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**Accreditation of Study Programmes
Assessment Report**

Institution: Moldova State University

Study programme: Professional Master in Labour Law

Assessment committee:

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Dates of the assessment visit: 21/05/15

Assessment committee sent the preliminary report to EKKA: 10.07.2015

Assessment committee received the comments of the institution under accreditation: No comments for this report

Assessment committee approved the final version of component assessment with 5 votes in favour and 0 votes against.

Date: 07.09.2015

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I Summary of the assessment (mark with 'X'):

	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements
Study programme and its development	X		
Teaching and learning		X	
Teaching staff		X	
Students		X	
Resources		X	

General Introduction:

The State University of Moldova (hereinafter referred to as SUM) is a state higher education institution established in 1946 with a mission of educating qualified specialists able to adapt to the changing social and economic conditions, as well as conducting fundamental and applied scientific research and offering various continuous education training programmes. Since 2001, SUM holds the status of an autonomous National University granted by the Government of Moldova and constitutes a unitary, integral and indivisible academic, educational, scientific and cultural center.

As the largest University in Moldova, SUM is providing both full and part-time studies on a wide range of specialties at the Bachelor's level (1st cycle) and the Doctoral level (3rd cycle), and on 125 Master of Research and Professional Master study programmes (2nd cycle) with the corresponding duration of 2 and 1.5 years.



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The Law Faculty of SUM was founded in 1959 and continues to be the leading provider of specialists in law in Moldova. The Faculty consists of nine departments: Theory and History of Law, Constitutional Law and Administrative Law, International Law and Law of Foreign Economic Relations, Civil Procedure Law, Civil Law, Business Law, Criminal Law and Criminology, Labour Law and Criminal Procedure and Forensics, and is governed by the Council of the Faculty elected for a term of five years. In academic year 2014/15, SUM conducts studies on 12 Professional Master programmes in the field of law: “Business Law”, “Criminal Law”, “Criminal Procedure Law and Forensics”, Civil Law”, “Civil Judicial Procedures”, “National and European Enforcement Law”, “Labour Law”, “International Law”, “Human Rights”, “Informational Law”, “Customs Law” and “Public Law”.

The Professional Master programme “Labour Law”, which is being evaluated, is a programme with the duration of 1.5 years of studies, three semesters and 90 credits. The study programme was founded in 2008 and is managed by the Department of Labour Law, who is also responsible for the monitoring and development of the curriculum.

Comments:

The study programme is authorized and functions in accordance with the normative acts in force. The title of the programme is consistent with its content. The department regularly plans the development of the study programme. The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme presented in the SER are in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework. The content and the learning outcomes of the programme are distinguishable from those of the bachelor’s study programme. The main objective of the master programme is to supplement the theory acquired by the students during the first cycle of studies with judiciary cases and practical aspects provide a more in-depth and focused object of study. The master’s programme has a logical structure.

Although the development of the study programme takes into consideration the major trends of the labour market

Also, there is a certain lack of systematic approach in collecting and taking into account the feedback from all the important stakeholders. The academic staff has a strong sense of mission and is well aware of the objectives of the study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives.

The Faculty and Department regularly conduct surveys to evaluate learning process and outcomes. However, the Department should have a clearer procedure to engage the students, alumni and employers in the development process. The teaching staff is enthusiastic and prefer to use active teaching methods. As a good starting point for independent learning, some courses have a textbook written by the instructor. The teaching staff is well aware of the need to keep up with the changes in legal regulations and recent court practice. Still, in order to provide a wider, comparative perspective, it is essential to include non-Moldovan, non-Romanian and non-Russian literature in the syllabi.

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The University has agreements or good cooperation with many public and private institutions, where the students can perform their internship. Students in general expressed satisfaction with organisation of internship. In order to achieve the necessary learning outcomes, all the internships should be conducted in the field of labour law.

It remains unclear how exactly the assessment methods are chosen and matched to learning outcomes and whether the students receive personal feedback regarding their performance at different assessments in order to support student development. The necessary regulation appears to be in place for the recognition of prior learning, but there is no actual experience. The Department should consider the possibility of increasing the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum. It provides more choices to students, but also increases the amount of credits that could be transferred after the end of academic mobility and therefore again makes academic mobility more attractive.

Although the students are already being encouraged to participate in scientific conferences and publish articles, the Department should find more ways to involve master students in current or future research projects (also in development activities).

At the moment, the qualification of full-time teaching staff does not fully comply with legal requirements as not all of them hold a PhD degree and only a few have had some international experience. However, the fact that some members of the teaching staff are also involved in practical legal activities related to the disciplines taught can be considered positive. Provided that the PhD student finalizes his doctoral studies soon, the legal requirements can be met and the programmes' sustainability ensured. However, it is still advisable to envisage the intake of some new younger members of the academic staff, even at part-time level at the beginning.

Concerning other staff development activities besides some project-based opportunities for continuing education, the committee did not receive any evidence concerning the broader staff development plan, including conducting systematic appraisal interviews with the staff and other methods of staff development. At the Faculty management level, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive staff development system that includes also other important elements of staff development, like the implementation of regular appraisal interviews with the teachers.

The committee recommends that at the Faculty management level a system will be created that supports and encourages the members of the full-time teaching staff to regularly develop their skills at foreign higher education institutions and participate in international networks. Regular goals for the international cooperation should be set and the achievement of those goals should be measured regularly e.g. during quarterly performance reviews of the members of the academic staff. Also, the department should even more actively seek possibilities for involving more visiting professors in the teaching in the study programme.

Compared to internationally acceptable standards, the participation in the international research projects and other international scientific activity needs to be much more active. In order to achieve that, more resources should be found and allocated to research activities. **It is highly recommended to apply for the EU funding already available to Moldova, e.g the Erasmus + programme**

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Research activities of the teaching staff are planned and monitored efficiently.

The students' satisfaction with the Labour Law study programme is high.

At the moment, mobility options on the Labour Law study programme are very limited and the academic mobility is virtually non-existent. It is recommended to encourage master students to participate in academic mobility and focus on informing them about the mobility opportunities (for example, hold classes or seminars to introduce the opportunities for academic mobility). In order to help the University in its internationalization (and academic mobility) processes at the University and also at the Faculty level, it is advisable to consider updating and revising the webpage's content in English in order to attract foreign students.

To further support the students, MSU should establish a formalized and effective counselling system for the students – e.g. consider to delegate the responsibility of study counselling from professors to trained specialists. Also, students need to be more informed about the additional counselling services Moldova State University (and also the Faculty) is offering

The committee welcomes the use of modern software by MSU in order to discover plagiarism, yet this approach is only one aspect of plagiarism detection. Therefore, the committee urges the Faculty to adapt a unified and more systematic approach towards preventing plagiarism and actively seek opportunities how to teach students about anti-plagiarism and academic ethics (e.g. course for academic writing, master's seminars etc).

It is advisable to seek ways how to formally strengthen the ties with graduates (alumni club, events for graduates, satisfaction surveys for alumni etc) and monitor their employment more systematically.

Although the graduation of students per each year meets the legal requirements, it would be in the Faculty's best interests that the causes for dropping out would also be formally collected and analysed.

The budget planning in general is sustainable. However, the Faculty seems underfinanced, which according to the understanding of the committee is the reason for many shortcomings described above, e.g. the general salary level of the academic staff, the state of library and the general infrastructure of the Faculty, the low level of academic mobility etc. It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.

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The trend of student numbers (admissions and graduations) is stable and indicates sustainability.

As the Faculty in general was at least partially under renovation, it was not possible for the committee to assess the conformity to the requirements of the teaching and learning environment as a whole. ICT devices are available for both Faculty members and students. The computer rooms look modern and meet the basic contemporary standards. The staff and the students are relatively motivated to use ICT techniques. The positive trend is the using of *Moodle* platform providing the students with information regarding the courses online. Still, the existing ICT solutions should be further developed in order to guarantee the existing resources to be fully utilised and to take the usage of modern technologies to the next level, e.g., full e-courses, webinars, video lectures and comparable.

There is almost no foreign literature in the field of law and the books available are rather out-dated. The University should pay attention to the modern sources of information when replenishing the library, investing in international academic databases, training the librarians, teaching staff and students of being able and motivated to use the resources. The library needs major investment, especially regarding field specific legal literature in English, French or German. It is recommended to increase the awareness of students and academic staff of international databases and motivate them to use the few available.

Commendations:

- The academic staff has a strong sense of mission and is well aware of the objectives of the study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives.
- Good employment rate of the graduates;
- Teaching staff is balanced by age and there is a sign of academic continuity;
- Teaching staff finds time to publish teaching materials for their courses;
- Internship is well organised and the University helps the students with a place of internship due to specific agreements or good cooperation with many employers;
- The ratio between master students and supervisors is favourable and due to this, the workload of academic staff is well-balanced.
- Budget planning has sustainable character;
- The usage of Moodle platform providing the students information regarding the courses online;
- Teaching staff is well experienced;
- Students' satisfaction with the study programme is high.

Recommendations:

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- **It is highly recommended to increase the cooperation between the master of law programmes in MSU regarding both the content and conduct of studies.**
- It is advisable to pay more attention to developing the students' English language skills (e.g, include in the curriculum more foreign language materials) and also offer the students some special course(s) on the methodology of legal research.
- It is recommended that all members of the academic staff involved in the study programme finalize their PhD studies as soon as possible.
- It is advisable to implement a clear system of gathering and taking into account the feedback from all the important stakeholders.
- Syllabi should include foreign legal literature (journal articles and books) in addition to literature in Romanian and Russian and library should acquire, as the first step, some well-known up-to-date textbooks covering the study programme related European or international regulations in English, French and German.
- When replenishing the library, attention should be paid to the modern sources of information, especially investing in international academic databases and training the librarians, teaching staff and students of being able and motivated to use the resources. At the University, access should be enabled to legal literature databases (e.g. WestLaw, LexisNexis, HeinOnline, BeckOnline etc). In the study processes, the use of such databases should be promoted, as there are numerous journals which are openly accessible and provide high quality articles.
- It is recommended to consider the possibility to increase the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum. It would provide more choices to students, but also increase the amount of credits that could be transferred after the end of academic mobility, and therefore again make academic mobility more attractive to the students.
- In order to achieve the necessary learning outcomes, all the internships should be conducted in the field of labour law.
- It would be advisable to provide students with personal feedback regarding their performance in order to support student development.
- Master students should be involved in broader research and development activities.
- At the Faculty management level, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive staff development system that includes also other important elements of staff development, like the implementation of regular appraisal interviews with the teachers.
- It is recommended to increase the international experience for teaching staff, also outside Romania. In order to achieve that, it is advisable to promote academic mobility among the teaching staff and actively seek opportunities to participate in international cooperation.
- Compared to internationally acceptable standards, the participation in the international research projects and other international scientific activity needs to be much more active. In order to achieve that, more resources should be found and allocated to research activities. **It is highly recommended to apply for the EU funding already available to Moldova, e.g the Erasmus + programme.**
- It is recommended to encourage master students to participate in academic mobility and focus on informing them about the mobility opportunities (for example, hold classes or seminars to introduce the opportunities for academic mobility).

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- In order to help the University in its internationalization (and academic mobility) processes at the University and also at the Faculty level, it is advisable to consider updating and revising the webpage’s content in English in order to attract foreign students.
- MSU should establish a formalized and effective counselling system for the students – e.g consider to delegate the responsibility of study counselling from professors to trained specialists. Also, students need to be more informed about the additional counselling services Moldova State University (and also the Faculty) is offering.
- It is recommended to adapt unified and systematic approach towards detecting plagiarism and seek opportunities how to teach students about anti-plagiarism and academic ethics (e.g course for academic writing, seminars etc).
- The University should seek ways how to formally strengthen their ties with graduates (alumni club, events for graduates, satisfaction surveys for alumni etc).
- It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.
- It is recommended to increase the awareness of students and academic staff of international databases and motivate them to use the few available.
- The existing ICT solutions should be further developed in order to guarantee the existing resources to be fully utilised and to take the usage of modern technologies to the next level, e.g., full e-courses, webinars, video lectures and comparable.

Recommendation to the Ministry of Education

- According to the Framework Plan for higher education (Order of the Ministry of Education no 455 of 2011 § 62) for the master studies, a course shall have 5/10/15 credits and subsequently one semester shall plan 6-2 courses/modules. This means that all courses on master’s level must have the same amount of ECTS (5 ECTS) with the same number of contact hours and hours for individual work. Some courses also are “combined courses” and they offer 10 ECTS. The assessment committee recommends considering changing this rule in order to enable the universities offering master’s level programmes some additional flexibility and to support the academic mobility.

II Assessment areas and requirements

1. STUDY PROGRAMME AND ITS DEVELOPMENT	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements
mark with ‘X’	X		

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Collected evidence:

- Self-evaluation report (SER);
- Annexes of SER;
- Internal regulations;
- Additional documents received during the site visit;
- Interviews with the management, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers.

General comments:

Based on available documents and on the discussions during the assessment visit the assessment committee is convinced that the professional master programme in Labour Law substantially conforms to requirements.

The study programme is authorized and functions in accordance with the normative acts in force. Considering the majority of the study disciplines within the programme as well as the learning outcomes of the curriculum the title of a study programme is consistent with its content.

The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework. The courses and study disciplines taught within the master's programme are distinguishable from those offered on the bachelor's study programme. The study disciplines are presented in a logical succession.

The development of the study programme takes into consideration the trends of the labour market,

There is a certain lack of systematic approach in collecting and taking into account the feedback from all the important stakeholders.

The academic staff has a strong sense of mission and is well aware of the objectives of the study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives.

Commendations:

- Development structure ensures sustainability and continuous development.
- The academic staff has a strong sense of mission and is well aware of the objectives of the study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives.
- Graduates acquire skills necessary to succeed in the labour market

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<p><u>Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is highly recommended to increase the cooperation between the master of law programmes in MSU regarding both the content and conduct of studies. • It is advisable to implement a clear system of gathering and taking into account the feedback from all the important stakeholders. • It is recommended to consider the possibility to increase the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum. It would provide more choices to students, but also increase the amount of credits that could be transferred after the end of academic mobility, and therefore again make academic mobility more attractive to the students. • It is advisable to pay more attention to developing the students' English language skills (e.g. include in the curriculum more foreign language materials) and also offer the students some special course(s) on the methodology of legal research. 	
<p>1.1. REQUIREMENT: A higher education institution regularly plans its development: the higher education institution has a development plan accompanied by an action plan to ensure sustainability both in the institution and in a given study programme. The implementation of the action plan is analysed and forms the basis for planning of the next development period.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According to the information obtained during the assessment visit, the new strategic plan of SUM for years 2015 – 2020 shall be established after the election of the new Rector which takes place in October, 2015. In terms of development, the Rector informed the committee that the priority issues for SUM are quality assurance, scientific research and also, modernizing the infrastructure of the University.</p> <p>Concerning the level of the law programmes, the management found it important to have more impact on local level and create a competitive framework for new talents. Fighting counterfeit and corruption was underlined as a key issue regarding the development of the law programmes.</p> <p>According to the management (the Rector and Vice-Rector), in the interests of more profound studies, the master programs in law should be consolidated, as there is currently a surplus of the programmes. The committee was informed that starting from June 1st 2015, there shall only be 5 law departments at SUM.</p> <p>There is a Strategic Development Plan in place for the Faculty of Law for years 2012 – 2017</p>	

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The Department of Labour Law is responsible for the master program, for its monitoring and development as well as for the continuous improvement. The current curriculum is organized in accordance to the current law, the development plan of the Department of Labour Law (see Annex) and development plans of the faculty and SUM. According to the SER, the Labour Law Department has a well-reasoned development strategy of university study program.

Based on the submitted documents and the interviews during the assessment visit the assessment committee is convinced that the department regularly plans the development of the programme.

1.2. REQUIREMENT: A study programme is authorized and functions in accordance with the normative acts in force.

Comments:

The curriculum of the professional master programme "Labour Law" was authorized by Order No. 385 of 30.05.2008 of the Ministry of Education.

The Order no. 455 of the Ministry of Education issued on June 3, 2011, establishes requirements for the study plans at Master's level. It is the requirement for the professional Master's programmes (90 credits) to be structured in the following way: Master thesis (30 ECTS), Internship (10 ECTS), Fundamental disciplines (15-25 ECTS), and Specialized disciplines (25-35 ECTS) among which there should be up to 20% alternative disciplines.

The structure of the Master's programme "Labour Law" is as follows: Master thesis (30 ECTS), Fundamental disciplines (15 ECTS), Specialized disciplines (35 ECTS) including two optional/alternative disciplines (10 ECTS), Internship (10 ECTS). and Disciplines to free choice (10 ECTS)

The Assessment committee finds that the Labour Law master's programme substantially functions in accordance with the normative acts in force. According to the SER the study program is authorized and functions in accordance with the current legal framework in Moldova according to the order of the Ministry of Education no. 385 dated 30 May 2008 (see Annex A.11) and other legal frameworks (e.g. Code of Education no. 152 dated 17 July 2014, Law on approval of Nomenclature on fields of professional training and specializations for preparing the experts in the higher education, 1st cycle (no. 142 – XVI dated 7 July 2005), Government Decision no. 983 dated 22.12.2012; see SER Annex B.I.2). The programme is authorized and operates according to the normative acts listed in SER. The curriculum also respects the impact of the Bologna Higher Education System and is based on the ECTS transfer system.

1.3. REQUIREMENT: The title of a study programme is consistent with its content.

Comments:

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<p>The title of the master programme is "Labour Law" and it is consistent with its content as implemented in the curriculum (see SER Annex D.1) as well as in the course descriptions (see Annex D.3.1). According to the SER, the curriculum has been prepared proceeding from: the content of the labour law branch; the activity of each labour law institution; the legal status of each subject of labour relations etc, which has also determined the title of the programme.</p>	
<p>1.4.REQUIREMENT: The conduct of studies, including the student workload of independent work and internship, support achievement of the objectives of the study programme.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According to the SER (p. 20) the courses are conducted as lectures and practical lessons. Lecturers combine theory with judicial practice and practical lessons encouraged students to deal with practical cases to consolidate the theoretical knowledge. Students also are involved in the preparation of legal draft acts.</p> <p>However, the discussions during the site visit revealed that a lot of the students studying on the programme are already employed and attend the courses in addition to their everyday work. Taking into account that for 90 ECTS, students also have an additional independent workload of 25-30 hours per credit point, it is questionable whether the students actually have enough time to spend on their studies during the semester to meet these requirements.</p> <p>During the internship (duration 5 weeks; 10 ECTS) students are offered the possibility to achieve knowledge through practical experience. Students can organize the internship by themselves and in case they are not employed, they are distributed to specialized public authorities (eg Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, State Labour Inspectorate or Ministry of Justice).</p>	
<p>1.5.REQUIREMENT: The objectives and learning outcomes of a study programme are in coherence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The structure and content of the study programme is internationally comparable.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The objective of the program is the preparation of highly qualified specialists in the field of labour relations.</p> <p>The description of the learning outcomes of the study program is divided in general and specific competencies (see SER Annex). These are for example the knowledge and understanding of notions, concepts, theories of jurisprudence, as well as procedures in practice and scientific research, the ability to deal with new legal frameworks to enable graduates to make legal decisions.</p>	

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The objectives and learning outcomes of the programme take in consideration the regulations of the Ministry of Education and the requirements of the Bologna Process (ECTS credit-transfer-system). The objectives of the curriculum (content and learning outcomes) are in accordance with the requirements of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The learning outcomes are comparable with other programmes of HEIs in Moldova.

Internationally, the Department of Labour Law considered similar academic programs e.g. the master program “Labour Law and Industrial Relations”, University of Bucharest, or the master program “Romanian and European Social Law”, Ecological University of Bucharest, of the master program “Legal security in Human Resource Management”, Romanian and European School auf Economics (see SER p 21).

- Recommendation to the Ministry of Education:** The system of distributing the amount of ECTS is only partially internationally comparable because according to the Framework Plan for higher education (Order of the Ministry of Education no 455 of 2011 § 62) for the master studies, a course shall have 5/10/15 credits and subsequently one semester shall plan 6-2 courses/modules. This means that all courses on master’s level must have the same amount of ECTS (5 ECTS) with the same number of contact hours and hours for individual work. Some courses also are “combined courses” and they offer 10 ECTS. The assessment committee recommends considering changing this rule in order to enable the universities offering Masters level programs some additional flexibility and to support the academic mobility.

1.6. REQUIREMENT The objectives, content and learning outcomes of the Master’s study programme are clearly distinguishable from those of the Bachelor’s study programme.

Comments:

The SER and the discussions during the assessment visit confirm that the objectives, the content and the learning outcomes are in general distinguishable from those of the Bachelor’s study programme.

According to the SER, within the bachelor’s study programme, "Labour Law" is a compulsory discipline that is taught within 90 hours during the second year of study. In the fourth year of study, they are provided with an optional subject "Labour disputes" with a total number of 44 hours. With this number of hours the student is acquainted with the activity of this branch of law and its tasks. Therefore, the student accumulates basic knowledge about the labour legislation. The Labour Law master’s program studies the institutions and sub-institutions of labour law, with a special focus on developing theoretical and practical skills in the field of labour relations necessary on labour market.

According to the students, in comparison to the first cycle of studies, the second cycle is more practical and useful and teaches them how to apply theory into practice. The seminars and courses are different. Also, theory can be the same but is treated differently. On bachelor’s level,

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<p>the students learn general subjects, but at master's level concentrate 100% on practical cases - the norm becomes more clear due to the master's programme.</p>	
<p>1.7. REQUIREMENT: Study disciplines of the study programme are presented in a logical succession.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The SER shows that there is a logical connection between the subjects of the Master program (see SER p 23-24; Curriculum Appendix). The offered subjects ensure to increase the knowledge of normative national and international framework of labour relations and legal guarantees in labour normalization and remuneration. In the second semester, the protection of the rights of employees and employers and non-judicial as well as judicial procedures are in the focus of the curriculum. The curriculums as well as the additional documents clearly show a logical structure of the master's programme.</p>	
<p>1.8. REQUIREMENT: Development of a study programme takes into consideration the needs of the labour market.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Development of the study programme takes into consideration the major trends of the labour market. The content of the study program is continuously improved to assure that the graduates are educated according to current labour market requirements.</p> <p>According to the teachers, the Labour Law study programme has a very important position in the current labour market. Because of the socio-economic transformation, there have been a lot of people who have been transferred into private institutions but have not been instructed properly. This has caused a lot of litigations. In 2003, a new Labour Code was adopted. Therefore, the employers and lawyers needed to know profoundly the labour litigation. The programme is quite restrained, but includes several aspects related to the crisis in society. They take into account the needs of Labour Inspectorate and the needs of the society.</p> <p>An employers' representative also highlighted the importance of the Labour Law programme in the light of the adoption of European health and safety directives into Moldovan legislation, which is currently a very important issue and has to be tackled by this study programme.</p> <p>The SER explains the focus on the needs of the labour market and assures that graduates will be able to integrate easily in the labour market. Therefore a periodic adjustment of the curriculum to the current needs of the market is performed regularly.</p> <p>The employment rate is very high (see SER p 18-19).</p>	

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The employers and the alumni themselves were very satisfied with the skills and qualifications of the graduates of Labour Law study programme.

1.9. REQUIREMENT: Study programme development is a continuous process which, among others, involves feedback from students, employers and other relevant stakeholders.

Comments:

The SER shows that the approval of the programme is organised in a continuous process. According to the information made available to the committee, the study programme renewal procedure is determined by the legal provisions of normative documents in force. The Regulation on initiation, approval, monitoring and periodical evaluation of the study programmes approved by the MSU Senate on 25.02.2014 acts at the institutional level. Any change in the curriculum starts at the initiative of the specialized chairs, taking into account the provisions from the Framework Plan. After that, the curriculum is discussed at the office of the Faculty and subsequently at the meeting of the Commission for Quality Assurance including in its structure also a representative of the employers. After this, the curriculum is approved by the Faculty Teaching Council and, by the last instance the Senate of MSU.

The Department of Labour Law examines the programme each academic year during the department meetings (see SER p. 39). Also, the students are officially involved because they are members of the MSU Senate, the Professional Council and Quality Commission of the Faculty of Law. In addition, also practitioners as well as heads of public authorities and graduates are invited to the department meetings to examine the curriculum of the master program.

The staff is informed about the development plan, there are meetings to discuss the plan and to plan further activities to innovate or restructure the study program according to the action plan as well as the current needs of the labour market.

The discussions with the students and the alumni revealed that they do give feedback to the teaching staff about the programme, with whom they have close communication, but rather in an informal manner.

- **Recommendation:** Although the feedback of students, employers and other stakeholders is to some extent taken into account when developing the study programme, it is advisable to implement a clear system of gathering and taking into account the feedback from all the important stakeholders,

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<p>1.10. REQUIREMENT: The members of the teaching staff are aware of the objectives of a study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The interview with the academic employees conducted during the site visit proves the strong awareness of the teaching staff of the study programme and of their role in achieving these objectives. The teaching staff, being practitioners themselves, are enthusiastic about the programme and have a strong sense of mission towards the society.</p> <p>The teaching staff makes considerable efforts for the assimilation of master students' knowledge, by using various modern methods of teaching (group assessments, modelling of situations, solving test cases etc.) and elaborates the course learning outcomes in accordance with the general objectives of the study programme.</p> <p>To assure the objectives of the study program the quality of the teaching staff is regularly evaluated and the results are assessed continuously by the Dean's Office, Quality Committee, Section of Management Quality, Curriculum Assessment and Development, Vice-Rector in charge of teaching activity.</p>	
<p>1.11. REQUIREMENT: Study programme provides opportunities for further education at doctoral level.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>In general, the study programme provides the students with opportunities for further education at doctoral level. The students gain some experience in academic writing while preparing their master's theses and therefore obtain necessary skills to continue their research activity within doctoral studies in Law.</p> <p>Still, there is some room for improvement regarding both the foreign language skills of the students (inevitably required for advanced scientific research) and their overall experience in academic writing.</p> <p>Recommendation: It is advisable to pay more attention to developing the students' English language skills (e.g, include in the curriculum more foreign language materials) and also offer the students some special course(s) on the methodology of legal research.</p>	

<p>2. TEACHING AND LEARNING</p>	<p>conforms to requirements</p>	<p>partially conforms to requirements</p>	<p>does not conform to requirements</p>
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mark with 'X'		X	
<p>Collected evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation report (SER); • Annexes of SER; • Internal regulations; • Additional documents received during the site visit; • Interviews with the management, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers. 			
<p>General comments:</p> <p>General comments:</p> <p>The Faculty and Department regularly conduct surveys to evaluate learning process and outcomes. However, the Department should have a clearer procedure to engage the students, alumni and employers in the development process. The teaching staff is enthusiastic and prefers to use active teaching methods. As a good starting point for independent learning, some courses have a textbook written by the instructor. The teaching staff is well aware of the need to keep up with the changes in legal regulations and recent court practice. Still, in order to provide a wider, comparative perspective, it is essential to include non-Moldovan, non-Romanian and non-Russian literature in the syllabi.</p> <p>The University has agreements or good cooperation with many public and private institutions, where the students can perform their internship. Students in general expressed satisfaction with organisation of internship. In order to achieve the necessary learning outcomes, all the internships should be conducted in the field of labour law.</p> <p>It remains unclear how exactly the assessment methods are chosen and matched to learning outcomes and whether the students receive personal feedback regarding their performance at different assessments in order to support student development.</p> <p>The necessary regulation appears to be in place for the recognition of prior learning, but there is no actual experience. The Department should consider the possibility of increasing the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum. It provides more choices to students, but also increases the amount of credits that could be transferred after the end of academic mobility and therefore again makes academic mobility more attractive.</p> <p>Although the students are already being encouraged to participate in scientific conferences and publish articles, the Department should find more ways to involve master students in current or future research projects (also in development activities).</p> <p>As described above, the study programme has both strengths and areas of improvement in this assessment area. Some problems are significant</p>			

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and require substantial effort to improve the situation (e.g. availability and use of foreign legal literature, involving master's students in broader research and development activities, increase comparative perspective). As a result, the study programme fulfils the following requirements partially. The Committee understands that some areas of improvement are on Faculty or University level, and thus demand action on Faculty or University level, but still inevitably affect the specific study programmes and their quality.

Commendations:

- Teaching staff finds time to publish teaching materials for their courses.
- Internship is well organised and the University guarantees the students a place of internship due to specific agreements or good cooperation with many companies.
- The ratio between master students and supervisors is very favourable.

Recommendations:

- It would be advisable to include more comparative perspective in different areas of the study programme.
- The syllabi should include foreign legal literature (journal articles and books) in addition to literature in Romanian and Russian and library should acquire, as the first step, some well-known up-to-date textbooks covering the study programme related European or international regulations in English, French and German.
- In order to achieve the necessary learning outcomes, all the internships should be conducted in the field of labour law.
- It would be advisable to provide students with personal feedback regarding their performance in order to support student development.
- In connection with the recognition of prior learning, it is recommended to consider increasing the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum in order to (1) provide more choices to students and (2) make academic mobility more attractive.
- Master students should be involved in broader research and development activities.

2.1. REQUIREMENT: Study management is regulated, publicly available, and supports the achievement of learning outcomes. In course of study management development, the results of feedback surveys and the analysis of learning activities are taken into account.

Comments:

The SER does not address the issue and speaks about something else.

However, the annexes of the SER, and additional information and materials received during the meetings (including those from other programmes) proved that the study management is regulated by national and internal normative documents, which are publicly available

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(although mostly in Romanian).

The SER and the meetings with the Dean, the Head of the Department and teaching staff (including those from other programmes) showed that the Faculty and Department conduct regularly surveys to evaluate learning process and outcomes. In the context of courses, students give their feedback on how course was delivered, what were their expectations, whether they achieved their objectives, etc. The results are taken into account when planning and implementing improvements. Teaching staff told the Committee that the study programme is adjusted also according to practical needs/expectations from the society. The proposals for changes to the study programme are first approved by the Department, then sent to the Faculty and finally to the senate. The Committee received mixed information on whether and how students, alumni and employers are actually involved in the development process: some said that they are involved, some regretted that they are not, some are not aware of how they could contribute.

- **Recommendation:** The Department should have a clear procedure to engage the students, employers and the alumni in the development process.

2.2. REQUIREMENT: Within the education process of study programme, efficient teaching strategies are applied (modern, interactive, teamwork-based, etc.) and oriented towards active learning of the students.

Comments:

The SER includes a long list of teaching methods, which include both traditional (e.g. lectures) and modern (e.g. seminars, problem solving, group work) teaching methods. The meeting with teaching staff indicated that a variety of teaching methods are used, and they prefer to use active teaching methods. Lectures are meant to provide introduction to the course and to explain basic concepts of the subject matter. Seminars are for practical teaching and learning, to develop teamwork, to solve cases, to conduct debates, etc. Seminars demand active participations from students and prior preparation at home. As a good starting point for independent learning, some courses have a textbook written by the instructor (member of the teaching staff). Teaching staff decides which teaching methods they wish to use and adjust the choice of teaching methods as needed. The SER shows that the Department has good understanding what the benefits of interactive methods of teaching and learning are.

2.3. REQUIREMENT: Within the education process of study programme, up-to-date teaching materials are used.

Comments:

The SER is extremely short on this issue, i.e. contains only one sentence listing some teaching methods. However, the meetings with teaching staff and alumni gave more information regarding teaching materials. The use of up-to-date teaching materials is inevitable for providing high quality education. It is commendable that teaching staff publishes practical journal articles and

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teaching materials for their courses. Teaching staff is well aware of the need to keep up with the changes in legal regulations and recent court practice.

Nevertheless, syllabi and meetings with teaching staff showed that a very limited number of foreign legal literature (journal articles and books) is used during the studies. The Committee notes that syllabi contain literature published in Romania or in Russia, but the situation is troubling when it comes to literature in English, French, German, etc. It is understandable that the study programme focuses on Moldovan law, giving Moldovan sources a priority, but in order to provide wider, comparative perspective, it is essential to include non-Moldovan, non-Romanian and non-Russian literature.

The programme contains courses which are related to European or international regulations (e.g. International Norms in Labour Relations) or could benefit from comparative perspective, but their lists of literature contain almost no foreign materials. Teaching staff admits that a very limited amount of foreign legal literature is available. Students wished that there was a course on comparative labour law, which is commendable addition, but necessitates foreign legal literature. It is also useful if students worked with foreign legal literature as well as authentic texts of treaties or judgments (Romanian versions are usually translations) to improve their foreign legal language skill. The fact that the instructor has used foreign legal literature to prepare his/he textbook does not mitigate this issue. The Committee saw that legal literature databases (e.g. WestLaw, LexisNexis, HeinOnline) are not available at the university, but there are numerous journals which are openly accessible and provide high quality articles.

- **Recommendation:** The library should acquire, as the first step, some well-known up-to-date textbooks covering the study programme related European or international regulations and comparative perspective in English.

2.4. REQUIREMENT: Organisation of internship is clearly regulated, the requirements for the completion of internship are determined, the instructions for conducting the internship are available and the supervision of students in work environment is ensured.

Comments:

The internship is regulated by national and internal normative documents. The curriculum contains a compulsory five week internship (10 credits). The objectives of internship are defined in the regulation of internship and also available in the blank portfolio of internship that is given to each student performing internship. Each student is officially assigned to a place of internship, and is appointed a supervisor from the university and a tutor from the place of internship. At the end of internship, students complete a portfolio of internship.

2.5. REQUIREMENT: The higher education institution has a network of partner organisations offering internship opportunities

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<p>for students and supporting the achievement of learning outcomes of study programmes.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The university has agreements or good cooperation with many public and private institutions, where the students can perform their internship. Students can themselves find a place of internship. The Committee learnt that the students who already work can perform their internship at their current workplaces. This opportunity involves a risk. If the current workplace is not related to Labour Law, the internship may not achieve its learning outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: In order to achieve the necessary learning outcomes, all the internships should be conducted in the field of labour law. 	
<p>2.6. REQUIREMENT: Assessment of learning outcomes of students is performed in accordance with the existing requirements. Assessment methodology is consistent with learning outcomes and includes feedback supporting student development.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The assessment of learning outcomes is regulated by national and internal normative documents. The assessment as a whole is comprised of the initial assessment at the beginning of study process, the current assessments during the semester (60%) and the final assessment at the end of semester (40%). The SER lists different assessment methods which are used. Students are informed at the beginning of the semester how the course will be assessed (methods) and what are the criteria.</p> <p>The Committee understands that the instructor of the course may choose the assessment methods. It remains unclear how exactly the assessment methods are chosen and matched to learning outcomes, especially when considering the fact that all courses are of 5 credits and contact hours are quite similar per 1 credit. The content of assessment methods (e.g. exam questions) are regularly updated. The SER states that the quality of applied assessment method (e.g. specific questions, tests, exams) are assured by the head of the Chair, of the Department and of Quality Management. If they are not subject matter experts, how do they assess and ensure the substantial quality questions, tests, exams, etc. in question? The Committee is not convinced that students receive personal feedback regarding their performance at different assessments in order to support student development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: It would be advisable to provide students with personal feedback regarding their performance in order to support student development. 	
<p>2.7. REQUIREMENT: The higher education institution recognizes prior learning and work experiences.</p>	

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<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The SER is short and general on this issue.</p> <p>The recognition of prior learning and work experience is mainly regulated by national normative documents. The meetings showed that there is confusion as to what the recognition of prior learning and work experience actually means. The Committee was interested if students can transfer the credits earned, individual courses taken in other Moldovan or foreign higher education institutions at master's or higher level to the MSU as part of their studies at the MSU. The Committee understands that according to national regulation, work experience is recognised only in the framework on vocational higher education. After the meetings, the Committee believes that necessary regulation is in place for the recognition of prior learning, but there no actual experience. The recognising prior learning is closely connected to academic mobility, i.e. if the credits earned during academic mobility are recognised without unduly difficulties, students have one more incentive to take advantage of academic mobility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The Department should consider the possibility of increasing the proportion of elective courses in the curriculum. It provides more choices to students, but also increases the amount of credits that could be transferred after the end of academic mobility and therefore again makes academic mobility more attractive. 	
<p>2.8. REQUIREMENT: Systematic analysis of achievement of learning outcomes is performed and improvement measures are undertaken.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The evaluation of study process has clearly defined purposes and its results are used to improve curriculum, courses, teaching methods etc. and to select teaching staff. There are several organs or officials who are involved in the analysis of the achievement of learning outcomes, e.g. Dean, Quality Assurance Commission, Quality Management Department, and the Pro-rector responsible for didactic activity. The SER and meetings showed that teaching staff and students are asked for feedback and their feedback is considered by appropriate organs and officials. The Committee received little information on whether and how alumni and employers participate in the evaluation of study process. If they are not involved, the Department should involve them as they can provide useful feedback.</p>	
<p>2.9. REQUIREMENT: Students are involved in research and development activities, the supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, applied projects, final thesis) is well organised and the satisfaction rate with the quality of supervision is high.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p>	

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Each student has a supervisor appointed by the Department. The study programme involves 8 instructors and has 31 master's students (enrolled in 2013). When considering the number of teaching staff and students, the ratio is fair and students should receive adequate supervision. Students have the freedom to choose the topics for their master's theses. The meetings with students and alumni showed that they were satisfied with their supervision. Master's students are encouraged to participate in scientific conferences and to publish scientific articles. The meetings with students and alumni showed that students actually participate in conferences and publish articles (sometimes with their supervisors).

However, the Committee found no evidence that students are involved in broader research and development activities (beyond their individual research), e.g. participating in a research project led by a member of teaching staff. True, there are examples where professors and students/alumni have co-authored a publication. The SER contains practically no information on research projects (different from participating in conferences). The meeting with teaching staff did not give further information on this issue.

- **Recommendation:** The Department should find and participate in research projects as well as it should find ways to involve master's students in current or future research projects (also in development activities).

3. TEACHING STAFF	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements
mark with 'X'		X	
Collected evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation report (SER); • Annexes of SER; • Internal regulations; • Additional documents received during the site visit; • Interviews with the management, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers. 			

General comments:

At the moment, the qualification of full-time teaching staff does not fully comply with legal requirements as not all of them hold a PhD degree and only a few have had some international experience. However, the fact that some members of the teaching staff are also involved in practical legal activities related to the disciplines taught can be considered positive. Provided that the PhD student finalizes his doctoral studies soon, the legal requirements can be met and the programmes' sustainability ensured. However, it is still advisable to envisage the intake of some new younger members of the academic staff, even at part-time level at the beginning.

Concerning other staff development activities besides some project-based opportunities for continuing education, the committee did not receive any evidence concerning the broader staff development plan, including conducting systematic appraisal interviews with the staff and other methods of staff development. At the Faculty management level, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive staff development system that includes also other important elements of staff development, like the implementation of regular appraisal interviews with the teachers.

The committee recommends that at the Faculty management level a system will be created that supports and encourages the members of the full-time teaching staff to regularly develop their skills at foreign higher education institutions and participate in international networks. Regular goals for the international cooperation should be set and the achievement of those goals should be measured regularly e.g. during quarterly performance reviews of the members of the academic staff. Also, the department should even more actively seek possibilities for involving more visiting professors in the teaching in the study programme.

Compared to internationally acceptable standards, the participation in the international research projects and other international scientific activity needs to be much more active. In order to achieve that, more resources should be found and allocated to research activities. **It is highly recommended to apply for the EU funding already available to Moldova, e.g the Erasmus + programme**

Research activities of the teaching staff are planned and monitored efficiently.

Considering all those facts, as well as the general findings from the SER and provided annexes, the general conclusion of the committee is that this criterion is partially compliant with the requirements.

Commendations:

- Some lectures given by foreign professors;

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- Some participation of members of teaching staff as lecturers or visiting professors abroad or in mobility programmes;

Recommendations:

- All members of the academic staff should finalize their PhD studies as soon as possible.
- At the Faculty management level, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive staff development system that includes also other important elements of staff development, like the implementation of regular appraisal interviews with the teachers.
- Find methods in order to encourage and support the teaching staff to participate in the international research projects and other international scientific activities.
- At the Faculty management level a system should be created that supports and encourages the members of the full-time teaching staff to regularly develop their knowledge and skills at foreign higher education institutions and participate in international networks. Regular goals for the international cooperation should be set and the achievement of those goals should be measured regularly e.g. during quarterly performance reviews of the members of the academic staff.
- The Department should actively seek possibilities for involving visiting professors in the teaching in the study programme.
- Compared to internationally acceptable standards, the participation in the international research projects and other international scientific activity needs to be much more active. In order to achieve that, more resources should be found and allocated to research activities. **It is highly recommended to apply for the EU funding already available to Moldova, e.g the Erasmus + programme.**

3.1. REQUIREMENT: The number and qualification of full-time teaching staff complies with the requirements established by legislation. At least 60% of the study programme is covered by full-time staff. 100% of full-time staff involved in the study programme have PhD degree or equal.

Comments:

From annex D5 it appears that all teaching staff members involved in the programme (8 people) are full-time. Out of those, one hasn't got a PhD degree yet, thus the percentage of full staff holding a PhD degree is 88% instead of 100%.

- **Recommendation:** In order to meet the legal requirement, all members of the academic staff should finalize their PhD studies as soon as possible.

3.2. REQUIREMENT: Distribution of full-time teaching staff by age, and the percentage of young members of the teaching staff, ensures the sustainability of studies in a higher education institution and a study programme.

Comments:

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<p>The age average of full-time staff is around 44 years. The oldest staff member is 65 years old and the youngest is 36. Provided that the PhD student finalizes his doctoral studies soon, the programmes' sustainability can be ensured, due to the fact that only two members of the teaching staff are more than 60 years old.</p> <p>However, it is advisable to envisage the intake of some new younger members of the academic staff, even at part-time level at the beginning.</p>	
<p>3.3. REQUIREMENT: The total number and qualification of teaching staff is – based on their responsibilities, workload and the number of supervised students – sufficient and adequate for achieving the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programmes at MA level.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According to the CVs, the qualification of the teaching staff is adequate to the disciplines taught. However, the fact that not all of them hold a PhD degree could be considered a drawback. In terms of workload and supervised students, it appears from the SER that the supervision workload is around 4-5 students per member of teaching staff. However, as some of the academics involved in this study programme are also involved in other master's programmes, this number is likely to be bigger in their cases, without exceeding 6 students to supervise.</p>	
<p>3.4. REQUIREMENT: The members of the teaching staff have an adequate teaching competence and improve their teaching methods.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The SER states that members of the academic staff regularly improve themselves. However, although the SER did not contained any annexes to support those statements, at the visit, from discussions with teaching staff it resulted that measures are taken in that respect and sufficient conditions are created for the development of the teaching competence of teaching staff.</p>	
<p>3.5. REQUIREMENT: The staff development system is effective: the members of the teaching staff have opportunities for self-improvement, staff development methods are applied by the higher education institution.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Apart from the fact that SUM offers some psycho-pedagogical training, it appears from the SER that there are no other measures implemented. The Development Plan for the 2012-2017 period (Annex D7) states that until 2012 self-improvement was the only existing way for improvement of the teaching staff. In the respective plan it is stated that the university should embark into developing cooperation links with foreign</p>	

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<p>institutions, mainly from Romania, allowing professors to be invited to teach on a reciprocity basis.</p> <p>The assessment committee welcomes this approach.</p> <p>Concerning other staff development activities besides some project-based opportunities for continuing education, the committee did not receive any evidence concerning the broader staff development plan, including conducting systematic appraisal interviews with the staff and other methods of staff development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: At the Faculty management level, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive staff development system that includes also other important elements of staff development, like the implementation of regular appraisal interviews with the teachers. 	
<p>3.6. REQUIREMENT: Visiting members of the teaching staff (including from foreign higher education institutions) are involved in teaching in a study programme.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>The only visiting member of the teaching staff is a full professor at the Balti State University who also teaches at SUM in this MA programme (Annex B3.6).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The committee recommends that the department should even more actively seek possibilities for involving more visiting professors in the teaching in the study programme. 	
<p>3.7. REQUIREMENT: The members of the full-time teaching staff of a higher education institution regularly develop their skills at foreign higher education institutions and participate in international networks.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Despite the SER mentions the fact that two members of the teaching staff participated in some Tempus programmes trainings, this is not relevant to the study programme and could only be taken into consideration as a general activity taken for improvement purposes. The wish of the professors was to gain free academic mobility with access to EU in order to get some foreign experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The committee recommends that at the Faculty management level a system will be created that supports and encourages the members of the full-time teaching staff to regularly develop their skills at foreign higher education institutions and 	

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participate in international networks. Regular goals for the international cooperation should be set and the achievement of those goals should be measured regularly e.g. during quarterly performance reviews of the members of the academic staff.

3.8. REQUIREMENT: Teaching staff are involved in national and international research projects and participate in forums, national and international scientific conferences.

Comments:

Although the SER stipulates that members of the teaching staff were involved in research projects and attended many conferences, from Annex 3.8 it appears that only a few had really published, no projects were involved and the only relevant research comes from the part-time member of the academic staff, coming from the State University of Balti.

- **Recommendation:** Compared to internationally acceptable standards, the participation in the international research projects and other international scientific activity needs to be much more active. In order to achieve that, more resources should be found and allocated to research activities. **It is highly recommended to apply for the EU funding already available to Moldova, e.g the Erasmus + programme.**

3.9. REQUIREMENT: Research activities of the teaching staff are planned and monitored efficiently.

Comments:

The SER stipulates that the research activity of each member of the academic staff is planned and monitored, as each of the academics has to fill in every year an individual work plan, with research tangible result, which becomes part of the Department's yearly plan, the real achievement of such results being monitored by the head of the Department, based on reports and evidences provided by each member of the teaching staff.

At the same time, the development strategy presented in Annex D7 stipulates for the period 2012-2017 the creation of two research centers: Centre for Public Law and Private Law Center, that will organize scientific activities (sessions and conferences, debates, round tables, practical workshops, case studies, experimental processes, methodological seminars, international schools, summer schools and essay contests), with emphasis in organizing international scientific conferences every two years.

At the visit, were provided proofs of annual individual plans of teachers, as well as reports by head of Department.

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4. STUDENTS	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements
mark with 'X'		X	
<p>Collected evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation report (SER); • Annexes of SER; • Internal regulations; • Additional documents received during the site visit; • Interviews with the management, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers. 			
<p>General comments:</p> <p>Although the committee was pleased to meet many satisfied students who all assured the positive image of the Labour Law study programme, there is also plenty of room for improvements. Main reasons for regarding the decision to assess the area as partially conforming to requirements were insufficient academic mobility (internal and external) and also the lack of systematic approach towards anti-plagiarism and academic fraud issues.</p> <p>At the moment, mobility options on the Labour Law study programme are very limited and the academic mobility is virtually non-existent. It is recommended to encourage master students to participate in academic mobility and focus on informing them about the mobility opportunities (for example, hold classes or seminars to introduce the opportunities for academic mobility). In order to help the University in its internationalization (and academic mobility) processes at the University and also at the Faculty level, it is advisable to consider updating and revising the webpage's content in English in order to attract foreign students.</p> <p>To further support the students, MSU should establish a formalized and effective counselling system for the students – e.g. consider to delegate the responsibility of study counselling from professors to trained specialists. Also, students need to be more informed about the additional counselling services Moldova State University (and also the Faculty) is offering</p> <p>The committee welcomes the use of modern software by MSU in order to discover plagiarism, yet this approach is only one aspect of plagiarism</p>			

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detection. Therefore, the committee urges the Faculty to adapt a unified and more systematic approach towards preventing plagiarism and actively seek opportunities how to teach students about anti-plagiarism and academic ethics (e.g course for academic writing, master's seminars etc).

It is advisable to seek ways how to formally strengthen the ties with graduates (alumni club, events for graduates, satisfaction surveys for alumni etc) and monitor their employment more systematically.

Although the graduation of students per each year meets the legal requirements, it would be in the Faculty's best interests that the causes for dropping out would also be formally collected and analysed.

Commendations:

- Students' suggestions and feedback is considered a valuable input to the University and Faculty.
- Students' satisfaction with the study programme is high.
- The preparation of students in the Labour Law study programme is in coherence with the labour market needs.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to encourage master students to participate in academic mobility and focus on informing them about the mobility opportunities (for example, hold classes or seminars to introduce the opportunities for academic mobility).
- In order to help the University in its internationalization (and academic mobility) processes at the University and also at the Faculty level, it is advisable to consider updating and revising the webpage's content in English in order to attract foreign students.
- MSU should establish a formalized and effective counselling system for the students – e.g consider to delegate the responsibility of study counselling from professors to trained specialists. Also, students need to be more informed about the additional counselling services Moldova State University (and also the Faculty) is offering. It is recommended to adapt a unified and systematic approach towards preventing plagiarism and seek opportunities how to teach students about anti-plagiarism and academic ethics (e.g course for academic writing, master's seminars etc). Implementing anti-plagiarism software is a positive step forward but there is room for further improvements.
- It is advisable to seek ways how to formally strengthen the ties with graduates (alumni club, events for graduates, satisfaction surveys for alumni etc).
- The causes for dropping out should be formally collected and analysed.

4.1. REQUIREMENT: The admission requirements for student applicants are based on qualities necessary for completing the study programme. The admission of students is performed by procedures stipulated in the normative acts.

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Comments:

In general, the admission requirements for students in the study programme Labour Law are in accordance with the normative acts and are based on qualities necessary for completing the study programme.

According to the SER, admission to the master’s programme is governed by the rules of organization and development of admission to higher education master cycle II, adopted and approved annually (<http://usm.md/admitere/>) under the Rules for Admission to higher education master cycle II, approved by Government Decision nr.1455 of 24.12.2007. The Dean informed the committee that annually, the criteria for enrolment of students is approved annually by the Senate.

Admission to master’s degree studies is in accordance with the rules of the institution and is organized in two sessions. The admission examination for master’s degree studies consists in a written or oral test for the profile subjects, also test for one foreign language and test for IT skills. According to the Dean, starting with year 2015, there shall be an online test as an entrance exam to the master’s level studies.

The national admission criteria include a specialty exam and evaluation of the IT and foreign language skills (English/French). **Regarding the general lack of foreign language skills among the master students encountered by the committee, a question can be raised whether the language test serves its purpose adequately or is there some room for improvement.**

<p>4.2. REQUIREMENT: The counselling system of students (including study, career and psychological counselling) is planned/targeted and effective.</p>	
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Comments:

Although the SER claimed that study and career counselling is available to students, as well as the Center of Psychological Assistance for the students, the committee was not able to witness the awareness of the students or the alumni of other formal counselling services than career counselling.

It is recommended for the Faculty to consider delegating the responsibility of study counselling from professors to a trained specialist. All of the professors are not prepared to provide effective study counselling. A separate study advisor can provide more professional counselling and could also ease the professors’ workload.

There seems to be a lack of information regarding other counselling services besides career counselling.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: MSU should establish a formalized and effective counselling system for the students – e.g consider to delegate the responsibility of study counselling from professors to trained specialists. Also, students need to be more informed about the additional counselling services Moldova State University (and also the Faculty) is offering. 	
<p>4.3. REQUIREMENT: Students are provided with internal and external mobility opportunities.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Mobility options on the Labour Law study programme are very limited. Although there very few options exist, the students are still not aware about the opportunities they might have. The committee encourages the Faculty to seek more academic mobility opportunities and to raise the awareness amongst students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: It is recommended to provide master students with internal and external mobility possibilities and focus on informing them about such opportunities (for example, hold classes or seminars to introduce the opportunities for academic mobility). 	
<p>4.4. REQUIREMENT: Students participate in international mobility programmes. The percentage of students participating in student mobility is stable or growing.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>None of the master, students have taken part in mobility programs, which clearly can be seen as an area for improvement. The students expressed a keen interest in the possibility of studying abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The committee recommends the faculty members actively seek possibilities to support and encourage students to participate in international mobility programmes. 	
<p>4.5. REQUIREMENT: Students are involved in the decision-making process at different levels of the higher education institution.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>As stated in the SER and also confirmed during the interviews, students are involved in the decision-making processes at various levels of the university. Furthermore they are not only formally involved but they also assured us that the management of the faculty and the university considers their feedback and also implements their suggestions. Master’s degree student representatives are included in the Council of the</p>	

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Faculty of Law, in the University Senate but also in the Quality Committee of the Faculty	
4.6. REQUIREMENT: A system has been established for the detection and prevention of academic fraud.	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According to the SER and information provided to the committee during the assessment visit, an ethics committee operates in MSU with a purpose to discover and penalize any academic fraud. In order to prevent and exclude plagiarism in master thesis, MSU is testing a special program that determines whether the master thesis overlap with other existing works and to what extent it overlaps. In this order the master thesis is presented with a CD copy which, after inspection, shall be kept in the archives of MSU. The purpose of this program is to prevent academic fraud, and copyright protection. The committee welcomes the use of modern software by MSU in order to discover plagiarism, yet this approach is only one aspect of plagiarism detection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: All of the study programmes under evaluation lack a systematic approach towards academic fraud. In many cases the discovery of academic fraud lies upon academic staff (for example thesis supervisors). Therefore, the committee urges the Faculty to adapt a unified and more systematic approach towards preventing plagiarism and actively seek opportunities how to teach students about anti-plagiarism and academic ethics (e.g course for academic writing, master’s seminars etc). 	
4.7. REQUIREMENT: Higher education institution has a tracking mechanism of graduates’ employment and is monitoring the evolution of graduates’ career.	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Monitoring the employment of the graduates could be more systematic. Much of this communications and monitoring of graduates career is done informally and is based on individual connections and relationships between the alumni and the (teaching) staff. There is a need for a systematic and institutionalized approach towards tracking the employment of the graduates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The committee recommends to consider organising annual events e.g. conferences, seminars or other types of networking meetings with the alumni of the faculty. Also the collecting feedback from graduates could be more regular and systematic. 	
4.8. REQUIREMENT: The competitiveness of the graduates of a study programme is demonstrated by employment rate according to obtained qualification; unemployment rate; employment rate in other fields than the one studied within the programme.	
<u>Comments:</u>	

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The committee was able to confirm that the students in the programme are prepared with the necessary skills and qualifications and also needed in the labour market. The chair is responsible for the implementation of the master's degree program, monitors by its own means the employment of graduates and their career development. Usually, this is materialized in writing recommendations to soliciting employers, as well as in maintaining collaboration links depending on requirements. The SER stated that the employment rate of the graduates is high and that almost all master students requesting employment are hired in the field of specialization. However, nor the SER or additional documents provided more detailed data on the employment rate of the graduates.

- **Recommendation:** It is recommended that the collecting of the data regarding the employment of graduates should be more regular and systematic.

4.9. REQUIREMENT: There is a system in place for monitoring academic progress. Graduation of students per each year meets the legal requirements. Effective measures are implemented to reduce the drop-out rates.

Comments:

According to the SER, there exists a database in SUM where all the academic results of the master students are included. The professors notify of the study results methodic worker from Dean's office who adds all necessary information to the register that reflects all final evaluations of the students.

Also, the SER states that the percentage of university dropouts over the last 5 academic years is 4.5%, which means that the dropout rate is very low, which is considered to be a success of the master program in labour law. The graduation of students per each year meets the legal requirements. Monitoring of students academic process is satisfactory and complies with the regulations and procedures in place.

However, it would be in the interests of the Department to formally collect and analyse the causes for dropping out. At the moment it is speculated in the SER that the main reason for abandoning the studies is migration abroad.

5. RESOURCES	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements
mark with 'X'		x	

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Collected evidence:

- Self-evaluation report (SER);
- Annexes of SER;
- Internal regulations;
- Additional documents received during the site visit;
- Interviews with the management, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers.

The budget planning in general is sustainable. However, the Faculty seems underfinanced, which according to the understanding of the committee is the reason for many shortcomings described above, e.g. the general salary level of the academic staff, the state of library and the general infrastructure of the Faculty, the low level of academic mobility etc. It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.

The trend of student numbers (admissions and graduations) is stable and indicates sustainability.

As the Faculty in general was at least partially under renovation, it was not possible for the committee to assess the conformity to the requirements of the teaching and learning environment as a whole. ICT devices are available for both Faculty members and students. The computer rooms look modern and meet the basic contemporary standards. The staff and the students are relatively motivated to use ICT techniques. The positive trend is the using of *Moodle* platform providing the students with information regarding the courses online. Still, the existing ICT solutions should be further developed in order to guarantee the existing resources to be fully utilised and to take the usage of modern technologies to the next level, e.g., full e-courses, webinars, video lectures and comparable.

There is almost no foreign literature in the field of law and the books available are rather out-dated. The University should pay attention to the modern sources of information when replenishing the library, investing in international academic databases, training the librarians, teaching staff and students of being able and motivated to use the resources. The library needs major investment, especially regarding field specific legal literature in English, French or German. It is recommended to increase the awareness of students and academic staff of international databases and motivate them to use the few available.

Commendations:

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- The classrooms are equipped sufficiently, the equipment is being renewed.
- The use of *Moodle* platform is providing the students with information regarding the courses online.

Recommendations:

- It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.
- The University should pay attention to the modern sources of information when replenishing the library, investing in international academic databases, training the librarians, teaching staff and students of being able and motivated to use the resources. The library needs major investment, especially regarding field specific legal literature in English, French or German.
- It is recommended to increase the awareness of students and academic staff of international databases and motivate them to use the few available.
- The existing ICT solutions should be further developed in order to guarantee the existing resources to be fully utilised and to take the usage of modern technologies to the next level, e.g., full e-courses, webinars, video lectures and comparable.

5.1. REQUIREMENT: The financial resources of a higher education institution are adequate for conducting studies, development activities related to studies and supporting the development of the teaching staff.

Comments:

According to the SER the MSU financial resources are sufficient for conducting studies. ([Annex B.5.1.](#)).

The committee still feels that in general the faculty seems underfinanced, which according to the understanding of the committee is the reason for many shortcomings described above, e.g. the general salary level of the academic staff, the state of library and the general infrastructure of the faculty, the low level of academic mobility etc. It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.

- **Recommendation:** It would be advisable for the University to try to find some additional resources in order to mitigate the possible risks to the financial sustainability and also upgrade the infrastructure and the library of MSU and also support the mobility of both teaching staff and the students.

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<p>5.2. REQUIREMENT: Trends in the number of students and graduates, and the budget of a higher education institution in the last three to five years indicate sustainability.</p>																						
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The trends of admission and graduation of students per each year are presented below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year of enrolment</th> <th>No. of enrolled students</th> <th>No. of graduates</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>18</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>24</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>48</td> <td>47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>38</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>32</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>31</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The number of students is stable and indicates stability.</p> <p>Also, from year 2010 to 2014, the revenues have increased by approximately 10% and so have the expenditures - by approximately 16%. The committee is confirmed that these numbers clearly show the sustainable character of budget planning.</p>		Year of enrolment	No. of enrolled students	No. of graduates	2008	18	16	2009	24	23	2010	48	47	2011	38	38	2012	32	30	2013	31	27
Year of enrolment	No. of enrolled students	No. of graduates																				
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2010	48	47																				
2011	38	38																				
2012	32	30																				
2013	31	27																				
<p>5.3. REQUIREMENT: Teaching and learning environments have been developed according to the teaching and learning objectives, include all facilities necessary for conducting studies in a given study programme and are of adequate capacity considering the number of students (auditoriums, seminar rooms, laboratories, rooms for students independent work and recreation, video projectors, internet etc.).</p>																						
<p>Comments:</p> <p>According to SER the university provides sufficient areas for conducting courses and practical lessons, including areas for recreation (see more detailed data on p 22-23 of SER). The committee witnessed that the faculty in general was at least partially under renovation, therefore it is currently not possible to assess whether the outcome of the works will meet all the requirements.</p>																						

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<p>5.4. REQUIREMENT: Both the conduct of studies and other activities of a higher education institution are supported by up-to-date information technology solutions, including the study information system, e-learning opportunities, and communication portals for students and teaching staff.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According to the SER, the students have access to computers in the library reading rooms and to free and unlimited Wi-Fi. During the observations made by the committee during the assessment visit, the number of computers is sufficient. ICT devices are available for both Faculty members and students. The computer rooms look in general modern and meet the basic contemporary standards. The staff and the students are relatively motivated to use ICT techniques.</p> <p>However, the availability and the knowledge of Faculty members regarding electronic legal databases should be increased. The committee found no evidence during the assessment visit that the basic legal databases are available for use from Faculty computers. The positive trend is the using of <i>Moodle</i> platform providing the students with information regarding the courses online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: The existing ICT solutions should be further developed in order to guarantee the existing resources to be fully utilised and to take the usage of modern technologies to the next level, e.g., full e-courses, webinars, video lectures and comparable 	
<p>5.5. REQUIREMENT: The students are provided with dormitories and medical service.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>SUM has dormitories for students (Annex B. 5.5.). Master law students stay in the dormitory no.19 on Flower Street 4/2, Chisinau. Law Faculty students receive medical services at University Medical Center located on Pan Halippa str. 6/5 Chişinău.</p>	
<p>5.6. REQUIREMENT: A library supports the conduct of studies ensuring that up-to-date information sources are available, and provides students with the opportunities for independent work.</p>	
<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>According the SER, the library is equipped with 1,809,725 of books, 1445 PhD thesis; 4074 rare rooks, 523 places for reading rooms (capacity that can simultaneously serve more than 20% of the students of the Faculty of Law of USM) and 4359 m²of functional space.</p> <p>However, in the light of this data, the most significant problem related to library is that there is almost no foreign literature in the field of law.</p>	

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The books available are rather out-dated. The visit to the library proved that the literature in the field is inadequate and needs fundamental strategic re-planning. The students and academic staff are not aware of international databases and therefore not motivated to use the few available. Also, the librarians need training to give advice to the students on how to access electronic academic materials.

- **Recommendation:** The library needs major investment, especially regarding field specific legal literature in English, French or German. The University should pay attention to the modern sources of information when replenishing the library, investing in international academic databases, training the librarians, teaching staff and students of being able and motivated to use the resources.