

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 European University of Moldova
FOR 5 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 European University of Moldova took place on May 6, 2015.
3. The Assessment Committee sent the preliminary report to EKKA on June 19, 2015. The Assessment Committee received the comments from the European University of Moldova on July 9, 2015 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	Conforms to requirements
Students	Conforms to requirements
Resources	Partially conforms to requirements

6. The EKKA Quality Assessment Council discussed the assessment report along with the comments of the European University of Moldova and 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

- The University has a good set of quality assurance policies.
- The University has a comprehensive website which makes available to students and applicants all the information they need.
- The University has good cooperation agreements with various representatives of the labour market and a good understanding of the labour market needs. The employers' and graduates' suggestions have been taken into consideration for the development of the programme.

- The University has a solid internships network which ensures that the internships are related to the field of study and contribute to achievement of the study programme’s objective.
- There is a reliable tracking mechanism in place that allows monitoring the employment rate and career development of the graduates.
- The study programme contains a special mandatory course aimed at developing research skills for the students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- It is recommended to develop an action plan targeted at the implementation of the strategic development plan and ensure that the results of the plan’s implementation are analyzed and serve as a basis for the following planning.
- The titles of some disciplines are not clearly related to criminal law, though the content is clearly related. It is recommended to improve the content of the programme by revising the title of the disciplines and also introducing some specialized courses of importance for the industry, such as cyber-crime, terrorism, etc., and offer free-chose disciplines that are more criminal law oriented.

6.2.

Teaching and learning	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The fact that all courses are published on the website is a plus for the students.
- The facilities such as mock court-room for simulated trials, forensic laboratory for preparing investigation related documentation and IT laboratory, are interesting tools that allow students to get involved in the reality of the legal activities. Also, two interesting features found at the visit are the legal clinic and case-analysis at the level of the Court of Appeal.
- There is an internal regulation regarding the assessment of learning outcomes, which enacts principles of increasing objectivity and transparency of the assessment, active involvement of students in the assessment process and also involvement in the evaluation process of representatives of labour-market and major businesses from Moldova.
- EUM’s internal regulations recognize prior learning outcomes that generated ECTS, mainly throughout the mobility system.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- It is strongly recommended that the evaluation at exams and final thesis levels is made more thorough, in order for the grading to be more critical and really reflect the quality of

the papers. Also, case-solving could be used more widely as an evaluation method instead of simple theoretical questions that only emphasise students' memorisation capacities.

- The supervision of master theses should concentrate more thoroughly on correct referencing and also cover more specialized themes and concepts.

6.3.

Teaching staff	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- Lecturers of the EUM are actively involved in national and international research activities and participate in scientific conferences, both at national and international level.
- The EUM is actively involved in publishing scientific literature and provides the opportunity to cover the publishing expenses for the books/research papers prepared by the staff members.
- There is a stimulating system in place based on bonuses for those members of the academic staff who are actively involved in research activities.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- It is recommended to ensure that a regular flow of visiting teachers from abroad participate in credit bearing courses of the programme and specialized seminars.
- It is advisable to extend the international cooperation and research activities with other countries, including the EU member states.

6.4.

Students	Conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The EUM is a popular law school in Moldova, which is in position to lure students from other academic institutions to continue their studies there.
- The Faculty is active in organising international cooperation within their means. Internally, students are encouraged to participate in meetings with practitioners.
- The EUM students are well integrated in the university management at all relevant levels.
- The graduates of the study programme are competitive in the Moldovan labour market.
- The dropout rate is small and clearly declining. Academic progress of students is constantly and systematically monitored by the University.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- In order to improve its graduates’ competitiveness, the external mobility of students needs to be enhanced.
- The skills and competences of the students in the area of academic writing and research have to be paid much more attention. At present this aspect of the programme is still underdeveloped.
- In order to achieve a better standard of graduates it is advisable that the EUM would revise its policies in grading that at the moment is overly generous.

6.5.

Resources	Partially conforms to requirements
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Strengths

- The building provides a good home for the Faculty of Law and the students. The EUM has good logistics, both in term of housing as in terms of equipment.
- Facilities such as mock court room and court of appeal room, forensic and IT laboratories which facilitate the development of practical skills for students.

Areas of Improvement and recommendations

- EUM does not have its own dormitories and medical services facilities.
 - The library, and in particular the availability of access to modern European databases of journals and other legal materials, needs to be improved. This will require further investment in this area by the EUM.
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 University has a comprehensive website which makes available to students and applicants all the information they need.
 - The University has good cooperation agreements with various representatives of the labour market and a good understanding of the labour market needs. The employers’ and graduates’ suggestions have been taken into consideration for the development of the programme.

- Lecturers of the EUM are actively involved in national and international research activities and participate in scientific conferences, both at national and international level.
- The EUM is actively involved in publishing scientific literature and provides the opportunity to cover the publishing expenses for the books/research papers prepared by the staff members.
- There is a stimulating system in place based on bonuses for those members of the academic staff who are actively involved in research activities.
- The EUM students are well integrated in the university management at all relevant levels.
- The graduates of the study programme are competitive in the Moldovan labour market.
- The dropout rate is small and clearly declining. Academic progress of students is constantly and systematically monitored by the University.
- Facilities such as mock court room and court of appeal room, forensic and IT laboratories which facilitate the development of practical skills for students.

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 European University of Moldova for a period of five 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