



Accreditation of study programmes KIMEP University Business

At its 16th meeting on 3rd September 2013, the Board of AQ Austria **decided to grant accreditation** to the programmes

"Bachelor of Accounting and Audit"

"Bachelor of Finance"

"Bachelor of Management"

"Bachelor of Marketing"

"Master of Business Administration"

"Executive Master of Business Administration"

at KIMEP University in Almaty, Kazakhstan for a period of five years, **under the following conditions**. The fulfilment of these conditions must be documented in writing within nine months (i.e. until 3rd of June 2014) and is subject to assessment by AQ Austria. In case of non-fulfilment, the accreditation will be withdrawn immediately.

Condition 1

KIMEP must raise the academic level of the Bachelor's thesis by fostering its academic foundation, linking it to research and supporting the students' methodological skills. This needs to be proven through a concept for a revision of the Bachelor's thesis as well as its implementation.

Condition 2

KIMEP must raise the academic level of the Master's theses by fostering its academic foundation, linking it to research and supporting the students' methodological skills. The thesis needs to be bound to defined scientific requirements, and students need to receive support to prepare their thesis. This condition needs to be proven through a concept for a revision of the Master's thesis as well as its implementation.



Condition 3

The principles for recognition of competences to the Master programmes must be clearly described in the relevant documentation.



Agency for
Quality Assurance
and Accreditation
Austria

Accreditation Report of the review team

Bachelor of Accounting and Audit
Bachelor of Finance
Bachelor of Management
Bachelor of Marketing
Master of Business Administration
Executive Master of Business
Administration (EMBA)

KIMEP University

June 2013

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1 General information

KIMEP University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of its Bachelor and Master programmes in Business. These study programmes of the same discipline are assessed in the following report. The report includes statements on the Bachelor resp. the Master programmes, where deviations require different descriptions. The assessment of the Bachelor and the Master programmes is strictly separated.

1.1 Basic principles of the procedure

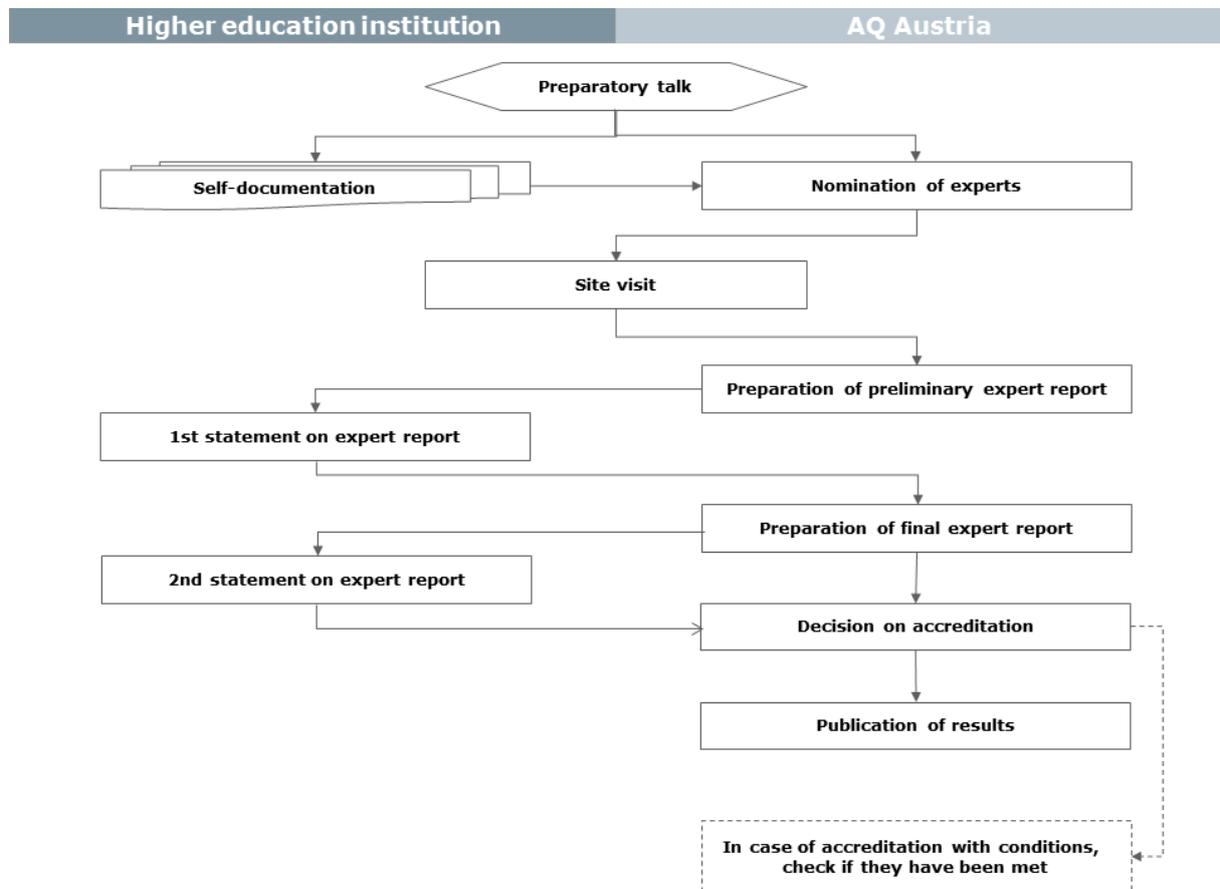
AQ Austria is the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education. The agency is operating in Austria and other countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is committed to serving the common good and is based on the values of the European Higher Education Area, in particular the autonomy and diversity of higher education institutions and independent quality assurance.

AQ Austria has been admitted to the "Register of accreditation agencies" by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan to carry through accreditation procedures of study programmes at higher education institutions in Kazakhstan.

By granting international accreditation to a study programme, AQ Austria confirms its compliance with European quality standards. These standards are derived from the principles laid down in the Bologna Process and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG).

Standard 1	Qualification objectives of the programme
Standard 2	Content and design of the programme
Standard 3	Academic feasibility
Standard 4	Examination system
Standard 5	Resources
Standard 6	Transparency and documentation
Standard 7	Quality assurance and development
Standard 8	Equal opportunities
Standard 9	Programme-related co-operation

The accreditation pursues the principles of a peer-review and follows the procedural steps:



The expert report and the higher education institution's statement constitute the basis for the accreditation decision, which is taken by the 14-members-Board of AQ Austria. There are three options for the decision:

Accreditation without conditions

The quality requirements are being met. Any recommendations given in the expert opinion are supposed to help the higher education institution continuously develop the study programme. The agency grants the accreditation for a period of five years.

Accreditation with conditions

Deficiencies have been detected which are likely to be corrected within nine months. The higher education institution proves that the conditions have been met, and this will be verified by AQ Austria.

Denial of accreditation

Serious deficiencies have been detected which are not likely to be corrected within nine months.

If the accreditation decision is positive, AQ Austria will issue a certificate to the higher education institution.

1.2 Profile and concept of the study programmes and brief description of KIMEP

The following information derives from the self-evaluation report of KIMEP.

Name of Study Programmes: **Undergraduate Programs in Business Administration**

Name of Degrees:

- **Bachelor of Accounting and Audit** (previously, BSc with Major in Accounting)
- **Bachelor of Finance** (previously, BSc with Major in Finance)
- **Bachelor of Management** (previously, BSc with Major in Management)
- **Bachelor of Marketing** (previously, BSc with Major in Marketing)

Date of introduction: BSc - August 1999; New Degree Titles – January 2013
Regular study period: 8 semesters
Number of ECTS credits: 240

KIMEP got the status of KIMEP University in January 2012 and asked the authority to transfer all old licenses, graduate, undergraduate and post-graduate, into the new ones with the status change from "Institute" to "University". On July 19, 2012 KIMEP got 10 new licenses for undergraduate programmes.

As the BSc degree title, with major in four areas, has now been substituted with four new specialised degree titles, the overall goals and objectives of programmes of studies have remained unchanged, with some very minor adjustments to specific objectives.

The overall structures of the four bachelor degree programs are the same and there are significant commonalities among the four programs. Specifically, the category of courses and corresponding credit hours are the same under the four programs. Moreover, the General Education courses (53/240 ECTS), Program Foundation Required courses (92/240 ECTS) and Physical Examination courses (8/240 ECTS) – total 168/240 ECTS – are exactly the same under the under the four programs. These commonalities lead to the same Program Goals, Program Objectives, Learning Objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes of the four specialised bachelor programs. In addition, Program Foundation elective courses (15/240 ECTS) are also similar among some of the four programs.

However, the four programs are distinctly different in terms of specialised knowledge. Specifically, Program Specialization courses (54/240 ECTS), Internship (12/240 ECTS), Thesis (4/240 ECTS) and State Examination (2/240 ECTS) – total 72/240 ECTS – are different the under the four programs. These uniqueness lead to different Program Goals, Program Objectives, Learning Objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes of the four specialised bachelor programs.

Given the above-mentioned common features of the four programmes, a single self-evaluation report was prepared.

Name of Study Programme: **Graduate Program in Business Administration**
Name of Degree: **Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

Date of introduction: August 1992
Regular study period: 4 semesters
Number of ECTS credits: 90 (resp. 67)

Name of Study Programme: **Graduate Program in Business Administration**
Name of degree: **Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)**

Date of introduction: 2007
Regular study period: 18 months
Number of ECTS credits: 60

KIMEP University

KIMEP was founded as the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics, and Strategic Research by a resolution of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, in January 1992. In February 2012 the Institute was granted university status. A non-profit joint-stock company, KIMEP University is overseen by an independent Board of Trustees elected by its shareholders.

KIMEP University is the largest American-style coeducational higher education institution in Central Asia serving a multicultural, multinational student body. Students at KIMEP University come from 25 different countries, including Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, the USA, the UK, Germany, China and Korea. Current annual enrolment on all programmes is about 4,000. Approximately 85% of currently enrolled students are undergraduates (Business, Economics, Public and Municipal Administration, Journalism, International Relations and Regional Studies, Jurisprudence), with 15% studying on Masters (Business Administration, Economics, Public Administration International Law, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, International Journalism and Mass Communication, International Relations) and Doctoral (Business Administration) programmes. All degree programmes at KIMEP are delivered in English.

According to the American-style credit system, originally adopted by KIMEP University, one credit-hour (a KIMEP credit) is equal to 15 teaching hours with the expectation that a further 30 hours will be spent by students on independent study. Thus, the graduation requirement for a Master's degree varies between 36 and 60 KIMEP credits, depending on programme duration. To harmonise the university's credit system with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), it was determined in 2011 that one ECTS credit equals to 27 learning hours, i.e. the workload of a 3 KIMEP-credit course is equal to a 5 ECTS-credit course.

In March 2010, Kazakhstan became the 47th state to join the Bologna Process, and for the last few years the country has been modernising its higher education system by applying the main

principles of the European framework including the three cycle degree system and a credit accumulation system.

KIMEP University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of Master programme of International Law in January 2013 after preparatory discussions during autumn 2012.

1.3 Accreditation procedure at KIMEP

KIMEP University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the Bachelor and the Master programmes of Business in January 2013 after preparatory discussions during autumn 2012.

Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation report by KIMEP	8 February 2013
Decision on review team members by the board of AQ Austria	12 February 2013
Preparatory skype meeting of the review team	17 April 2013
Site-visit at KIMEP by review team	22 - 24 May 2013
1 st draft of the report of the review team	
Formal statement by KIMEP	
Final report of the review team	
Statement on the final report by KIMEP	
Accreditation decision by board of AQ Austria	3 September 2013

Members of the review team

Name	Institution	Role
Péter Csóka	Corvinus University of Budapest	Reviewer from academia
Mikus Dubickis	Riga Technical University	Student reviewer
Katharina Hofer	University of Linz	Reviewer from academia
Zhanat Kumisbekuly Myrzakhmet	Eurasian National University	Reviewer with professional experience
Peter F.E. Sloane	University of Paderborn	Reviewer from academia, head of the review team

AQ Austria Coordinator

Alexander Kohler

2 Assessment results

2.1 Standard 1: Qualification objectives

The learning outcomes are well defined at both the programme level and the course level. Thus, each course has its specific learning outcomes. They are set in workshops by the faculty in a bottom-up process according to what is needed in business and what is expected by companies once the students are graduated. Hence, feedback from business practice is incorporated and the learning outcomes are linked to practical applicability, for example in the marketing area this could be a specific marketing plan for a firm. The knowledge and skills meet the requirements of business and there is a good balance between general and specific knowledge. Furthermore, students are incorporated in the development process of learning outcomes. They also participate in department meetings and in committees. The integration of teaching and learning through the inclusion of recurrent feedback loops is a characteristic of the curriculum.

The learning outcomes complement each other and accumulated learning outcomes are considered by the university and the faculty members to gain a holistic perspective on the learning outcomes as a whole. There are rubrics for the assessment of learning outcomes and they are incorporated in the syllabi of each course. A standard format on learning outcomes and their individual weights is given. The learning outcomes are related to quality assurance objectives and there is a clear commitment towards quality enhancement. Thus, learning outcomes are updated on a continuous level, again in a bottom-up process from the department level to the highest body of KIMEP, i.e. the Academic Council. It becomes evident that the update comes from inside the university involving faculty and students. The assessment happens at a detailed level and each course assessment contributes to the learning outcomes.

Regularly, the syllabi are reviewed regarding the learning outcomes, and there is an assessment whether the learning outcomes have been met. This update is made on an annual basis, specifically every academic year, and there is a committee that presents the results to the faculty members. Every year, fine-tuning is made through minor changes. Major revisions of the learning outcomes are made every two to three years. Feedback from students also leads to modifications regarding the learning outcomes. At the end of the semester, each faculty member fills out a course management form and the dean ensures that the course and the learning outcomes are appropriate. There is a specific area in the course management form dealing with how the learning outcomes match with the strategy of the university.

The intended learning outcomes are communicated clearly to the students well in advance through the course syllabus. The syllabus is accessible for the students on an electronic platform. Instructors discuss the syllabus and the related qualification objectives in the first class. Subsequently, the specific qualification objectives are explained in more detail in the following classes when they are related to the topics discussed in class. Students are progressed through in-class activities and it is essential to relate the learning to practice, e.g. in internships. Learning outcomes do not only include knowledge, but also specific skills such as presentation skills or critical thinking.

Finally, the learning outcomes and qualification objectives correspond to the discipline levels of the bachelor programmes in the areas of accounting and audit, finance, management and marketing. The learning outcomes and qualification objectives also meet the discipline specific requirements of the master programmes.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.2 Standard 2: Content and design of the programme

All KIMEP programmes are modularised. These modules count for a specific number of ECTS. However KIMEP adopted an American-style teaching-hours credit system right from its foundation. The system's basic building block is a credit-hour - a KIMEP credit - which is equal to 15 teaching hours, with the expectation common in the United States that further 30 hours will be spent on independent study. In November 2011, KIMEP's Academic Council resolved to equate its teaching-hours credit system with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), so as to facilitate the implementation of dual Master's degrees and, more generally, reciprocal credit transfers between European HEIs and KIMEP. This was achieved by harmonising student course (module) workloads. It determined that one ECTS credit is equal to 27 learning hours. This was reaffirmed by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs in January 2013. This enabled the existing long-standing workload expectations of a KIMEP-credit course to be equated with a 5 ECTS-credit course.

The contents of the programmes match the state of the art in business studies practiced in business schools all around the world. There is indeed an emphasis on applied studies. This becomes particularly evident when considering the instructional design of the teachers and the recruiting strategy of the university. The lecturers prefer problem based approaches focussed on practical problems of enterprises. This approach is also founded in the central ideas quoted by the Academic Council and the Deans. KIMEP wants to focus on industry's needs.

In daily work this is not interpreted as a naïve manpower-approach. The instructional designs of the lecturers also promote the students' personality. The development of personal skills seems to be an overarching object.

There is a sophisticated and professional process of curriculum revision. The programmes are revised in a bottom-up process. This is a process of continuous improvement of the relevance of the contents where the lecturers report to regulatory boards.

Maybe this way of quality improvement and curriculum development is a little 'over-organising' the daily work of the studies.

The students have the possibility to do extra semesters in form of summer schools. These so called 'semester plus' reduce the period of study. Students can do two of these extra semesters to reduce study years. This shortening option conflicts with the idea of workload programmes. A workload should cover the learning time of an average student and balance it out in a period of one year. The regular two-semester-programme per year should fit to the regular workload of one year. If one or even two extra semesters are put in addition into the workload of one year than this accrues of course a shortage in the time the students can spend for the regular semester.

According to the American tradition summer schools are a reasonable way to shorten the average duration of study programmes. KIMEP is influenced by this tradition. Therefore they have good reasons to run this extra semester. But this contains contradictions to the Bologna standards:

Following the Bologna model a student has a yearly workload of 1.800 hours (h). This can be breakdown to a workload of 39/40 h per week. One central idea is that a balance exists between contact hours and learning hours. If students visit summer schools with a workload of approximately 400 hours the weekly workload in the semesters rises from 39 h to 47 h. Students who have demonstrated well above-average study and examination results can manage such a programme.

The ordinary programme has an intensive workload. Putting in an extra semester increases the workload. Not only over-performing students choose the extra semester but also the average ones. On top of all these requirements the European tradition in which the Bologna model is embedded also calls upon the students to carry out supplementary activities like internships, individual studies a. s. o. These additional activities would not be possible if the regular workload is already at 46 hours a week.

These considerations have two implications:

- 1st KIMEP should have itself a critical view on this work overload and evaluate the workload of the students. In this evaluation it also should be taken into consideration that there should be in the medium-term a swift from the American tradition to the Bologna model.
- 2nd From a more general point of view it seems to be necessary to give the students more spare time for supplementary activities. Putting extra semesters into the programme reduces high academic ambitions and leads to professional school education.

To make it clear: it normally should not to be possible to do extra programmes. This only can be possible in individual and exceptional cases. If joining a 'semester plus' becomes the regular case than the workload of the normal semester is not balanced properly. The established workload of the regular seminars has to be revised. As long as the extra-programme 'semester plus' is a 'normal' pathway, the existing workload of the regular semesters are note credible.

The programmes partly comply with the standard.

2.3 Standard 3: Academic feasibility

As stated in the self-evaluation report, „Admittance into the Undergraduate Program in Business Administration requires evidence of completion of secondary or higher-level education and a demonstrated proficiency in English, and if necessary, the zero-credit Foundation English Program“. In the MBA programme „a minimum score of 60 on the KIMEP English Entrance Test (KEET) or other equivalent test, for example, an IELTS of 5.5, although students can be conditionally admitted with a lower KEET score.“ When talking to faculty and students, the review team felt that the level of English is good, however, due to the crisis there is pressure to admit students with lower level of English who need some time to catch up.

The workloads are calculated as follows: "A student admitted to the BCB bachelor programs/ to the MBA program on a full-time basis is expected to undertake 1,620 learning hours of study each academic year determined on the basis of 27 learning hours for each ECTS credit". In the regular semester it means 45 hours a week over 18 learning weeks, in which the self-study seems to be overestimated for better students. Since the review of course workload is an integral part of the syllabus review process embedded in the program's quality assurance arrangements, we are confident that the overestimations will be corrected. It is in line with the strategic plan, where we can read about planning to introduce „a clear set of academic planning algorithms that can easily convert credits to annual working hours to weekly working hours".

Continuous assessments (essays, in-class tests, mid-term examinations, and oral presentations) are taken into account when calculating the workload. Final examination is mandatory at BA level, but not mandatory at MA level in Kazakhstan by state regulation.

It is positive that all students are assigned an academic mentor (providing student support and advice, also with respect to specific topics such as internships, mobility), the review team felt that the faculty is too much available for the students.

In the BA programmes the changing of a major is possible and quite common. It is a positive feature since students are not locked into a major.

The credit system allows that many BA students work in the last semester. This flexibility is positive, but could be given more attention by discussing it annually.

Student with special needs are taken into account on a case-by-case basis.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.4 Standard 4: Examination system

There is a continuous assessment (typically essays, quizzes, in-class tests, mid-term examinations, and oral presentations) and final assessment (notably final examinations, final term papers, internship project reports, and defended theses). Both are used to assess academic performance in business administration courses (modules). This is to ensure that the balance of different forms of assessment is appropriate for the assessment of the programme's knowledge-based and skill-based intended learning outcomes (ILOs). Assessment compensation is not permitted under the examination regulations. The lecturers of a module are also responsible for assessment.

The relation between continuous and final examination is not formalised. The lecturers expect continuous participation in courses and work on case studies. They focus on practical experience but there is no formalised way how these experiences are transferred into the academic learning.

A central part of every academic examination system is the thesis. In the past the BA thesis was not required. The examples the review team revised had a more or less poor performance according to the theoretical backgrounds. The students do not have enough time

to prepare the thesis properly. In future the thesis will be obligatory. The review team believes that the students will have to have a special preparation for the thesis and that the workload for the preparation of the thesis has to be extended. Also the requirements for the MA thesis should be increased.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.5 Standard 5: Resources

Funding for the programmes is secured by the collection tuition fees, getting financial aid (about 20%) and maintaining reserves. KIMEP does not depend on one main sponsor. In 2012 the net income at the whole university level after capital expenditure was negative only due the obligation to maintain reserves. The BCB, just like other business schools in the world is a cash cow.

The rooms and technical equipment are appropriate for teaching and self-studying. The library is well equipped; it is the largest university library in Central Asia. The review team could access online randomly selected top international journals. The Windows XPs should be upgraded and more attention should be given to a laptop based IT access (for instance by providing enough sockets in a classroom to charge them). Wifi has been available since February 2013. The Support Services makes sure to have a smooth spatial planning and organisation of learning facilities.

The needs of students and teachers in special situation are taken into account on a case-by-case basis.

The core faculty is internationally well qualified and carefully selected. A weakness is the lack of top international research, which might be caused that some faculty is teaching in summer instead of doing research (and maybe they are also too much available for students in general) and Kazakh and Central Asian research is over supported. This results in a low involvement in international research programs. However, the qualification of international journals and the intentions to increase quality publications are positive.

The co-operation between the Oversight Committee and the Executive Education Centre is good, but can be strengthened.

The faculty fluctuation is not relevant (annually 3-5 leaving out of 54). The number of faculty having masters or lower qualification is reasonable but decreasing.

Students can access online folders and electronic learning platforms to support administration and learning.

Teachers in the MBA programs are coming from the teachers of the BA programs and from outside, using very strict selection criteria. The selection criteria for the BA staff are also high.

Research and teaching enhancement support is provided by the BCB for the faculty.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.6 Standard 6: Transparency and documentation

The core values of integrity and transparency are central to the policy of the university. There is a clear commitment of the university towards complete transparency. The access to general information can be regarded as good. Students can get information through the university website, the student portal and the lecture-drive (l-drive) for personal information on their individual courses including electronic materials. Information is accessible also from anyplace outside the campus which is convenient for students, and information is available in advance. Furthermore, there are library systems to search books and there is a specific e-mail programme for students to communicate with their instructors. There is also an orientation programme with advisors after admission to the university. For freshmen, information may be improved as they sometimes might find it difficult to find the information they are looking for. More printed instruction and information would be required as it is easier and faster.

In the courses, students know about the assessment criteria well in advance. The transparency of grading is given. There are midterm tests, final exams, other small exams as well as interactive elements such as reports or presentations. Students can always ask the course instructor regarding detailed feedback on the interactive parts of the assessment or on the exams. Also, students can approach their instructors to see their exams, for example in their office hours. The instructor discusses the exam with the student and explains the grading.

Furthermore, curriculum development that happens regularly on an annual basis is well-documented. The faculty has access to the documents on the revision of the curriculum. The final outcome of the documentation is a catalogue that goes through revision every year in a bottom-up process.

The student evaluations of courses and faculty members are executed through continuous surveys that are undertaken by the institutional research centre after each course. Every instructor as well as the students have access to the results on an aggregate level, i.e. referring to the department or the college. Thus, students can inform themselves on the results of the survey. Regarding the consequences of the student evaluations, instructors improve their teaching based on the feedback collected in the surveys. They try to amend specific issues raised in the survey. Critical incidents are discussed among the faculty in the department and with the students, and feedback is given.

Specifically regarding the Master Programme of Business Administration, it is not immediately evident that the master programme covers 67 ECTS points and not 90 ECTS points. This difference of 23 ECTS points (so-called bridging courses) arises from the fact that some students need to do 23 ECTS points, including six fundamental courses covering 18 ECTS points, to achieve the necessary knowledge background and the required level for the Master programme. The bridging courses do not form an admission requirement for the Master Programme of Business Administration, i.e. they are actually part of the programme. In order to avoid misinterpretations, the role of the bridging courses and the potential credit transfers of prior degrees should be stated explicitly and in more detail in the documentation.

The BA programmes comply with the standard.

The Executive Master of Business Administration complies with the standard.

The Master Programme of Business Administration partly complies with the standard.

2.7 Standard 7: Quality assurance and development

There is a quality assurance system in the university. Overall system involves both internal institutional processes and external validation and benchmarking and accreditation. The system is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning, ensure that programme content is in place and assessment methods demonstrate that students have achieved the program's intended learning outcomes. The quality management for the programs is integrated into the quality management system of the entire higher education institution.

The quality assurance system in KIMEP is designed to enhance a quality for both BA and MA programs. There is more than one department (person) responsible for quality assurance - Chair of the Department, the Graduate Program Office, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Institutional Research Department. That could be the reason why it is not always clear for the representatives of the university, which person and/or department is responsible for the quality assurance (commission found that on the site visit).

The periodic review of programs is arranged every two years by the Program Committee and Departmental and College's Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Committee, involving students, alumni, faculty and employers/members of the Business Advisory Board. In the future University also plans to involve the members of the International Advisory Board. According to international experience, it is recommended that the review of programs is arranged every year.

There is a student's representation in the Academic Council, but student's participation should be increased - more than one representative in the Academic Council. The recommended practice is to determine students' participation in decision-making institutions for at least 20% of the total number of representatives.

During the studies process students are asked to fill the questionnaires, but the filling is not mandatory and not all of the students perform. The response from the students' side could be higher. The staff knows their own score and the average score. KIMEP offers 'Teaching excellence seminars'. The recommendation is to try to increase the response rate by motivation programme - students would appreciate to receive feedback out of their evaluation - enhanced study course content or methods, changed academic staff, plans to improve the situation with the toilets etc. Adequate infrastructure makes appropriate conditions to study motivation. The results of the study programme monitoring are taken into account but the stakeholders, including students, are not always informed about it. The recommendation is to inform stakeholders (provide the feedback) about the use of the results.

Opportunities for giving feedback at the end of the programme - There were opportunities to meet with the chair of the programme and the dean. Proposals for improvements were sent to the Academic Council of KIMEP. Unfortunately there are no standardised feedback mechanisms.

The review team has the impression that the time for the thesis writing is short, and that the theoretical part of it is poor. BA thesis was not a requirement until now. Currently new incoming students will have to prepare BA thesis. There should be a sound basis for thesis development in the future through the new programme. The thesis will be prepared in the earlier phase of the studies.

For the Master programme's thesis there are provided small number of ECTS. When comparing with a situation abroad, there is not enough time for full and qualitative development of the thesis. It is necessary to assign for it more ECTS and determine higher requirements regarding to the volume, structure and distribution (the largest share of the volume is for the research and solutions/suggestions not for the descriptive part of the thesis), research methods and references (more sources, scientific articles, specialised literature) of the thesis.

The student workload actually does not meet 45 hours, which is similar abroad. It is recommended to review certain study courses in order to check courses' workload– it could be valuable to increase students' individual workload in order to provide expected workload.

Future employment of the graduates is assured. 93% of the students find job immediately after graduating, which is seen as strength. Not always students are ready to work for the specific amount of money, which is offered by employers, so it is recommended to inform students about the situation in the labour market, their long-term benefits and attitude to form successful co-operation with representatives of labour market.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.8 Standard 8: Equal opportunities

The review team has found out that there are no any facts of discrimination by gender, nationality, race, religion, age at KIMEP University as in relations with students, but also in relations with teaching staff. The principles of equal opportunities are fulfilled. The situation with students with special needs or disabled students is also suitable, and KIMEP tries to help such students. But there is a lack of written policy. KIMEP explains the absence of such a policy by the small number of such students, but there should however be written rules in documentation of the University for fresh applicants and on the website.

The standard of internationalisation of the BA and the MA programmes is also evident. The University has a lot of distinguished professionals from the West at the business faculty. They also have professionals from Kazakhstan and other CIS countries. The balance between international and local teaching staff is given.

In the field of academic mobility and internationalisation, KIMEP has about 10% of foreign students at business faculty. These students do not have any disadvantages and they are well integrated, because there are no language problems due to English being the working language.

A medical center of KIMEP supports students not only with physical problems but also with psychological problems. Orphans get first priority when they need a dormitory placement. Students with special needs are directed to the particular offices for personal assistance. It is clear that the College Student Support Center helps students who consider themselves to be in need of advice or mentoring, who wish to withdraw from a College programme, who are at risk of academic withdrawal because of their poor academic performance or who are high academic achievers in need of greater challenges to achieve at their highest possible academic level.

Students who have unexpected family or medical demands, get help from KIMEP to adapt and continue their academic education. Students with physical disabilities or other special needs, once they have been identified by the Undergraduate Admissions Office and confirmed by the Medical Center, are all interviewed by the College Student Support Center. They get specific learning support and they get Personal Development Plans. There is no problem with special assessment, particularly with respect to final examinations. The classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms that need to be accessed by students are barrier-free.

There are no gender problems or other problems of inequality problems in the staff. The balance of international and local staff is definitely good and helps to know to students how to apply knowledge here but also how to use it abroad. The staff teaches not only in the narrow sense but they also share their mentality which contributes to widening the horizon. There should be a balance between international and national perspective and KIMEP is very good at it.

The programmes comply with the standard.

2.9 Standard 9: Programme-related co-operation

University involves collaboration with other institutions of higher education in Kazakhstan and abroad. There exist around 100 partnerships with other universities. Collaboration with academic partner institutions entails dual-degree programmes, student exchange programmes, joint international summer programmes, common conferences etc.

Practical implementation of student mobility is also supported by the administration – there are offered grants. The number of exchange students, both outgoing and incoming, is increasing. It is more difficult with incoming students mobility – for foreign students it is relatively complicated, because they have to deal with a residence permit. This is not directly related to the implementation of the study programme at the university, but the situation in the country, which hinder the attraction of foreign students.

There is a professional curriculum development with a permanent revision of the curriculum. The outcome orientation is ensured on the basis of contacts with business, research reception, the participation in research projects. KIMEP should, however, improve its research activities, which also includes applied research. The collaboration with the business community entails Internships Agreement, Business Advisory Board, Guest Lecture Series, Alumni Association etc. Involvement of alumni and enterprises can be improved. After the meeting with Alumni and entrepreneurs there was an impression that they are willing to further engage in studies implementation processes and university should use it. Industry provides financial support. Korean and Turkish enterprises are very active, and research funding is made available through these co-operative partnerships.

Networking with enterprises functions well. Internships are used in order to provide job offers to students. Students' projects are organised inside enterprises. Currently EMBA programme is closer to industry than other programmes.

It is recommended to ensure that students have the opportunities to write ordered final theses (research concrete topics, which are relevant for enterprises, for instance, develop

cost-based business growth, new products introduction strategies etc.). It is also recommended to increase the number of practical training excursions to enterprises.

Overall there is a co-operation in research – with partners from other universities and between faculty staff. More collaboration with local research institutions now is sought. However, in this case research has further development, although one has to take into account the limited time of the staff for these activities. Teaching load is eight courses per week, what is perceived as excessive. There is not much space for research. At the moment there is implemented joint research job between students and faculty, but there are very good opportunities for more collaborative research by participating in conferences and publishing scientific articles.

KIMEP collaboration with all parties ensures international environment with all of the resulting benefits for the students, for example, by making international network of professional contacts. Enthusiastic atmosphere at KIMEP is an evidence to have good opportunities to develop successful co-operation in all directions.

The programmes comply with the standard.