

**Expert's Report on the Accreditation of Study Programs**  
**at the**  
**World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden**  
**1412-xx-1**



**2. Meeting of the ZEvA Commission for International Affairs on 22.04.2015**

**TOP 4**

Study Program	Degree	ECTS	Programme Duration	Type of Programme	typical annual intake	maximum annual intake
Master of Science in Maritime Affairs	M.Sc.	90	14 months	full time		
Accelerated programme		66	10 months	full time		
Maritime Affairs	PhD		3-4 years	full time		
Part-time	PhD		4-6 years	part time		

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- Prof. Dr. Frank Ziemer, Wismar University of Applied Sciences, Professor for Maritime Law
- Prof. Dr Mike Barnett, Southampton Solent University, Maritime and Technology Faculty, Professor of Maritime Safety
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**Hanover, February 27th, 2015**

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*I Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission*

**1 Decision of the ZEvA Commission for International Affairs (KIA)**

## **I. Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission**

### **1. Decision of the ZEvA Commission for International Affairs (KIA)**

*The KIA follows the experts' report and recommendations and takes note of the university's response. As the university has already agreed to formulate the completion of a dissertation in a preceding Master's programme as an entry requirement for their doctoral programme, the condition for the doctoral programme suggested by the experts has been fulfilled.*

*The KIA decides to accredit the Master's programme "Master of Science in Maritime Affairs" at the World Maritime University in Malmö with the degree of Master of Science for the duration of five years without conditions.*

*The KIA decides to accredit the doctoral programme "Doctor of Philosophy in Maritime Affairs" at the World Maritime University in Malmö with the degree Doctor of Philosophy for the duration of five years without conditions.*

## **2. Final Vote of the Expert Panel**

### **2.1 General Aspects**

#### **2.1.1 General Recommendations:**

- The expert panel recommends including external stakeholders in WMU's internal committees to strengthen decision making processes and avoid self-perpetuation of incorrect decisions.
- The expert panel recommends exploring the possibility of giving students the opportunity to spend some time at WMU's Chinese locations.
- The expert panel recommends revising the learning outcomes according to Bloom's taxonomy and in line with the second and third cycle of the "Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area". The learning outcomes should make explicit what the students will know, or be able to do, as a result of successfully completing the course.

### **2.2 Master of Science in Maritime Affairs (M.Sc.)**

#### **2.2.1 Recommendations:**

- The expert panel recommends formulating specific intended learning outcomes for each of the specialisations.
- The expert panel recommends re-assessing the distribution of 95 ECTS credits over a duration of only 14 months. WMU should evaluate the real student workload and revise the programme according to the results by either reducing the number of ECTS credits or extending the duration of the programme.
- The expert panel recommends making a dissertation mandatory.
- The expert panel recommends choosing a more standardised credit system for the course units, for example units of 4 credits and multiples thereof..
- The expert panel recommends integrating Port Management and Shipping Management & Logistics into one specialisation and also exploring the possibility for new specialisations such as e.g. Offshore Oil and Gas.
- The expert panel recommends including the marks obtained for the Foundation studies modules in the overall Grade Point Average.
- The expert panel recommends that the carrying of Failed modules is eliminated to ensure that students achieve 90 (95) credits in order to obtain an MSc.

***1 Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission***

***2 Final Vote of the Expert Panel***

2.2.2 Recommendation to the ZEvA International Accreditation Commission:

The expert group recommends the accreditation of the Master's programme "Master of Science in Maritime Affairs" with the degree of Master of Science for the duration of five years without conditions.

**2.3 Doctor of Philosophy in Maritime Affairs (PhD)**

2.3.1 Recommendations:

- The expert panel recommends re-distributing the credits for the registration to the other progression seminars and the thesis.
- The expert panel recommends reducing the number of progression seminars from 4 to 3 and introduce an annual monitoring system, using an independent assessor from within WMU.
- The expert panel recommends making the publication of the dissertation mandatory.
- The expert panel recommends that the records of the meetings between PhD students and their supervisors are kept by the PhD office, e.g. in a progress report for each PhD student.

2.3.2 Recommendation to the ZEvA International Accreditation Commission:

The expert group recommends the accreditation of the doctoral programme "Doctor of Philosophy in Maritime Affairs" with the degree Doctor of Philosophy for the duration of five years under the following conditions:

- The university is to make the completion of a dissertation in the preceding Master's programme an entry requirement.

*II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel*

*0 Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure*

## **II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel**

### **Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure**

It is the purpose of this accreditation procedure to assess the quality of the study programmes of the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden (WMU) against international standards. The assessment is based on ZEvA's "Assessment Framework for the Evaluation of Study Programmes" as laid out in our "Manual for Evaluation and Certification of Study Programmes". This assessment framework is in part based on the "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)" (ENQA 2009), the "Framework for Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area" (2005) and the "ECTS User's Guide" (European Communities, 2009).

For the purpose of assessing WMUs programmes, WMU were asked to hand in a self-report on their programmes, describing in detail their institution and the programmes to be assessed, covering all aspects of ZEvA's assessment framework.

After receiving the self-report and assembling an expert panel for the accreditation procedure, a site-visit was conducted in Malmö. During the site-visit, the expert panel had the opportunity to speak with the university's management and teaching staff as well as students of both study programmes. Also, the members of the expert panel were given a tour of the university's facilities and also the new building which is currently under construction and to which the university will move later in 2015.

This report is based on the experts' assessment of the university's self-report and their findings during the site-visit. It will serve as a basis for ZEvA's Commission on International Affairs to decide on the accreditation of the university's study programmes. In the case of a positive decision by the Commission, ZEvA will award its quality seal for a limited time period, after which the university can reapply for accreditation.

## **1. Assessment of the Study Programmes**

### **1.1 Institutional Governance and Management**

#### *General Organisation*

The World Maritime University was founded by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations' specialized agency for maritime affairs and opened in Malmö in 1983. As such, WMU is "owned" by IMO's 170 member states. The university is in fact stateless and as a UN institution, it has the status of an embassy in Malmö. In 2005, WMU also started to offer degree programmes in China, which are not covered by this report.

The organisational structure of WMU is laid out in its charter, adopted by IMO's Assembly. As laid out in the charter, the university is governed first and foremost by IMO. Ultimate authority lies with the IMO Assembly which meets biennially. WMU's budget is overseen by the IMO Council, which meets twice a year and appoints WMU's chancellor. To date all WMU chancellors have also been IMO's Secretary General. The Secretary General also appoints WMU's Board of Governors, which meets at least annually and is assisted by an executive board which meets at least three times a year. The chancellor appoints the university's president. The Board of Governors also appoints the Academic Council, which is presided over by the president and includes all academic staff. The Academic Council has appointed several sub-committees, including the Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CAC), the Admissions Boards, the Quality Assurance Committee, the Information and Communications Technology Committee, the Research Ethics Committee et.al.

WMU's mission is laid out on their web-site:

As a center of excellence for postgraduate maritime education, our mission is to serve the global maritime community through education, research and capacity building to ensure safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans. WMU:

- Contributes to maritime capacity building and the development of effective policies for the global maritime community
- Helps build a sustainable world through maritime education and research
- Educates future global maritime leaders, experts and professionals
- Provides a forum for international collaboration on maritime transportation

WMU's vision is to be the world's leading maritime university for postgraduate education and research. By the end of 2014, WMU has had over 3.900 graduates from 165 countries.

The expert panel agrees that WMU has a clearly defined institutional profile with its own vision of quality. It notes only that the internal committees are entirely composed of WMU's own teaching and administration personnel, often with a seat in several committees. To strengthen decision making processes and avoid self-perpetuation of incorrect decisions WMU should consider including external stakeholders in these committees.

#### *Equal Opportunities*

WMU also has a clear equal opportunities policy and a commitment to the UN's Millennium

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Development Goals. The expert panel commends the university for its efforts at increasing the number of female students in a traditionally male-dominated field. The only area where equal opportunities have not been achieved is in the enrolment of disabled students. Due to WMU's political status, it is not possible to organize UN health insurance for non-EU students with health conditions before enrolment, and all students with disabilities are excluded from the Swedish health insurance system. This effectively bars these students from immigration.

*Student Mobility and Internationalisation*

Internationalisation is at the core of WMU, as it is an international university and almost all students come from outside Sweden. The study programmes have a decidedly international focus and the students conduct field studies in an international context. So, for the most part, the enrolled students do not feel the need to spend some time abroad at another university and come back afterwards. Most of the students are on leave from their current employment and need to finish their studies within the required time, and many are financed by their employers or international funders, and these funds cannot easily be used to finance studies at another university. Moreover, the students are excluded from the European Erasmus-network, as WMU is not a European institution. The experts appreciate that student mobility is not an essential issue for the students involved and that there are considerable logistical hindrances. However, some effort could be made to give students the opportunity to spend some time at WMU's Chinese locations, which would offer courses easily comparable to those of the programme in Malmö. The students present during the site-visit expressed that they would find this opportunity desirable, so the expert panel recommends that WMU explore that possibility.

## **1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes**

The university has formulated intended learning outcomes both for study programmes and for individual study units or subjects. These learning outcomes cover key competencies within the programme's field of study and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the future employability of the students. The intended learning outcomes of the Master's programme are as follows:

MSc in Maritime Affairs graduates are:

- equipped with the interdisciplinary maritime knowledge necessary to contribute to national and international capacity building and to fulfil their national and international responsibilities for effective maritime development
- specialists in one of six disciplines: Marine Environmental & Ocean Management; Maritime Education & Training; Maritime Law & Policy; Maritime Safety & Environmental Protection; Port Management; or Shipping Management & Logistics
- possessed of expert leadership, problem-solving and critical analysis skills
- able to carry out research and communicate the results of this independent work
- able to work effectively, both independently and in a group, to integrate complex knowledge from different aspects of the maritime field
- able to contribute to the sustainable development of the maritime industry



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- knowledgeable about IMO regulations and Conventions, and the goals of the UN
- able to communicate, operate and inter-act in an international and multi-cultural environment
- members of a maritime network that spans the globe and crosses all areas of maritime activity
- able to communicate confidently and clearly in English in a professional context and using a variety of media

These learning outcomes do not distinguish between the individual specialisations, nor are there any added learning outcomes for the specialisations (cf. the recommendation below). The course descriptions give intended learning outcomes for each subject individually.

The learning outcomes of the PhD programme are as follows:

Research skills

Ability to:

- describe the nature of academic research and its role in policy determination and optimisation
- Identify and explain the processes and requirements for the conduct of appropriate academic research
- Explain the main methodologies of research including qualitative and quantitative methodologies and their strengths and weaknesses
- Choose appropriate methodologies and methods for specific research questions
- Use different tools/methods for conducting research
- Use, as appropriate, different statistical tools and interpret their outcomes in social and operational contexts
- Recognize the necessity of and requirements for research ethics including those related to plagiarism
- Develop a plan to continuously evaluate and improve their own research skills and the application of their findings for practical ends

Critical thinking skills

Ability to:

- Critically review existing literature in their own subject area showing in-depth analytical, evaluation and synthesis abilities in the interrogation of information from diverse sources
- Develop a learning strategy that incrementally shows advanced critique of theories and practices in the domain
- Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking skills in answering academic queries from peers, faculty and the wider University community and in the interpretation of research results

Academic practitioner skills

Ability to:

- Define the attributes of a scholar and the relevance of academic work to industry practice in their own discipline(s)
- Apply effective project management techniques, in relation to their own resources and time management, goal and milestone setting and the evaluation of performance, for the purpose of completing research work
- Exhibit an awareness of developments in their own area of work and contemporary knowledge in the domain

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- Create and/or promote appropriate peer-networks for improving research in their specific subject area and for the optimisation of a knowledge based society
- Apply research skills to the production of a distinct and original work in the form of a dissertation and under examination conditions show professional ability as a researcher
- Use the technology (hardware and software) required in the particular research domain of interest

Professional communicator skills

Ability to:

- Communicate complex ideas in a coherent, organized and technically sound manner and with clarity
- Demonstrate advanced scholarship in a subject area through the communication of their own research outcomes in a local and international context
- Discuss the requirements for publicising findings and the underpinning scientific rationale
- Communicate research findings via appropriate academic media
- Use correct citation techniques and apply the relevant style to the referencing of academic text
- Properly acknowledge the work of others both in written and oral communications
- Appreciate and use proper research and subject area terminology

For each progression stage of the PhD programme, individual intended learning outcomes are formulated in the course descriptions.

The expert panel concludes that these learning outcomes properly correspond to the contents of the programmes and that the intended learning outcomes of the individual course units sufficiently relate to the overall learning outcomes.

In the formulation of these learning outcomes, however, the experts see some room for improvement. The learning outcomes should make explicit what the students will know, or be able to do, as a result of successfully completing the course (for example, “be members of a maritime network” is not the result of acquiring knowledge or skill). The university should refine the learning outcomes according to Bloom’s taxonomy and in line with the second and third cycle of the “Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area.”<sup>1</sup> For the Master’s programme, WMU should also consider formulating specific intended learning outcomes for the specialisations.

### **1.3 Concept and structure of the Study Programme**

#### **1.3.1 MSc in Maritime Affairs**

##### *Structure*

The Master’s programme in Maritime Affairs awards a total of 95 ECTS credits and the course runs for a period of 14 months. Students who already have a postgraduate qualifica-

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<sup>1</sup> See for example <http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/workload-a-ects/177-educational-structures-learning-outcomes-workload-and-the-calculation-of-ects-credits.html>

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tion relevant to the programme can apply for advanced standing and thus can finish the programme in 10 months for a total of 71 ECTS credits (accelerated programme). The amount of credits was recently changed from 90 to 95 by awarding an additional 5 credits for the field studies. Also, since the programme began, its duration has been reduced from 21 months to 17 and then to the current 14. One ECTS credit at WMU equals a total of 26-28 hours of student workload.

The programme is divided into 4 terms. The first term comprises 24 credits for the Foundation Studies. These do not contribute towards the cumulative grade point average of the programme. The students have to pass the first term with no more than one F grade. In the second and third terms, the students undertake their respective Specialisations, for which 40 credits are awarded. Also, they conduct their field studies (5 credits). During the fourth term, students have a choice of either writing a dissertation or choosing from a catalogue of Electives. A dissertation is recommended for those who are aiming for further academic qualifications such as a PhD, while electives are recommended for students who want to return to their job after graduation. For the electives or dissertation, the students are awarded 24 credits and a further 2 for a seminar.

The programme is further divided into course units that range from 2 to 10 credits (except for the dissertation with 24 credits). The contents, learning outcomes, teaching methods, student workload, assessment requirements etc. are laid out in the detailed course descriptions, to which the students have access on the University's online portal.,.

The experts see the programme as well executed and designed in a way that students should be able to reach the intended learning outcomes and qualifications associated with a second-level degree according to the Qualifications Framework. The graduates can be expected to achieve good positions in their further career and make a major contribution to their relevant fields of employment. For the most part, graduates are going back to their employers, especially if the tuition fees were covered by them. WMU's main focus is on training and capacity building for developing countries, which is commendable.

Its structure, however, is in many respects unusual for universities within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Firstly, according to the ECTS User's Guide, usually in an academic year 60 ECTS credits are awarded, equalling a total of 1,500-1,800 hours of student workload. Thus, 95 ECTS credits (2,375 hours) should normally be awarded after 18 months of study, not 14. This results from the fact that the MSc is an intensive programme with less time for holidays and longer working hours. 60 credits are usually calculated with 32-39 hours per week over 46 weeks of the year. 95 credits would amount to roughly 46-50 hours per week, with 46 weeks per year (or less, if spread out over more than 46 weeks). The university has explained that the short duration of the programme was a specific requirement of the IMO members, so that students can return to their respective positions as soon as possible. The experts consider this as a challenging programme. Assumed that the students are highly motivated, have work experience and a good student support system available, it may still be feasible but the experts feel the workload stretches the limits somewhat. Thus, the experts recommend to re-assess the distribution of 95 credits over the course of 14 months. WMU should evaluate the students' real workload and possibly revise the programme according to the results.

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Secondly, Master's programmes in the EHEA usually comprise 60, 90 or 120 credits. 95 thus deviates from this norm. Since the deviation is a minor one, the experts recognise no deficiency in this.

Thirdly, the possibility of finishing the programme without a dissertation seems very unusual. This could lead to problems of recognition of the degree by other EHEA countries. WMU has already identified several countries world-wide that require a dissertation, so students from these countries have to choose a dissertation. In the expert panel's opinion, the university should make the dissertation mandatory. All Master's degrees should provide the necessary qualification for a student to undertake a PhD. Without a dissertation the students might not be eligible for a PhD in some countries. Equally, WMU has to make this an entry requirement for their PhD programme. Undertaking a PhD is academically challenging and the experience of writing an extended piece of work based on research is important. Thus entering the PhD programme without having undertaken an MSc dissertation is likely to lead to a much higher risk of failure.

Fourthly, the diversity in size of the course units seems unnecessary. The experts recommend choosing a more standardised system, like units of 4 credits and multiples of it. This also makes the transfer of credits easier.

*Specialisations*

The students can choose between one of the following specialisations: Marine Environmental & Ocean Management, Maritime Education & Training, Maritime Law & Policy, Maritime Safety & Environmental Protection, Port Management, or Shipping Management & Logistics. These specialisations cover the second and third terms for a total of 40 credits, and thus comprise an important part of the programme. The choice of specialisations is mainly dependent on the demands of the students' employers. The expert panel notes that some of the specialisations are not clearly distinguished, especially Port Management and Shipping Management & Logistics which have a very strong overlap. The expert panel recommends integrating these two specialisations into one and also exploring the possibility for new specialisations like e.g. Offshore Oil and Gas.

*Entry Requirements*

Entry requirements for the MSc Programme are as follows:

- a Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline, or an equivalent university qualification  
or
- the highest grade certificate of competency for unrestricted service as master mariner or chief engineer, or equivalent maritime qualifications  
and
- substantial, directly relevant professional experience
- competence in English language, demonstrated by an internationally recognised standard test
- computer competence (at least the ability to use Microsoft Office)

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The English language requirements are as follows (ESSP is WMU's English and Study Skills Programme):

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

ESSP participation required if the scores are:

IBT: 61 to 79

PBT: 500 to 549

no ESSP required if the scores are:

IBT: 80+

PBT: 550+

WMU's TOEFL institution code is 9198.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

bands 5.0 and 5.5 ESSP participation required

band 6.0 or above no ESSP required

Please note: the academic, not the general training version of the test is required

Cambridge Examinations

First Certificate (FCE) ESSP participation required

Proficiency (CPE) no ESSP required

The experts consider these required scores as rather low but accept that WMU has had a long experience with these requirements.

WMU is in a unique position in that the first selection of students is not undertaken at the university but by the student's employers or funders. They select students that they then suggest to WMU and WMU then decides which of these are qualified for the programme. The exceptions to this approach are the few self-funded students who apply directly at WMU and are tested there. Thus, the real competition happens outside of WMU's control and it is hard to assess how many applicants have already been ruled out once the applications are transferred to WMU.

### 1.3.2 PhD in Maritime Affairs

#### *Structure*

The PhD programme of Maritime Affairs is usually completed within 3-6 years, after which a total of 240 ECTS credits are awarded. Students can study full-time (3-4 years) or part-time (4-6 years), if they are still in employment in their respective home countries. They are required to undergo a Research Methods Course (20 credits) and four Progression Seminars (1&2: 30 credits, 3&4: 40 credits) In addition to this, the students are awarded 20 credits for Registration and an approved research proposal, and 60 credits for the dissertation.

In each Progression Seminar, the students are required to present the results of their research. Based on this presentation, the Progression Board decides whether the student may proceed to the next stage of research or if they should possibly discontinue their PhD altogether. The final dissertation can be completed as a monograph or as a compilation of published articles. The programme is completed with the defence of the dissertation.

While the programme has no formalised specialisations, WMU outlines the main areas of

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research in which students can conduct their research:

- Maritime Administration: Law, Policy and Security
- Maritime Risk and System Safety (MaRiSa Group)
- Marine Environmental Research (MER Group) / Ocean Policy and Management
- Shipping and Port Management
- Maritime Energy Management
- Maritime Technology and Education

The expert panel sees this structure as feasible. The programme also seems well executed and providing qualifications in line with the third level of the Qualifications framework. The students can be expected to achieve the intended learning outcomes and good opportunities for a high-level career in the maritime field or in academia.

However, the award of 20 credits for the application seems highly unusual, as it is awarded for work done before enrolment. The expert panel thus recommends re-distributing the credits for the registration to the other Progression Seminars and the thesis.

Also, the expert panel had the impression that the Progression Seminars put a lot of pressure on the students and recommends reducing them. The seminars might become a series of hurdles to jump, rather than allowing a continuous period of in-depth research. However, to ensure that satisfactory progress is made, the expert panel recommend the introduction of an annual monitoring programme, with an assessor, independent of the supervision team, conducting an interview with each student. A brief report could be lodged with the PhD administration office.

The expert panel also recommends making the publication of the dissertation mandatory, which to date has not been the case.

### *Entry requirements*

In their PhD brochure, WMU gives the entry requirements as follows:

Applicants should typically hold a good Master's degree in a relevant discipline. In exceptional cases, substantial professional, business or industrial qualifications/experience may also be taken into consideration.

For the most part, the expert panel considers these entry requirements as sufficient, but as stated above, in the light of WMUs own MSc programme, they deem it necessary to set the completion of a dissertation in the Master's programme as a mandatory requirement to prepare the students for publication and extensive research.

## **1.4 Teaching Faculty**

WMU employs 23 members of resident faculty, divided into Full Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors and Lecturers, all of whom are involved with the programmes to be assessed. 20 members are full-time, of which 13 currently oversee doctoral students. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, all faculty members are encouraged to participate

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in research, for which their teaching load can be reduced, and also have administrative responsibilities. Research activities are also a requirement for internal promotion to a higher grade.

Prerequisites for appointment are

- A doctoral degree
- Professional experience in the maritime sector
- Research and publication record
- Excellent English and communication skills

Recruitment is conducted globally, and the selection procedures are transparent, as laid out in a Policy & Procedure document. The appointment is carried out by the Chancellor.

In addition to resident faculty, WMU also relies heavily on external teaching personnel. 6 Adjunct Professors have been enlisted and over 100 visiting professors. These are usually academics from other universities, senior industry practitioners and international civil servants. It is stated in the WMU Academic handbook that the visiting faculty do not receive payment for their contribution to the programme..

WMU employs academics who have teaching experience at other universities and who have received their pedagogic training there. It does not have its own training programme but uses the Faculty Forum as a peer coaching tool, supplementing it with occasional training courses.

The expert panel asserts that the resident faculty are well qualified within the maritime field and, supplemented by qualified visiting faculty, cover the necessary expertise for the execution of the programmes. The commitment of the resident faculty is to be commended and the students seemed for the most part quite satisfied.

## **1.5 Infrastructure, Resources and Student Support**

WMUs financial resources are for the most part comprised of the tuition fees, as WMU receives no recurrent UN funding. The tuition fees cover the entire costs of the programme. The fees for the standard MSc are currently \$26,600 without living expenses and \$53,500 all-inclusive. Tuition for the PhD programme stands at \$33,400. The MSc tuition fees are mostly covered by the students' employers (46%) or international donors (46%). Only 8% of the students are self-funded.

The expert panel had the opportunity to inspect the current building of WMU as well as the plans and the actual construction site of the new building which is to open in a few months. The experts recognise that the facilities in the old building are somewhat dated and run-down but deem them still sufficient for the execution of the MSc and PhD programmes. However, the move to the new building promises to improve the university's facilities considerably. The expert panel was impressed by the new building even in its unfinished state and sees it as an excellent venue for research and teaching as well as the students' social life. The new building includes the historic Tornhuset, the Harbour Master's Building, which is within walking distance of the train station and the city centre. This is being expanded by a modern annex, partly enclosing the historic building. The new building will double WMUs floor space and

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provide a state-of-the-art environment. The library will be extended and there will be ample study and work group areas for students as well as a cafeteria, individual lockers and a print shop. The building is provided by the City of Malmö, as was the current building.

The university also provides housing for the students at a secure building site, which most of them use for the duration of their stay. The expert panel was given a tour of the building and was impressed by the extent of care that WMU invests in their students. Student support in general seemed very intensive and personal, given the small number of students.

Supervision of the PhD candidates is also extensive. The students have regular meetings with their supervisors. The supervisors are required to keep records of every meeting with their PhD students. The expert panel recommends that these records are kept by the PhD office.

The expert panel see the small number of administrative staff as a limiting factor if the number of students increases according to the ambitions of WMU. Still, the administration seems functional and well-organised.

## **1.6 Student Assessment**

### *MSc in Maritime Affairs*

Assessment for the MSc is generally conducted either as written examinations or as assignments. Assignments comprise 70% of the overall assessment. If the grade of an assessment is a D or an F, the student may re-sit the examination or assignment. The re-sit is conducted within a couple of weeks after the release of the grades.

The expert panel sees this system as sufficient, and has confidence that the assessments are conducted in line with the intended learning outcomes. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee has to approve every assessment and verify its adherence to the Learning Outcomes. Criteria and rules for assessments are well documented and readily available to the students. As the assessments are conducted after each consecutive course unit, the students do not have to sit several examinations in parallel.

The Foundation Studies in the MSc programme do not contribute towards the cumulative grade point average (GPA) of the programme; the courses are merely rated with a Pass or Fail. The students have to pass the first term with no more than one F grade to proceed to the second. The Grade Point Average for the last three terms has to be 2.67 or above for the students to be awarded with an MSc, provided they have no F grade in these terms. Students may also leave after the third term with a Post-Graduate Diploma, if their Grade Point Average is above 1.67 and they have no more than one F grade.

The experts feel that the exclusion of the Foundation Studies from the GPA is unjustified and recommend including them in the GPA. Additionally, WMU should consider eliminating the possibility of carrying one fail from the Foundation Studies. As these courses are part of the programme, the students should thus pass all mandatory courses to receive their degree.

WMU awards grades according to their own scale but additionally the relative ECTS grades.



*II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel*

**1 Assessment of the Study Programmes**

These are specified in the Diploma Supplement and the Transcript of Records.

WMU has also made sufficient arrangements for students with disabilities, including special assistance, extra time and other particular arrangements according to the students' special needs.

*PhD in Maritime Affairs*

The PhD is assessed through the dissertation and its defence by the Examination Board. The Board may recommend awarding a PhD, awarding it after additional work, refusing the degree and also awarding an MPhil, if the candidates have accumulated at least 160 ECTS.

Apart from the dissertation, the credits are awarded through successful completion of the Research Methods Course and the Progression Seminars.

### **1.7 Quality Assurance**

WMU has documented their extensive quality assurance system, which includes evaluations of all subjects, teaching and assessment by the students, a reporting system, a Quality Bulletin, and a system of external examiners. Quality assurance is overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee, which is chaired by the registrar. WMU has also provided extensive results of their quality assurance during the site visit and the experts gained the impression of a very strong commitment to quality throughout the institution. The results of WMUs quality assurance are used to constantly develop their institution and study programmes further.

All internal stakeholders are involved in WMUs quality assurance and the students have their own student council, which also appoints representatives to the Academic Council and the Student Affairs Monitoring Council.

### **1.8 Transparency and Public Information**

Information about the university, its policies and its programmes is provided on WMUs website. For external interested parties, general information about the programmes is readily available. Potential students and funding organisations are provided with information about the entrance requirements. WMU also hands out information brochures about their programmes that describe the curriculum, entrance requirements and all other relevant information for applicants.

The students and staff at WMU have access to several online platforms that provide more in-depth and up-to date information about the programmes and the individual courses. The experts were given access to these platforms prior to the site-visit and found them hard to navigate, but all students are given an extensive introduction to all online tools and thus should be well equipped to use them on a daily basis.

*II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel*

**1 Assessment of the Study Programmes**

**1.9 General Findings and Impressions of the Expert Panel**

The expert panel commends WMU as an institution that provides a high quality education for students in the maritime world. Its governance structure is extensive and ensures a commitment to quality and the application of the university's mandate. Its special status gives it unique possibilities, as it is not bound by any national legislation or higher education system. This special status also has its challenges, as WMUs programmes are not as easily recognised as programmes within the EHEA. However, the experts feel that they can commend the recognition of WMUs awards within the EHEA. The key features of programmes within the context of the Bologna Process are all present, in some cases in an unusual manner but still within acceptable limits. In some instances, as stated above, the expert panel sees room for improvement and for enhancing the quality of WMU as an institution and of its study programmes, but this does not diminish the overall positive impression.

The experts were impressed by the collegial atmosphere in which the site visit was conducted. WMUs staff seems committed to its institutional goals and well qualified to carry out the study programmes. The students that the experts met were also great ambassadors for WMU and were clearly proud of their institution. The new building is bound to increase the quality of WMUs facility considerably and will also further improve the quality of their programmes.

***III Appendix***

***1 University's Response to the Expert Report***

**III. Appendix**

**1. University's Response to the Expert Report**

**Introduction**

The University would first like to thank the members of the Expert Panel and the representative of ZEVA secretariat for their engagement, interest and positivity throughout the site visit. WMU has found the entire ZEVA Accreditation Procedure both useful and interesting, from beginning to end; it has offered us a new framework within which to examine our policies and procedures, and a fresh view of WMU as part of international academia.

\* \* \*

**Responses to the Recommendations in the Expert Report**

**1.1 Institutional Governance and Management**

*General Organisation*

External Stakeholders on internal committees

The main committees (Board of Governors and Executive Board) that govern the University are made up entirely of external members, without any members drawn from the University; even the President is only in attendance at the meetings of the governing bodies. The Rules that govern the Academic Council (and its sub-committees) are determined by the Board of Governors, under the Charter. The Board has not made any provision for external representation on the Academic Council and its sub-committees, apart from the right to attend of the members of the Board of Governors itself. The University can propose the change to the IMO Secretariat, but the decision is not WMU's to make.

*Student Mobility and Internationalisation*

Malmö students to be offered the opportunity to spend time in China

We have previously offered the option of spending all or part of the fourth term in China. However, after three years (Classes of 2011, 2012 and 2013), not a single student had taken up the option, and so we ceased offering it. However, we are happy to re-introduce this option, as new generations of students may now be interested in this exchange opportunity.

### III Appendix

#### 1 University's Response to the Expert Report

## **1.2 Intended learning Outcomes**

### Improve the WMU Intended Learning Outcomes

We are very grateful for these comments, and have already started to arrange meetings to:

- (a) agree the specific ILOs for each MSc specialisation
- (b) improve and refine the learning outcomes for the programmes as a whole and for the subjects within the MSc programme.

## **1.3 Concept and Structure of the Study Programme**

### Workload and Credits

The University agrees wholeheartedly with the Expert Assessors and feels that the students are, at many points in the programme, burdened with a very heavy workload. We will re-assess the study hours and credits awarded, with a view to reaching a better balance, and introduce this in the next Academic Handbook, which applies to the Class of 2017.

### Dissertation Requirement for the MSc

While we fully understand the context and reasons for the recommendation that all MSc students should complete a dissertation, this is not something that can be introduced at the stroke of a pen. The system of elective subjects as an alternative to a dissertation was introduced on the request of WMU's stakeholders, especially the employers of the graduates, who were seeking graduates with broader, rather than deeper, knowledge. Equally, many of the students want to extend their specific subject knowledge outside their specialisation, to increase their employment mobility within their home administration. WMU would also need to consider the resource implications, and have these considered by the governing bodies. We would need to move towards more resident faculty and fewer visiting faculty, which would be far from cost-neutral.

We would therefore respond that we would adopt this as a medium-term aim, subject to the discussions we will initiate with our stakeholders. However, a greater number of students are now writing a dissertation: from 24 in 2013 (23%), to 38 last year (31%) and 37 (34%) this year.

### Subjects and their credit weighting: multiples of 4 to be used

We are pleased to introduce this recommendation in the next Academic Handbook, which will apply a uniform standard for the Class of 2017 onwards.

### Specialisations

We will not be amalgamating the specialisations in Shipping Management & Logistics and Port Management. The differentiation is very important to the students, their employers and

### III Appendix

#### **1 University's Response to the Expert Report**

their governments. The common teaching between the two specialisations already provides economies, and no further financial saving would be made through amalgamating the two specialisations; indeed, we would be likely to be perceived as unresponsive to the preferences of our stakeholders and of the IMO Member States. In addition, from the students' perspective, two classes, each of around 20 students, provide a much better learning and mentoring environment than a single class of over 40 students.

New specialisation: the new specialisation in Maritime Energy Management will be introduced in the next Academic Handbook, for the Class of 2017 onwards. This is a subject that is not currently available elsewhere in the form we will offer it, and it has been designed to appeal to a slightly different student base from the traditional WMU student.

#### **1.3.2 PhD in Maritime Affairs**

##### 20 credits awarded for registration

We accept this recommendation and we will re-distribute the credits, as suggested, with effect from the students who first register in 2016.

##### Introduction of an annual monitoring scheme

We are enthusiastic about this proposal, which we will introduce as soon as the details are agreed by the Research Committee, but at latest by the end of 2015.

##### Publication of dissertations

The publication of dissertations has always been encouraged, but the Research Committee will now examine the recommendation that this become mandatory.

##### Entry Requirements

This recommendation, that an applicant to the PhD programme must have completed a Master's degree with a dissertation, is already the actuality, but as recommended, we will now make the requirement explicit.

#### **1.5 Infrastructure, Resources and Student Support**

##### Retention of records by PhD Office

The University is happy to accept this recommendation, and it will be implemented in tandem with the annual monitoring programme, so that a full set of records (supervision and monitoring) can be retained for each doctoral student by the PhD office.

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**1 University's Response to the Expert Report**

**1.6 Student Assessment**

**Inclusion of first-term grades in the overall GPA**

The University is very happy to receive this recommendation. The current system was introduced at the behest of the External Examiners in 2013, as they had received student complaints that it was unfair to include the first-term grades. We will revert to our previous system with effect from the next Academic Handbook, for the Class of 2017 onwards.

**No F grades to be carried**

This recommendation was discussed extensively during the site visit, and we are happy to implement it, again with effect from the next Academic Handbook, for the Class of 2017 onwards. We will also introduce the possibility of students taking an additional re-sit exam, so that they are all offered the chance of reaching the required standards.

\* \* \*

**Conclusion**

The staff and students of WMU would again like to thank the Expert Assessors for their advice and expertise, as well as for their engagement and enthusiasm during the visit to Malmö.