



# Summary report on the accreditation of the study programmes in Cluster C at al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty: Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master), Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master), Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master)

Upon the request for accreditation of al-Farabi Kazakh National University from July 2013, AQ Austria conducted the accreditation procedure of the study programmes Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master), Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master), Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master). In accordance with the "Guideline for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes" adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in July 2013, AQ Austria publishes the following summary report.

## 1 Short information on the application for accreditation

Information about the institution	
<b>Institution (applicant)</b>	Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU)
<b>Location of the institution</b>	Almaty (Kazakhstan)
Information about the study programmes	

<b>Name of the study programmes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Psychology</li> <li>2. Pedagogics and Psychology</li> <li>3. Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition</li> <li>4. Social Work</li> <li>5. Physical Education and Sport</li> </ol>
<b>Academic Degrees</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</li> <li>1. Master of Social Sciences in Psychology</li> <li>1. PhD in Psychology</li> <li>2. Bachelor of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology</li> <li>2. Master of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology</li> <li>3. Bachelor of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition</li> <li>3. Master of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition</li> <li>4. Bachelor of Social Service in Social Work</li> <li>4. Master of Social Service in Social Work</li> <li>4. PhD in Social Work</li> <li>5. Bachelor of Education in Physical Education and Sport</li> <li>5. Master of Education in Physical Education and Sport</li> </ol>

## 2 Short information on the accreditation procedure

Al-Farabi KazNU submitted an application for accreditation of the study programmes Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master), Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master), Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master) in July 2013. Place of delivery of the study programmes is Almaty.

In a circular resolution on 30 October 2013, the Board of AQ Austria passed the proposal for peers for the review and assessment of the study programmes.

Name	Institution	Role
Prof. Dr. Cristiano Violani	Sapienza University of Rome	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Krassimir Stojanov	University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Rudolf Egger	University of Graz	Peer from academia, head of the panel
Prof. Dr. Hervainé Szabó Gyöngyvér	Kodolányi Janos University of Applied Sciences	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Arno Müller	Universities of Leipzig and Jena	Peer from academia

Meirgul Alpysbayeva	L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University	Panel member from Kazakhstan
Mag. Janine Wulz	University of Vienna	Student panel member

A site visit at al-Farabi KazNU took place in Almaty from 12-13 February 2014, which was attended by all peers and a coordinator from AQ Austria.

The Board of AQ Austria took the accreditation decisions for the study programmes Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master), Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master), Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD) in its meeting on 13 May 2014. The accreditation decisions for the study programmes Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master), Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master), Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD) are valid as of 13 May 2014.

The Board of AQ Austria took the accreditation decision for the study programme Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master) in its meeting on 4 July 2014. The accreditation decision for the study programme Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master) is valid as of 4 July 2014.

### 3 Subject matter of the application

**Bachelor programmes** *'Psychology', 'Pedagogics and Psychology', 'Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition', 'Social Work', 'Physical Education and Sport'* are offered as full-time four-year programmes providing education based on the combination of theory and practice. Graduates of the Bachelor programmes are equipped with knowledge and skills for the following careers opportunities (the information derives from the al-Farabi KazNU website: [http://www.kaznu.kz/en/12743/page/Departments/Faculty\\_of\\_Philosophy\\_and\\_Political\\_Science/For\\_prospective\\_students\\_\\_2013/](http://www.kaznu.kz/en/12743/page/Departments/Faculty_of_Philosophy_and_Political_Science/For_prospective_students__2013/)).

*Psychology.* Graduates of the Bachelor programme are qualified to work as teachers of Psychology at institutions of secondary education, as practicing psychologists within the national health care system, education, the services for the family; as psychologists-consultants at national and local public administration bodies and non-governmental organisations; political psychologists and image makers; personnel managers in personnel services of various organisations and employment services; psychologists at the penitentiary institutions and military units divisions, as well as at institutions of psychological-psychiatric forensic expertise.

*Pedagogics and Psychology.* Graduates of the Bachelor programme are qualified to work as teachers-psychologists in educational institutions of different types (preschool institutions, secondary and vocational schools); as junior research workers in the fields of Pedagogy and Psychology at scientific research institutes; as teachers of Pedagogics and Psychology. They will also be employable as social pedagogues in boarding schools, children's homes, penitentiary and special correctional institutions; as specialists for national and local level public authorities (the Ministry of Education and Science, province Department of popular schooling, district education, local administration bodies); as well as personnel managers in personnel services of organisations providing employment services, training and retraining of personnel.

*Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.* Graduates of the Bachelor programme are qualified to work as teachers of the subject 'Self-Cognition' and as Social Pedagogy specialists at secondary schools, in the government agencies (the Committee for Protection of Children's Rights under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, provincial departments for protection of children's rights); in the social welfare institutions (bodies of social security, support to the unemployed, low-income, disabled); in the educational institutions (pre-school institutions, secondary schools, children's homes, boarding schools, special education institutions); institutions dealing with the problems of education and development of the younger generation in the social environment (correction and rehabilitation centres, etc.); institutions engaged in the organisation of children's leisure and creative activities, the socialization and personal development of the younger generation (non-governmental organisations, children's clubs, health camps, etc.).

*Social Work.* Graduates of the Bachelor programme are qualified to work as social work specialists in governmental and non-governmental institutions and international organisations; as employees at social welfare and security institutions (employment centres, social adaptation and rehabilitation centres, institutions of social care for children and adolescents, etc.). They will be employable in international projects and organisations, work as experts for social policy departments and social protection of the population.

*Physical Education and Sport.* Graduates of the Bachelor programme are qualified to work as coaches and teachers of different kinds of sport in sports-oriented institutions of supplementary education. They will be employable as physical training instructors and teachers of Physical Education for institutions of secondary, vocational and higher education. Graduates are equipped for a career of a specialist in physical education and sport at respective departments of governmental authorities of various levels.

**Master programmes** 'Psychology', 'Pedagogics and Psychology', 'Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition', 'Social Work', and 'Physical Education and Sport' are full-time two-year study programmes targeted at young professionals with different academic backgrounds, and are also open to graduates from respective undergraduate study programmes offered by al-Farabi University. In addition to the range of career paths open to Bachelor graduates, graduate employment opportunities include entry to higher level jobs in the public, private and non-governmental sectors, in particular junior teaching positions at higher education institutions and junior research positions at scientific research institutions. Graduates of the Master programmes are also qualified to pursue doctoral studies.

**PhD programmes** 'Psychology' and 'Social Work' are full-time three-year study programmes delivered in three languages. The distinctive features of the programmes include cooperation of each PhD student with two academic supervisors (Kazakh and foreign), as well as a study abroad opportunity available to each student at the expense of the Kazakh Government. Graduates of the study programmes are qualified to continue on to careers as professors in universities, senior researchers at scientific research institutions, or to occupy advanced administrative positions in the public and non-governmental sectors.

## 4 Summarizing results from the assessments of the peers

### **Standard 1: Study programme and programme management**

The qualification objectives and content of the study programmes are in line with the national education legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, but not aligned with the respective levels of the QF-EHEA. The learning outcomes are defined very broadly. The Kazakh credit system is in place but it is not used in compliance with ECTS.

The descriptions of the content of knowledge within modules are too schematic, there are overlapping themes; theories and methods used in education are not clearly aligned. The compulsory and recommended literature needs further elaboration; the number of sources should be reduced, but they should better fit the study courses.

The student-teacher ratios in the study programmes are very good which is an important strength of the programmes. The student workload is reasonable to reach the intended qualification objectives.

E-learning is not a visible part of the study programmes. Admission requirements are clearly stated and open to public.

The Bachelor and Master programmes in **Psychology** are under a strong influence of the traditional approach of the soviet Psychology that was more oriented toward theoretical elaborations rather than empirical research and the development of professional activities based on scientific evidence. Although at present all al-Farabi KazNU Psychology programmes, especially the Bachelor and Master ones, suffer from limitations in research topics and in the availability of laboratories, equipment and service, the university seems capable to invest adequate financial resources to acquire the necessary competencies in the areas of Clinical and Health Psychology and/or of Work and Organisational Psychology and to reorganise the programmes using the best European and international programmes in applied psychology and in the cognitive sciences as external benchmarks. The low number of students enrolled (max 25 per programme) should ease the organisation of laboratories to strengthen the scientific vision and competencies of the students and the establishment of the psychological services needed for their professional training. In the doctoral programme the basic criteria for academic work are substantially met; students are highly motivated and well prepared.

The Bachelor and Master programmes in **Pedagogics and Psychology** prepare well-educated and well-trained graduates who show good analytic competencies. Although it is not usual in the international practice to put Education and Psychology in one discipline, this clearly does make sense in the local context, due to the professional profile of the absolvents of the programmes: the programmes aim at qualifying students to 'Pedagogue-Psychologists' both in the areas of school and of extra-school education. This profile presupposes enriching of pedagogical perspectives to educational processes by psychological knowledge.

The Bachelor and Master programmes in **Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition** are generally structured well and have student/teacher ratios equivalent to internationally recognized standards. The study programmes are focused on the disciplines of Pedagogics and Psychology, meet the national educational standards and are appropriate for preparing school teachers of the subject 'Self-Cognition (Self-Knowledge)' as a new field of knowledge

and skills development. However, the programmes are not compliant with general objectives and international standards in Social Pedagogics: the social pedagogy elements are missing from the study programmes. The knowledge base, practice skills and competencies of social pedagogy are not reflected in the research of the programmes' faculty who are all connected with education science. Thus, the study programmes cannot be accepted as "Social Pedagogics" programmes. They are to be assessed as study programmes in alternative pedagogy: pedagogy of well-being, creative pedagogy, value centered pedagogy, or culture based education.

The Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes in **Social Work** are very different in their learning outcomes, content and organisation from what is expected from Social Work programmes in Europe and beyond with regard to compliance with international professional standards and qualifications. The learning outcomes defined for each level are very weak and do not correspond to respective levels of the European Qualification Framework or any field-specific qualification frameworks or professional standards. There are no clear strategies for social work research, profession research. The knowledge base of social work theories and practice is missing, with the exception of critical social work models. Lack of international dimension regarding the content and research resources is an area of special concern for the Master programme. However, the Panel notes that the practical orientation of the education and the support provided by the university in the search of internship placements for students are positive aspects of the study programmes.

The Bachelor and Master programmes in **Physical Education and Sport** are generally structured in consistency with the formulated qualification objectives. However, the study programmes are very broad and need to be sharpened and differentiated according to the future field of employment, i.e. either as school Physical Education teachers or as coaches/trainers. The strong focus of the study programmes is on practically doing sports; more critical theoretical thinking on sport and physical education is to be provided to make the structure of the study programmes well-balanced. One of the major strengths of the study programmes is the high competitiveness of their graduates on the national labour market.

## **Standard 2: Staff**

Al-Farabi KazNU has a staff development programme which includes yearly trainings and workshops for teachers across the university. The new faculty members are mostly hired from among the graduates of al-Farabi KazNU Master and PhD programmes, which cannot contribute to the diversification of research and knowledge transfer. There is no tenure track system at the university.

*Psychology.* Many of the teaching staff are competent, interested and involved in research activities, but their competencies and research interests are limited to the areas of General Psychology, Education, and Social and Cultural Psychology. Competencies in Health and Clinical Psychology and in Work and Organisational Psychology are scarce or missing.

*Pedagogics and Psychology.* The staff members are well qualified and motivated for their profession. There is a strong motivation to make the academic staff more international.

*Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.* The teaching staff are qualified to fulfil the teaching tasks in the study programmes. However, the Social Pedagogics staff members are mainly specialists in pedagogy and educational research, their research objectives being focused on school matters only. There is no group of teachers directly involved in field practice.

*Social Work.* The Social Work teachers and researchers are highly qualified but only small part of them are specialists in Social Work. Their scientific performance is mainly soft, the share of publications in highly-valued journals is not high. The department needs to employ staff from the social work profession.

*Physical Education and Sport.* Most staff members have sound qualifications in physical culture (sport science) and long-term teaching experience. However, most of them lack international experience and international publications.

### **Standard 3: Quality assurance**

The study programmes are supported by the institutional quality assurance system, though there is no well-designed quality assurance unit at the faculty level. Quality review of teaching performance through student, alumni and employer surveys is carried out on a regular basis. However, there is no evidence of the analysis and interpretation of the survey results, or signs of changes resulting from the feedback provided. Evidence of periodical reviews of the study programmes is missing. Peer review of teaching performance is in place, but there is no (documented) follow-up procedure. Information policy and system for the information provision to stakeholders and public are not in place at the faculty level.

The interaction with external stakeholders (employers) is established in a good way by regular meetings; students sit on most university committees. Nevertheless, the influence of students and stakeholders on decision-making is not clear.

### **Standard 4: Funding and infrastructure**

The funding of the study programmes is mainly based on the state budget. Admission fees are rather high for local students; however state educational grants are available to them on a competitive basis. The infrastructure for most of the study programmes is in general appropriate, although some facilities and equipment relevant for the study programmes are missing (e.g. psychological services and laboratories for Psychology programmes, a swimming pool for physical education and sport programmes). The new library complex and university library fund have an impressive number of materials necessary for students, though the number of electronic resources in humanities and social sciences is limited.

The information support to maintaining faculties' and departments' homepages is weak. The university intranet UNIVER system provides an adequate informative basis for the management of the study programmes by the departments and by the faculty following quality assurance criteria.

### **Standard 5: Research**

*Psychology.* There is a substantial lack of research in cognitive and social neurosciences, psychometrics and statistical data analysis, work and organisational psychology, clinical neuropsychology, psychopathology, clinical and health psychology. Integration of research into the teaching process is claimed, but there is no evidence that student's curricula at the Bachelor and Master levels include research activities other than delivering questionnaires and interviews.

*Pedagogics and Psychology.* The study programmes are linked basically to two research topics of the Department – causes for acts of suicide among adolescences in Kazakhstan, and the role of family education for human development. These topics are very relevant in the local context, and the research activities on them are well established. Nevertheless, relevant research on current international trends in education would be important in order to increase awareness not only of local issues, but also global issues.

*Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.* The strategic ideas in developing research in the programmes “Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition” are very vague. The way how researchers bring in their projects and fulfil their work regarding the improvement of the scientific profile of the study programmes is not clear.

*Social Work.* There is insufficient evidence concerning the transfer of research outcomes into the educational processes. The documents provided by the teachers do not illustrate the basic research results but rather reflect applied research outcomes. The PhD programme in Social Work has no clear strategy for research. For achieving excellence in research nationally and internationally, a deeper science base for professions needs to be developed, especially at the Master and Doctorate levels; a special emphasis should be made on internationally recognised innovations.

*Physical Education and Sport.* As a consequence of the rather low level of research, the interaction of research and teaching needs to be improved. The organisational and structural conditions at the university are suitable for the scheduled research activities but they are misbalanced in regard to research in the natural sciences and in the humanities of sport science. The larger share of research is undertaken in the natural sciences.

#### **Standard 6: National and international co-operations**

Al-Farabi KazNU has established partnership relationships with more than 400 higher education institutions and international/national organizations within Kazakhstan and abroad; efforts are being made by the university towards increasing student and staff mobility. However, there is no clear faculty- or department-level strategy of international cooperation including memberships in professional associations, professional co-operations with international and national experts. International cooperation is often in place mainly due to personal interest of the staff, not as a response to the needs of the study programmes. Strong relationship between the study programmes and employers should be noted as one of the strengths of the study programmes.

## 5 Accreditation decisions and statements of grounds

At its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014, the Board of AQ Austria decided:

1) The programmes "**Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology**", "**Master of Social Sciences in Psychology**" and "**PhD in Psychology**" at al-Farabi KazNU in Almaty, Kazakhstan, do not meet the standards of the „Guideline for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes" ("Guideline...") adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in July 2013.

2) Pursuant to 3.5 of the "Guideline..." the Board of AQ Austria denies accreditation to the programmes.

Reasons for denial are

- major deficiencies in the basic education on Bachelor and Master levels which are so substantial that they cannot be remedied by a condition (standard 1.2; standard 1.3; standard 1.5);
- the insufficient research environment for the PhD level (standard 1.13.1, standard 5.1).

Further information can be derived from the panel's report.

It has to be stated that the sole basis for the assessment of the study programmes and decision taking by the Board of AQ Austria are the standards as defined in the Guideline of AQ Austria for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes from July 2013. The qualification standards defined by the Europsy certification system have been used by the panel for the purpose of comparison of focus areas within the curricula, but not for the purpose of assessment.



At its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014, the Board of AQ Austria decided:

1) The programmes "**Bachelor of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology**" and "**Master of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology**" at al-Farabi KazNU in Almaty, Kazakhstan, meet the standards of the „Guideline for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes" ("Guideline...") adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in July 2013.

2) Pursuant to 3.5 of the "Guideline..." the Board of AQ Austria grants accreditation to the programmes for a period of six years, i.e. until 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

3) The Board of AQ Austria notes that the programmes meet some of the standards only partially. Pursuant to 3.5 of the „Guideline..." accreditation is therefore granted subject to fulfilment of the following conditions. The fulfilment of these conditions must be documented in writing within nine months (i.e. until 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2015) and is subject to assessment by AQ Austria. In case of non-fulfilment, the accreditation will be withdrawn immediately.

Condition 1 (standard 1.4)

ECTS must be implemented in compliance with the ECTS Users' Guide to reflect the real workload. The workload must be defined and calculated.

Condition 2 (standard 1.8)

A standardized "Diploma Supplement" must be issued to all graduates.

Condition 3 (standard 6.1; standard 5.1)

A strategic plan of how international research will be strengthened must be provided. The plan must include the description of the steps which are to be taken and a timeline.

Condition 4 (standard 1.3; standard 1.5)

A module "Theory of Education" (or a similar title) must be included into the programme on Bachelor level. It shall be placed within the cluster "Vocational Modules".

Condition 5 (standard 5.3)

Research projects of students must be included as part of the curriculum in the Master programme and are required to be awarded credits.

Condition 6 (standard 3.3)

Student involvement must be institutionalised in all decision-making processes (this regards curriculum development, quality assurance, etc.) and in bodies at the university faculty and on departmental levels.

Condition 7 (standard 6.1)

A clear internationalisation strategy (including internationalisation at home) must be developed and a respective concept for it must be provided.



Condition 8 (standard 3.2)

Coherent, transparent and result-oriented quality assurance processes which contribute to a development of a quality culture at faculty level must be developed and presented.



At its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014, the Board of AQ Austria decided:

1) The programmes "**Bachelor of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition**" and "**Master of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition**" at al-Farabi KazNU in Almaty, Kazakhstan, meet the standards of the „Guideline for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes" ("Guideline...") adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in July 2013.

2) Pursuant to 3.5 of the "Guideline..." the Board of AQ Austria grants accreditation to the programmes for a period of six years, i.e. until 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

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#### Condition 2 (standard 1.8)

A standardized "Diploma Supplement" must be issued to all graduates.

#### Condition 3 (standard 1.3; standard 1.5)

The title of the study programmes must be changed in order to correspond with their contents: As the study programmes do not include contents on "Social Pedagogics", this part of the title must be removed.

#### Condition 5 (standard 1.2; standard 2.1)

Tasks regarding the management of the programmes must be set up on department level. This applies also to competencies in subject allocation as well as management of practice and internship.

#### Condition 6 (standard 5.1)

Research of staff has to be oriented more toward professional research instead of soft questions of instruction methods.

#### Condition 7 (standard 6.1)

A clear internationalisation strategy (including internationalisation at home) must be developed and a respective concept for it needs to be provided.

#### Condition 8 (standard 3.2)



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Qualitätssicherung  
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Austria

Coherent, transparent and result-oriented quality assurance processes which contribute to a development of a quality culture at faculty level must be developed and presented.



At its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2014, the Board of AQ Austria decided:

1) The programmes "**Bachelor of Education in Physical Education and Sport**" and "**Master of Education in Physical Education and Sport**" at al-Farabi KazNU in Almaty, Kazakhstan, do not meet the standards of the „Guideline for International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes" ("Guideline...") adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in July 2013.

2) Pursuant to 3.5 of the "Guideline..." the Board of AQ Austria denies accreditation to the programmes.

Reasons for denial are founded on

- major deficiencies in the curriculum with regard to subject specific didactics and pedagogy (standard 1.2, standard 1.3, standard 1.5);
- insufficient research in the field of physical education and sport on the Master level (standard 5.1, standard 1.2);
- weak international co-operation in subject-specific areas (standard 6.1, standard 6.2).