

The Assessment Decision of the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education

12/10/2015

**A proposal to the Minister of Education
of the Republic of Moldova to**

**ACCREDIT
the Master's study programme "Criminal Law"
of the National Police Academy "Stefan cel Mare" of MIA
FOR 3 YEARS**

Acting in accordance with the authorization granted by the § 10 (4) of the Universities Act and sections 3.7.1 and 3.7.3 of the Statutes of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA) and based on section 33.5 of the document "Requirements and Procedure for Accreditation of Study Programmes in Moldova", the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education shall state the following.

1. On February 23, 2015, the Director of EKKA approved by her order the following composition of the

Assessment Committee:

Stephen C. Shute – Chair	Professor, School of Law, Politics and Sociology, University of Sussex; United Kingdom
Stela Buiuc	Deputy director, Centre of Legal Approximation, Ministry of Justice; Moldova
Mihai Floroiu	Professor, Faculty of Legal, Social and Political Sciences, "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati; Romania
Andres Parmas	Judge in the criminal chamber, Tallinn Circuit Court, PhD student; Estonia

2. The Assessment Visit to the National Police Academy “Stefan cel Mare” of MIA took place on May 4 – 5, 2015.
3. The Assessment Committee sent the preliminary report to EKKA on June 18, 2015. The Assessment Committee received the comments from the National Police Academy “Stefan cel Mare” of MIA on July 6 and approved the final version of the component assessments on July 20, 2015.
4. The Secretary of the Council forwarded the assessment report containing the component assessments to the members of the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education on 24.09.2015. The assessment report forms an integral part of the assessment decision. The report will be made available on the EKKA website.
5. **The component assessments were as follows:**

Study programme and its development	Conforms to requirements
Teaching and learning	Conforms to requirements
Teaching staff	Partially conforms to requirements
Students	Partially conforms to requirements
Resources	Conforms to requirements

6. The EKKA Quality Assessment Council discussed the assessment report along with other relevant materials at its session on October 12, 2015 with the participation of 9 Council members. The Council decided to point out the following strengths and areas of improvement of the Master’s study programme “Criminal Law”:

6.1.

Study programme and its development	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- As the development plan of the University and the action plans have to take into account the plans of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, they are in line with the ongoing reforms and the needs of the employer.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- It is recommended for the University to create more tailored action plans for the implementation of the Strategic Development Plans’ objectives and have a system in place for analysing the degree of implementation to ensure that it is taken into account for the future planning.

- It is recommended to improve the international comparability of the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme by analysing similar study programmes of other foreign high rank universities.
- The Academy should review the content of the study programme to ensure that it contains the most relevant and contemporary courses so as to serve the needs of Moldova as the country continues to develop. It is recommended to improve the content of the study programme by introducing more specialised courses like economic, cyber and tax offences into the curriculum.
- The research skills of the students are rather limited, especially in terms of the quality of the academic level of the master theses. It is advisable to include a special course in the programme that would enhance the students’ research skills necessary for their work on the master thesis and their further doctoral studies.
- There is a lack of an embedded understanding across staff and students of the concept of learning outcomes. It is advisable to ensure and that there is a clear and even understanding of the purpose and the expected learning outcomes of the MA programme among students, teachers and employers.

6.2.

Teaching and learning	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- There is a modern forensic laboratory at the Academy and a good crime scene investigation room.
- A mock court-room for simulated trials is an interesting tool that allows students to get involved in the reality of the legal activities.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There are some material inconsistencies in the curriculum regarding the calculation of the credits. The Academy should ensure that ECTS related information in the Diploma Supplement corresponds exactly to the number of ECTS of the study programme.
- As most of the students are already the employees of MIA, their internships are mostly organized at the working place and they do not have much flexibility in organizing and conducting their internships in other sub-structures of the Ministry or other organizations.
- From the analysis of grades catalogues, the committee could see that the assessment is rather generous. No overall failures were observed, with a 100% success rate for the students that took the examinations. The implementation of the grading system does not make it possible to distinguish the students according to their knowledge acquired.

- Further improvement of the quality manual is needed in order to tackle more directly the issues of learning outcomes. At the moment, the Manual contains only general dispositions.

6.3.

Teaching staff	Partially conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The age balance of the teaching staff is promoted in the University in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.
- New members of the teaching staff have to pass the module of 30 credits on psycho-pedagogy, organized by the Academy. The Academy ensures the supervision of the teaching skills and methods of the new assistant lectures by appointing observers who are experienced lecturers.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The workload of most of the staff members is overly high, in some cases exceeding the maximum threshold of 250 hours.
- Not all of the teaching staff have been able to travel abroad to participate in the international conferences and networks. Both the ministry of internal affairs and the academy should seek ways of insuring that staff can travel in order to keep their knowledge up-to-date and their skills at an international level.
- The involvement of teaching staff in international research projects is limited. The academy is encouraged to continue to be outward looking and to engage positively and proactively with any opportunities to participate in international research projects.
- There are no regular visiting academics or practitioners involved in teaching credit bearing courses.

6.4.

Students	Partially conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The employment rate of the students is 100%.
- The graduation rate of the students is high, varying between 90-98%, and the drop-out rate has decreased over the years.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There are no mobility opportunities available for students.. Therefore, no students have participated in international mobility programmes. Without those opportunities, the

students will, over time, be disadvantaged in the global market place for work. Even if mobility is not possible, due to specific status of students and institutions, a mechanism of visits/exchange of good practice should be put in place. The best law schools in Europe make exchange possibilities available for their students in the area of criminal law and the Academy is encouraged to open similar opportunities to its students.

- The Academy should strengthen the processes and procedures that it has in place for detection of plagiarism and academic fraud.

6.5.

Resources	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The Academy has a good solid financial ground to conduct studies in a stable way.
- The Academy has adequate logistics, both in term of housing and equipment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There is a lack of transparency regarding the study programme on the University’s website. The Academy should take steps to make sure that all relevant information about programmes is available and accessible on its website.
 - The Academy should keep its IT provisions under constant review and update it appropriately in order to ensure it keeps pace with the fast-moving area.
 - The teaching materials are rather scarce and the capacity of the library is only for 6.2% of the students, which is rather low. The capacity of the library should be increased and a wider selection of bibliographic materials should be made available to the students.
- 7.** According to section 33.5 of the document “Requirements and Procedure for Accreditation of Study Programmes in Moldova”, if one or two of the component assessments by an assessment committee are “partially conforms to requirements, the Quality Assessment Council shall analyse the strengths and areas of improvement of the study programme to accredit the study programme for a period of five years or for a period of three years.
- 8.** The Council analyzed the strengths and areas of improvement of the study programme and taking into account that:
- The content of the study programme needs to be improved to ensure that it contains the most relevant and contemporary courses so as to serve the needs of Moldova as the country continues to develop.

- The research skills of the students are rather limited, especially in terms of the quality of the academic level of the master theses.
- There is a lack of an embedded understanding across staff and students of the concept of learning outcomes.
- The implementation of the grading system does not make it possible to distinguish the students according to their knowledge acquired.
- The workload of most of the staff members is overly high.
- Not all of the teaching staff have been able to travel abroad to participate in the international conferences and networks.
- The involvement of teaching staff in international research projects is limited. There are no regular visiting academics or practitioners involved in teaching credit bearing courses.
- There are no mobility opportunities available for students. Therefore, no students have participated in international mobility programmes.
- The teaching materials are rather scarce and the capacity of the library is only for 6.2% of the students, which is rather low..

the Council **DECIDED**

To make a proposal to the Minister of Education of the Republic of Moldova to accredit the Master’s study programme “Criminal Law” of the National Police Academy “Stefan cel Mare” of MIA for a period of three years.

The decision was adopted by 9 votes in favour and 0 votes against.

9. Contestation:

- 9.1.** Evaluation proceedings conducted by EKKA may be disputed if the proceedings do not comply with the procedure provided for in this document. The challenge is filed with the Management Board of the Archimedes Foundation within 30 working days after the person filing the challenge became or should have become aware of the contested finding.
- 9.2.** The assessment decision by the EKKA Quality Assessment Council may be disputed after adoption of the corresponding administrative decision by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova.

Tõnu Meidla
Chair of the Council

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council