contain different attendance and study-time volumes, even though the same number of credit points is to be gained once the modules are completed. Overall, the workload of a term adds up to 800 hours (20 weeks of 40 hours each).

The following table offers a rough overview of the main subject matters:

Year	Sem.	Theme	ECTS
1	1	<i>European Public Health Problems Today</i> The European Agenda for Public Health; contributions of the main disciplines to Public Health and the European Agenda for Public Health	30
	2	<i>The Shape of Public Health in Europe Today</i> Public Health Institutions and frameworks in a globalising world	30
2	3	<i>European Public Health Objectives</i> Objectives ‘Health for All’, ‘Free movement of goods, services and capital’ and ‘Good governance’ in light of the European Agenda for Public Health	30
	4	Minor	30

3	5	<i>Making Public Health Work in Europe</i> Tools for planned change on different levels of Public Health	30
	6	<i>Shaping Europe's Future of Public Health</i> Real life (research) project(s) and thesis	30

The course of study is divided into 26 modules (cf. Annex 17). The 4th semester is designed as "minor"(cf. Subchapter 3.2 Modularization).

The entire body of study contents, as well as each term in part, are planned according to the "Active and Self-Directed Learning Method"(ASDL). The ASDL is described in the "file of information"(p. 17) as "[a] key feature of this model is that the student plays an active role in his/her own learning process, which is focused specifically on meaningful learning concepts". Therefore, each semester is structured according to the 4 successive constitutive phases: "Sensitising", "Exploration", "Integration" and "Application". The first phase incorporates discussions between the student and the teacher regarding the former's current knowledge stage on particular, study-relevant, problems. The second phase - "Exploration" - focuses on searching information which might offer solutions to the problems encountered in the first phase. These possible solutions are verified and assimilated during the third phase. The last phase - "Application" - allows reflecting upon the processes which occurred during this study process and its results (ibid.).

The description of the overarching thematic structure also offers details on the "Educational principles", as well as on the learning environment developed within this "learning method". Thus, one can say that the study program focuses on the student's learning process. To make it more clear, the study philosophy centers on 3 main principles: learning as constructive process, learning as contextual process and learning as social process. This makes room for a critical and investigative approach regarding the primary strategy and the self-monitoring competencies. The afore-mentioned annex also describes the process through which these competencies are to be achieved and improved.

Under page 18, the file of information offers a thematic overview structured according to the ASDL learning method for the first, second, third and fifth

term of the study program. The fourth semester is, however, an exception to this, as it constitutes the “elective period”: “During semester 4, students will follow electives. Students should provide their own motivation why they wish to take one specific elective. The selection of each student underpins the preferred topic or topics in the third year of study. These favoured electives may be taken within or outside the University of Maastricht. The potential electives could be found in the 'International Classroom' of the bachelor programme of the FHML or minors within bachelor programmes offered by other faculties within UM, preference being given to those courses geared towards international and/or European topics and themes. This minor period could also be used for an educational period abroad” (file of information, p. 23).

A research internship is intended in the sixth semester of the study program. Annex 16 offers further specifications in this regard. According to the applicant university, the role of the internship is to prepare the students for their Bachelor thesis: “The placement is centred around independent preparation, planning and conducting academic research on a Bachelor level, which means that the student is to gain experience with conducting independent academic research on a Bachelor level under supervision. This is an opportunity for students to become acquainted with the art and science of research, preferably within an existing and ongoing research project. This research will be the basis for the Bachelor's thesis. The topic of the placement and the thesis must be in line with the mission and objectives of the B-EPH curriculum and must demonstrate the accumulated knowledge and skills of the student.” (ibid., p.1). The students are to choose from a pool of institutions and research queries three possibilities. A selection process will take place in order to assign each student an institution and a query for their internship (if the possibility exists, the first choice of the student will also be taken into consideration.). Even though, conventionally, the university decides in matters regarding the pool, students are allowed to recommend practicum institutions and queries, too. A coordinator is at the disposal of the students in matters regarding the internship. As primary contact person, he/she is to meet with each student at the beginning of the practicum in order to answer any open questions. Moreover, each student will be assigned two practicum

tutors, one on the side of the university (“faculty supervisor”), the other on the side of the institution (“institutional supervisor”). It is expected that several students will conduct their internship abroad. Annex 16 offers also details regarding the funding possibilities (e.g. through the ERASMUS program). The afore-mentioned annex also states the admission requirements for an internship (p.2): “Students need to fulfill the requirements for the placement. This includes having all ECTS for the first 4 semesters. Only when presenting the complete record or after consolidation from the Exams committee on a strategy how to achieve the ECTS before the placement, students can be considered in the assignments of host institutions. Only then, they can also start their placements in February”.

The afore-mentioned link between the Bachelor-thesis and the internship is outlined in Annex 15, too. The annex also provides further details and specifications regarding the elaboration of the bachelor thesis.

4.2. Modularization

The study program is organized on modules. Annex 5 lists the modules available (for the academic year 2008-2009)(cf. p. 14). The first up to the third semester begin each with an “Introduction”, for which no credits are allocated. The following table lists the modules sequentially:

Se- mester	Module- Code	Title	Work- load (h)	ECTS
1	E.1.1.0	Introduction: Visit to Euregion	40	0
	E.1.1.1	Infectious diseases: Tuberculosis	280	10
	E.1.1.2	Social and Cultural Determinants: Work-related stress and Burnout	160	5
	E.1.1.3	Environmental Determinants: Ambient Particulate Matter	160	5
	E.1.1.4	Frames for Public Health, Eating Disorders	160	4
	E.1.1.5	Cumulative test 1	40	6

2	E.1.2.0	Introduction	40	0
	E.1.2.1	European (Public Health) Institutions	280	10
	E.1.2.2	Public sector: Mother and child care	160	5
	E.1.2.3	Private sector: Aging in Europe	160	5
	E.1.2.4	Institutions in EPH	40	4
	E.1.2.5	Cumulative test 2	40	6
3	E.2.1.0	Introduction	40	0
	E.2.1.1	Health Systems in Europe a: Harmonisation an Health Care Systems in Transition b: Open Markets, Cross Border Care and the Europatient	280	10
	E.2.1.2	Excursion to Central and Eastern Europe	40	0
	E.2.1.3	Health Strategies in Europe a: Health for all, Health in All and the Neighbourhood b: Good Governance and Tobacco Control	280	10
	E.2.1.4	The European Pharmaceutical Market	160	4
	E.2.1.5	Cumulative test 3	40	6
4		Minor	800	30
5	E.3.1.0	Best Practices, Transferability and Innovation: Introduction	40	0
	E.3.1.1	Alcohol and Drug Use as a Health Problem: Practices and Best Practices	280	10
	E.3.1.2	Food, Novel Food, Food Safety: Best Practices, Transferability and Innovation	280	10
	E.3.1.3	Overview of Planned Change Models and Theories	40	0
	E.3.1.4	Writing a research proposal and preparation for placement	160	4
	E.3.1.5	Cumulative test 4	40	6
6	E.3.2.1	Placement and draft thesis on research project	gesamt:	15
	E.3.2.2	Finalising the Bachelor Thesis	800	15

The thematic descriptions of the first three semesters, as well as those of the fifth can be found in Annex 5. The units are divided according to the following areas of study: "Summary of the Unit", "Objectives", "Content", "Skills Training", "Methodology", "Statistics", "Learning Methods" (which also includes the Workload, with details regarding the attendance and individual study time), "Examination", "Literature", as well as "Evaluation and next steps". In addition to that, the annex also lists the "Module Coordinator".

The fourth semester is described in detail in annex 5, page 82ff: "Within the scheme of the 4th semester BEPH students need also to follow educational modules or units elsewhere. According to the Examination Rules BEPH the student may - within given conditions - select components of his/her own choice, with a minimum total study load of 30 credits. The components that may be chosen include:

- study components provided for the programme in Health Sciences by the FHML (named International Classroom),
- study components provided by another faculty of University of Maastricht, as well as
- study components provided by any other government-funded or designated university (abroad) if named in a yearly catalogue".

The sixth semester - also designed according to the previously-mentioned areas of study of the modules - includes an internship and the elaboration of the Bachelor thesis.

Annex 6 ("Outline and description of the horizontal and vertical trajectories") presents the structure of the study program, as well as its modules, considering for the most part aspects relating to research methods, statistics, analysis skills, scientific and academic thinking, as well as the European profit (European Added Value).

The file of information provides, under 2.2.5 Examination and Assessment (p. 27), accurate details concerning the examination process within the study program. In this respect, exams are regarded as an essential component

within the learning process. On the one hand, the evaluations focus on the "learning methods", such as Problem Based Learning (PBL), PBL in Teams, projects, written assignments (cf. file of information, 2.2.4). On the other hand, they take into account the ASDL: "The types of testing links up directly with the learning phases model and the educational methods used" (file of information, 2.2.5).

The forms of evaluation consist themselves into 2 main categories: "summative and formative assessments". Hence, in the beginning of the course of study, the focus is set on the "summative testings". These are intended to evaluate the students and establish a selection. As the course of study develops, the focus shifts on the "formative testings", meant to aid students in improving their study and learning performance. The types of evaluation, namely the "portfolio assessments" are described in the file of information under p. 28 and comprise 3 parts: "the progress dossier"; "the test dossier" and "self assessment and peer assessment". Page 20 of the same document offers an evaluation overview for each term according to the ASDL system (Sensitising, Exploration, Integration, Application). For instance, each ASDL phase has a corresponding type of examination: during the first semester, the phase Sensitising involves "Individual reports and group assignments", phases Exploration and Integration involve "individual assignments plus paper", whereas phase Application will employ "individual assignment plus oral report". The "cumulative test" "involves a test, covering more than a single semester, which becomes increasingly complex, with questions relating to subjects dealt with in previous semesters. A cumulative test of this kind has a number of advantages: students are required to make an effort to remember what they have already learned and to demonstrate that they have not forgotten it. Those responsible for constructing the test questions will be encouraged to integrate everything students have learned so far into the questions making up the test. It is expected at the moment that a test of this kind will take place four times during the course of the programme" (ibid.).

Regarding electronic and media learning platforms, the applicant university employs the "BlackBoard" (EleUM: <http://eleum.unimaas.nl>). This is described as following: "Via BlackBoard, the students are provided with information

about the semesters, the teaching material, the timetables and the examinations. In addition, students and lecturers have access to the electronic portfolio" (file of information, 4.1, p. 36).

Pertaining to thematically related study programs, details can be found in the file of information, under Appendix 1, Overview Bachelor Programmes on the European Continent. According to the applicant university, there is a great diversity at an European level of public-health or public-health-related study programs. However, most of the North-European (including the Netherlands) programs listed focus rather on a more national aspect of the "public health concept". Moreover, the teaching language for these programs remains the national language. In contrast to North-Europe, Public Health in South-Europe remains a predominantly medical field. Specific undergraduate study programs can barely be found, whereas graduate and further training programs are directed exclusively at medical practitioners. The most influential developments in the field of educational Public Health are actually taking place within the recent EU member states. Striking as it may seem, there are considerably more Master study programs in the domain, than there are Bachelor ones (cf. Appendix 2). The present Bachelor study program is said to "[fill] a gap in the European public health training landscape by transcending these nationally oriented programmes" (file of information, 1.1.5, p. 8)

4.3. Educational objectives

The overall aim of the Bachelor study program should be understood in terms of "academic orientation". Regarding this, the file of information states that: "The mission of the programme is to train students to become allround specialists in European Public Health, specialists capable of appreciating, analysing and comprehending the impact of European and transnational integration on public health, health systems, health services, and the changing role of citizens, clients and. The overall aim of the bachelor programme is to provide students with cutting-edge knowledge, academic insights and entrepreneurial skills, in the field of public health and health care systems within a broad international and European perspective. Graduates will

be able to make a positive and constructive contribution to dealing with the issues raised by a European Agenda for Public Health and/or by intentions at national level to adopt or anticipate that Agenda. They will be able to take up employment within the wider public health field in an internationally oriented labour market patients" (file of information, p. 1)

This overall aim of the study programs is divided into 5 main areas: "knowledge and insight", "applying knowledge and insight", "formation of a judgment", "communication" and "learning attitude and skills". Subsequently, these are further divided into 28 "final qualifications":

"With respect to Knowledge and Insight

1. to have a robust disciplinary knowledge in public health issues;
2. to have the capacity to look beyond the boundaries of core disciplines;
3. to be able to analyse complex disciplinary, multi- and interdisciplinary public health problems, in terms of actors and factors;
4. to have knowledge and understanding of the interconnection between public health problems and solutions at a global, European, national, regional and local level;
5. to have knowledge and understanding of public health analyses and interventions, including a serious understanding of research methods and techniques;
6. to be capable of understanding and interpreting the historic background of the field of study, including the history of public health ideas and concepts;
7. to be capable of understanding and interpreting the historic international and European background in the field of study;
8. to have knowledge and understanding of the relation between cultural backgrounds on the one hand and the perception and framing of public health problems and solutions on the other;
9. to have knowledge and understanding of the structure and practice of international institutions, i.e. European institutions, including regulations and incentives, as political and economic mechanisms;
10. to have knowledge and understanding of the potential benefits of research, academic research methods and techniques;

With respect to Applying Knowledge and Insight

11. to have experience with public health analysis and interventions including research methods and techniques;
12. to have experience with regulations and incentives as the core basic political and economic mechanisms;
13. to be able to critically reflect on the field of study and its relation to other fields of study and the social environment;
14. to be capable of analysing the ethical and normative aspects of the consequences of scientific thinking and acting and discussing them with confreres and non- confreres and integrate these aspects into their own scientific work;
15. to be capable of analysing the consequences of scientific thinking and professional acting;
16. to be capable of analysing the social consequences (economic, social, political, cultural) of new developments in the field of study and discussing them with confreres and non-confreres and integrating these consequences into the scientific work.
17. to be able to critically reflect (independently) on their own thinking, decisions and actions and adjust them;

With respect to Formation of a Judgement

18. to acquire an original and critical style of scientific thinking and analysis and professional intervening;
19. to be capable of anticipating and analysing the consequences of ones own professional decisions and actions;
20. to be capable when necessary of reviewing their own professional knowledge;
21. to be able to choose a place as a professional in society;

With respect to Communication

22. to be able to critically use the Internet for literature research, publishing drafts, interacting with on-line peer review systems, and empirical research;

23. to have excellent writing and communication skills (in English) by being capable of communicating about research and problem solutions with confreres, stakeholders, and non-colleagues;
24. to be able to debate about the field of study and the position of that field within society;
25. to be able to work in a team, to be able to create partnerships, and to be able to participate in professional networks;
26. to be able to act as a (project)leader or use leadership skills;

With respect to Learning Attitude and Skills

27. to acquire an attitude of life-long learning and to be able to use the acquired skills throughout professional life.” (File of information, p. 11ff)

Also according to the file of information, p. 12f, these “final qualifications” are applicable to either the research field at the University of Maastricht and the labour market. When considering the first, the qualifications 1 up to 21 are not only interrelated, but also refer to domains such as epidemiology, social sciences, behavioral sciences, economics, biomedicine, political sciences and “legal ethical sciences”. For the most part, these domains center around the “The Maastricht Care and Public Health Research Institut” (Caphri, cf. Annex 10).

The final qualifications, namely from 11 to 28, relate to the job market and are based on statistics and results concerning it. Likewise, these qualifications correspond to the general and specific competencies, as established within the “Tuning Educational Structures in Europe” project.

After completing the degree, a student of the program should have gained sufficient relevant competencies, as described in the following paragraph: “A student having successfully completed the B-EPH programme:

- a) acts and thinks according to the concept of New Public Health;
- b) is conversant with the terms and key theories from the underlying basic disciplines and is able to place the concept of New Public Health in a European and international context;

- c) is conversant with the most important current problems, questions and challenges in the field of European Public Health, and is able to interpret and explain these problems in theoretical-academic terminology;
 - d) is able to demonstrate academic-critical thinking and reasoning;
 - e) has broad knowledge and skills in social sciences research, is fully able to comply with professional standards for practical action in the appropriate areas of application, and is able to express him or herself excellently in both written and spoken language;
 - f) has developed an attitude of life-long learning”
- (file of information, p 9).

4.4. Labour market situation and job opportunities

The “academic orientation” aspect of the study program also considers the employment situation of the future graduates: “The Bachelor of European Public Health (B-EPH) qualifies its graduates as allround health science specialists on a bachelor's level with a unique outlook on the European perspective of public health” (Annex 18). After graduating, students have the possibility, either to enter the employment market or to pursue further qualification in the form of a Master study program. With regard to the first option, Annex 18 offers detailed information. Moreover, the annex also presents the options former graduates of the study program have chosen (out of a total of 28 questioned graduates, 21 have enrolled in an appropriate Master's program and 5 have entered the labor market). The annex also lists the Master study programs which the students have registered with.

The development of the employment market and, alongside it, the job opportunities of the graduates are placed in an international context. Within it, emphasis is set on the increasing number of further training and practice possibilities in the field of Public Health, as well as on the ever more poignant academic and individual aspects of the profession. Accordingly, the applicant university identifies an increasing demand from the part of similar European and international qualified experts. This being the case, the university raises awareness that the graduates of the EPH bachelor program will be conferred

a visible advantage, when applying at any of these institutions(cf. file of information, p. 8). According to the applicant university, the internship overview shows that the graduates are soundly prepared to enter the employment market.

The university lists the following employment fields for the graduates of the study program:

- “- international health consultants
- policy advisors
- health information officers
- project managers
- public health advocates (NGO)
- prevention specialists
- public health advocates
- staff personnel
- European affairs managers
- research scientists

Graduates can work for a variety of organisations, including:

- local, regional, national, and European administrations and governments
- NGOs (non-governmental organisations)
- insurance companies
- international organisations and corporations
- universities
- hospitals
- private firms / agencies” (Annex 18).

4.5. Access and authorization requirements

The entry requirements for the Bachelor's program “EPH” mention that admitted to the program can be candidates who have completed a pre-university degree within the Dutch educational system (VWO, voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs). Acceptable are all VWO profiles. Annex 8 contains an overview of the international degrees and certificates

equivalent with a VWO-degree (in Germany: the Abitur). The candidates admitted will be decided by a board of examiners named by the faculty.

4.6. Quality Assurance

The file of information outlines, beginning with p. 39, the quality assurance plan. As it results from it, the quality assurance system of the study program is embedded in that of the faculty. This, in turn, rests upon 3 main areas:

1. program evaluation
2. evaluation of study results
3. professional development of lecturing staff

The file of information also offers more details regarding the areas listed above. For example, for the program evaluation area the following description is given: "The system of programme evaluation consists of three elements:

- a) quantitative evaluation for each module
- b) qualitative evaluation for each semester
- c) forum evaluation

Quantitative evaluation for each semester:

Each (bachelor) semester is evaluated in quantitative terms. Following completion of the semester, the students complete a standardised questionnaire about the semester. The questionnaire is aimed at an overall and quantitative assessment of all elements in the teaching module (content and organisation). Reports are submitted to the OD, the programme coordinator involved and in outline to the Course Committee. At the moment when this file is published, an experiment is being carried out with tailor-made web-based evaluations. If this experiment proves successful, quantitative evaluation within the B-EPH programme will subsequently be designed on this basis.

Qualitative evaluation for each semester:

According to a semi-structured questionnaire, during the final tutorial group meeting, the tutor evaluates the semester together with the students on the

basis of elements including content, work form, study load, organisation, etc. According to the elements discussed, the tutor also provides his/her own professional opinion. The semester coordinators are using the qualitative evaluation to make a better assessment of the data from the quantitative evaluation.

Forum evaluation:

The forum evaluation is the third component of the evaluation system. During this evaluation, themes are discussed which go beyond the limits of the semester, such as the do-ability of the study programme, the substantive coherence of the programme, the training of skills, the facilities and the general evaluation of the teaching programme. Forum evaluation will take place in the form of a plenary discussion meeting headed by the OD. Both students and lecturers are invited. The resultant report is then discussed in the Course Committee and the programme coordinators consultation" (file of information, p. 39).

According to the applicant university, students and lecturers are involved alike in the quality assurance of the study program (cf. file of information, p. 40). Moreover, this matter concerns the Alumni too, as they contribute to the constant improvement of the study program.

Furthermore, the University of Maastricht has compiled a further-training program directed at lecturers and which intends to instruct them in matters such as "problem-based learning, lecturing skills and the computer as a learning/teaching tool" (cf. *ibid.*, p. 39f).

The file of information offers, starting p.36, specifications regarding student support. Its various aspects are elaborated upon, such as "information", "study advisor", "student mentor", "lecturer mentors", "study association" and "information provision". For example, a "study mentor" is assigned to each group of first-year students. He has the task to attend to them and answer any questions pertaining to the study.

All information regarding the study program is provided on a fully digitalized platform: "Within the B-EPH, information provision about the educational aspects is fully digitalised. All information about education (including the study guide, teaching timetables, examination regulations, etc.) has been placed on a central Internet site of the education and internationalization office of the faculty" (file of information, p. 37).

5. Personnel and spatial equipment

5.1. Lecturers

Annex 11 lists the tutors of the study program (9 professors, 3 "associate professors" and 3 "assistant professors"). The annex also contains a short curriculum vitae of each of them. Furthermore, 14 out of a total of 15 hold a Ph. D. degree. According to the applicant university, within the teaching process will also be participating associates of the FHML of the University of Maastricht, as well as guest lecturers from other faculties within the university. Moreover, the study program allows space for international guest speakers (cf. file of information, p. 34).

5.2. Equipment for Teaching and Research

Annex 13 presents a letter from the faculty's administration concerning the functional equipment. The management thus expresses its full support for the study program in terms of financial and factual equipment.

The practical equipment of the study program, and of the faculty, respectively, is listed in the file of information under p. 35. The faculty has available over 33 seminar-rooms (which can accommodate 10-15 students), as well as lecture halls, "Skills-Rooms" and "Teaching Laboratories". The afore-mentioned document offers more details regarding the spatial accommodations.

The library and its affiliated “learning resource center Randwijk” are available for the shared use of the faculties of Health, Medicine and Psychology, as well as for the University's Clinic. The library is described as an scientific library for education, research and patient care and it is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (cf. file of information, p. 35).

Related to the computer equipment of the department, the application documentation indicates that students have access to computers not only in the “teaching laboratories”, but also in the “learning resource center Randwijk”. The latter puts at the free disposal of the students 165 computers equipped with both standard software, as well as access to various scholarly electronic databases” (including the university library catalogue, Medline/Pubmed, Embase, PsycInfo, etc., and educational programs, general student information and the electronic course materials)” (ibid.).

Annex 12 discusses the funding possibilities of the Bachelor's program “EPH”. According to it, the costs incurred for the academic year 2010-2011 were of 2.307.896,- Euro. However, the revenue for the same year amounted to 2.306.456,- Euro.

6. Expert's report

The on-site assessment for accreditation of the Bachelor's study programme “European Public Health” submitted by the Maastricht University took place on 04.02.2010 in Maastricht.

The following experts took part in the assessment:

- as representatives of the Higher Education Institutions:
Prof. Dr. Marie-Luise Dierks, Medical University Hannover, Department Epidemiology, Social Medicine and Health Care System Research
Prof. Dr. Beate Blättner, University Fulda, Faculty Nursing and Health

- as representative of professional practice:
Prof. Dr. Manfred Wildner, Bavarian State Office of Health and Food Safety

- as representative of the students:
Frauke Kupfernagel, Student at the University of Applied Science Neubrandenburg

The expert group was accompanied by the AHPGS.

The expert group met on 03.02.2010 in the premises of Maastricht University. The expert group of the Accreditation Commission carried out an inspection of the rooms and facilities available for the study programme under guidance of the responsible persons of Maastricht University.

The subsequent dinner of the expert group served the purpose of collection and discussion of questions and impressions of the documents sent earlier. Furthermore, the on-site assessment was structured.

The on-site assessment was carried out on 04.02.2010. The experts held discussions with the faculty heads, the persons responsible for the programme and with a group of present students of the study programme to be assessed as well as from the following Master's study programme "European Public Health".

The expert report is structured according to the criteria for the accreditation of study programmes given by the Accreditation Council (cf. "Rules of the Accreditation Council for the Accreditation of Study Programmes and for System Accreditation"; Resolution of the Accreditation Council of 08.12.2009; Drs. AR 93/2009).

Criterion 1: Qualification Objectives of the Study Programme Concept

The Bachelor's study programme "European Public Health" of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Science (FHML) of the Maastricht University pursues the objective of educating the students to become "all-rounders" in

Public Health in the European context. With the study programme, the gap between the science of "Public Health" on the one hand and the national and international developments in institutions responsible for health promotion on the other is to be closed. "Knowledge at the interfaces" in the mentioned areas, scientific qualifications as well as entrepreneurial abilities are to be imparted to the students as general educational objectives. The imparting of knowledge as well as the capabilities and competences are always embedded in the European perspective of the health sciences. With regard to the imparted contents, a balanced selection of content-related and methodological knowledge is apparent, which corresponds to the claim of an up-to-date education of Public Health subjects. The claim of European orientation of these Public Health contents is also satisfied. The comparative analyses of solutions of cross-border Public Health questions in different European countries as well as the providing of contacts with European institutions play a special role in this. However, according to statements of the students, the examples for international solutions used in the course focus too much on the Netherlands and Germany until now. In the opinion of the expert group a stronger emphasis and consideration of other European countries or regions is desirable here.

The expert group assesses the aspects regarding the objectives of the study programme, explained by the persons responsible for the study programme, to be realistic for the study programme on the one hand and as innovative and pioneering for the further development of the European thought on health promotion on the other hand. Furthermore, particularly the ways for achieving the mentioned objectives are considered to be extraordinarily innovative (cf. criterion 3). The structure of the study programme lets one expect that enabling the students to take up a qualified gainful employment as well as enabling them for social involvement and personality development will be achieved. In the opinion of the expert group, the educational objectives are defined having recourse to carefully designed and highly differentiated quality assurance system in the study programme (cf. criterion 8). For this, one also takes recourse to analysis of the destinations of the graduates. The expert group recommends that the students be instructed in suitable partial modules

also about up-to-date bio-medical fundamentals and, if necessary, be given the option of deepening their knowledge in these areas.

Criterion 2: Conceptual Classification of the Study Programme in the System of Studies

In the overall view, the study programme meets the requirements of Bachelor's study programmes formulated in the qualification framework for German degrees. Knowledge and understanding of the graduates are built on the level of the entrance to a Higher Education Institution and they are significantly deepened. On the one hand, the competences to be acquired - particularly instrumental, systemic and communicative competences - are described in detail, on the other hand, it can be assumed that the competences also are achieved in the course of the study programme.

The experts assess the inspected Bachelor's theses to be strong and positive with regard to scope, structure and scientific standard achieved. In this connection, the expert group recommends considering how far manuscripts submitted for publication in relevant well-known professional journals can also be accepted as theses.

The study programme is fully modularised and the application of ECTS is possible. 26 modules, including Bachelor's thesis, are scheduled in the study programme. Over and above that, the so-called "Minor" is planned in the 4th semester, in which the student can take modules outside the curriculum or else complete a semester abroad.

The expert group assesses the structuring of the content of the modules to be coherent. The detailed structuring of the competence oriented module descriptions is considered highly positive.

The conditions for admittance to the Bachelor's study programme are regulated. The condition for admittance for the study programme is - from the German point of view - the secondary school leaving certificate (Abitur).

Criterion 3: Study Programme Concept

The Maastricht University has many years experience with the concept of “problem based learning”, which was developed further and improved continuously. This innovative teaching method is based on preliminary work at the McMasters University and has also been adopted with modifications by other large universities (e.g. reform study programmes of medicine of the Harvard University and the Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich). It enables a high degree of activation of the students and a self-organised study within certain limits under the supervision of a tutor. Building on that, the “active and self-directed learning method” was developed for the Bachelor's study programme “European Public Health”, in which the contributions of the different experts involved are integrated into a continuous development spiral in the individual modules as well as across the complete course. Every module as well as every semester is subdivided into the four phases “Sensitising”, “Exploration”, “Integration” and “Application”, each based upon the previous one. In the first phase, the students are supposed to discuss their current state of knowledge of the various problem areas or questions with the teachers. The phase “Exploration” is characterised by the search for information for possible solutions related to the problems raised in the phase “Sensitising”. The possible solution approaches are scrutinised and integrated correspondingly in the phase “Integration”, while the reflection about what was learnt in the process is in the foreground in the last phase. It was shown comprehensibly and convincingly in the presentations of the course direction and the students, that this teaching approach has been implemented consistently and in the context of a continuous quality development. In this process, horizontal and vertical learning strategies were also implemented. The horizontal strategy concerns the interconnected teaching of methodological contents such as quantitative and qualitative study methods across several modules. The vertical axis refers to the increasing complexity of teaching units, which have been imparted and corresponds to the well-known concept of the teaching-learning spiral in modified form.

The “Minor” planned for the fourth semester, which makes choosing options with regard to Public Health relevant questions or even foreign sojourns

possible, is assessed positively by the expert group. Correspondingly, the method of achieving the objective with regard to the defined qualification or educational objectives is considered to be adequate by the expert group.

The imparting of specialised knowledge and inter-disciplinary knowledge, the imparting of methodological and generic competences as well as the pedagogic and didactic foundation of the studies concept are regarded throughout as fulfilled.

In view of the overall convincing design of the study programme - with regard to the content-related aspects as well as the innovative teaching method of problem-based learning, the expert group recommends that the Maastricht model be more popularised at a European level as a complementary offer. For this, one could look for partnerships with other European Higher Education Institutions.

Nevertheless, a number of problems appeared - as could be expected in the case of so demanding and innovative a programme - in the beginning in the implementation of the concept in the practice of the Higher Education Institution, such as work overload of the students, insufficient consultation among the teachers etc. It was reported on the part of the students, that these problems were recognised relatively quickly, changes immediately decided upon and implemented successfully. It has to be critically mentioned, that the experiences regarding this in the use of results of the teaching evaluation were not documented for improving the quality of the teaching. In connection with this, the expert group recommends the continuous documentation of all measures taken for the further development of the study programme (cf. also criterion 8).

Criterion 4: Academic Feasibility

In the opinion of the expert group, the academic feasibility of the Bachelor's study programme "European Public Health" has to be looked at from different sides. On the one hand, there is the structure of the study programme, which is well-structured and comprehensible and transparent for all students. The

demands on the students are laid down openly. On the other hand, particularly because of the very structured design of the study programme, there is the problem that the workload is very high for the students. The students are not only expected to have a high commitment but also high attendance times (40 weeks per study year with 40 hours per week, i.e. 5 days in the week from 8-16 hours). For that the students get, in the opinion of the expert group, optimal prerequisites for the small-group based and individual support for independently acquiring competences. The strong, consistent practice orientation has also to be highlighted, which can be seen among other things in that, continuously updated, real problem situations from the Public Health provision system are taken as a basis for the "problem based learning". In the view the students, the time schedules made by Higher Education Institution for the completion of the study programme are realistic as well as - after corresponding acclimatisation - academically feasible. The expert group recommends that the special demands of the study programme be more clearly described in the information media for the study programme.

The statements concerning the demanding burden with regard to time also coincide with the statements concerning the examinations in the study programme: These are based throughout on the competences to be acquired in the respective modules. Nevertheless a high commitment of the students is demanded even here, since the examinations - more in the sense of "reviewing the course of learning" - extends over the entire semester. The students, however, take the accompanying workload as a challenge for continuous learning rather than an excessive demand. Consequently there is no concentration of the examinations at the end of the semester.

Criterion 5: Examination System

As explained, the examinations are oriented towards knowledge and competence. According to the students, the examination burden is demanding but academically feasible. The expert group shares this impression. Handicapped students have a claim to compensation of disadvantages in the context of examinations.

Criterion 6: Facilities

The on-site inspection of the premises of the Higher Education Institution on the evening before the assessment showed, that the available teaching or learning infrastructure is of a high quality. The study programme has an excellently equipped library with several study and seminar rooms, two bigger lecture halls, which can be used if required, as well as several seminar rooms for teaching of small groups, some of which are equipped with hearing aids with induction loops suitable for the handicapped. The EDP-technical equipment is up-to-date, the available electronic books and magazine library with installed teaching materials are noteworthy. Catering and sports facilities are offered by the University. As an unusual feature a students' office has been set up for the study programmes European Public Health, contributions to a student magazine are possible. The staffing of the study programme has been assessed by the expert group to be quantitatively as well as explicitly qualitatively adequate.

A tutor system is associated with the presented concept of "active and self-directed learning". The tutors (students from higher semesters trained and supported by professors) help the students in the search for solutions to the problems raised in the respective modules. According to the statements of the students, the tutor system fulfils several aspects: firstly the students are offered an employment opportunity within the very demanding study programme. Furthermore particularly the foreign students have the opportunity of support through tutors right from the beginning of the studies, which is more than the usual support given at Higher Education Institutions. However, the most important aspect has been identified as the possibility to pass on one's own knowledge to other students and thus to extend one's knowledge and particularly one's own competences.

To sum up, the expert group assumes that the qualitative and quantitative resources with regard to personnel, material and space are ensured for the study programme.

Criterion 7: Transparency and Documentation

As shown above, the innovative teaching concept of the Bachelor's study programme "European Public Health" sets high demands not only on the teachers but also on the students. In the opinion of the experts, this has not been described adequately clearly in the information materials used for publicity. Correspondingly, the experts recommend that it should be explained more clearly in the information media about the study programme, that the BA "European Public Health" is a particularly demanding programme, which expects not only special commitment but also high attendance times from the students. Furthermore the experts assess the home page of the FHML as well as the details on the study programme "European Public Health" contained in it as meaningful and informative. All details on the study programme, on the course of studies as well as on the examinations to be passed are published.

Details are given also about the system of the course guidance service, which is considered to be very good and open by the students.

Criterion 8: Quality Assurance and Further Development

The concept of quality assurance in the study programme was convincingly explained in the discussions with the persons responsible for the study programme. Special attention was given to the presentation of the feedback possibilities for students and teachers. Here, particularly also under consideration of the statements of the students, a functioning quality development system could be made clear credibly. The efforts of the Higher Education Institution in this area have to be particularly appreciated. It also becomes clear, that this quality development with emphasis on the teaching brings a distinct additional load on the teachers with respect to necessary mutual consultations, compared with comparable programmes.

Criterion 9: Study Programmes with a Special Profile Claim

Since the study programme is offered as a full-time study programme (acquisition of 180 Credits as per the European Credit Transfer System within

a regular course duration of three years), the criterion does not have any relevance.

Criterion 10: Gender Justice and Equal Opportunities

The expert group assumes, based on the explanations of the persons responsible for the study programme with regard to the areas of gender justice, equal opportunities as well as disadvantage compensation for students with handicaps and chronic illness, that this criterion has to be assessed as fulfilled. Nevertheless the expert group recommends, that particularly the aspects of gender justice as well as the non-discrimination policy with respect to the institution as well as the teaching in the study programme be explained and documented.

Summary and Recommendations to the Accreditation Commission

To summarise it is to be said, that the study programme, in its academic orientation, satisfies superbly the prerequisites necessary for an accreditation in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Accordingly the experts have decided to recommend the accreditation of the Bachelor's study programme "European Public Health" to the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS.

The experts recommend the following for the further development and improvement of the study programme concept as well as the study conditions:

Aspects of gender justice (gender issues) as well as the non-discrimination policies of the Higher Education Institution should be explained, documented and presented more clearly.

- The teaching examples for international solutions seem far too focussed on the Netherlands and Germany until now. A stronger

emphasis and consideration of other European countries or regions would be desirable here.

- Regarding the Bachelor's theses, it should be examined how far manuscripts submitted for publication to relevant well-known professional journals can also be accepted as theses.
- The present challenge of the study programme refers to the stabilisation of achievements at a high level. For this one should pay attention to a lasting strong relation of students and teachers.
- It is recommended that the up-to-date bio-medical fundamentals be imparted to the students in suitable partial modules and that, if necessary, they be given the option of deepening their knowledge in these areas.
- The vertical networking of the Bachelor's programme with the Master's programme and a possible Doctor of Philosophy programme should be considered in the further development.
- In view of the overall convincing design of the study programme, it is recommended that the European Public Health model at the European level be made better known as a complementary offer. For this one could look for partnerships with other European Higher Education Institutions. This refers both to the content-related aspects and to the innovative teaching method of problem-based learning.

7. Decission of the Accreditation Commission

Decission of the Accreditation Commission from the 20 May 2010

Resolution from 20 May 2010 on the basis of the application documents and the evaluation report including the expert review of the on-site visit, which took place on 3-4 February 2010. The comment of the higher education

institution on the substantive part of the expert review from 25 March 2010 was also taken into account.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS has discussed the procedural documents, the vote of the expert group, and the comment of the higher education institution.

The Accreditation Commission has adopted the following resolution:

The full-time Bachelor study programme "European Public Health", which is completed with the degree "Bachelor of Science" (B.Sc.), has been accredited. The study programme, which was first offered in the winter semester of 2006, is based on 180 credits according to the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and a regular study period of six semesters.

By awarding the accreditation certificate, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS confirms that, for a duration of five years (until 20 May 2015), the Bachelor study programme "European Public Health" meets the criteria for study programme accreditation laid down in the "rules of the Accreditation Council for the accreditation of study programmes and for system accreditation" (Drs. AR 93/2009 from 08 December 2009).

No further conditions for accreditation have been defined for the Bachelor study programme.

The Accreditation Commission also supports the recommendations formulated in the expert report.

Freiburg, 20.05.2010