



# Accreditation of study programmes KIMEP University Public and Municipal Administration

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

*"Bachelor of Public and Municipal Administration"*

*"Master of Public and Municipal Administration"*

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 In case of non-fulfilment, the accreditation will be withdrawn immediately.

## Condition

KIMEP must establish a framework for effective quality assurance of the two programmes. The relevant interest groups must be involved in this process, and the framework should be compatible with mechanisms for quality assurance of other KIMEP programmes.



Agency for  
Quality Assurance  
and Accreditation  
Austria

# Report of the review team

## Bachelor of Public and Municipal Administration

## Master of Public Administration

# KIMEP University

5 July 2013

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# 1 General information

KIMEP University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the Bachelor programme in Public and Municipal Administration and the Master programme in Public Administration.

These two study programmes of the same discipline are assessed in the following report. The report includes statements on the Bachelor resp. the Master programme, where deviations require different descriptions.

The assessments of the Bachelor and the Master programmes are strictly separated.

## 1.1 Basic principles of the procedure

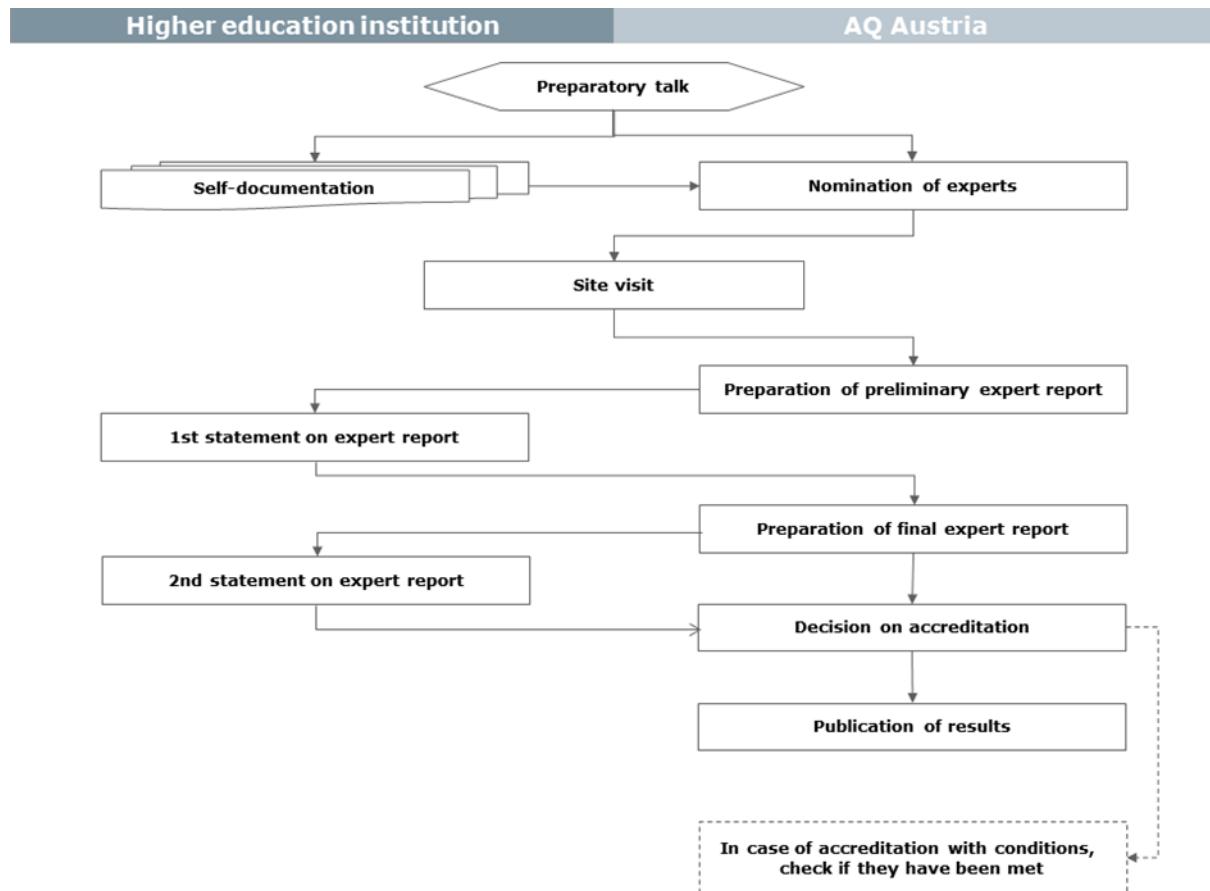
AQ Austria is the Austrian agency for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education. The agency is operating in Austria and other countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is committed to serving the common good and is based on the values of the European Higher Education Area, 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
- Standard 2 Content and design
- 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 resp. its website.

### **Bachelor or Public and Municipal Administration (BPMA)**

Date of introduction:	August 1999
Regular study period:	8 semesters
Number of ECTS credits:	240
Majors:	Public Policy and Administration Financial Management

The objectives of the programme are:

- to promote knowledge and skills needed to perform in public, non-governmental, and private management and policy-making through the building and strengthening of the analytical and leadership capacity of graduate students;
- to provide graduate students with the generic and specialized management and policy knowledge and skills needed for successful careers in the public, non-governmental, and private sectors;
- to educate graduate students for ethical service to their society and the broader regional and international community.

The programme is designed for prospective managers to gain skills that enable them to adapt to changing demands within different sectors through an intellectual and practical interdisciplinary approach to learning. BPMA graduates are expected to evidence their theoretical knowledge of public administration and their acquisition of the required practical skills, including:

- a satisfactory level of knowledge of:
  - the concepts and theories that have informed the development of public administration, public policy, and public management;
  - the nature of the public sector and its relationship to government, civil society and the marketplace, and how it can be institutionally arranged and reformed;
  - the concepts and theories of public finance (taxation and expenditure), governmental budgeting, and financial management;
  - the nature of public organisations and impact of their structure and culture on organisational performance;
  - the concepts and theories of motivation, leadership, job design and organisational change that can be applied to improve the performance of public organisations;
  - one or more areas of public policy specialization (including natural resources, urban development, social policy, environmental policy, and health policy); and
- the necessary cognitive, inter-personal, and self-management skills to:
  - undertake research that synthesizes, integrates and applies theoretical constructs to define, analyse, and address issues in the fields of public administration, public policy, and public financial management;
  - communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively in oral and written English;
  - make appropriate use of information technology for the retrieval, analysis, and presentation of information;
  - work effectively with others in the pursuit of common objectives.

## **Master of Public Administration (MPA)**

Date of introduction: August 1993  
Regular study period: 4 semesters  
Number of ECTS credit points: 120 ECTS

The programme has the following goals:

- to promote excellence in the study and practice of public administration through the building and strengthening of the analytical, problem-solving, and leadership capacities of its graduates;
- to provide graduate students with an advanced level of knowledge of contemporary governance and public administration, public and financial management, and public policy; and an advanced level of research skills, which will enable the completion of research thesis;
- to prepare graduates for ethical service to their society and the international regional and international community.

Upon completion of the MPA programme its graduates are expected to have acquired:

- satisfactory knowledge of:
  - the nature of the public sector and its relationship to government, civil society, and the marketplace, and how it can be institutionally arranged;
  - the economic perspectives on government and public policy, governmental budgeting, and public financial management;
  - ethics as they apply to the public sector;
  - public organisations and their management and leadership, and the impact of organisational structure, culture, and leadership on organisational change and performance;
  - project appraisal and management, and the necessary cognitive, self-management, and interpersonal skills;
  - concepts and theories of public policy and analysis; and
- the necessary cognitive, inter-personal, and self-management skills to:
  - undertake supervised independent research, involving the synthesis and application of theoretical constructs to topics in the fields of public administration, policy, and management;
  - communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively in written and oral English;
  - use information technology for the retrieval, analysis, and presentation of information;
  - work effectively with others in the pursuit of common objectives.

## **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 harmonize the University's credit system with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), it was determined in 2011 that one ECTS credit equals 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 modernizing its higher education system by applying the main principles of the European framework including the three cycle degree system and a credit accumulation system.

### 1.3 Accreditation procedure at KIMEP

KIMEP University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the Bachelor programme in Public and Municipal Administration and the Master programme in Public Administration in January 2013 after preparatory discussions during autumn 2012.

#### **Timetable of the accreditation procedure**

<b>Procedural step</b>	<b>Date</b>
Delivery of self-evaluation reports 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	9 April 2013
Site-visit at KIMEP by review team	27-28 May 2013
1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the report of the review team	22 June 2013
Formal statement by KIMEP	29 June 2013
Final report of the review team	5 July 2013
Statement on the final report by KIMEP	19 July 2013
Accreditation decision by board of AQ Austria	3 September 2013

#### **Members of the review team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role</b>
Prof. Dr. Theo van der Krogt	European Association for Public Administration Accreditation	Reviewer from academia, head of the review team
Dr. Christine Leitner	Danube University Krems; Ministry for Economic Affairs, Family and Youth, Vienna	Reviewer from academia
Yerbol Moldakassimov	Information-Analytical Centre under the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan	Reviewer with professional experience
Anca Prisacariu	University of Bucharest; European Students' Union	Student reviewer

#### **AQ Austria Coordinator**

Zhanna Kuzminykh

## 2 Assessment results

### 2.1 Standard 1: Qualification objectives

The qualification objectives of the programmes are well described and used in both the study programmes – 'Bachelor of Public and Municipal Administration' (BPMA) and 'Master of Public Administration'.

The intended learning outcomes of the Bachelor programme are:

- describe and apply the concepts and theories that have informed the development of public administration, public policy and public management;
- describe the nature of the public sector and evaluate its relationship to government, civil society and the marketplace, and how it can be institutionally arranged and reformed;
- analyse and apply the concepts and theories of public finance (taxation and expenditure), governmental budgeting and financial management;
- describe the nature of public organisations and analyse the impact of their structure and culture on organisational performance;
- describe, analyse and apply the concepts and theories of ethics in government;
- describe and evaluate the legal environment in which public organisations function;
- describe and analyse the concepts and theories of motivation, leadership, job design and organisational change that can be applied to improve the performance of public organisations;
- describe, analyse and evaluate one or more areas of public policy specialization (including natural resources, urban development, social policy, environmental policy, and health policy);
- complete research involving the synthesizing, integrating and applying of theoretical constructs to define, analyse and address issues in the fields of public administration, public policy and public management;
- communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively in oral and written English;
- make appropriate use of information technology for the retrieval, analysis, and presentation of information;
- work effectively with others in the pursuit of common objectives.

The intended learning outcomes of the Master programme are:

- describe and analyse the nature of the public sector, its theoretical underpinnings, and its relationship to government, civil society, and the marketplace, and how it can be institutionally arranged;
- describe, analyse and evaluate economic perspectives on government and public policy, governmental budgeting, and public financial management;
- describe and apply the concepts and theories of ethics as they apply to the public sector;
- describe, evaluate, and compare public organisations and their management and leadership, and appraise the impact of organisational structure, culture, and leadership on organisational change and performance;
- analyse and evaluate projects and management, using the necessary cognitive, self-management, and interpersonal skills;
- describe, analyse, and apply the main concepts and theories of public policy and analysis;

- undertake supervised independent research, involving the synthesis and application of theoretical constructs to topics in the fields of public administration, policy, and management
- communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively in written and oral English;
- use information technology for the retrieval, analysis, and presentation of information; and work effectively with others in the pursuit of common objectives.

What is visible from these intended learning outcomes in both programmes, is that there is a heavy emphasis on description and analysis, and somewhat less on practical skills. However in the description of the tasks and projects students have to do in the courses, there was enough training of practical skills reported by both teachers and students. The focus on team work and presentation skills is very much appreciated by the students. This focus is also highly appreciated by employers in Kazakhstan the review team has met. According to the interviews with management and faculty, as well as alumni and employers' representatives, graduates from both programmes go to the public sector, i.e. non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Government, but also increasingly to the private sector. Their knowledge and skills are highly appreciated by employers. Reversely, students expect to be "in high demand" in the labour market due to their specific skills (critical thinking, team work and communication skills) and the fact that they are fluent in English with good writing skills. On a more general note, management observed that the current trend is a shift of high school graduates' interest towards 'professional' degrees (in medicine, engineering etc.). Public Administration is a professional degree as it gives knowledge and competencies in financial management, project management, and evaluation.

There is a clear relation between the qualification objectives, the learning objectives of the programmes and the learning objectives of the courses. In the self-evaluation reports (SERs) the matrix between the programmes' intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and courses was presented. The study guides for the courses are elaborate and complete. Students can see the objectives of each course, follow them and check the extent to which the objectives are met. Students have the information they need and can see their goals.

The programmes include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects of public administration, with an accent on public management and especially financial management. This makes KIMEP's public administration students also wanted in the profit sector and NGOs. The only remark that could be made is that the law and technology component in the programmes is rather small (see section 2.2).

There are enough electives for students to make the programmes more personal fit. This was confirmed by the students and graduates during the interviews.

The acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies adequate for the public administration practice is sufficient. An internship is part of the BPMA programme; MPA students without experience in the public sector can do an internship as well. Some of the students can have an internship at the ministries in Astana based on a competitive selection organised by the university student representative body, KIMEP Student Association (KSA). In the courses there is enough attention to the local situation in Kazakhstan, especially through cases and projects in which students have to apply theory to concrete local cases.

Assessment methods in both programmes are diverse, oriented to bringing theory into practice, and they reflect adequately the ILO's and the QO's.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.  
The MPA programme complies with the standard.

## 2.2 Standard 2: Content and design

The self-evaluation reports and the site visit interviews with KIMEP management revealed that the National Qualification Framework (NQF) has not yet been adopted. Therefore it is too early to speak about compliance. As stated in the self-evaluation documentation "Kazakhstan became the 47th participating country in the EHEA, on 12 March 2010, under the Budapest-Vienna Declaration. It is in accordance with Ministry of Education and Science (MES), recently issued National Qualifications Framework. As yet, the MES has not fully adopted the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as the basis for determining program content, duration, student workload, or credit requirements for graduation".

From the SERs supplemented by the insights obtained through the interviews with the management, the review team understands that the challenge for KIMEP at present is to manage the co-existence of three different systems: the American, European, and post-Soviet systems. The process to establish the ECTS has been initiated, but details still need to be worked out, e.g. clear definition of the student workload, quality assurance (QA), etc. Even if there is plenty of room for improvement, the review team could observe the commitment of KIMEP management in this regard. The ECTS is applied taking the recommendations of the European Commission as a point of departure.

The content of the BPMA and MPA programmes is modelled after comparable programmes offered by western universities (which was the purpose of KIMEP); the last review of the programmes was benchmarked against programmes of the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter in UK remotely located from bureaucratic centres the same as Almaty, which serves as the example of a well-justified, "context-based" choice.

The undergraduate programme in Public and Municipal Administration (BPMA) began as a major in the four-year program of study that led to the awarding of a Bachelor of Social Science degree that was licensed by the MES in 1999. From 2001, it leads to the awarding of a Bachelor of Social Science in Public Administration degree, which received State Attestation in March 2003 and was re-attested in March 2008. Since July 2012 this program leads to the awarding of a Bachelor of Public and Municipal Administration. The program is an eight-semester program of full-time study that has to be completed within 10 years of commencement.

The graduate programme in Public Administration (MPA) was initially authorized in 1993 under KIMEP's Charter. It was then licensed, after the subsequent enactment of enabling legislation in 1996, by the MES in January 2002, and received State Attestation in November of that year and was re-attested and re-licensed in March 2008. In 2013, the study programme 'Master of Public Administration' was re-licensed by the MES; according to the 2013 License Grant, the programme will have the title 'Master of Public and Municipal Administration' (MPMA) from Fall Semester, 2013 onward.

The MPA is offered as a four semester full-time programme with a fast track option for KIMEP BPMA graduates (12 months min.) according to the interviews with the programme director and management. The MPA programme is designed for graduates in any field and, thus, presumes no prior knowledge of, or work experience in, public administration. Students may

enroll for less than a full-time course of study and they may take academic leaves of absence from the programme for a maximum of one academic year. A student must complete all requirements for graduation within five years from starting the program.

In reality the MPA programme is implemented in a format that allows part-time study since there is a high demand from students to combine a permanent job and Master-level studies. The students and alumni confirmed this need in the interviews during the site visit. For this reason, the MPA programme may last longer than two years, up to five years depending on the students' choices/circumstances. According to management, at least 50% of the BPA students go to MPA. If KIMEP BPMA students proceed to the MPA programme they get a one year reduction and pursue the so-called 'fast track' programme (maximum course reduction=4, courses=12 credits). This implies that students may graduate within 12 calendar months. The rest of the students have to take a number of foundation courses, their studies last 1,5 years as a minimum. It is possible for students to have course waivers if they have studied these subjects earlier, i.e. credits are transferred from other KIMEP programmes or other universities. This is also possible with studies/courses completed abroad (on a case-by case-basis).

The BPMA and MPA programmes were designed to conform with the general Bachelor's-level and Master's-level Dublin Descriptors respectively, and were designated by KIMEP's Academic Council to be a 240 and 120 ECTS credit programme respectively, in accordance with the European guidelines in the absence of Kazakh guidelines.

An overview of the BPMA programme content can be found in the BPMA self-evaluation report Vol. 1 (pp. 73-78; Vol. 2 provides detailed descriptions). It includes Foundation courses (43 ECTS are required by the MES General Education Courses which include 8 ECTS for physical education; other Foundation Courses, in particular English language), a Major in Public Policy and Administration and a Major in Financial Management, and a number of Major Elective Courses.

The MPA programme includes the following components (cf. MPA self-evaluation report):

Required Courses:	ECTS
Critical Thinking and Writing	5
Essentials of Public Administration and Management	10
Public Policy Analysis	10
Economic Perspectives on Government	10
Fiscal Governance	10
Research Methods and Statistics	5
Public Management and Leadership	10
Administrative and Management Ethics	10
Project Evaluation and Management in the Public Sector	10
Thesis I: Thesis Design	5
Thesis II: Thesis Proposal	5
Thesis III: Thesis Defense	10
Internship in Public Administration and Management	5
Selected Issues in Public Administration and Management	5
Electives Courses: (two of the following have to be chosen)	10
Local Government	
Public Sector Reform	

Social Policy  
Public Sector Economics

The content and design of the courses of both the BPMA and MPA programmes achieve the specified qualification objectives (see also section 2.1). The self-evaluation reports as well as the interviews with students and teachers at the site visit confirm that the individual courses provide for adequate formats of teaching and learning to achieve the ILOs (see section 1.1). During the site visit, the review team encountered good teachers with diverse methodological approaches. At the same time the students confirmed the effectiveness of the content design and methodological approaches and showed a high level of commitment towards KIMEP and satisfaction with their achievements.

In terms of links between research and practice, as well as international vs. local context, students, alumni and faculty perceive the balance as adequate and 'fit for the purpose'. The concerns of the review team of an overlap of between the BPMA and MPA programmes were not shared by the students, alumni and faculty. In the MPA programme students partly deal with the same topics but in a more in-depth and 'individualised' manner.

In effect, both the BPMA and MPA design demonstrate a strong focus on financial management, while law, political science, and e-governance are not very prominent/if at all considered (see also BPMA and MPA self-evaluation reports Vol. 2 for details). In particular law and technology but also strategic planning and taxation could be more integrated into the public administration curricula when compared with other international public administration programmes. In this context, faculty mentioned the College requirements at the site visit: Students must take certain foundation and general education courses before they start the PA courses. In addition, information technology (e-governance) is partly covered in the course "Government and development". Regarding law, a new major "Law and governance" will be offered in the academic year 2013-2014 in cooperation with the Law Faculty. However, regarding the 'Budgeting and taxation in local administration' course, as well as regarding strategic planning, it is not clear to what extent these topics are integrated into the mandatory or elective courses. The review team suggests therefore that faculty management should consider integrating these disciplines in the curricula of the study programmes. In addition, subjects focused on the Kazakh context are mainly electives while mandatory disciplines tend to be basic theoretical (and international) subjects (for details see also BPMA and MPA self-evaluation reports, Vol. 2).

According to the faculty and student views expressed at the site visit, the local context is referred to in all courses of both programmes. Students are encouraged to use critical thinking and apply theory to the specific local context. The knowledge and skills acquired in the programmes have proven of high value in practice according to alumni.

Internships and exchange programmes are designed in a way to allow students to achieve ECTS credit points. Internships are mandatory and considered of high practical value. There are two approaches to the internship (c.f. self-evaluation reports BPMA, p.17): "(1) Introductory Internships: to provide opportunities for students to determine if they have an interest in a particular career; or (2) Professional or Work-Experience Internships: to provide opportunities for students to gain experience in their fields and to create a network of contacts. Students have the opportunity to undertake an internship abroad as part of their program of study. This can be arranged with one of KIMEP's partner universities by the International Relations Office. The administration of local internships is a College function."

An internship of the Bachelor programme is recognised for the MPA programme. In addition, MPA students might do their internship in the organisation where they are employed.

From the interviews with the students it became clear that internships are done abroad only in exceptional cases. Students seemed to show increased interest in exchange programmes abroad which are offered on a credit-transfer basis (however, the question of funding was raised). In particular summer schools enjoy increasing popularity, such as the one offered by the University of Ljubljana). According to the self-evaluation documentation, "All the concerned parties must approve such credit transfers in advance. Such study-abroad opportunities are arranged with KIMEP's partner universities by the International Relations Office." As observed in the interviews at the site visit, there appear to be different criteria for the internships in the Bachelor and master programme, even though these criteria have not been made explicit.

The internship programme is adequately supported by faculty and practitioners (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report BPMA, p. 29). This was also supported by the perception of students expressed at the site visit. Criteria for the selection and implementation have been established (e.g. including a GPA 3.0 for internship at the National Parliament). Even though the number of students who get access to internships in the ministries is limited, KIMEP provides support in facilitating the internship procedure for all its students. Students have to produce an internship report (which is part of the assessment) and keep a diary during the internship. "Internships in the Kazakh Parliament are a successful experience. Pyotr Krepak, former RK Minister of Labour, is coordinating the programme. Now 60 KIMEP students [BPMA and MPA students among them] are in Astana doing their internships in the Ministry of Economics, of Foreign Affairs, Labour, Health, Supreme Court, Constitutional Court and other offices. This is the 10th year of the internship programme." (Quote from the interviews at site visit)

The criteria for the Master thesis are clearly laid out (cf. self-evaluation report MPA). The Bachelor thesis will only be introduced as of the next academic year since it is required at the national level. According to some alumni there is a close link of their Master thesis to their actual work. In general students choose the topic (either research based or focused on a practical problem) as well as their supervisors for their Master thesis. Students decide when they are ready to defend their thesis. According to the discussion with the MPA students, "the supervisors guide you, not just instruct you".

Regarding the integration and cooperation with research projects there is no evidence of closer involvement of BPMA and MPA students in on-going research activities (KIMEP does not yet offer PhD programmes, see also section 2.5).

The admission requirements and the selection process for both programmes have been defined and published on the website. Professional experience is not required to be admitted to the MPA programme. In reality, Master students are however usually more focused on their career development and have some work experience or are working during their studies. The admission requirement for the MPA is a bachelor diploma. However, the review panel noticed that sometimes BPA students were allowed to enter the MPA programme while still finishing their BPMA.

As mentioned above, rules for the recognition of foreign qualifications have been defined in the context of the exchange programmes with partner universities. Beyond that this issue is dealt with on a case-by case- basis (similar to qualifications from other national universities)

according to discussions at the site visit. No provisions have been made for crediting/recognition of experiential learning /work experience (equivalent competences and knowledge that are acquired in the workplace).

The site visit also demonstrated that both programmes enjoy good administrative support, based on an impressive infrastructure (see also standard 5). The equal opportunities policy is not formalised (yet); and the special learning needs policy is not (yet) clearly defined (see section 2.8). On a more general note, KIMEP sees the programmes' development 'in process', many issues are still dealt with on a quite informal basis, this is e.g. also true for the quality assurance process (see section 2.7).

#### Recommendations:

- Reflect on the balance of international and national components in terms of mandatory and elective subjects, in particular also with a view to the development plans (i.e. local government focus), even though students and staff are very satisfied with the combination of theory and practice in their study as well as the link to local practice. In this context, the list of obligatory readings for major subjects should be regularly revised and updated by including texts of current government programmes, initiatives and relevant legislation in Kazakhstan.
- Revise and strengthen the degree of inter-disciplinarity in the content design in terms of further integrating legal aspects, strategic planning, taxation and e-governance, in particular strengthen the law, technology and taxation components in both programmes.
- Involve student more in on-going research and research cooperation projects, which would be beneficial for both students and faculty.
- Encourage student mobility (beyond summer school attendance), in particular also within the framework of internships and exchange programmes, which could be made mandatory (at the Bachelor level).
- Clarify the differences in objectives and criteria of the internship within the framework of the BPMA and MPA programmes.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.

The MPA programme complies with the standard.

## 2.3 Standard 3: Academic feasibility

Entry qualifications are taken into account, and are reviewed annually. For the BPMA programme national students are required to have a specific level at secondary school plus a minimum score (35) at the KIMEP English Entrants Test (KEET). Foreign students need a secondary school diploma and demonstrate proficiency in English (at the KEET they need a score of 60).

The MPA students need a Bachelor degree and a score of 40 at the KEET. KIMEP BPMA graduates are waived the foundation courses in public administration of the MPA programme and may take the fast track option, resulting in a Master programme of about one year.

Students can complete the programme in the intended period when studying full time. When studying part-time (which occurs frequently, especially in the MPA, because student work full time), they need more time. They can use up to 5 years for the completion of the

programme. Classes are scheduled in evening hours to accommodate part-time students. Both programmes offer optional intensive summer semesters to students.

The workload is carefully calculated by the faculty and indicated in the study guides, and students report that it is fair in terms of the number of credits. The programmes' self-evaluation reports also specify the student workload: "The workload requirements in all courses are specified according to the assigned ECTS credit weighting (that is, 135 learning hours for a five ECTS credit course and 270 learning hours for a 10 ECTS credit course), with the specification of suggested learning activities on how students should allocate their study time. The review of course workload is an integral part of the syllabus review process embedded in the program's quality assurance arrangements."

The self-evaluation reports provided by the programmes describe the student workload as follows: "In a regular semester (Fall and Spring semesters):

- a full-time student's expected workload in a regular semester is no more than 810 hours (45 hours a week over 18 learning weeks), which, normally, involves undertaking up to six courses, depending on their assigned ECTS credit weighting; and
- a part-time student's expected workload in a regular semester is no more than 405 hours (22.5 hours a week over 18 learning weeks), which, normally, involves undertaking up to three courses, depending on their assigned ECTS credit weighting.

In the optional intensive Summer 1 semester:

- a full-time student's expected workload in this semester is no more than 405 hours (50.6 hours a week over 8 learning weeks), which, normally, involves undertaking up to three courses, depending on their assigned ECTS credit weighting; and
- a part-time student's expected workload in this semester is 135 hours (16.9 hours a week over 18 learning weeks), which involves undertaking one course assigned a 5 ECTS credit weighting.

In the optional intensive Summer 2 semester:

- a full-time student's expected workload in this semester is 135 hours (33.75 hours a week over 4 learning weeks), which involves undertaking one course assigned a 5 ECTS credit weighting."

The students generally perceive the workload as balanced and appropriate. As one student put it, "Teachers tell us from the outset that we have to work hard. In addition, we know from the syllabus what is expected from us and what the conditions or assessment are".

Support services are available and used by students for internships and studying abroad. Also medical and psychological services are available on campus. There is a system of mentoring, but there are indications that students more often use support of other students through the student organisation (e.g. 'Public Administration. Absolute Power', PAAP), although on paper there is an elaborate system, including an "early alert" system to identify underperforming (but also high-achieving) students. From the student interviewees' responses during the site visit, the review team noticed that some of them are aware of the mentoring instrument, but do not know how to use it or didn't find it promoted well enough.

KIMEP (and also KIMEP sponsors) provide scholarships. Part of these scholarships are 'need-based' and are dependent upon the parents income. Also there are scholarships for very bright students and for students with disabilities. A Scholarship standing committee decides on the scholarships allocation. According to the Master programme self-evaluation "KIMEP promotes equal access through its comprehensive financial aid program for graduate study. In

2011-12 it offered 10 merit scholarships with 100% tuition remission, and 10 needs-based scholarships with 50% tuition remission."

Recommendation:

- Consider exploring ways and strategies in order to improve the mentoring and advising services on the programme and institutional level.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.

The MPA programme complies with the standard.

## 2.4 Standard 4: Examination system

After studying the self-evaluation and supplementary documents as well as after interviewing all the stakeholders of KIMEP BPMA and MPA programmes the review team can state that the examination system successfully determines whether the qualification objectives have been achieved or not. However, the review team learned during the site visit that KIMEP could use a policy on the appropriateness of the assessment. There is high commitment at all levels of KIMEP towards the projection of the teaching-learning process: starting with content and design of curriculum, continuing with workload weighting, assessment of academic performance and achievement of learning outcomes.

The review team noticed during the interviews that there is general satisfaction among students and teachers in relation to assessment procedures as a whole.

The examination system manages to reflect intended learning outcomes. However, the responsibility for the teaching and assessment of a public administration course rests with the academics assigned to teach them with no other higher management supervision. Even though there is to some extent academic freedom of individual teachers in establishing assessment methods, weighting and calendar in certain circumstances it may be a constraint to give 40 % weight to the final assessment form in compliance with the national regulations.

All criteria as well as deadlines, attendance requirements, continuous and final assessments are published under examination regulations as well as communicated to students by every teacher responsible for his/her class at the beginning of the semester.

Students in special situations feel that they can discuss deadlines and formal requirements to all programme-related examinations with their teachers on individual basis, and they face a positive attitude from their teachers in relation to postponement or rescheduling of examinations/deadlines. However, there is no clear formalised procedure at institutional or programme level in this regard (see section 2.8).

The interviewees found the final theses as theory based, but also giving good information about resources applied and data used (see also section 2.2).

Students considered that there is the right balance between the number of examinations and workload for each of the disciplines. Moreover, both current students and alumni confirmed that there were plenty of sources to get support in case students with different educational backgrounds needed assistance in order to keep up.

Continuous assessment plus its balance with final assessment build a good efficient system, as confirmed by the interviewed stakeholders.

In most of the cases, class attendance influences a part of the final grade, in some of the cases 100% attendance is mandatory. However, there was not a high rate of complain about 100% attendance requirement among students. The interviewed students expressed their great satisfaction with the fact that the examination system is encouraging them to think, not only to memorise or reproduce facts or theories.

The reviewed programmes have an appeal procedure in place, and students are aware of its existence. However, not many of them actually use this possibility.

An official transcript detailing the courses undertaken and the grades achieved is issued to BPMA and MPA graduates. However, the team recommends KIMEP to consider the possibility of introducing the Diploma Supplement as designed by the Bologna Process especially since Kazakhstan joined this Process already in March 2010. This will further facilitate recognition and comparability of studies in European Higher Education Area and across the globe.

Recommendation:

- Consider the possibility of introducing the Diploma Supplement as designed by the Bologna Process especially since Kazakhstan joined this Process already in March 2010. This will further facilitate recognition and comparability of studies in European Higher Education Area and across the globe.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.

The MPA programme complies with the standard.

## 2.5 Standard 5: Resources

The KIMEP University has a solid resource base to deliver the programmes utilising tuition fees.

However, 90% of KIMEP budget has to come from tuition fees and the university does not receive government funding, but the top managers reported about the university's fundraising campaigns aimed at financial diversification in a bid to become a "world-class university".

The review team had an opportunity to visit the library facilities and look at the wide range of sources, i.e. literature (books, journals) and online services. Items of obligatory and other readings are available in sufficient amount. Some part of the literature is received as the gift from foundations (e.g. Brockhaus). There is an authorized access to international academic e-databases of journals such as EBSCOhost, JSTOR, SpringerLink etc. for students, staff and other university members, who actively use them. Library working hours are long enough and flexible, especially during exam periods, which helps to accommodate student needs in particular situations and with special needs.

Study rooms are technically well-equipped with LCD-projectors, screens and PCs. Adequate access of students to PC rooms with Internet is in place. Relevant technical and other support is provided by the university to students with physical disabilities.

There is no IT-based platform for the planning and organisation of studies. In the meantime, there is a rudimentary IT-supported learning platform (L-drive) enabling the faculty to share materials with students and colleagues contributing to the university's stock of academic resources, while some teachers use a more sophisticated platform.

Faculty, both national and international, are well-qualified. A PhD degree from a western university is an obligatory requirement for faculty positions. Recruiting new faculty is a rigorous process administered by the Department of Public Administration based upon a global search from the most qualified candidates. Relevant teaching experience and an appropriate array of publications is required for positions above Assistant Professor. The remuneration packages offered are competitive with those of European universities. At the same time, the top-management reported some official constraints limiting timely nomination of globally well-qualified candidates for faculty and managerial positions. For instance, the academic rank of a "full professor" has to be recognized by the Ministry of Education and complicates getting the work permit for the foreign faculty members. An example is the vacancy for the position of Dean of College of Social Sciences.

KIMEP is embarking upon the shift from quantity to quality of publications in terms of expectations for the faculty and is encouraging them to continue conducting and publishing research. However, it is not yet clear to which extent staff development is among the priorities of the programmes' management as there is no structure/individual in charge of these tasks. The review team would like to underline the importance of innovation in teaching-learning process, continuous development of teaching skills adding student centred methods and instruments in daily pedagogical activities.

There is not yet an elaborate system and policy of faculty training and development. KIMEP does not offer doctoral programmes and thus cannot train people to the level of full professorship. According to the discussions with management, the Dean and Head of department at the site visit, KIMEP aspires to get a PhD licence and the licensure process is under way. PhD programme delivery is supported by the state, i.e. students will receive grants from the Kazakh government. Government invests heavily in PhD programmes, though preferences are mainly on math and technologies. KIMEP seeks to identify international partnership universities who could provide support to KIMEP in PhD programme delivery. Most candidates have 'domestic circumstances' (family, children), full-time jobs, and/or financial limitations. Going abroad for the entire programme would be highly problematic and very costly. A possible approach would be going to western universities on a part-time basis. Students could take a limited number of courses abroad and do the basic part at KIMEP (foreign faculty could come to Almaty and KIMEP could use their own teaching capacities). This could be a systemic approach to staff development and lead to western PhD degrees.

Faculty members teach in other programmes and vice-versa. The review team was impressed by the motivated faculty and their very diverse didactical approach. This was acknowledged by the students and graduates. However, the number of faculty is small for a Bachelor (with specialisations) and Master programmes.

The teacher/student ratio is a little high with regard to the MES requirements (1:8), but acceptable from the viewpoint of the Bologna process requirements.

Budgetary constraints provide limited opportunities for the faculty to teach abroad. The university mainly relies on the international teaching experience of some of the staff, though

this international experience was accumulated before entering KIMEP and there is no substantial proof to have it continued ever since.

Recommendations:

- Establish a systematic framework and policy for faculty development and training, including mobility. Consider implementing staff development practices: establishing a structure that would have as a main responsibility teacher training, drafting a policy in this regard (including gender equality provisions), better promotion of innovative pedagogical instruments and methods that would be student centred in the same time.
- Introduce a standard IT-supported learning platform to be used by all students and faculty members.
- Consider diversification of KIMEP's revenue sources to reduce the current overdependence on tuition fees and move towards higher financial sustainability.
- Increase the number of faculty.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.

The MPA programme complies with the standard.

## 2.6 Standard 6: Transparency and documentation

Overall, the BPMA and the MPA programmes were well documented and relevant information was accessible for the review team without barriers. The study programme, the individual courses, admission and examination requirements, as well as internships and student mobility are described in the SERs and the additional documentation provided before and during the site visit. However, information on the programmes on the website of KIMEP is limited, and not all relevant content is sufficiently concise and/or it cannot be found easily.

Individual courses/modules and requirements in terms of objectives, ECTS, readings and assessments are clearly set out in the syllabus descriptions according to the samples provided in the SERs BPMA Vol. 2 ("BPMA Course Briefs", pp. 44-96) and MPA Vol. 2 ("MPA Course Briefs", pp. 44-73) and additional documents provided for the site visit (e.g. MoU for internships). This was also confirmed by the students of both programmes. (As one student put it "we know from the beginning what we need to study and what is required in the exams").

Student representatives are involved in the decision making of the university (30% of every structure are students), but not at the programme level. Also, there is a lack of student involvement in quality assurance actions, e.g. course evaluation design, curricula revision. Even if there were some points expressed during the site visit that students are not always interested in getting involved, the review team believes that the university (as well as programme) can find different ways to make them feel as full partners and encourage their participation in all the matters of the academic community.

Information on internships and mobility of students is also provided during the programmes according to the interviews with students. In particular regarding the internship at the Parliament, there is a well-defined selection process in place which is clearly communicated according to the site visit discussions with faculty and students. Exchange programmes are communicated and supported by the International Office (cf. site visit discussion with students, faculty and support services).

Course materials are generally made available electronically on the L-Drive. The discussions during the site visit also confirmed that students can access the L-Drive remotely as well as their individual workspace. In general, students and faculty confirmed that various communication channels are used. According to the students' interviews the communication with and the responsiveness of the teachers (on- and offline) is viewed as excellent. As one student put it "It's great to communicate with your teacher also via Facebook". However, there is no general standard learning and communication platform (e.g. Moodle) in place (see also section 2.5).

KIMEP's website does not display the information in an appropriate manner to easily get an overview of the content and focus of both programmes. (There is for example no specific section on "programmes" on the start page.) The focus of the programmes (on financial management) is not adequately reflected in the information published on the website. No details of the courses are delivered, a description of perspectives is lacking. The way the programme is presented on the website is important for prospective and current students as well as potential employers. Highlighting the key focus, conditions and benefits of the programmes would also be relevant to attract international students. According to the discussions with KIMEP management, the Dean, and the Chair of the Department at the site visit the website has recently been reconstructed. Previously faculty had direct access to the website and quickly updated the information. The relevant information has been delivered to the Computer Centre and is supposed to be updated on the website in a timely manner.

The equal opportunity policy is not entirely clear/transparent. This point is further elaborated in section 2.8.

#### Recommendations:

- *Strong recommendation:* Improve student participation in decisional, executive and consultative structures on the programme level, as well as in quality assurance.
- Improve the university website to make the content of the BPMA and MPA programmes clear and easily accessible, and to explain differences and inter-linkages, including details on the individual courses and other interesting options such as internships, student mobility and the planned dual degree. Once in place, equal opportunity policy should also be mentioned on the website. The decision, design and implementation of how information is displayed on the website should not (just) be left to the IT staff but should be based on user needs (i.e. involve students and teachers in the development).
- Continue the practice of publishing the annual KIMEP Catalogue as it is a document of high importance for (prospective) students.

The BPMA programme partly complies with the standard.

The MPA programme partly complies with the standard.

In its first statement KIMEP provided the following clarification regarding the review team's comments contained in section 2.6 (p.21) of the present report: "KIMEP University usually provides a Catalog that includes a description of each degree program and its constituent courses, as this is the basis of, by reference, its contract with its students. Such a Catalog was not produced for the 2012-13 academic year because of delays in gaining MES licenses for all of KIMEP University's undergraduate and postgraduate programs".

The review team regards KIMEP's comment as a useful clarification, but wishes to emphasize that the findings and recommendations relating to the issue concerned remain valid.

## 2.7 Standard 7: Quality assurance and development

A system of course evaluations (written surveys) is used KIMEP-wide. During the site visit, the review team learned that the results are not always useful for faculty members, but address rather shallow aspects from the teaching-learning process.

The overall results are published and the course evaluations are available for the faculty member and the head of the department/programme. All faculty involved in the programme are learning from the evaluations, especially the written comments of the students. However, the extent to which a certain teacher integrates the suggestions depends on this individual as there is no systematic evaluation that analyses the potential improvements of the didactic activity. During the site visit the review team learned that the results are analysed by very few people, according to one of the interviewee's opinion.

These course evaluations are also used for personnel evaluations. The students are not really involved in the methodological part of the evaluation, though they fill in the questionnaires (but the response rate is low), and can see the results on the KIMEP website. They report that they have the impression that their comments are taken seriously. However, it was difficult to state that recommendations are integrated as they have semester disciplines and it is unlikely to meet the same teacher again. The contacts between students and teachers are good and informal.

There is a system of data collection from employers and graduates (surveys every four years), and there are informal contacts with employers, but a systematic review of objectives of the programme, is not in place yet. Furthermore, there is no systematic way of using the data that are collected – they are not closing the quality circle. There is no advisory board of employers. Sometimes focus groups are used, but they stay mainly at informal level.

The methodology of data collection is as a whole (both from students and from employers) shallow; there is no centralised department for quality assurance, nor is there a quality assurance policy at the institutional or programme level. There is no clear task division between central and department level on quality assurance. Surveys for employers and graduates are used by central units as well as by the department, without knowing who does what. Reliance on individuals in using the data is too big.

This informal (intuitive) process depends too much on personalities. But this may be considered a strength as well. Alumni-ambassadors (nominated by KIMEP) can be important for getting feedback from graduates and can be a good informal channel for communication. It is unclear if, and how, this instrument is used systematically. The whole organisation is relatively small, certainly the Public Administration Department, which makes informal communication and feedback possible and effective, but also unstable.

The programme management is aware of the incomplete quality circle. They are awaiting a framework for quality assurance to be developed and approved at KIMEP level.

Although the quality circle is not complete yet, the department is very open to input from outside. They use visiting professors in their programmes frequently. Also in 2012 both

programmes were reviewed by the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), and both have been unconditionally accredited for seven years.

Given the mentioned considerations it is set as a condition that a systematic framework for quality assurance should be established for the BPMA and MPA programmes, involving all stakeholders.

#### Recommendations:

- Establish quality assurance structures (departments, committees) at KIMEP level as well as department/programme level.
- Plan quality assurance task division between all the structures and individual at management level.
- Close the quality assurance circle, especially the analysis and, most important, further integration of the feedback results in the day-to-day procedures and practices.
- Establish systematic mechanisms and instruments in order to increase the involvement of external stakeholders (set up an advisory board, conduct focus groups) in the programmes' evaluation and improvement.
- Make better use of alumni association, both in evaluating the intended learning outcomes of the programmes, and in evaluating the programmes' execution.
- Use more open questions in the Employers Questionnaires, questions specifying and clarifying the issues like "Which skills exactly to develop".
- Decide which KIMEP unit is responsible for conducting particular surveys, and make it joint projects.
- Improve the methodological aspects for the different types of data collection constantly, so that the data truly helps the institution and individual teachers.
- Put in place evaluations of the instruments themselves in order to assess their functionality.
- Improve student involvement in all QA related actions, including in methodology design for data collection.
- Increase transparency of QA related actions to the entire academic community.
- Assure better visibility of the course evaluation results (can also build trust of students in the instrument and increase the participation rates).
- Close the quality loop when looking at the results of course evaluation: design an instrument that assesses to which extent individual teachers take into account students' suggestions.
- Improve and systematise the evaluation of the support services by students.
- Ensure involvement of the entire academic community in QA related issues that leads on the long term to the establishment of a "quality culture" inside the institution.

The BPMA programme partly complies with the standard.

The MPA programme partly complies with the standard.

## 2.8 Standard 8: Equal opportunities

According to KIMEP 2010 Catalog, "KIMEP is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for admission to all qualified individuals. KIMEP does not discriminate any individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, social or sexual orientation, creed, marital status, physical disabilities, remote area location, age or any other subjective criteria." KIMEP's core values include a commitment to the care for the well being of all members of the KIMEP community — students, faculty, and staff — regardless of their nationality, religion,

gender or other factors, such as physical disability, special needs, or capacity to pay the required tuition. However, the equal opportunity policy is not yet clear/transparent and visible to the academic community, either for students, or for teaching staff regarding the promotion to management positions.

As the institution acknowledges, there are no formal regulations relating to students with confirmed physical disabilities or special needs. It is the review team's impression that students with health-related impairments and students with an educationally disadvantaged background are supported at the level of study programmes both by the commitment of individual teachers as well as by the highly valued work of support services. We must mention though that this is an individual-related practice which makes it, if not formalised, to a certain extent unstable when looking into the future.

KIMEP has a dormitory for 429 students. The self-evaluation report states: "Priority is given to orphaned and disabled students, scholarship students (when full-time scholarships include dormitory accommodation), international and CIS full-time degree students, first-year degree students, current students who are 17 years old or younger, and current students based on their year of entry and financial need." KIMEP tries to provide enough dormitory places for students, some of whom pointed out growing demand during the last years, especially regarding Bachelor students. However, the number of places that students can access for accommodation is rather small so that a limited number of students can actually benefit from this support from the university. If not resolved, this aspect can represent a barrier for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds that cannot afford a more expensive alternative in Almaty.

There is a high commitment on behalf of KIMEP in offering support to international students by facilitating accommodation and guidance by faculty staff and support services in order to better integrate them into the KIMEP academic community. Regarding the support offered to local students, there is a system of mentoring that students are aware of but it is not used, according to students (see also section 2.3).

Every year KIMEP offers scholarships to a large number of its students, which demonstrates a high commitment of the institution in removing social inequalities, especially given the fact that the income sources are very limited. The scholarships are very diverse: they take into account academic performance only, social background only or both in the same time; they come under fee waivers – different percentages depending on individual grades/social status (see also section 2.3). When referring to scholarships available to MPA students, there is a mandatory criterion for the applicant to be a teaching assistant for 20 hours/month. The review team would rather see this practice (acting as a teaching assistant) as an advantage, not an eliminatory criterion that restricts the access of students to the scholarship.

The review team learned during the site visit that students would welcome a less bureaucratic process of scholarship management.

#### Recommendations:

- Draft an equal opportunities policy both for students with different types of special needs and coming from "vulnerable" groups, and for teachers with regard to promotion of female faculty into leading positions.
- Formalise the flexible treatment of students in special situations with respect to deadlines and formal requirements of assessment so that the practice is not tied to individuals.

- Promote the support that the university is willing to offer to students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds so that it reaches prospective students before enrolling at the university.
- Establish a centre for students with disabilities.
- Decrease the bureaucracy level in scholarship distribution process.
- Eliminate the mandatory criterion in MPA scholarships for students to act as teaching assistants.
- Embrace the EHEA action line of social dimension (access to higher education, progression and graduation from higher education without facing socio-economic obstacles), and consider ways of assuring/facilitation of the access for a diverse group of students.
- Increase the number of dormitory places.

The BPMA programme partly complies with the standard.

The MPA programme partly complies with the standard.

## 2.9 Standard 9: Programme-related co-operation

KIMEP's international activity is aimed at expanding the university's international activities and to enhancing the awareness and reputation of KIMEP as a competitive institution in the global academic community (<http://www.kimep.kz/international>).

KIMEP has a broad network of international partners, including 106 agreements with universities from around the world. These collaborations incorporate student exchange programmes, 11 dual degree programmes, joint international summer programmes, faculty mobility programmes, and joint research opportunities. Not all partnerships are active.

BPMA students go abroad on exchange programmes for a semester or a full academic year at one of KIMEP's partner universities; KIMEP and the other universities involved approve credit transfers in advance. For MPA students international mobility options are less explored for the reasons of Master students' full-time employment, budget constraints etc.

Next year KIMEP plans to launch a dual degree programme for MPA students in cooperation with the Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP), Lausanne, Switzerland.

An Executive MPA programme is envisaged, particularly targeted to public employees in Astana and based stronger on the use of e-learning and blended learning approaches. In addition, local administrations in Almaty will be targeted more in the programme development and student recruitment. The challenge here is KIMEP's mandate to deliver programmes in English only. Co-operation with the Astana based National Academy of Public Administration is not envisaged.

Professional internship is organised in the Kazakh Parliament, ministries and other state bodies, NGOs and private companies for both programmes as a mandatory element. In case of the fast track MPA programme option (1 year) available to KIMEP's BPMA graduates, the internship may be waived. The proposal to be made here is to introduce flexible international mobility options for fast track Master students (e.g. short-term international internship) to cater for a higher professional level international practical experience.

Faculty mobility opportunities exist, but are not very much explored and are limited by financial constraints. KIMEP encourages faculty members to participate in national and international conferences, workshops and seminars. A faculty member is entitled to attend up to two international conferences in an academic year with one of them supported by KIMEP. It was the impression of the review team that mobility of staff (even if reduced) is rather based on individual initiatives and efforts than a coordinated and systematic approach at the programme/institutional level.

KIMEP seeks to cooperate with national partners in Kazakhstan, including research collaborations. As it was noted by the top-management, establishing relationships is part of KIMEP policy in line with new licence requirements (cooperation, collaborative research etc.). There is research collaboration inside KIMEP. Both national and international faculty publish papers in Kazakhstan, which is part of the research cooperation within KIMEP and contributes to a better fine-tuning of the international teaching process to the local context.

In conclusion the review team is of the opinion that the programmes make use of KIMEP's extensive international relations, but that it is not totally clear what is the international policy and effort on the programme level.

Recommendations:

- Clarify the internationalisation policy (including staff and student mobility) on the programme level.
- Intensify international mobility of faculty.
- Explore opportunities for setting up dual degree programmes further.
- Intensify the dialogue with stakeholders in curricula revision and deploy labour market needs researches to make sure that the programmes still respond to societal needs.
- Introduce flexible international mobility options for fast track Master students (e.g. short-term international internship) to provide a higher professional level of international practical experience.

The BPMA programme complies with the standard.

The MPA programme complies with the standard.