



Agency for
Quality Assurance
and Accreditation
Austria

Accreditation Report of the panel Cluster A

Translation Studies (BA, MA, PhD)

Foreign Philology (BA, MA, PhD)

Linguistics (MA, PhD)

Study of Literature (MA, PhD)

Philology (BA, MA, PhD)

Turcology (MA)

Oriental Studies (BA, MA, PhD)

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

March 2014

Index

1	General information	3
1.1	Basic principles of the procedure	3
1.2	Listing of study programmes and brief description of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University	5
1.3	Accreditation procedure at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University	9
2	Assessment results	10
2.1	Standard 1: Study programme and programme management	10
2.1.1	Translation Studies	11
2.1.2	Foreign Philology	12
2.1.3	Linguistics	13
2.1.4	Study of Literature	14
2.1.5	Philology	15
2.1.6	Turcology	17
2.1.7	Oriental Studies	18
2.2	Standard 2: Staff	21
2.2.1	Translation Studies	21
2.2.2	Foreign Philology	21
2.2.3	Linguistics	22
2.2.4	Study of Literature	22
2.2.5	Philology	22
2.2.6	Turcology	23
2.2.7	Oriental Studies	23
2.3	Standard 3: Quality assurance	25
2.4	Standard 4: Funding and infrastructure	27
2.5	Standard 5: Research	28
2.5.1	Translation Studies	28
2.5.2	Foreign Philology	28
2.5.3	Linguistics	28
2.5.4	Study of Literature	29
2.5.5	Philology	29
2.5.6	Turcology	30
2.5.7	Oriental Studies	30
2.6	Standard 6: National and international co-operations	32

1 General information

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the following programmes: Translation Studies (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Foreign Philology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Linguistics (Master, PhD), Study of Literature (Master, PhD), Philology (Bachelor, Master, PhD), Turcology (Master), and Oriental Studies (Bachelor, Master, PhD). These study programmes are assessed in the present report.

Bachelor and Master programmes of the same discipline as well as PhD programmes (where applicable) are assessed in one report, but may include different statements and assessments, which have to be assigned to the relevant programme. Where deviations require different statements and assessments, these are made.

1.1 Basic principles of the procedure

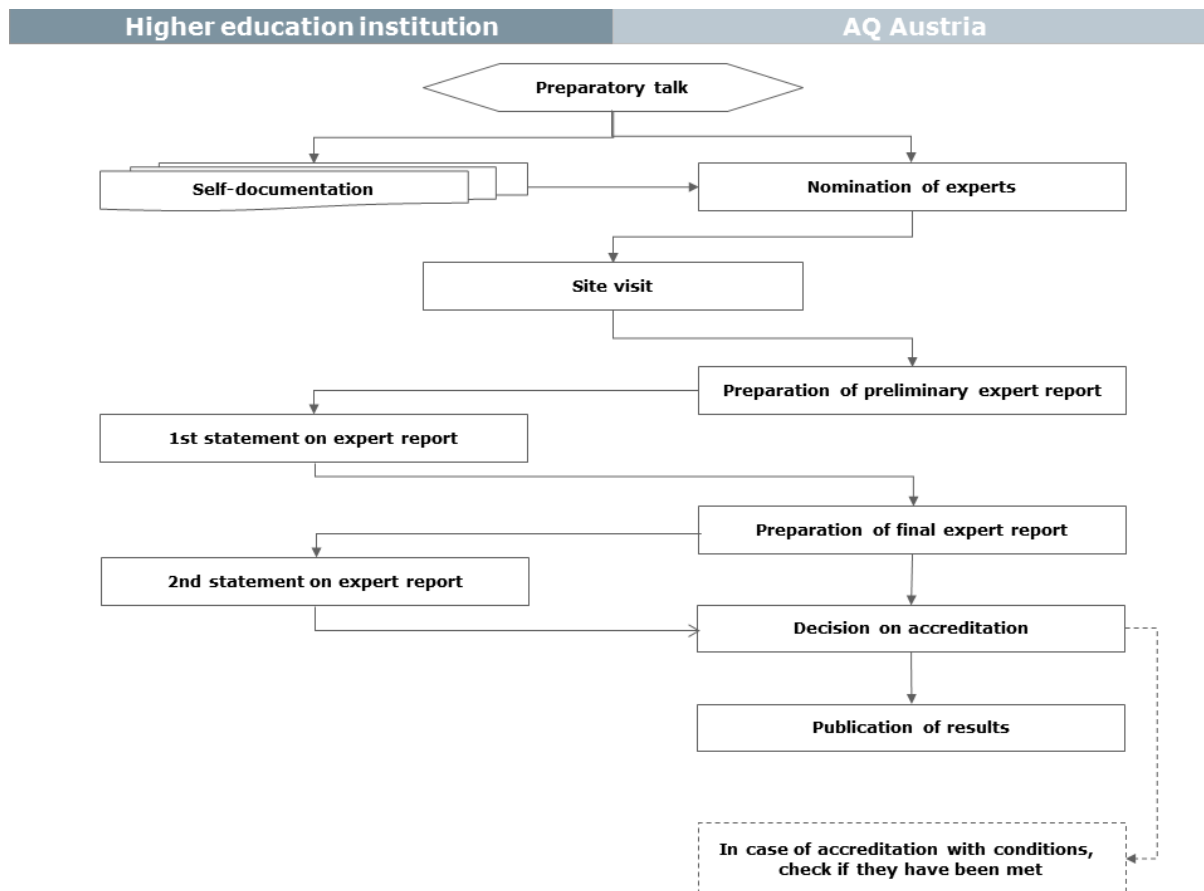
AQ Austria is the Austrian agency for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education. The agency is operating in Austria and other countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is committed to serving the common good and is based on the values of the European Higher Education Area, 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 out accreditation procedures of study programmes at higher education institutions in Kazakhstan.

By granting international accreditation to a study programme, AQ Austria confirms compliance of the study programme 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	Study programme and programme management
Standard 2	Staff
Standard 3	Quality assurance
Standard 4	Funding and infrastructure
Standard 5	Research and development and appreciation of the arts
Standard 6	National and international co-operations

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



The report of the Panel 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 met. Any recommendations given -on the basis of expert opinion are supposed to help the higher education institution to continuously develop the study programme. The agency grants the accreditation for a period of six 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 Listing of study programmes and brief description of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

The information in the following table derives from the self-documentation submitted by al-Farabi Kazakh National University:

Name of the programme	Translation Studies
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor of Humanities in Translation Studies
Date of introduction	September 1995
Regular study period	4 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	192 ECTS, 128 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Translation Studies
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Translation Studies
Date of introduction	September 2008
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	70 ECTS, 47 Kazakh credits

Name of the programme	Translation Studies
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Translation Studies
Date of introduction	February 2010
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	112,5 ECTS, 75 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Foreign Philology
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor of Humanities in Foreign Philology
Date of introduction	September 2007
Regular study period	4 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	218 ECTS, 131 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Foreign Philology
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Foreign Philology
Date of introduction	September 2009
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	98 ECTS, 59 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Foreign Philology
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Foreign Philology
Date of introduction	September 2010
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	66 ECTS, 40 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Linguistics
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Linguistics
Date of introduction	February 2010
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	110 ECTS, 66 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Linguistics
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Linguistics
Date of introduction	September 2010
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	67 ECTS, 40 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Study of Literature
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Study of Literature
Date of introduction	June 2010
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	98 ECTS, 59 credits

Name of the programme	Study of Literature
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Study of Literature
Date of introduction	June 2010
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	125 ECTS, 75 credits

Name of the programme	Philology
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor of Humanities in Philology
Date of introduction	September 2004
Regular study period	4 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	242 ECTS, 145 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Philology
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Philology
Date of introduction	September 1996
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	98 ECTS, 59 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Philology
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Philology
Date of introduction	September 2010
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	90 ECTS, 54 credits

Name of the programme	Turcology
Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Turcology
Date of introduction	September 2010
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	70 ECTS, 47 credits

Name of the programme	Oriental Studies
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor of Humanities in Oriental Studies
Date of introduction	September 2006
Regular study period	4 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	252 ECTS, 151 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Oriental Studies
-----------------------	------------------

Academic degree awarded	Master of Humanities in Oriental Studies
Date of introduction	September 2002
Regular study period	2 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	98 ECTS, 59 KZ credits

Name of the programme	Oriental Studies
Academic degree awarded	PhD in Oriental Studies
Date of introduction	September 2006
Regular study period	3 years
Number of ECTS credits and Kazakh credits	125 ECTS, 75 KZ credits

Brief description of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

The following information derives from al-Farabi Kazakh National University website <http://www.kaznu.kz/en/>, the website of the Eurasian Universities Association (EAU) <http://www.eau-msu.ru/heis/view/34/education>, and the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan: <http://www.edu.gov.kz/en/>, as well as from the evidence provided by the university management during the site visit.

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (al-Farabi KazNU) was founded on 5 January 1934 as Kazakh State University. In 2001 the University obtained the special status of a national university and was renamed into its current name.

Al-Farabi KazNU is the largest academic and research centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The university structure includes 14 faculties, 62 departments, 9 research institutes and 25 centres, and a TechnoPark. The university currently offers more than 180 majors at the Bachelor, Master and PhD levels. The courses are conducted in Kazakh, Russian and English language. The total student population exceeds 20,000 people. The number of academic staff is over 2,500 people including 400 doctors of sciences, more than 800 candidates of sciences, and 200 holders of PhD degrees.

Al-Farabi KazNU mission is to form, through provision of relevant, elite quality higher education, a corps of competitive professionals prepared for solving problems associated with the intensive development of the key areas of economy, science and public life of the country. In line with its mission, the University developed its vision and strategic goals.

The special National University status granted to al-Farabi KazNU by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2001 provides a higher level of administrative and academic freedom as compared to Kazakh higher education institutions (HEIs) of other types.

According to the State Programme of Education Development in The Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011–2020, approved by the decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 7 December 2010, a staged process of granting autonomy in academic, financial and management activities to higher education institutions of Kazakhstan will start in 2015. Starting in 2015, autonomy will be granted to the national research universities; in 2016 to higher education institutions with the *national* status; in 2018 to HEIs of other types. (http://www.edu.gov.kz/en/zakonodatelstvo/gosudarstvennaja_programma_razvitija_obrazovaniya/).

The University's governance structure comprises the Academic Council, a consultative advisory body bearing responsibility for institutional decision-making and strategic planning,

Rector, Rector's Office, and the University Administrative Department. The Board of Trustees and the Council of Seniors are advisory bodies that also participate in the university strategic planning and bring external perspectives on issues related to institutional governance.

Al-Farabi KazNU was the first university in Kazakhstan and Central Asia to join the Magna Charta Universitatum (2003, Bologna) and to adopt the three-cycle system of higher education. The University launched its first PhD programmes in 2005.

Al-Farabi KazNU is currently the largest provider of PhD programmes in Kazakhstan; since 2005 more than 200 faculty members of foreign universities have been engaged as external co-advisors in the preparation of al-Farabi KazNU PhD students.

Since 2009 al-Farabi KazNU delivers double degree programmes with universities from France, Russia, and Spain. Since the academic year 2010/11 al-Farabi KazNU Master students can enrol in double degree programmes offered by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Network University (SCO Network University) and by the Commonwealth of Independent States Network University (CIS Network University).

Distance learning opportunities at al-Farabi KazNU are provided for the students of the Law Faculty and the Higher School of Economics and Business, for continuing education, and for students doing their internships or exchange programmes abroad. Moodle is used as a basis for distance learning.

The University has implemented a credit system based on the extensive use of INTRANET technology. A university-wide electronic system, the UNIVER network, is used by all faculty and students as a tool for daily monitoring of the academic process.

Al-Farabi KazNU has established close relationships with the business community; the University's Board of Employers includes representatives of the largest national companies such as Kazatomprom, the National Space Agency, KazMunaiGaz, or Eurasian Bank. Employability of the University's graduates is reported to exceed 95 per cent.

Al-Farabi KazNU has partner relationships with 418 foreign HEIs and with a number of international organisations including the UN, the NATO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the British Council, Alliance Française, Confucius Institutes, USAID. Joint research projects are conducted in cooperation with international research centres and laboratories.

Al-Farabi KazNU is a member of the International Association of Universities (IAU), Eurasian Association of Universities (EAU), European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI), International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE), International Federation of Engineering Education Societies (IFEES).

1.3 Accreditation procedure at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

Al-Farabi KazNU mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the programmes mentioned above in July 2013.

Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation reports by al-Farabi KazNU -	27 November 2013 Further documents: 19 December 2013 and 5 February 2014
Decision on Panel members by the Board of AQ Austria	30 October 2013
Preparatory skype meeting of the Panel	13 January 2014
Site-visit to al-Farabi KazNU by Panel	12-14 February 2014
Draft report of the Panel	28 March 2014
Formal statement by al-Farabi KazNU	none
Final report of the Panel	7 April 2014
Statement on the final report by al-Farabi KazNU	9 April 2014
Accreditation decision by the Board of AQ Austria	13 May 2014

Members of the Panel

Name	Institution	Role
Prof. Dr. Larisa Schippel	University of Vienna	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Birgit Menzel	University of Mainz	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Heinrich Pfandl	University of Graz	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Walter Grünzweig	University of Dortmund	Peer from academia
Prof. Dr. Éva Csató Johanson	Uppsala University	Peer from academia, head of the panel
Prof. Dr. Bert Fragner	Austrian Academy of Sciences	Peer from academia
Dr. Sulushash Kerimkulova	Nazarbayev University Astana	Panel member from Kazakhstan
Kotryna Peilakauskaite	Vilnius University	Student panel member

AQ Austria Coordinator

Dietlinde Kastelliz

2 Assessment results

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University provided a comprehensive self-documentation of the study programmes and study management. Additional documents were supplied in due time during the preparatory phase of the evaluation process. In some places, the self-documentation was overly detailed which made it partly difficult to grasp the relevant facts, in some places inaccuracies resulted in misleading information. The grammatical and lexical quality of the documents partly left much to be desired, probably due to inadequate translation of texts. These problems of comprehension were solved during the site visit when the panel had the opportunity to get answers in open-minded, face-to-face discussions with university managers, academic and administrative staff members, students, alumni and employers of the study programmes' graduates. Well-organized and effective meetings contributed significantly to the work of the panel.

The study programmes under review represent important academic fields within the humanities. The Humanities provide a foundation for understanding human existence and behaviour and are important academic, educational and professional resources. Universities are therefore expected to place special emphasis on education and research in these fields. Linguistic studies and education in native and foreign languages have a paramount significance in the multilingual Kazakh society. The panel recommends to the university leadership to provide equal opportunities for both humanities and sciences at al-Farabi National University for achieving excellency at international level. Priority should be given to scholarships in humanities, especially to studies on the official languages of Kazakhstan, the minority languages spoken in Kazakhstan, foreign languages and to research on the multilingual society of Kazakhstan.

2.1 Standard 1: Study programme and programme management

Some common features apply to all study programmes on all levels within this cluster. The ECTS system is used for accreditation purposes and student mobility, but has not yet been conceived and realised for 'daily use'. Al Farabi KazNU still operates with the Kazakh credit system, which is based on contact hours (both for students and for teachers) and hours for self-guided work of students, but not on actual students' workload.

Al-Farabi KazNU uses the Kazakh credit system, different from the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). According to the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan *On the Organisation of Educational Process on the Basis of Credit Technology of Training (2011)*, one Kazakh credit corresponds to 45 learning hours for Bachelor degree programmes; 60 hours for Professional Master degree programmes, 75 hours for Research and Teaching Master degree programmes, and 105 hours for PhD programmes. Al-Farabi KazNU equates one ECTS credit to 27 learning hours.

So far no diploma supplement is issued to graduates. The Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Kazakhstan has not yet made arrangements for implementing this tool of the Bologna reform.

Student groups in the study programmes under accreditation are quite small, which allows for good interaction and communication between students and teachers. Teachers are free to choose adequate teaching methods and apply them.

2.1.1 Translation Studies

Translation Studies is offered on Bachelor and Master levels for the combinations Kazakh, Russian and Oriental languages (Turkish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic, Iranian, Hindi, Urdu). A 'Western language' (English, French, German) is offered as an additional foreign language on a basic level. A considerable part of the programme consists of learning foreign languages which is provided from zero, i.e. for students without prior knowledge. It is, however, not specified, which languages can be pursued to the professional level (C2) in the Master programme. Practical translation is taught in the area of literary as well as pragmatic translation, however in different proportions depending on the languages. It includes special (economic, judicial, technical, medical) and intersemiotic translation (dubbing, subtitling). Interpreting is taught on a basic level.

Translation Studies as an academic discipline, however, is not sufficiently acknowledged and represented at the university.

(a) Statements

The Bachelor programme is oriented towards practically working translators.

The Master programme is (research-)oriented towards Literary Translation.

The PhD programme is oriented towards recruiting academic staff and includes pedagogical elements.

Translation Studies are described as a state-of-the-art study programme. On closer examination, however, it becomes obvious that the programme does not meet international standards of the discipline. Contemporary as well as modern Western approaches are missing. The recommendations for research literature are the same for both Bachelor and Master levels. They are compiled haphazardly and show no relation to the different subjects of translation. The syllabi contain mostly titles from Soviet-Russian research literature while international research literature/bibliography, mostly in English, is absent.

Without a serious improvement of these basics it will not be possible to establish a research oriented Master programme and even less a PhD-level in Translation Studies.

(b) Assessments

The programmes lack clear structure on all three levels: Translation (practice) is taught on the basis of the Translation Studies programme and within the Faculty of Oriental Studies. It is not clear whether translation in Oriental Studies is based on a scientific foundation.

The working languages are not clearly identified. Also there is no information which fields of translation are taught for which language-pairs.

The proportions and relationship between learning the language (which languages?) and learning to translate (which pairs?) is not specified in a satisfactory way.

In the **Bachelor programme** the status of interpreting (oral translation) is not clear. Consecutive interpreting is mentioned, but without any visible description: e.g. fields (as commerce or technology, international organisations/diplomacy or community interpreting) and objectives to be reached. Simultaneous interpreting was mentioned in interviews with the panel at the site visit, but it does not appear in the study programme's description in the self-documentation.

The language levels of French and German is not clearly defined. There is also a lack of information on whether they are 'working languages', from which and into which students have to translate/interpret or if French and German have a different status.

Learning outcomes are not sufficiently specified for different courses and levels in the Bachelor and Master programmes. The same is true for the syllabi. Modules for the scientific foundation of (written and, if included, oral) translation for all language pairs (meta level) according to current international theoretical and methodological standards are not adequately specified.

No terminology management/CAT-tools are used (TRADOS etc.) and so far no equipment for interpreting exists (which does not matter as long as there are no courses offering simultaneous interpreting).

2.1.2 Foreign Philology

Foreign Philology is offered on Bachelor, Master and PhD levels for one foreign language, English.

English is taught from zero to level C 2. The study programme includes literary studies (on basic level), as part of teaching the language, Cultural Studies based on Linguistics, Linguistics (incl. Corpus Linguistics, Socio- and Psycholinguistics), Anglophone studies, intercultural communication (both theoretical, based on psycholinguistics, and applied/intercultural training), and methodology for foreign language teaching.

Bilingualism and multilingualism are included as topics, as well as 'critical thinking' and some other philosophical basics.

It has not become entirely clear to the panel how 'Foreign Philology' is conceived. In the self-documentation different versions of curricula had been presented to the panel, which were contradictory. Also no clear division of subjects is visible: the study programme bears the general name 'Foreign Philology', which could be specifically Sinology or Anglistics.

(a) Statements

The English programme is relatively extensive and covers both language training and linguistic aspects. The comparative, intercultural, cross-cultural dimensions as well as the area of language interaction or intercultural communication is impressive and addresses areas and methodologies up to international standards. The attempt to understand the language not only in the context of English-speaking countries but also in global contexts ('Global English') is very helpful, as is the specific relevance of language training for Kazakhstan itself. Other features which confirm the international standard are for example the reference to information technology, although the actual use of the hardware the panel saw, has yet to be demonstrated.

One area for which Bachelor students are trained is clearly that of teaching English in schools. However, both students and teachers reported that in the course of the transformation of Al-Farabi University into a research university, this teacher training program has already phased out completely. The panel did not hear that other practical professional profiles students are obviously prepared for, especially in the area of language and cultural mediation, are being phased out. The basic practical orientation, although underpinned by an impressive linguistic theoretical foundation, thus remains.

How this affects research orientation in English is a big question. What is completely missing is the dimension of literature (including texts in other media such as film, TV, popular culture) and to a large degree also Cultural Studies, also with regard to contemporary American literature and culture.

The Bachelor programme seems to be oriented both towards philology (i.e. arts and aesthetics, literary texts) and towards the practical application of English for business communication. The teaching programme includes (almost exclusively) British material, mostly literature, while exams include also some American material.

The Master programme is (research-) oriented primarily towards linguistics, but includes methodology of teaching language and intercultural communication.

The PhD programme seems to be oriented towards recruiting academic staff. With a few exceptions (critical thinking), almost no Western studies are included in the reading recommendations outside of linguistics and the methodology of teaching language. The syllabi are limited and identical in most courses.

(b) Assessments

The programme, esp. on the Bachelor level lacks a clear structure and concept: philology as a discipline dealing with aesthetic, artistic literary texts is mixed with teaching English for business communication and practical intercultural communication.

On the Master level, there is an overwhelming orientation towards Linguistics. The working languages are not clearly mentioned. Upon inquiry the panel learned that it is mainly Kazakh or Russian, but also English is taught in language training courses and in certain Master courses. The working languages should be clearly marked for the courses on Master level in the curriculum.

Since Foreign Philology (= English) also provides a background in Cultural Studies and also intercultural competence for other disciplines at the university, such as Translation Studies, it should comprise more Cultural Studies, including American Culture. As the spectrum clearly expands beyond literature and linguistics into politics, history and culture, good examples such as the global e-classroom-project with Columbia University, New York, should be continued and expanded.

2.1.3 Linguistics

The study programmes in language, philology and study of literature as a whole do not seem to be recognized as fully independent subject areas of their own, maybe because they do not have Bachelor programmes at al-Farabi University in these disciplines. The scientific objectives in these areas cannot be subordinated to the same metric criteria as engineering or the natural sciences. Whereas the curricula of the study programmes seem to be self-conscious enough in this respect, their place in the university as a whole needs to be better defined.

(a) Statements

Student workload seems at times non-transparent and needs to be spelled out more clearly, whereas study areas with large reading canons can never fully integrate this reading into workloads expressed in credits, credits should at least be more commensurable with overall workloads.

Examination: The state examination on the Bachelor level, usually an oral exam with usually three questions on different topics, is a type of 'comprehensive exam', which is taken outside of the regular study programme. One solution to make this more compatible with the Bachelor system may be to unravel the comprehensive exam and integrate its contents into (several) module examinations for the specific field.

Prerequisite for being admitted to the Master programme is a Bachelor degree in philology. This can be in the field of Foreign Philology, Russian Language and Literature, Philology, Kazakh Philology, Kazakh Language and Literature or Translation studies.

With regard to the relationship of staff and students the panel assesses that communication and cooperation between Masters' and PhD students and supervisors is excellent. This has to do with the fact that the number of theses per supervisor is limited and that supervisors are taking great interest in their students' work. The dialogue between graduate students and professors is characterized by intellectuality, professionalism and mutual respect. Apart from intellectual training and dialogue, continuing social and moral education for students seems to be a common goal and standard among the teaching staff. Students are early on given the opportunity to do independent research and to discuss their findings in departmental, faculty, university and national forums.

Al-Farabi's strategic decision to become a research university also has consequences for PhD students. It was reported that PhD students need to have at least one publication in a 'high impact publication' as defined by Thomson Reuters and that in order to place such a publication, they need to pay up to 3,000 Euros to the publisher. If this is true, it is of course totally unacceptable. Al-Farabi University should clarify the conditions and provide opportunities for no-fee publications in 'high-impact' periodicals for its academic staff.

Both Master and PhD-programmes in Linguistics are well structured, both correspond to the state of the art and offer a lot of theoretical courses at all levels. The programmes contain all the important areas of modern linguistics, there are diachronically, as well as synchronically oriented courses. A very large number of courses is offered for students, and they are well described.

(b) Assessments

It is not always clear on what kind of material (i.e. languages, such as Russian, Kazakh, English, or others?) the courses are based and what the percentage of practical language courses is. As the panel could see, not all students in their last year are able to express themselves in English fluently, whereas their knowledge of Russian and/or Kazakh seems to be sufficient for class work and research on Russian and/or Kazakh language material (as far as Kazakh is concerned, this judgement is based on impression rather than on peers' interviews or empirical evidence).

As the Master programme in Linguistics is not based on a previous linguistic Bachelor programme (at least the panel did not see a description of such a programme at al-Farabi University), the admission criteria to such a study should be clearly defined.

2.1.4 Study of Literature

(a) Statements

In the written materials received, this programme only exists as a Master and PhD programme (actually, reference was made to the MSc rather than the MA in the self-report of the university, which was unclear). In communicating with department heads and deans, however, the panel was told that this was actually a problem of documentation. Therefore, the present report can only relate to the Master and Doctoral programmes.

The programme in Study of Literature concentrates mainly on the national Kazakh philology, but attempts to contextualize this in a world literary context. The methodological and theoretical bases for both study programmes are strong and the panel's discussions with

professors/instructors and students have shown the panel, that their awareness of the current standards in the field is present. At the same time, the faculty themselves significantly contribute to the field (e.g. the theory of chronotopes which is very much present in the curriculum) and that they make specific reference to Russian theoretical models (Lotman, Bakhtin etc.).

Based on the self-evaluation and especially the secondary literature provided for the modules, the poststructuralist discussion does not yet seem to have arrived; however, in the panel's discussions with students and instructors, it was found that they are taking this development into consideration.

The research the panel has been shown and explained (and, as far as it was in English and Russian, the peers were able to read themselves) shows a text-based methodology informed by a solid theoretical understanding of the research.

The programme gives the impression of being carried by a research community where graduate students and professors are learning from each other and where professors are promoting fresh research on the part of their students.

(b) Assessments

The theoretical and methodological framework of Study of Literature is too much based on Russian or Kazakh models. Theories and scholarly work from other countries should also be introduced to ensure a dialogue and interconnectedness with the international scientific community.

2.1.5 Philology

(a) Statements

Kazakh Philology comprises both undergraduate Bachelor (4 years), and postgraduate studies (Master 2 years and PhD 3 years).

The study programmes in Kazakh enjoy much governmental support. They provide a good introduction into the theoretical and methodological issues of Kazakh linguistics with a solid anchoring in general and Turkic linguistics. They are aligned with the objectives of the institution and are logically connected with its strategies and goals. Students profit from a good cooperation with the subject Turcology.

On the basis of the documentation and the information gained during the site visit the panel can conclude that the qualification objectives of the study programmes are in accordance with the respective levels of the qualification framework of the European Higher Education Area.

The contents, structure and scope of the programmes and the teaching methods are suited to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The application of the ECTS system is not transparent. On the Bachelor level 27,25 per term, on the Master level 24,5 per term, on the PhD level 31,5 credits are awarded per term. Moreover, examinations are credited with a nominal 1 or 2 credits, which does not correspond to the actual workload and should be re-calculated to be in line with the real situation. The number of credits given for theses does not correspond to the workload either, e.g. the final state exam 1 is awarded with 2 credits, the Bachelor thesis with 2 credits. The Master thesis is worth 11 credits and the PHD thesis 47 credits.

The study programme is structured consistently with regard to formulated qualification objectives.

The students' workload is traditionally very high but it is arranged in such a way that it allows them to reach the required qualification.

The examination methods are not well described but it is the panel's understanding that they are suitable for assessing the students' achievements. The old system of state examination is maintained but has not yet been accommodated to the credit system.

Issuance of a diploma supplement is not guaranteed.

Admission requirements are regulated on national level for each study programme. External achievement can be recognised when they come from a related discipline.

For PhD students an excellent research environment is in place. This ensures close contact between doctoral students and scientific research staff as well as provides the opportunity for cooperation within the university, e.g. with the department of Turcology, and with important academic institutions outside the university, e.g. the Kazakh Academy of Sciences.

The panel talked to very competent Master students and PhD candidates who served as teachers as well and worked on the methodology of analysis of mass media, textbooks and literary texts in Kazakh. To a question referring to interactions with Turkologists in the field of the historical development of the Kazakh language they corroborated unisono their intense cooperation with their colleagues belonging to the neighbouring field.

Many active Kazakh journalists, writers, poets and media specialists are graduates of the Department for Kazakh Philology at Al Farabi KazNU. This is also true for the majority of teachers of Kazakh philology and literature in other universities in Kazakhstan – many of them graduated from al-Farabi KazNU.

The programme of **Russian Philology** is offered on three levels – Bachelor (4 years), Master (2 years) and PhD (3 years). The Bachelor programme includes elements of linguistics, literary studies, Russian Folklore and History of Antique Literature and Kazakh philology. It is well organised, the descriptions are clear and the main literature used in the respective fields is given after every chapter (although only English translations of the titles are used). The study programme benefits on all levels from a) the fact that Russian is still the second official language in Kazakhstan and b) close relations to Russia and its academic world.

The Master programme focusses on literature, which is logical, as there is a separate Master programme for General Linguistics. The Master programme of Russian Philology, however, also includes some other aspects, on a more reduced scale, such as linguistics and general philological questions.

The PhD programme also offers courses about linguistics and literature to develop in-depth knowledge of the subjects.

(b) Assessments

The objectives of the study programmes are aligned with the objectives of the whole institution. As the Bachelor programme in Russian Philology is intended for 17-19 year-old students, it seems to be very or even too ambitious, as far as the learning outcome is concerned. The objective of this programme is to be vocationally oriented, and the panel

wonders, whether a nineteen-year-old graduate of philology will need to be, in his professional career, a specialist in 'philosophical aspects of the Russian Literature' (p. 129 self-documentation). The same holds true for psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and some other fields of linguistics, which are prominently represented in the curriculum. It might be an idea to reduce these elements (and, instead, offer more active English language practice, even at the expense of other languages).

On the whole, the teaching and examination methods are appropriate.

In the Master and PhD programmes it is not clear, whether and at which level students can decide about a specialization between linguistics and literature.

Communication between teachers and students appears to be good and intense, which is true for all levels. The student-supervisor ratio is satisfactory or even good.

2.1.6 Turcology

Turcology in its classical sense aims at historical and comparative linguistic and philological studies of languages belonging to the so-called 'Turkic' family of languages (to which Kazakh and Turkish belong). Students are well-acquainted with so-called 'Old Turkish' and 'Old Uighur' and so-called 'Qara-Khanid Turkish', and it goes without saying that all of them learn Turkish.

The Department of Turcology was opened in 2010 as a part of the Faculty of Oriental Studies. The study programme gives a good introduction into the theoretical and methodological issues of Turkic linguistics in both diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The study of Turkish and knowledge of Turkey play a central role in the programme, which is aligned with the objectives of the institution and is logically connected with its strategies and goals. Students profit from a good cooperation with the other subjects taught at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, especially Arabic and Persian, as the knowledge of these languages is required for studying Islamic Turkic texts. Good cooperation with the subject Kazakh philology also contributes to the quality of the programme.

On the basis of the documentation and the information gained during the site visit the panel concludes that the qualification objectives of the study programme are in accordance with the respective levels of the qualification framework of the European Higher Education Area.

The contents, structure and scope of the programme and the teaching methods are suited to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The application of the ECTS system is not transparent and differs for different programmes. The Master level (2 years) is awarded with 70 ECTS credits (in contrast to 98 ECTS credits in Kazakh Philology).

The study programme is structured consistently with regard to formulated qualification objectives.

The students' workload is traditionally very high but it is structured and arranged so that it allows them to reach the required qualification.

The examination methods are not well-described but it is the panel's understanding that they are suitable for assessing the students' achievements. The old system of state examination is maintained but has not yet been accommodated to the credit system.

Admission requirements are regulated on national level. No information about systematic recognition rules for external achievements was obtained although the panel understands that previous studies in related disciplines and from other universities are reviewed in the recognition process.

For PhD students an excellent research environment is in place. This ensures close contact between doctoral students and scientific research staff as well as provides the opportunity for cooperation within the university, e.g. with the department of Philology, and with important academic institutions outside the university, e.g. the Kazakh Academy of Sciences.

(a) Statements

Turcology (which was titled 'Turkic Languages' in the self-documentation) is, in comparison to Oriental Studies, much more orientated towards a working perspective of its alumni within the academic community. The students' motivation seems to be very high.

Among other Turkic languages there is a preference visible for so-called Qipchaq-Turkic languages (Kazakh but also Qirghiz, Tatar and Bashkir, and others). Yakut (Sakha) and apparently Tuvinian are also subjects of instruction.

(b) Assessments

The communication between students and teachers is apparently excellent and very intense.

The student-supervisor ratio is excellent.

ECTS is only used for accreditation purposes and for issues connected with students' academic mobility. The concept of orientation towards the students' workload and consequently calculation of ECTS has not yet been grasped. This is however true for all study programmes on all levels reviewed by the panel in Cluster A.

The credit system in use in daily operation at al-Farabi KazNU does seem plausible, but is not in line with the ECTS system (see also comment in the introduction to this chapter).

2.1.7 Oriental Studies

In the Faculty of Oriental Studies eight languages are subject of regular instruction: Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Japanese, Persian, Turkish and Urdu. Language teaching is organized in four departments: (1) Arabic and Iranian Studies (the latter comprising of teaching and studying Persian language – so-called 'Farsi' – only, no further Iranian language included, not even Tajik!), (2) Turkish and Indian languages, (3) Chinese, and (4) Japanese and Korean.

Most students decide in favour of Chinese as their main language, followed by Korean and Japanese, Arabic and Turkish, Persian and Hindi. According to the explanations given by staff members, Urdu seems to be the least requested language at this faculty.

The departments were formed about 25 years ago. Originally there were six, but they were partially merged into larger departments (Arabic & Iranian, and Turkish & Indian). These measures aimed obviously at joining less frequently studied languages (i.e. Persian and Indian languages) with stronger languages.

(a) Statements

The Faculty of Oriental Studies plays an important role in the framework of the whole al-Farabi programme management. The study programmes aim at leading the students into practical fields of future activities and as well as into academic employments. Language training is therefore a basic requirement of all three programmes (Bachelor, Master, PhD). At least one half of the credits is dedicated to acquiring proficiency in the chosen languages.

Initially (i.e. in the first week at university), Bachelor Students choose a 'first language'. In the second year they must add an additional language (this can be English or another 'Oriental' language).

Referring to most of these languages (with the exception of Urdu, the state language of Pakistan) there exist strong international relations based partially on inter-academic contracts but foremost on official contracts with governmental institutions of the respective countries. Sending students abroad in order to obtain more intensive language training is a central element of Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes. Students have to spend the third year in a country where the chosen main language is in general use. For political reasons, students of Arabic are currently facing difficulties. At this time, the most stable countries where students can be sent to are Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, but traditional ties of cooperation used to be much closer with Egypt. Close ties with Turkey can be observed, due to the latter's political goal to closely cooperate with Turkic speaking Central Asian countries. Well-functioning political contacts with Iran optimize the opportunities for cross-border exchange of students with this country. It goes without saying that the most intense interests in Eastern languages are concentrated on neighbouring China and on Japan but, for the past few years, also on (South-)Korea. The number of students of Korean now seems to have surpassed those learning Japanese. The Chinese department cooperates with the Minzu University of Beijing (the former 'Central University of Minorities'). At Minzu, teaching Chinese to students from Kazakhstan is obviously offered within the frame of Chinese instruction to ethnic Kazakhs living within China. Hindi is less developed, and the teaching of Urdu seems to be in a crisis.

Teaching of Turkish is – according to the staff – strongly supported by the Faculty of Turcology.

In general, sending students abroad for language training is apparently a strong aim of the teaching staff of the Faculty of Oriental Studies. The panel received the impression that in some cases the selection of the places (and in the case of Arabic, even the countries) depend on rather pragmatic decisions following haphazardly day-to-day criteria and financial possibilities and not necessarily a strategic plan. This is in principle acceptable but there may arise difficulties in the case of Arabic (which is in high demand as a foreign language) in the near future, due to political reasons. The responsible staff-members are aware of this fact.

The quality of language training for Bachelor students is at least sufficient and (particularly in the case of the 'first' languages) good up to very good, on the Master's and PhD level and beyond very good.

The workload of – at least – some of the teachers is very high.

Alumni of the Oriental Studies' programmes are in many cases employed at economic and financial institutions closely associated with Chinese, Japanese and Korean enterprises and also with such institutions based in Turkey. An even greater share of them tries to find employment in the academic sphere, i.e. within their own institution at al-Farabi University or

in similar and corresponding units in other universities in Kazakhstan. The panel has not heard of any alumni who found substantial employment in academic institutions in neighbouring or in more distant countries. There are, however many indications of timely limited/short-term grants, stipends and short-time employments abroad.

(b) Assessments

The Faculty of Oriental Studies has very well conceptualised and well managed programmes for Bachelor, Master and PhD Studies.

Language training, being an important part on all three levels of the programme, is well organized and very effective. For international students – e.g. from European universities – an exchange programme with this university could be attractive, particularly for improvement of knowledge of and proficiency in Oriental languages.

Communication between students and teachers is apparently excellent and very intensive, which is true for all three levels. The student-supervisor ratio on all levels is excellent as well.

ECTS is only used for accreditation purposes, but not in daily work at al-Farabi University. The credit system in use seems plausible, but is not aligned with the ECTS system (see also introductory comment to this chapter).

As the administration of al-Farabi University intends to present the institution as a 'research university' teachers will face a heavy 'research load' in addition to their 'teaching load'. In the field of Oriental Studies, the possibilities of studies on the PhD level should be increased: this would contribute to the university administration's expectations concerning research activities of staff and conform with the understanding of a research university. The levels of Bachelor and Master studies include a large proportion of language training and teaching of basic information on the countries where the chosen languages are used (beyond philological information also on society, culture economics, geography and more). It is therefore the PhD-students who could contribute much more effectively to these expectations, thus complementing the research activities of the professors, the research capacity of whom is naturally limited if their teaching workload is taken into account.

2.2 Standard 2: Staff

A common comment shall be placed at the beginning, which is true for all study programmes. It refers to the expected duties of young researchers and staff at al-Farabi KazNU.

During the meetings the panel heard from both colleagues and PhD students that it is obligatory for the PhD students to publish at least one 'high impact publication' as defined by Scopus or Thomson Reuters during their studies. In addition, there were reports about excessively high sums of money which had to be paid for the publication of such articles (from 2.000 to 3.000€!, see also comment in chapter 2.1). The panel has not heard of such (or any) sums being demanded by publishers to pay for publishing in established journals and it is doubtful whether such practices actually exist in the field of the humanities. If it exists, the question is who raises the fees and where the money goes to.

It deserves also to be mentioned that for all study programmes a high workload of teachers was noticeable. This comes, however, not only from teaching obligations, but also from the obligation to engage in 'social work' with students (e.g. sport activities, street cleaning). On the other hand it needs to be emphasised, that the student-teacher ratio is very good and allows for individual work and supervision.

On university level, a staff development programme is in place which offers teachers the opportunity to participate in trainings. On department level, mutual visitation to classes and feedback (which can also be regarded an instrument of internal quality assurance) are practiced.

2.2.1 Translation Studies

(a) Statements

The qualification of the staff in teaching Translation Studies is in some parts insufficient, especially when it comes to Translation Studies as an academic discipline.

(b) Assessments

The staff are highly motivated and willing to deliver the study programme well. The translation practice in terms of translation exercises are in good hands, both in Oriental Studies and in Translation Studies.

2.2.2 Foreign Philology

(a) Statements

The qualifications of the staff are very good. It was noted, however, that although 'Foreign' Philology (except for Oriental Studies, which is very well represented and extensive) seems to be synonymous with 'English', the panel did not meet representatives of the staff of English studies. As for the second language, a choice between French and German should be maintained. The panel had the impression that German was underrepresented, which might come from the lack of evidence of it.

(b) Assessments

The staff are highly motivated, competent and willing to deliver a good study programme. The qualification balance of staff for the study programme is not completely achieved due to a lack of qualification opportunities in Anglophone countries.

2.2.3 Linguistics

The panel's interaction with the staff in literary study and philology has shown that they are very competent teachers who are well acquainted with their field. In their teaching, they pursue project work and include their research into their teaching ('research based learning'). The partial lack of secondary materials forces them to become inventive and to create their own teaching materials.

The staff seem to be very committed even though their teaching loads are extremely high. Already prior to the strategic decision to turn al-Farabi University into a research university, they have done valuable research. However, if they are not required to do this research as part of the university's attempt to become a full research university, their teaching obligation needs to be reduced drastically in order to make room for research. Although this will require hiring new qualified staff, this will in the end also benefit teaching on all levels because it will increase the segments of teaching which are research-based.

(a) Statements

The staff have a very high teaching load (up to 28 hours per week, six days a week), for which they are not sufficiently paid. Also for students the work load is very high (starting from 16 contact hours per week also on Saturdays). The qualifications of the staff are diversified, most of them cover a wide spectrum. This statement is true for staff of all study programmes covered in this cluster.

(b) Assessments

The staff seem very well qualified to work at a high level internationally. However, the amount of teaching (up to 28 hours per week) is so high that it is doubtful whether the exceptionally high output of published papers (especially in foreign/international journals and monographs, with high impact factors) as documented in the various presentations of the departments, can be maintained in future.

2.2.4 Study of Literature

(a) Statements

The staff possess the relevant scientific and pedagogical qualification for the study programmes and human resource development at all level.

(b) Assessments

The staff seem very well qualified to work at a high level internationally. However, the amount of teaching (up to 28 hours per week) is so high that it is doubtful whether the exceptionally high output of published papers (especially in foreign/international journals and monographs, with high impact factors) as documented in the various presentations of the departments, can be maintained in the future.

2.2.5 Philology

(a) Statements

The staff possess the relevant scientific and pedagogical qualification for the study programmes and human resource development at all levels.

(b) Assessments

The staff possess the relevant scientific and pedagogical qualification for the study programmes and human resource development at all levels. The qualifications of the staff in the field of Russian Philology are very good both with regard to scientific and pedagogical issues on all levels of the study programme.

The staff seem very well qualified to work at a high level internationally. However, the amount of teaching (up to 28 hours per week) is so high that it is doubtful whether the exceptionally high output of published papers (especially in foreign/international journals and monographs, with high impact factors) as documented in the various presentations of the departments, can be maintained in the future.

2.2.6 Turcology

(a) Statements

The teachers' average teaching load is approximately 27 credits per year. One credit equals 45 hours, of which 15 hours are contact hours, while 30 hours are designated to students' self-directed work. The faculty has the right to allocate workloads to teachers. A particular problem arises from the fact that teachers are expected to intensify their research and publication activities. Together with the equally expected 'social work', this leads to a very high workload.

In the case of Turcology the teachers' inclination towards scholarly reflections and instruction of theories etc. is very strong.

(b) Assessments

Teachers have a very high workload. This does not only consist of the teaching workloads but also of various types of 'social work' which are sometimes very time-consuming (see also statement at the beginning of chapter 2.2). Much energy needs to be invested into preparation of teaching material and acquisition of various kinds of technical support: digital language classes and drills, films in various languages (e.g. various Arabic dialects,).

The staff possess the relevant scientific and pedagogical qualification for the study programmes and human resource development at all level.

Teachers are generally very engaged in their activities and there is a strong mutual network of solidarity.

2.2.7 Oriental Studies

(a) Statements

The teachers' average teaching load is approximately 27 credits per year. One credit is 45 hours. The faculty has the right to allocate workloads to teachers. A particular problem arises from the fact that teachers are expected to intensify their research and publication activities. Together with also expected 'social work' this leads to a very high workload. Many teachers are engaged in additional (voluntary?) activities together with their students on all programme levels (Bachelor, Master, PhD). Mutual interaction among the teaching staff is apparently strongly developed.

Staff members involved in extraordinary projects have a possibility to attend to conferences (even abroad) at the expense of the project's budget – otherwise there is no such budget provided by al-Farabi University.

Teachers are expected to produce textbooks and further textual material for language instruction (glossaries etc.) preferably during the period of summer vacation (two months). This is mandatory for senior lecturers.

(b) Assessments

Teachers have very high workloads. This does not only consist of the teaching workloads but also of various types of 'social work' which are sometimes very time-consuming. A lot of energy is to be invested into preparation of teaching material and acquisition of various kinds of technical support: digital language classes and drills, films in various languages (various Arabic spoken dialects, e.g.).

Teachers are generally very engaged in their activities, and there is a strong mutual network of solidarity. They are well qualified to deliver good study programmes.

2.3 Standard 3: Quality assurance

(a) Statements

Al-Farabi KazNU uses result-oriented internal rankings for its internal management. This is aimed at increasing quality by competition between faculty staff.

The study programmes are supported by the institution's quality management system. The quality of study programmes is assured by using different quality assurance instruments. These include performance rankings (see above), different surveys among students, faculty, alumni, etc. The focus on internal ranking is seen critical by the panel, as the ranking criteria are based on key performance indicators, which are difficult to define for the humanities.

The study programmes are included in the regular quality assurance cycle. The staff and also the students participate on a regular basis in the evaluation of the curriculum, the study conditions and the programmes' organisations. Still, there is a lack of a holistic approach on monitoring the quality of a study programme as a whole, as responsibilities are not clearly assigned for quality assurance at faculty and department level. Systematic involvement of all relevant stakeholders for single study programmes as well as students' regular participation on study programmes' quality enhancement processes should be strengthened.

The evaluations apply international standards. Too much importance is paid to US and other ranking agencies. National research subjects such as Kazakh linguistics should be given higher priority by using also a national ranking system in which publications in Kazakh are also given priority. Judging from the university's website, Al Farabi uses external expertise for evaluation purposes and for the purposes of further development. Some examples of such an evaluation are:

- Al-Farabi KazNU applied for and gained international accreditation for a number of its programmes from the German accrediting agencies ASIIN and ACQUIN in 2010 and 2011.
- The University entered the group of top 300 universities and has occupied the 299th place in the QS World University Rankings.

The participation of students in reflections on the study programmes and individual courses and modules they attend, study conditions and programme organisation has been institutionalised as well. Students are satisfied with the follow-up of the evaluations though the procedures for these are not defined by the system.

The panel has found that teachers truly care about feedback from students. Both on the undergraduate and the graduate levels, students have a direct impact on what is taught and how it is taught. The direct communication from students to teachers and vice versa is fostered by relatively small study groups. It is hoped that this personal input will not be lost in the future as it cannot be replaced by other means.

The university management is trying to shift evaluations and quality assurance to a different, quantitative level. This can be a valuable addition to the personal interaction and feedback as long as it takes into consideration the specific qualities and characteristics of the humanities and in particular the languages. In the humanities, quality of teaching and research as an intellectual task cannot be as easily expressed in quantifiable figures and demonstrated as in other areas.

The university uses its own tool (the UNIVER system) as an information platform to be used both by students and faculty.

(b) Assessments

Close relations between students and teachers are established that lead to good collaboration and at the same time to a friendly environment for direct student feedback. However, there is a need of more systematic procedures, which enable reviews of the study programmes in general from a holistic perspective and leave no gaps between separate subjects and courses.

The quantitative character of the key performance indicators, which are applied for internal ranking is a weak point for the humanities within al-Farabi University.

2.4 Standard 4: Funding and infrastructure

(a) Statements

The panel gathers from the internet that Thomson Reuters has concluded a national agreement with Kazakhstan to make available journals and materials on the "Web of Knowledge." If this is actually available - <http://science.thomsonreuters.com/cgi-bin/jrn1st/jlresults.cgi?PC=H&Alpha=A> - then sufficient access to international literature is indeed guaranteed - provided students have direct access to it. The panel has, however, been unable to ascertain the actual availability of this or other resources during the site visit, either in the (new) central library or in the departmental/faculty facilities. The reading lists provided for the modules reflect the availability of some important secondary book resources; however, a deficit is also evident.

Literature problems may be alleviated by inviting specialized librarians in these areas to provide expert advice on the type of resources that are to be procured.

Al-Farabi KazNU is a campus university. On the area of the campus there are 'working buildings' as well as students' dormitories, different facilities (theatre, sports facilities, etc.) and a park. An impressive library has recently been constructed on the campus (unfortunately, at the time of the site-visit the heating system had not yet been installed). Apart from this central university library, departments have their own small libraries and various libraries in Almaty can also be used by students and staff.

International bibliographies, journals, including electronic journals, and databases on Translation and Interpreting Studies, as well as textbooks are missing and widely unknown and absent in the library.

Acquisition of more literature, including journals and e-journals published in English or Turkic and general linguistics as well as on translation and interpreting studies is recommended, especially because highly ranked scientific publications are expected to be in English.

Currently simultaneous translation cannot be taught due to the lack of adequate technological equipment.

Expenses for domestic and international travel by staff members to conferences and for other educational purposes partly need to be paid from employees' salaries and are not covered by the university.

(b) Assessments

The overall university budget was 70 billion Tenge at the time of the site-visit. Faculties and departments do not have their own, autonomous, budget at their disposal, but interviewees during the site-visit reported that their wishes or orders for further purchases from the university's budget are usually handled without problems.

Adequate rooms and technical facilities for covering the study programmes in their current structure are available. The new library has not started to function but the panel's impression is that it will provide good facilities for the researchers and students.

2.5 Standard 5: Research

While the panel recognizes 'social work' to be an important part of the academic tradition in Kazakhstan (see also comments in chapter 2.2), they do recommend that less time is spent on this task per teacher (thus making available more research time) and making this social work more field specific.

2.5.1 Translation Studies

(a) Statements

In accordance with the status of a research university, the acceptance and implementation of Translation Studies as a full study programme on all three levels must be highly appreciated. This discipline has developed quickly and expanded internationally and with interdisciplinary dimensions and has integrated in an international network in the past decades. Translation Studies is both a theoretical and an applied academic discipline. However, this international state of the art is neither reflected in the study programme nor in the university's research. At present, there are private institutes offering training programs for interpreters and/or translators. As al-Farabi University competes with them on the Kazakh market of higher education, it has the great opportunity, as a research university, to implement a modern research-based translational education, to study the local market, and to train translators/interpreters who will be able to adapt to new challenges in the highly internationalized and specialized market of Translation (and Interpreting) Services (Translation Industry) in Eurasia. In order to meet this challenge, research on a state-of-the-art international level has to be integrated into the programme of Translation Studies.

(b) Assessments

Discussions with the panel show, however, that the basis for Translation Studies' research is almost one single direction: The linguistic oriented school (Kommissarov et al.). This fits with the preferred international cooperation partner MSLU (Moscow). An interconnectedness with the consideration of the international development of the discipline would be rather impossible because of this (s. publication strategy).

2.5.2 Foreign Philology

(a) Statements

The dominant emphasis on English literature should be balanced by introducing more research directed towards contemporary Cultural Studies of the Anglo-American world, especially the US, including the accelerated multimedia network technology. Moreover, the theoretical and methodological framework should be expanded beyond only Russian models which according to the papers offered seem to dominate equally in Philology, Foreign Philology and in Literary Studies.

(b) Assessments

Despite the above said, the university is on the right track directing the subject towards understanding English- based literatures and cultures.

2.5.3 Linguistics

(a) Statements

Linguistic research is at a very high level, especially concerning the classical linguistic disciplines. The panel also finds topics on gender linguistics, culturally oriented linguistics and

some other subfields of linguistics (socio-, psycholinguistics etc.). The rich and important tradition of ethnolinguistics, founded in Almaty by M.M. Kopylenko in the 1980s, is upheld by several members of the faculty (e.g. G. Madiyeva). Their research is based mainly on current Russian ethnolinguistic scholarship, which includes works of some American and British researchers. However, almost no reference to German, French or other European researchers is made. A reception or critical dialogue with international linguistic concepts outside the Russian-based ethnolinguistic model is missing.

(b) Assessments

This department which offers Linguistics is decidedly on the right track with regard to the University's aim of becoming a research university. Students at both levels are integrated into research work. The staff seem, however, overburdened with teaching and administrative work, there is simply not enough time for research.

2.5.4 Study of Literature

The solution could be hiring an administrative director (or two), and hiring some more lecturers who will not be obliged to do research, to give more time to the researchers.

(a) Statements

Students are informed about ongoing research projects and are even involved in them in a systematic and well organized way.

The interaction between research and teaching is well functioning.

Literary research is at a high level, especially as far as the classical philological disciplines are concerned. Research covers all genres of Russian literature, authors (from Pushkin via Blok to contemporary Russian authors, like Ulitskaya or Dovlatov). Students at all levels are also taught classical (Belinskii, Bakhtin) and contemporary (Lotman, Uspenskii, Etkind) theories.

(b) Assessments

The department of Study of Literature is decidedly on the right path with regard to the university's aim of becoming a research university. Students at both levels are integrated into research work. The staff seem, however, overburdened with teaching and administrative work, there is simply not enough time for research.

The solution could be hiring an administrative director (or two), and also hiring some more lecturers who will not be obliged to do research, to give more time to the researchers.

2.5.5 Philology

The interaction between research and teaching is well functioning.

Students are informed about on-going research projects and are even involved in them in a systematic and well organized way.

National research subjects such as Kazakh linguistics should be given higher priority by using also a national ranking system in which publications in Kazakh are also given priority.

(a) Statements

Philological research on Russian philology is at a very high level, especially as far as the traditional philological disciplines are concerned. Research covers all genres of Russian literature authors (from Pushkin via Blok to contemporary Russian authors, like Ulitskaya or Dovlatov). Students at all levels are also taught classical (Belinskiy, Bachtin) and contemporary (Lotman, Uspensky, Etkind, Karaulov and many others) theories.

With respect to theory and methodology, a consideration or introduction or critical dialogue with international concepts and models – in addition to Russian-based approaches – might be taken into consideration.

(b) Assessments

This department is decidedly on the right path with regard to the University's aim of becoming a research university. Students at both levels are integrated into research work. The staff seem, however, overburdened with teaching and administrative work, there is simply not enough time for research. The solution could be hiring an administrative director (or two), and also hiring some more lecturers who will not be obliged to do research, to give more time to the researchers.

2.5.6 Turcology

(a) Statements

The teachers both in 'Turcology' and in 'Oriental Studies' represent an extraordinary high standard of academic didactics. Moreover, there is a strong impression that in these fields the research potential is also very high, and all of them have the intellectual ability and potential to contribute to the fame of al-Farabi University as a research university. The scholarly and didactic quality of the staff is very high. The research projects within the various departments are definitely in line with the strategy of the departments (the faculties, respectively). The meetings with alumni and with employers of graduates of these faculties have proven the high proficiency of the graduates within their working environments. There cannot be any doubt about the quality of the work being done by the teaching staff. In many cases the integration of personal research of teachers into their teaching activities was absolutely evident.

In the case of research projects, the integration of Master and PhD students into these projects is convincing and impressive. Many of these students do even have the possibility to participate actively in scholarly conferences, workshops etc.

(b) Assessments

There are only systemic problems which are not at all caused by the teachers themselves: It is clearly the responsibility of the governmental institutions to ensure an environment where a rational and plausible balance between teaching and research activities for every single member of the academic staff is guaranteed.

2.5.7 Oriental Studies

(a) Statements

The teachers both in 'Turcology' and in 'Oriental Studies' represent an extraordinary high standard of academic didactics. Moreover, there is a strong impression that in these fields the research potential is very high, and all of the researchers have the intellectual ability and potential to contribute to the fame of al-Farabi University as a research university. The scholarly and didactic quality of the staff can thus be considered to be very high. The research projects within the various departments are definitely in line with the strategy of the departments (the faculties, respectively). The meetings with alumni and with employers of graduates of these faculties have proven the high proficiency of the graduates within their working environments. There cannot be any doubt about the quality of the work being done by the teaching staff. In many cases the integration of personal research of teachers into their teaching activities was absolutely evident.

In the case of research projects, the integration of Master and PhD students into these projects is convincing and impressive. Many of these students have even the possibility to participate actively in scholarly conferences, workshops etc.

(b) Assessments

There are only systemic problems which are not at all caused by the teachers themselves: It is clearly the responsibility of the governmental institution to assure an environment where a rational and plausible balance between teaching and research activities for every single member of the academic staff can be guaranteed.

2.6 Standard 6: National and international co-operations

There is good cooperation of al-Farabi KazNU University on international and national levels but much weaker on a regional level. The forms of cooperation are quite different: conferences and seminars, joint projects and programmes, partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding, academic mobility and exchange programmes, use of internal and external expertise for evaluation and further development. The range of partners whom the university collaborate with on national, regional and international levels is also wide: from universities in Kazakhstan to various universities abroad, from different research organizations to governmental and diplomatic organizations, from private and business companies to large international organizations.

Well developed cooperation with different partners at all the levels, support provided by them to students, faculty and departments allows to develop and strengthen educational and research capacity of the university, in particular the faculties and programmes under consideration. Especially strong international relations are observed at the faculty of Oriental Studies which has very good relations with most of the countries covered by the study programmes. The feedback from students and faculty staff on their experience from participation in different types of cooperation, especially at the international level, is very positive and impressive.

(a) Statements

I. National cooperation

The first overview covers the whole university (not specifically the study programmes reviewed) to give an insight of its role within higher education in Kazakhstan.

1. Other universities in the country:

- Al-Farabi University develops many study programmes as well as curricula for separate courses within these programmes. Al-Farabi's curricula are taken as standards for the whole country, and other universities then follow these examples.
- Al-Farabi organizes annual conferences to which other universities are invited for participation and usually publishes conference proceedings, which is then shared with the participating universities.
- The university also conducts different seminars and organizes training sessions and workshops on different issues (research, teaching methodology, administration, etc.) for representatives of other universities in Kazakhstan.
- Master and PhD students from other universities can take their internship at al-Farabi University and vice versa.
- Students from other universities can come to al-Farabi to study separate courses or for a semester within the framework of internal academic mobility.
- The university participates in joint research projects. A good example is al-Farabi's university partnership with three universities in Kazakhstan (Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (Almaty), East Kazakhstan State Technical University (Ust-Kamenogorsk) and Karaganda State Industrial University (Temirtau) in the European Commission TEMPUS project "Qualification frameworks in central Asia: Bologna-based principles and regional coordination" (QUADRIGA) led by University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany (2012-2014).

2. Cooperation with Different research and governmental organizations, such as the Academy of Science in Almaty, the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Suleimenov,

the, Institute of Literature and Arts named after M. Auezov, the Institute of Linguistics named after Baitursynov, the Turkish Academy in Astana, the Kazakh Institute of Strategic Research, the Almaty city administrative body (Akimat).

Main directions of cooperation – serving as a base for research and internship for Master and PhD students, joint work on grants and projects, use of the staff of these organizations for reviewing of Bachelor and Master students' graduation papers, inviting leading staff for lecturing to Master and PhD students, development of study programmes and study materials at al-Farabi.

3. *Cooperation with Embassies and Consulates, Culture Centers and Funds of practically all oriental countries of the programmes under study:* Turkey, Iran, China, Korea, Japan, India.

Main directions of cooperation: support from these bodies by providing books, encyclopaedias, dictionaries and other teaching and reading materials to the university, by providing technical and other equipment (computers, TVs, furniture), sponsoring students and providing best students with stipends, providing students internships and potentially future employment. As an example, al-Farabi students were repeatedly among the winners of the Republican Olympiad in Chinese Language organized yearly by the Consulate of Peoples Republic of China in Almaty and received grants by the Chinese government to study in China. Students and professors attend different cultural events organized by these bodies and invite their representatives for activities organized at the university.

4. *Cooperation with Businesses and private organizations,* such as the Bank of China in Kazakhstan, Shinhan Bank Kazakhstan, LG Electronics, "Turkuaz Invest", "Zaman Kazakhstan", etc.

Main directions of cooperation: use of these structures as places for students' internship, their participation in reviewing Master's and PhD theses, in the development and improvement of study programmes, in sponsoring students and different events organized by the faculties (seminars, Olympiads), lecturing to students at the university, providing help with infrastructure development. A good example is the creation of an Information- and Resource Laboratory at the Korean Studies Centre of al-Farabi University with the support of such Korean companies as 'AK Group' consulting and LG Electronics. Another example is Shymhan Bank Kazakhstan which has a Memorandum of Understanding with the university on cooperation in different projects and gives scholarships to students to study at Korean universities. Most of these partnering companies have become employers for the university graduates.

5. *Alumni.* The university keeps contacts with alumni, especially with those who work in organizations that closely collaborate with the university, not to speak of those who stay at the university upon graduation.

Main directions of cooperation: getting feedback from alumni and using it to evaluate and further develop study programmes and study materials, invitation for lecturing to students, seeking for help in organizing internship for current students via alumni links.

II. Regional cooperation:

Cooperation on a regional level is relatively weak as compared with cooperation on national and international levels. Still there are some examples of cooperation which deserve to be mentioned.

The Japanese and Korean departments have old links with the leading Oriental Centres in Russia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan mostly focused on research. These links used to be strong in Soviet times but are nowadays they are becoming weaker, mostly due to political reasons, as the panel was told during the site-visit.

Main direction of cooperation is research by means of participation in conferences, publication of research papers e.g. in the journal 'Korean Studies News in Central Asia', joint projects. Some examples of cooperation are as follows:

- Partnership in the European Commission TEMPUS project "Qualification frameworks in central Asia: Bologna-based principles and regional coordination" (QUADRIGA) led by University of Koblenz-Landau (Germany). The three-year QUADRIGA initiative involves 3 out of 5 TEMPUS countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) along with European partners from Germany, Portugal, Spain, Netherlands, Austria and Poland.
- Participation of al-Farabi in the international project initiated in 2013 by Korean Foundation "Global e-School" in partnership with Hanyang University and two universities from Russia: Far East Federal University and Uralsk Federal University. This project allows students to listen to the lectures of professors from the leading Korean universities.

III. International cooperation:

International cooperation is one of the key strategic directions of al-Farabi Kazakh National University aimed at promoting the development and reforming of higher education through the integration into the global educational and scientific community.

Partners and agreements. Al-Farabi has established partnerships with more than 400 universities and various international organizations (UN, NATO, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, British Council, DAAD, Alliance Française, Confucius Institutes, USAID, etc.) and foreign research funds.

There are more than 200 memoranda of understanding signed on the university level which serve as a basis for the development of relations on departmental and individual levels. Al-Farabi is a member of a consortium of universities and annually participates in educational projects such as TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus, held within the framework of the European Commission. The university is also the member of international associations as International Association of Universities, Eurasian Association of Universities, SEFI European Society for Engineering Education, and International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience, etc. In 2003, KazNU signed 'Magna Charta Universitatum'.

Especially successful among the faculties under consideration is the Faculty of Oriental Studies which has strong and well developed international relations. There are very good relations with nearly all countries covered by the programmes at this faculty. It has links with dozens of research organisations, universities, funds and centers, among them highly acknowledged universities in Korea, Japan, Turkey, China, Egypt, Iran, India, USA (The University of Michigan and The University of Chicago), Holland (Leiden University), Russia (Moscow State Linguistics University); a number of international funds (International Japanese Fund, International Chinese Fund, Kazakh-Turkish Cooperation, Center for study of Hindi (Deli India), etc. There is excellent international cooperation and networking at all levels for which the faculty must be congratulated.

There is a number of international agreements on cooperation at Foreign Philology Faculty as well, as for example an academic and cultural cooperation agreement with Cadiz University in Spain (in student exchange), an agreement of cooperation with the Russian Academy of Sciences (academic mobility, research, and joint projects), an agreement of scientific cooperation with the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences (associative experiment with carriers of different cultures living in Kazakhstan), etc.

There are some links with the Russian Academy of Sciences and a number of universities in Russia: Saint Petersburg State University, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow State Linguistic University, Moscow State University for Humanities, People's Friendship University of Russia and some regional universities – Kemerovo State University, University of Nizhny Novgorod, Samara Branch of Moscow City Pedagogical University, Volgograd State University.

Main directions of cooperation are lectures of visiting professors from these universities and the use of some of these universities as places for visit by KazNU professors and students within the academic mobility framework. Especially strong cooperation is with the People's Friendship University of Russia in Moscow which in partnership with KazNU offers double degree programme for Master students of the KazNU Philology Programme (along with some other programmes).

International projects and programmes, not necessarily related to the study programmes under accreditation

1. For the development of the Bologna process, the integration of research and education, and an accelerated transformation into a research institution, Al-Farabi University is involved in different programmes and projects of such international organizations as UNESCO, ACTR/ACCELS, UNDP, IREX, NATO, ISTC, FP -7, TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus, NESP, the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the World Bank, etc.
2. Students and faculty staff can apply for **scholarships** for the following international programmes launched by:
 - US government scholarships: Fulbright, Muskie, Undergraduate exchange program (global UGRAD);
 - German government scholarships (DAAD);
 - British Government scholarships (Chevening);
 - Oriental countries governments and organizations' scholarships;
 - Kazakhstan government scholarships for 'Bolashak' programme for study at Master and PhD levels, training and research in the countries abroad (last year 26 staff members were trained at the UK universities via 'Bolashak' grants in their own disciplines).

Most of the scholarships that applicants received, however are mainly from Oriental countries and from the 'Bolashak' programme, with very few or no scholarships from the Western countries.
3. Currently, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University is the leading institution among universities of Kazakhstan, participating in projects of the European Commission TEMPUS, aimed to improve the system of higher education. The university was so far involved in 12 Tempus projects.
4. Al-Farabi is a member of the consortium of two international networks of universities – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's University and the Commonwealth of Independent States' Open Network University. Within the SCO University Consortium students are being trained in the number of majors including 'Russian Language'.

5. Aside from its exchange programmes, al-Farabi KazNU offers students the opportunity to study abroad with several international programmes on undergraduate and graduate level, in partnership with universities around the world. KazNU was one of the first universities in Kazakhstan to establish double degree programmes with partner institutions. These programmes allow students to study abroad during the summer or the academic year. Credits that students earn at universities abroad are counted for their degrees at al-Farabi. As an example, Master students of the 'Philology' programme (along with some others) can apply for this type of programme and get the second degree in equivalent specialty from the People's Friendship University of Russia. The length of study is two years with the first year in partner university and the second one in al-Farabi KazNU.
6. An example of a joint degree programme is the Bachelor programme in 'Chinese Language' at the faculty of Oriental studies launched in 2013 under the agreement of KazNU with Lanzhou University in China.

Academic mobility at KazNU is an essential part of the internationalisation strategy aimed at training skilled professionals who can be competitive on the domestic and international labor market. It gives students and academic staff the opportunity to study, conduct research or participate in internships in universities abroad. There are special government funds for such academic mobility programmes, but the requirement for participating in them is not only the student's high performance but also good command of the language of instruction of the foreign host university, which is mostly English. Now the university started to offer some subjects in English to give students an opportunity to improve their command of English.

Practically every Master and PhD student spends a certain amount of time (from a few days to a semester or even an academic year) at a university abroad as this is a part of their study programme requirement (as stipulated in the state standards), which is sometimes funded by the Kazakh government (in case a student receives a state grant for studying, it is covered by this grant). An important feature of PhD programmes is the requirement for each PhD student to have 2 supervisors: one local and one foreign, a requirement which imports international experience and practice to these programmes. Students study corresponding subjects in the foreign university or they can also attend courses online. Their credits earned at the partner university are recognized at al-Farabi upon return.

Between 2009 and 2013 a large number of students from Foreign Philology and Oriental Studies Faculties of KazNU participated in academic mobility programmes different universities. Among these universities are Helsinki University, Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg and others. Feedback from students on their academic mobility experience of studying abroad is very positive and impressive.

For the Russian Philology programme, however, there are opportunities only for Master level students and nearly no programmes of academic mobility for PhD students, though they also express their wish to study abroad.

Academic staff mobility is also actively used and takes different forms at KazNU:

- *Lectures of international visiting professors*, mostly from the partner universities and organizations. Last year out of altogether 250 foreign professors 72 held lectures in the Humanities at al-Farabi University (16 in Foreign Phil./Linguistics and Literary Study – 8 of them from universities in Russia; 2 in Translation Studies, 6 in Kazakh Philology, 10 in Turcology and 35 in Oriental Studies).
- But visiting professors only come for a short period of time which does not seem to be very effective. In meetings with students and faculty staff the wish was expressed

that foreign guest lecturers and visiting scholars should stay longer, so that a continuous dialogue can be established.

- *Visiting partner universities by al-Farabi academic staff.* This format is widely used by the professors from both faculties: Oriental Studies and Foreign Philology, who relatively often go abroad for the purposes of professional development, exchange of experience with their foreign colleagues, conducting research, collecting research materials and even study for the degree programmes. Thus, for example, there are three instructors from KazNU who do a PhD programme in Teheran University in Iran with grants from the Iran government which they won in the competition. There are visits to the following institutions: International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden; The University of Chicago; Amsterdam University of Phonetic Sciences; Giessen University, etc.
- *Participation of academic staff in international conferences abroad.* There are many examples of academic staff participation in such events. Some of them received grants or are paid from research project funds, but many instructors have to pay for participation themselves which is very costly for them.
- *Hiring international staff for teaching at KazNU.* There are only a few native speakers who work at KazNU.

Among the countries that are involved in academic mobility with KazNU are Austria, Bulgaria, China, Great Britain, Germany, Egypt, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Spain, Malta, The Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Finland, Czech Republic, Serbia, Turkey, USA. Some of these countries are involved in the Erasmus Mundus programme.

The co-operation projects encourage and support the advancement of the study programmes and the mobility of students and staff. For the future we recommend the establishment of more long-lasting international co-operation projects and also to give students in Kazakh philology possibility to use exchange possibilities with Turkish universities (this is at the present possible only for students studying Turcology).

(b) Assessments

The present national cooperation projects provide for good networking with other universities and academic institutions, especially in but also outside Almaty.

The international cooperation focuses on intensive cooperation with Turkish universities. PhD students have one local and one external supervisor.

The list of international cooperations, as well as the number of visiting professors, is impressive for a university in Kazakhstan, among them there are a large number of very well-known scholars from all over the world. The same holds true for the activities of the departments' staff visiting institutions abroad and publishing in international journals. However, the peers learned during the site-visit that many of these activities are not supported by the university and have to be financed by the staff members themselves. This should be changed in order to give more people the chance to travel abroad, and to also enable younger and financially weaker members of the staff to do research in foreign countries.