



Agency for
Quality Assurance
and Accreditation
Austria

Accreditation Report of the Panel Cluster C

Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD)

Pedagogics and Psychology (Bachelor, Master)

Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition (Bachelor, Master)

Social Work (Bachelor, Master, PhD)

Physical Education and Sport (Bachelor, Master)

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

March 2014

Index

1	General information	3
1.1	Basic principles of the procedure	3
1.2	Profile and concept of the 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	Psychology	10
2.1.2	Pedagogics and Psychology	13
2.1.3	Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.....	14
2.1.4	Social Work	15
2.1.5	Physical Education and Sport.....	16
2.2	Standard 2: Staff	19
2.2.1	Psychology	19
2.2.2	Pedagogics and Psychology	20
2.2.3	Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.....	20
2.2.4	Social Work	21
2.2.5	Physical Education and Sport.....	21
2.3	Standard 3: Quality assurance	22
2.4	Standard 4: Funding and infrastructure	26
2.5	Standard 5: Research and development and appreciation of the arts	28
2.5.1	Psychology	28
2.5.2	Pedagogics and Psychology	29
2.5.3	Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition.....	29
2.5.4	Social Work	29
2.5.5	Physical Education and Sport.....	30
2.6	Standard 6: National and international co-operations	31

1 General information

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (hereinafter – al-Farabi KazNU) mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes in Psychology; Bachelor and Master programmes in Pedagogics and Psychology; Bachelor and Master programmes in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition; Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes in Social Work, and Bachelor and Master programmes in Physical Education and Sport. These twelve study programmes are assessed in the accreditation report. The report includes statements and assessments on the Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes respectively where deviations require different descriptions.

The final assessment (fulfilment of the standards) of each study programme under review is explicitly stated in Chapter 3 of the present report.

The Panel notes that the documents provided by al-Farabi KazNU did not include summaries of descriptive information or quantitative data organised in tables and statistics, but this information can be, in good part, extracted from the documents submitted. Despite some translation problems, the documents provided are consistent and have substantial correspondence with the materials and observations collected by the Panel during the site visit. However, the Panel draws attention to the following limitation of the self-evaluation documentation: among the documents submitted self-evaluation reports with proper SWOT analyses were not present.

The Panel also notes that the site visit was conducted in adherence with the AQ Austria Code of Conduct and it was well organised by al-Farabi Kazakh National University and by AQ Austria in a friendly and open manner. Congratulations to the organisers.

1.1 Basic principles of the procedure

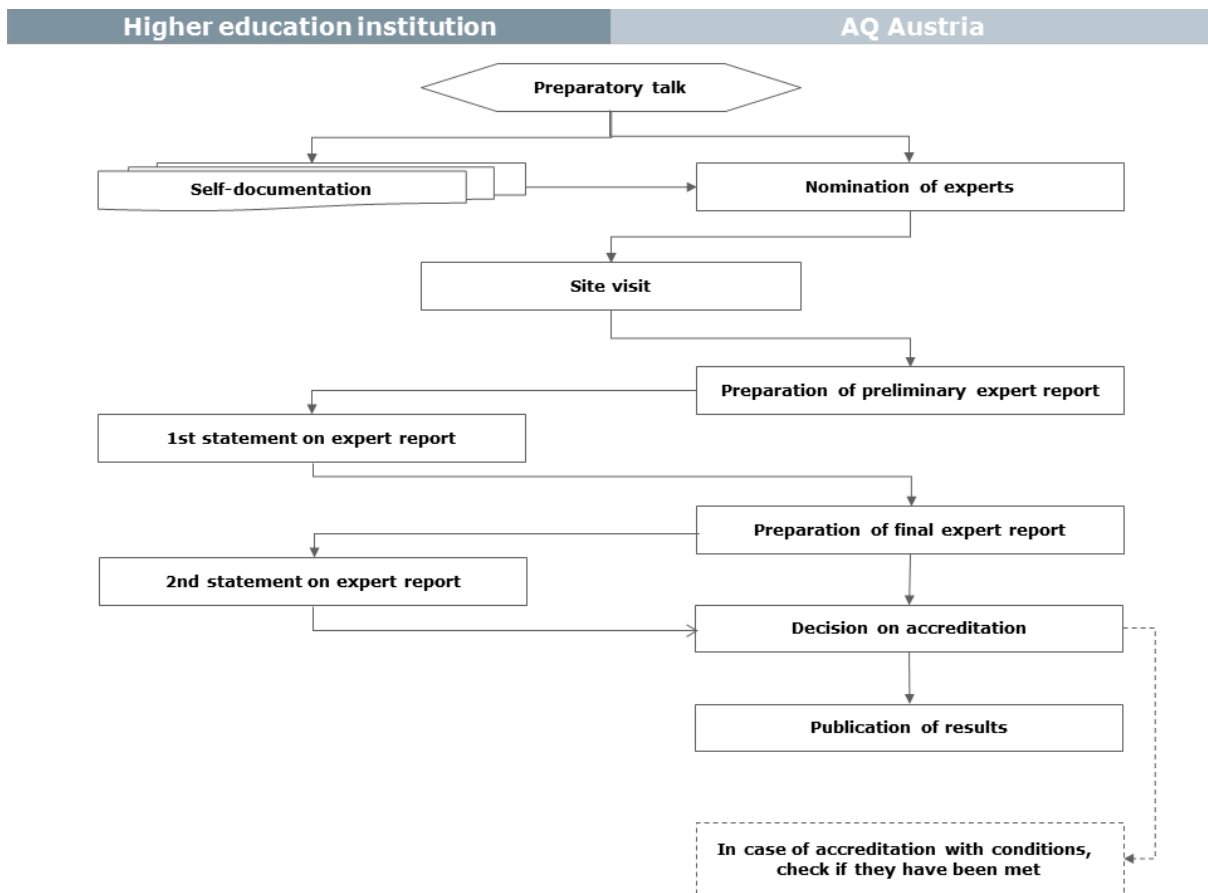
AQ Austria is the Austrian agency for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education. The agency is operating in Austria and other countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is committed to serving the common good and is based on the values of the European Higher Education Area, 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 the 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 accreditation 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 being 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 Profile and concept of the study programmes and brief description of al-Farabi Kazakh National University

The following information on the study programmes derive from the self-evaluation reports of al-Farabi Kazakh National University.

Name of the study programme	Psychology
Academic degree awarded:	Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology
Year of introduction:	1992*
Regular study period:	4 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	243
Number of Kazakh credits:	146
Name of the study programme	Psychology
Academic degree awarded:	Master of Social Sciences in Psychology
Year of introduction:	1996*
Regular study period:	2 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	98
Number of Kazakh credits:	59
Name of the study programme	Psychology
Academic degree awarded:	PhD in Psychology
Year of introduction:	2005*
Regular study period:	3 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	125
Number of Kazakh credits:	75
Name of the study programme	Pedagogics and Psychology
Academic degree awarded:	Bachelor of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology
Year of introduction:	2004*
Regular study period:	4 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	265
Number of Kazakh credits:	159
Name of the study programme	Pedagogics and Psychology
Academic degree awarded:	Master of Education in Pedagogics and Psychology
Year of introduction:	2004*
Regular study period:	2 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	98
Number of Kazakh credits:	59
Name of the study programme	Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition
Academic degree awarded:	Bachelor of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition
Year of introduction:	2010
Regular study period:	4 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	265
Number of Kazakh credits:	159

Name of the study programme	Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition
Academic degree awarded:	Master of Education in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition
Year of introduction:	2011
Regular study period:	2 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	98
Number of Kazakh credits:	59
Name of the study programme	Social Work
Academic degree awarded:	Bachelor of Social Service in Social Work
Year of introduction:	2002*
Regular study period:	4 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	227
Number of Kazakh credits:	151
Name of the study programme	Social Work
Academic degree awarded:	Master of Social Service in Social Work
Year of introduction:	2002*
Regular study period:	2 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	89
Number of Kazakh credits:	59
Name of the study programme	Social Work
Academic degree awarded:	PhD in Social Work
Year of introduction:	2007*
Regular study period:	3 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	113
Number of Kazakh credits:	75
Name of the study programme	Physical Education and Sport
Academic degree awarded:	Bachelor of Education in Physical Education and Sport
Year of introduction:	2004*
Regular study period:	4 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	258
Number of Kazakh credits:	155
Name of the study programme	Physical Education and Sport
Academic degree awarded:	Master of Education in Physical Education and Sport
Year of introduction:	2010
Regular study period:	2 academic years
Number of ECTS credits:	98
Number of Kazakh credits:	59

* Kazakhstan entered the Bologna process in 2010. The study programmes have consequently been adapted to the Bologna system. The process has not been finished yet.

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 run 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. Since 2015 autonomy will be granted to the national research universities, since 2016 to higher education institutions with the *national* status, and since 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 of 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 corporate network UNIVER 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, National space agency, KazMunaiGaz, Eurasian Bank etc. 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 Kazakh National University mandated AQ Austria with the accreditation of the study programmes mentioned above in July 2013.

Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation reports by al-Farabi KazNU	22 November 2013, later submittals on 19 December 2013 and 5 February 2014
Decision on Panel members by the Board of AQ Austria	30 October 2014
Preparatory Skype meeting of the Panel	13 January 2014
Site-visit to al-Farabi KazNU by the Panel	12-13 February 2014
Draft report of the Panel	25 March 2014
Formal statement by al-Farabi KazNU	4 April 2014
Final report of the Panel	11 April 2014
Statement on the final report by al-Farabi KazNU	18 April 2014
Accreditation decision by the Board of AQ Austria	13 May 2014

Members of the Panel

Name	Institution	Role
Prof. Dr. Cristiano Violani	Sapienza University of Rome	Peer from academia (Psychology)
Prof. Dr. Krassimir Stojanov	University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt	Peer from academia (Pedagogics and Psychology)
Prof. Dr. Rudolf Egger	University of Graz	Peer from academia (Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition); head of the Panel
Prof. Dr. Hervainé Szabó Gyöngyvér	Kodolányi Janos University of Applied Sciences	Peer from academia (Social Work)
Prof. Dr. Arno Müller	Universities of Leipzig and Jena	Peer from academia (Physical Education and Sport)
Meirgul Alpysbayeva	L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University	Peer from Kazakhstan (Educational Studies)
Mag. Janine Wulz	University of Vienna	Student peer (Education, Political Science)

AQ Austria Coordinator

Zhanna Kuzminykh

2 Assessment results

2.1 Standard 1: Study programme and programme management

The qualification objectives and content of the study programmes are in line with the national education legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, but not aligned with the respective levels of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) used across the European Area of Higher Education (EHEA).

The Kazakh credit system is in place but it is not used in compliance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS); Kazakh credits are not clearly transferrable to ECTS credits. A Diploma Supplement is not issued to al-Farabi KazNU graduates.

Although foreign language courses are offered at the Bachelor and Master levels, there is evidence of lack of international scientific literature in the study programmes. As was stated by an interview participant, literature mostly comes from Russia and Ukraine because 'Kazakhstan is a Russian speaking country'.

The student-teacher ratio in the study programmes under review is very good.

E-learning is not a visible part of the study programmes.

Admission fees are rather high for local students; however state educational grants are available to them on a competitive basis.

The Panel notes that aligning the study programmes with the respective levels of EQF, effective implementation of ECTS and other instruments of quality assurance and internationalisation including Diploma Supplement would mean opening the university and its study programmes to internationalisation and to further integration into EHEA. In particular, ECTS is a common framework in Europe for student workload calculation and accounting for international exchanges, giving double diplomas, continuing Master's in another institution, or doing internships. If al-Farabi KazNU introduces a double credit system (ECTS plus a well elaborated university credit system) and makes the necessary adjustments, both the systems can work very well.

2.1.1 Psychology

The statements and evaluations regarding the three programmes under review are given on the basis of the AQ Guideline for International Accreditation (July 2013), as well as the expert knowledge about the academic training in psychology in the European Higher Education Area and of the criteria and qualification standards defined by the Europsy certification system by EFPA, the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (<http://europsy-efpa.eu/>).

Since both in the European qualification standards and at al-Farabi KazNU the Bachelor and Master programmes in Psychology are conceived as strictly aligned and interdependent, the statements concerning them are not differentiated.

(a) Statements

The three study programmes in Psychology (Bachelor, Master, PhD) proposed for accreditation by al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, are offered within the Faculty of Philosophy and Political Sciences.

At present both the Bachelor and the Master programmes in Psychology enrol about 25 students per year. Admissions to the PhD programme are mostly limited to 3-5 candidates.

In the Module Handbook the objectives of each module are meticulously described and are consistent with the study programme, but the general qualifications objectives of the Bachelor and Master programmes are not expressed, and those that can be inferred from the Module Handbook for the Psychology programmes, show a focus limited to general psychology and on educational and social issues. There are several overlapping descriptions of knowledge and skills to be acquired in different modules and the curricula include compulsory modules on National history and identity that do not have correspondence within the European programmes for the education and training of psychologists.

Statistic information on the completion of the study programmes was not provided in the self-evaluation documents nor is it possible to estimate the required workloads from the Module Handbook. Since the order of the modules and of the exams is not totally clear, the risks of overload and of under commitment are not assessable. However in the audits neither the students nor the instructors mentioned any problem.

Specific information concerning the examinations is provided for each module, there are general regulations, and no problem was mentioned during the audits.

Admission requirements. At the Bachelor level there is a national university entrance exam.

For the Master programme, it is unclear if the orientation policies and the regulations for the admission to the Master's ensure the selection of candidates with knowledge, skills and personal characteristics adequate to learn how to operate as professional psychologists.

E-learning and blended techniques have not been mentioned either in the documents or during the interviews on site.

In the Department of General and Ethnic Psychology there is a lack of adequate laboratories with up to date equipment and there are scarce psychological services (e.g. assessment and consulting centres) where the students can learn to practice under supervision.

Bachelor and Master students do not appear directly involved in research or in professional activities within the study programmes.

Concerning the PhD programme in Psychology, the research direction plan in part is vague and in part overlaps with the Master programme. However at present specific qualifications for the Psychology programmes do not exist in Europe, and the programme organised at the Department of General and Ethnic Psychology at al-Farabi KazNU is substantially adherent to the Salzburg II Principles published by EUA and in line with the elaborations of the European Council for Doctoral Education. The dual mentors systems (one at al-Farabi KazNU and one international) for each doctoral candidate assures adequate supervision, contributes to internationalisation, and allows the candidates to pursue scientific interests that are novel at al-Farabi KazNU.

The criteria qualifying the doctoral programme, which seems to pursue only an academic qualification, are substantially met.

(b) Assessments

Both the Bachelor and the Master programmes appear more aligned to traditions and to the framework imposed by the Ministry for Education than to the al-Farabi KazNU institutional strategies. The Bachelor and Master Psychology programmes appear as a readaptation of the courses in Psychology which were present when the university was mostly focused on the preparation of teachers. The programmes disregard important professional applications of psychology in Europe and the knowledge they require (e.g. clinical neuropsychology, clinical health psychology, psychopathology and psychotherapy, organizational psychology, etc. See Appendix 1).

The Modules Handbook reveals a strong influence of the traditional approach of the soviet psychology, that was more oriented toward theoretical elaborations than toward empirical research and to the development of professional activities based on scientific evidences. At present neither the qualifications nor the content of the Bachelor and Master programmes in Psychology meet the current scientific and professional standards of the education and training for professional psychologists in Europe. This seems mostly due to the present limitations of the institutional autonomy (which will change in 2015-2016) and to the current status of the national qualification standards, which are set by the Ministry of Education and define obligatory courses on National history and ethnicity issues, aimed at creating a Kazakh identity, which is clearly superfluous in the education of psychologists.

One has to consider that, in perspective, under the directives of the European Commission, the accreditation of the al-Farabi KazNU psychology programmes by AQ Austria should lead to the immediate recognition of their degrees in all the EU countries where, under relatively heterogeneous national regulations, psychologists practice a regulated profession and are expected to operate mainly in two professional areas (Clinical and Health, Organizational and Work) that at present are not adequately considered in the al-Farabi KazNU Bachelor and Master programmes in psychology, which appear adequate (in part) only for an academic qualification aimed to operate in the third broad area for applied psychology, i.e. Education.

One should consider also the presence in the same Department of other Bachelor and Master programmes denominated „Pedagogics and Psychology“ and „Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition“. The deficiencies in the basic education and in the training for the main professional areas in Psychology (Clinical and Organizational) together with the redundant overlapping with other study programmes focused in the area of education is confusing, does not appear useful to reach the strategic goals posited by al-Farabi KazNU, and eventually will disfavor the professional psychologists educated and trained at al-Farabi KazNU and interested in working as psychologists in other countries in the EHEA.

At present the programmes in Psychology offered at al-Farabi KazNU comply only in part with EuroPsy, the qualification framework defined by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA, 2013) for the development of public European registers of psychologists certified by a "EuroPsy Certificate".

The EuroPsy criterion of a minimal duration of the BA + MA academic curriculum of 5 equivalent years (300 CFU) is substantially satisfied, provided that the Kazakh credit system is aligned to the ECTS and the number of credits acquired in the State Compulsory Modules

(National history, Kazakh ethnicity etc.) are considered extra). Therefore the Master programme graduates who, after graduation, will complete a period of at least one year of full time supervised practice (60 ECTS), could aspire to qualify for the Europsy certification that they have the basic competences required to operate professionally in dependent or independent practice at the point of entry of their career. However, unfortunately, at present the goals and contents of the programmes are organised in a way that doesn't correspond to Europsy curricular criteria for the education and training of professional psychologists in Europe. In fact the Europsy criteria for operating in the Clinical Health area and in the Organisational Work area are not met; and they are met only in part for the area of Education.

Although at present there are evident weaknesses and deficiencies in the Bachelor and Master programmes, the low number of students enrolled (max 25 per programme) guarantees an adequate student to instructor ratio that is an important strength. Furthermore al-Farabi KazNU seems capable to invest adequate financial resources to acquire the necessary competences in the areas of Clinical and Health psychology and/or of Work and Organizational Psychology and to reorganise the programmes looking at the best European and international programmes in applied psychology and in the cognitive sciences.

The low number of students enrolled should ease the organisation of laboratories to strengthen the scientific vision and competences of the students and the establishment of the psychological services needed for their professional training.

In the doctoral programme the basic criteria for academic are substantially met and the candidates appear highly motivated and well prepared, however the programme suffers from the same general problems and from the limitations in the research topics and in the availability of laboratories, equipment and services which have been noticed.

Advice is that the Department of General and Ethnic Psychology should also try to attract talented PhD candidates and junior researchers from other national and international institutions in order to increase the variety of research topics and the professional developments.

2.1.2 Pedagogics and Psychology

(a) Statements

The students of the study programmes are well-educated and well-trained; they show good analytic competencies.

Although in the international practice it is not usual to put Education and Psychology in one discipline, this clearly does make sense in the local context, due to the professional profile of the absolvents of the programmes: the programmes aim at qualifying students to "Pedagogue-Psychologists" both in the areas of school and of extra-school education. This profile presupposes enriching of pedagogical perspectives to educational processes by psychological knowledge.

There is confusion between competency- and content-oriented outcome approaches in the programme. This might be due to fixing too much of the content as mandatory by extra-university authorities – which could lead to lack of flexibility of the process of designing of

courses and modules. A competency-orientated outcomes approach presupposes this flexibility.

A lot of effort is being made at the Department that operates the programmes to establish more and stronger research activities, but these activities are not sufficiently integrated into teaching. Mostly students of the Master programme reported many times that they are involved in research activities, but these activities are not credited, and students' research projects are not taken into consideration for examinations.

In the Bachelor programme there is insufficient consideration of the theory of education. There is no clear distinction between the theory of education on the one hand, and the history of pedagogy and school pedagogy on the other.

In most cases the lists of literature to be studied in the study programmes are oriented almost exclusively towards the Russian/Soviet tradition in the pedagogy as well as towards the intention to re-invite or to create Kazakh own tradition.

(b) Assessments

The lists of literature to be studied in the courses of the programmes are not sufficiently regarding the international states of arts in the respective disciplines. However, the teachers are motivated to use more international literature. Hence, provided that more autonomy would be given to the teachers, they would re-shape their courses in the way that they would become more closely linked to international discourses.

The Bachelor programme lacks a module on Theory of Education. The cluster "Vocational Modules" is deficient without such a module.

It is a weakness especially of the Master programme that research projects of the students are not included as parts of the curriculum, and that these projects are not credited.

2.1.3 Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition

(a) Statements

The study programmes in Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition were developed following the national educational standards and governmental prescriptions. The Bachelor and Master programmes are based on the results of historical and regional developments, but they are not compliant with general objectives and international standards in Social Pedagogics¹.

The goals of the study programmes are not clear; it is not obvious whether the programmes focus on the education of educators or on a wider range of social pedagogics. There is evidence that the study is built up as vocational training for future teachers of the subject "Self-Cognition" ("Self-Knowledge") recently introduced into the school curriculum by MES RK. Further goals include promoting the approaches and programmes for going global and matching the activities with the local areas are vague, but there is a long process involving discussions with the local stakeholders.

¹ See e.g.: Hallstedt, Pelle/Högström, Mats (2005): THE RECONTEXTUALISATION OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY. A study of three curricula in the Netherlands, Norway and Ireland. MALMÖ STUDIES IN EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, No. 21. http://muep.mah.se/bitstream/handle/2043/7231/Hallstedt_Hoegstroem_manus.pdf?sequence=1 [4.3.2014]

The defined learning outcomes describe in general the knowledge and skills students obtain upon completion of study programmes. The study programmes are not designed in line with the defined student learning outcomes; they are not based on scientific potentials either.

The study programmes are focused on the disciplines of pedagogy and psychology, i.e. on the education disciplines. The programmes have an accent on self-knowledge/self-cognition as a new field of knowledge and skills development. The social pedagogy elements are missing from both study programmes under review.

The mentoring ratios are equivalent to internationally recognized standards. Gender equality, equal opportunities, and the promotion of women are established.

Mechanisms for approving, monitoring and developing of the study programmes and qualifications are not properly in place (e.g. there are no committees which would include students and staff to evaluate the quality of the study programmes regularly).

(b) Assessments

The approach developed by the Department responsible for the delivery of the Bachelor and Master programmes "Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition", does not fit the framework for Social Pedagogy.

The study programmes are weak in social disciplines. In Europe such programmes should have up to 40 % of the core subjects common with social work, so the study programmes under review do not match European or global standards for study programmes in the discipline 'Social Pedagogy'. The knowledge base, practice skills and competencies of social pedagogy are not reflected in the research of the programmes' faculty who are all connected with education science.

Thus, the study programmes cannot be accepted as "Social Pedagogics" programmes. They are to be assessed as study programmes in alternative pedagogy: pedagogy of well-being, creative pedagogy, value centered pedagogy, or culture based education.

The study programmes meet the national educational standards and are appropriate for preparing school teachers of the subject 'Self-Cognition (Self-Knowledge)'.

If international accreditation for the study programmes in Social Pedagogy is sought, the programmes are to be re-developed on the basis of the condition and recommendations given by the Panel in present Report (Section 3.1.3).

2.1.4 Social Work

(a) Statements

The study programmes in Social Work have been developed for three levels of education. The learning outcomes developed for the Bachelor programme are socialisation for profession, communication, working in teams in projects; the learning outcome at the Master degree level is generalist social work. Specialisation aims are management in social work, economics and management in social work, social work in clinical settings. The university supports the practical orientation of the study field. Students are supported in their search of organisations for doing their internships.

The social work profession has a double mandate: help and provision of professional services to those who are in need, and resolving of social conflicts and problems by social workers as representatives of administrative power. The study programmes have an emphasis on the latter, with strong conflict management orientation and strong technology accent, as well as focus on administration. The programmes have fragmented practice modules; an accent on internship is made in the structure of the study programmes.

(b) Assessments

The study programmes are different in their learning outcomes from international standards. At the Bachelor degree level the accepted practice is to educate for generalised practice, at the Master degree level - for advanced and specialised practice, in case of the PhD programme the goals can be accepted as those for postgraduate LLL programmes.

The study programmes should have different objectives regarding fieldwork and practice for different levels. The study programmes are narrowly oriented at theory, the integration of theory and practice is missing. The teachers are not directly involved in professional practice, which hinders considerably the transmission from practice to theory. There is no evidence of clear understanding of different levels of professionalisation; the education strategy was adapted from the Russian model. There are no clear strategies for social work research, profession research. The knowledge base of social work theories and practice is missing, with the exception of critical social work models. Lack of international dimension regarding content and research resources is not appropriate for the Master degree level.

The social work programmes have to be clearly aligned with different foci on professionalisation at different levels, there is no need to repeat specialisation at the Master and Doctorate levels. In international experiences the generalist practice is aimed at the development of students' competencies to do social work regarding all basic activities: to work with children, youths, adult and elderly people, to do social work in urban settings: for example, with the homeless, sexworkers, to work with individuals, with groups, and communities, in rural settings, to provide special services to families, handicapped and ethnic communities. Management and social work economics, macro – practice, clinical social work are more appropriate for the Master level. Master level specialisations are more advanced and include, for example, working with mentally ill, victims of rape, with those who live in prison, doing social work with drug user groups, working with communities suffered from wars, ethnic riots, and terrorism and so on. It is recommended to adjust different levels of the study programmes with international standards to deepen knowledge and skills at each level.

The PhD programme in Social Work has no clear strategy for research.

2.1.5 Physical Education and Sport

(a) Statements

The university states that they want to be a *modern* university, i.e. to advance from *teaching* to *research* to *innovation*. *Internationalisation* is considered as an indicator of the transformation process.

The Bachelor degree takes four academic years (233 ECTS). In the documents on the learning outcomes a mixture of knowledge and understanding of *educational aspects* as well as "*optimization of physical and sports training*" are mentioned, as well as an understanding of "*Foreign economic activities, physical culture and sports organisations, processes, the international political life...sports in the world*". Among other learning outcomes to be achieved

by the Bachelor students upon completion of the study programme are analysis ("carrying out research... demonstrate the independence and original approach to solving the problem... to plan and solve problems on a professional level") and synthesis – "position of skills of critical analysis" is mentioned. Understanding of history and philosophy is among the learning outcomes defined for the Master degree level.

The Bachelor programme offers courses in the *History of Physical Education and Sport* and courses on the *Olympic Movement*, in *National sport and moving games* and courses on *sport games*. The course "TPhES3403 Theory of Physical Education and Sport" only deals with "sport facilities and equipment" and the like.

The Module 2. "Pedagogics and the psychology FKIS" claims to provide the following competences: "able to critically evaluate problems, approaches and trends reflecting the present state of scientific discipline and in the field of research and spheres of professional practice". Generally speaking, there is a strong focus on practically doing sports and on practically applying research findings.

The study programmes are mainly structured in consistency with the formulated qualification objectives. As a four years programme it covers a very broad range of aspects. Statement by a student: "In the course *Sports Pedagogy* we study pedagogy and psychology disciplines, at exams we have questions about designing and modelling of the study process, teaching methods".

The workload as identified in the programmes' self-evaluation documentation and reported during the interviews on site is reasonable to reach the aspired qualification objectives.

According to one of the representatives of organisations employing alumni of the study programmes, „as a higher education institution, they can only employ Master graduates, and there are not enough of them. We have been cooperating with al-Farabi KazNU for many years and give preference to their graduates".

(b) Assessments

The course *History of the Republic of Kazakhstan* in the so called 'state compulsory module' is not in line with international/European traditions.

European Bachelor programmes in sport science typically take only three years and therefore include 180 ECTS credits only.² The goals of a Bachelor programme that intends to produce future Physical Education teachers and the goals of a Bachelor programme which intends to produce future sport scientists or professionals in the field of training and coaching should significantly differ from each other. The Bachelor programme at al-Farabi KazNU tries to cover all of those in one study programme.

It is unclear how international aspects are supposed to be integrated into the study programmes given the lack of international literature in the programmes. It is also unclear how the statements regarding expected learning outcomes ("2. Analysis") differ from independent problem-solving and research on the Master programme level. The object of the critical analysis is not clear either, as well as the courses in which this ability will be taught or addressed. The intended *understanding* mentioned in the documents on the learning

cf. <http://www.dshs-koeln.de/english/studying-structure/>²

outcomes for the Master degree programme is far too broad and undoable within this study programme.

The courses in the *History of Physical Education and Sport* and courses on the *Olympic Movement*, as well as the courses in *National sport and moving games* and courses on *sport games* are in danger of presenting overlapping content. The course "TPhES3403 Theory of Physical Education and Sport" only deals with "sport facilities and equipment" and the like and does not provide any *critical theoretical thinking* on sport and physical education.

The Module 2. "Pedagogics and the Psychology FKIS" claims to provide the competences like "being able to critically evaluate problems, approaches and trends reflecting the present state of scientific discipline ...". However, the Russian literature (from the years 2001-2004) on the reading list is insufficient to reach these competences (this statement is paradigmatic for the other courses). The modules need to be revised and updated with more recent and international (English language) literature. That does, of course, not mean, that the Russian literature should be neglected. The Panel is fully aware that there is a strong Russian tradition in sports science which is of highest value for the scientific field. However, the international academic literature should be integrated.

The strong focus of the study programmes on practically doing sports ("60% practical exams, 40% theoretical exams" according to interview statements of student) is an unbalanced structure if it is not accompanied by *critical reflection on sports*. The aim of modern university education in sport science shall not be the production of fitness/health instructors (only). This can be done in courses of non-academic clubs or sports foundations/institutions. Practically applying research findings is not bad in itself, but it should not be the one and only aim of university education. Strictly trying to apply findings is the aim of universities of applied sciences.

An alumnus from the Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science stated "theory is great, but it should be more practice oriented". However, that does not seem to be the case for Physical Education and Sport programmes at al-Farabi KazNU.

The study programmes are too broad, they need to be sharpened and differentiated according to the future field of employment, i.e. either in Schools as PE teacher or a coach/trainer.

Examination methods are suitable.

2.2 Standard 2: Staff

Al-Farabi KazNU has a staff development programme which includes yearly trainings and workshops for teachers across the university. During the site visit students reported that faculty use various teaching methods delivering lectures and seminars, but not so many teaching methods referring to social learning.

There is no tenure track system at the university. But the faculty is hired on the basis of one-, two-, or three-year contracts, which can be prolonged after successful attestation of the hired persons. The prolongation of contract is strongly determined by the results of performance-oriented ranking of the university faculty. The new faculty members are mostly hired from among the graduates of al-Farabi KazNU Master and PhD programmes.

In regard to the staff selection procedure, the recruitment of al-Farabi KazNU own alumni may limit the university's opportunities in terms of becoming a research university, since this approach cannot provide the diversification of research and knowledge transfer. The university has to think of recruiting more personnel from outside, e.g. from other Kazakh universities and from beyond Kazakhstan. According to the First Vice-Rector, most teachers from other Kazakh universities are willing to apply for a job at al-Farabi KazNU. However, no clear strategy of staff selection from external market has been developed.

There are no clear career paths for staff, no formal requirements to walk up the career ladder – this is basically a matter of time and experience gained at the university. Professorship is granted by MES RK, it is not up to the university to do it.

2.2.1 Psychology

(a) Statements

Almost all the instructors belong to a Department of General and Ethnic Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy and Political Sciences. The academic staff at the KazNU Department of General and Ethnic Psychology includes 4 Professors; 10 Associate Professors ; 4 acting asst. Professors; 3 Senior Lecturers (all with a Kazakh or Russian PhD degree); 7 Senior Teachers (mostly without a PhD).

An analysis of the staff's curricula shows that most of them (19) hold a PhD, gained by most of them at KazNU, where they were previously covering teaching positions (see Appendix 2). The research interests and competences are concentrated on topics in the areas of general, social, cultural and educational psychology. Competences in the areas of Clinical and Health Psychology and in Work and Organizational Psychology are absent.

The curricula indicate that the large majority have recent publications.

The ratio students / faculty is optimal.

The teaching staff seems to have had access to career developments and further doctoral education at al-Farabi KazNU.

Almost all teachers seem not involved in professional extracurricular professional practice and there are no external adjunct or part-time professional instructors.

(b) Assessments

The career developments of the staff teaching in the Bachelor and Master programmes seem to have happened prevalently within KazNU. That explains a redundancy of scientific qualifications and research interests that are limited to the areas of general psychology, education, and social and cultural psychology, and a substantial lack of faculty needed to assure the teaching of psychological subjects matters and professional skills in the areas of Clinical and Health Psychology and of Work and Organizational Psychology.

2.2.2 Pedagogics and Psychology

(a) Statements

There is a good ratio between the numbers of the teachers and the students. There is also an appropriate system of career development. The staff members are committed to the development of the university towards a research academic institution. The university management is systematically aiming at acquiring distinguished international scholars as visiting or part-time professors.

(b) Assessments

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

2.2.3 Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition

(a) Statements

In general, the staff is qualified to fulfil the teaching tasks in the study programmes. The teachers have adequate formal degrees and meet professionalisation level.

The social pedagogy teaching staff are mainly specialists in the field of education. They have a high reputation in pedagogy and educational research, their research objectives being focused on school matters only. However, it is not clear which competencies are required for the staff to teach in the field of "Self-Cognition".

Teachers offer counselling, mentorship and professional orientation services to ensure students' personal and professional development.

The lack of skills in English among the staff members was evident during the site visit.

The staff selection procedure is not clear.

(b) Assessments

Students can express their opinions and give suggestions for improvement; they can also influence the decision-making and problem-solving processes on issues that concern them.

Students receive feedback on the measures that have been taken on the basis of their opinions and suggestions for improvement of the quality of studying, as well as the measures that have been taken in order to solve the problems that affect them.

The teachers of the study programmes ensure that the assessment of student learning is in line with the defined learning outcomes, that the range of learning is being assessed, and that the assessment is appropriate to the qualification level. However, the study programmes do not cover the range of Social Pedagogics. There is no group of teachers directly involved in field practice.

2.2.4 Social Work

(a) Statements

The study programmes in Social Work do not have their 'own' faculty or department, which is very important to provide quality education, practice and research. The teachers of the study programmes are experts in other disciplines. The study programmes need to adapt to the new disciplines of Social Work and Social Pedagogics and renew staff, involve more practitioners. In case of al-Farabi study the staff can hardly transmit international professional edge knowledge.

(b) Assessments

Social Work teachers and researchers are highly qualified but only small part of them are specialists in Social Work. Their areas of expertise are mostly sociology, psychology, management. Their scientific performance is mainly soft, the share of publications in highly-valued journals is not high.

The Social Work staff needs highly developed knowledge in the discipline of Social Work. The department needs to employ staff from the social work profession.

2.2.5 Physical Education and Sport

(a) Statements

There are 6 full-time professors, 18 assistant professors and nine senior lecturers. No lecturers or assistant lecturers. Most staff members have sound qualifications in physical culture (sport science) and long term teaching experience. However, most of them lack international experience and international publications. Some staff members have no significant visible connection to sports science (either in research or teaching), e.g. people who do research on biofuels; peroxidas of plants. Staff members have access to resources for further development.

(b) Assessments

The total number of 33 academic members of staff is reasonable for the number of students (649), however the lack of lecturers and assistant lecturers shows a misbalanced staff structure.

Some faculty members have the main focus on teaching practical sports which can be seen in the low research activities, i.e. publications, respectively in the publications with mainly 2 up to 4 pages only. The lack of international experience in teaching and research contradicts the aims (e.g. internationalisation) of the University.

Staff members should have a significant connection to sports science either in teaching and/or research. Although staff members have access to resources for further development, internationalisation is still to be improved.

2.3 Standard 3: Quality assurance

(a) Statements

The change of the university mission into becoming a research university has also changed its internal management, which now includes result-oriented ranking of the staff, departments and faculties within the university. The new internal management system is aimed at enhancing quality by increasing competitiveness among the faculty members.

According to the interview with administrative staff responsible for quality assurance processes at the university, the quality management is carried out at different levels. One of them is quality assurance at the administrative level which is ensured through Quality Management Systems of ISO 9004:2009 and ISO 9004:2011. The quality management processes are defined as a communicative task and an executive function. The division of responsibilities related to the quality system is described and is linked to the university's organisational structure.

Quality assurance is implemented at the academic level, its methods and tools being developed jointly by the Methodological Bureaus at the Faculty/Department level and the Scientific-Methodological Council at the University level. The quality of the study programmes is measured by the degree of their compliance with the state educational standards set by MES RK. These standards are further developed by the Methodological Council and Bureaus of the university, students and staff are not involved in the educational standards elaboration. External stakeholders (employers) are involved in the enhancement of the study programmes through participation in faculty-level Boards of Employers which meet 4 times a year. There is evidence that the employers advise to the study programmes but do not make significant influence on decision-making processes within the university.

Other - mainly external - quality assurance procedures include international, national, and institutional / programme accreditations, as well as university rankings.

The quality of the study programmes under review is assured through various quality assurance instruments including performance rankings of faculty and staff, surveys among students, employers and alumni, peer evaluations, expert commission, methodological commission, collective discussions, etc. The Centre for Social Investigation and Social Engineering at the Department of Sociology and Social Work conducts theoretical and applied social research in education, including student and staff surveys.

Quality of teaching and research activities of the university faculty is assured by quantitative measures, in particular, performance ranking of faculty and staff. The ranking criteria are based on key performance indicators which cover research output (publication of articles in journals with high impact factor), application of research results (patents), participation in international conferences and seminars, social engagement and academic output. The salary of the faculty members is linked to the performance-based system.

Students evaluate teachers' performance and the quality of study courses through regularly conducted paper and electronic questionnaires, but it is not clear to the students what happens to the questionnaires afterwards; the results are not available to students. The feedback gathered from the questionnaires is sent to the Head of the respective Department. The procedure for dealing with consequences of low ranking among faculty and negative student feedback on teaching performance and courses includes discussions at the

Methodological Bureau meetings and academic seminars. Results are also discussed with the teachers and negative results can lead to consequences.

The UNIVER system provides an adequate informative basis for the management of the study programmes by the departments and by the faculty following quality assurance criteria. The students' opinions about the instructors and the modules are regularly acquired. However there is no evidence that the students are asked also to provide feedback and suggestions to improve the quality of the study programmes.

Peer reviews are used for evaluating faculty's teaching performance by other faculty. Such peer observations are voluntary for experienced teachers, but obligatory for young teachers, who are also expected to attend lectures of leading professors.

Students sit on all university committees and have a student representation council. As was stated by alumni of the study programmes during the site visit, the student council or students in general have no influences at the decisions that are made by the committees of different levels. Students are engaged in the organisation of activities (clubs) for students and can talk to university representatives if there are issues to discuss. Students formally have the right to participate in committees, but they are not fully involved in all decision-making. Also, they are not involved in the external evaluation procedures, either in the self-evaluation process and report preparation or in the site visit.

The university-wide Academic Policy has been developed to provide general information and ensure procedures for prevention of academic dishonesty and plagiarism as well as include other disciplinary measures in case of any misconduct. A Regulation on Appeal Procedure is in place, which enables students to appeal against the examination results within 24 hours after the examination. A Council on Ethics has also been established that has developed the Staff Code and the Student Code to increase the efficiency of the study process.

In order to deal with cases of discrimination (e.g. sexual, racial discrimination) a Commission on Ethics, involving Deans, students, teachers and management, is set in place. Students do not know explicitly about this commission, they would rather talk to persons at the faculty- or department level.

(b) Assessments

The university leaders are committed to the quality of the university, quality of study programmes, and quality of research. The University has a clear quality assurance policy based on ISO 9000 standards. The university accreditation and quality assurance units for quality management are well designed; the quality assurance personnel are adequately trained. The university has developed a result-based system of staff performance assessment and for gathering information on quality issues from external stakeholders. Quality policy, strategy, and procedures are formalised and open to public. The quality assurance policy determines the relationship between teaching and research in education: the university aims to get a full research university status. There is a clear university-wide policy concerning education processes and quality measurement system.

The outcome-based evaluation of teachers that results in three different levels of ranking categories ("traffic light") is based mainly on quantitative indicators, which can be burdening for the faculty of the study programmes under review: it is difficult to measure quantitatively in the fields of humanities and social sciences. For example, the use of such an indicator as 'patents received' is not relevant for the faculty members in social sciences and humanities.

On the other hand, financial incentives upon the ranking results motivate the teaching staff, but the system is mostly linked to the research output of each staff. Publications in high-impact factor journals weigh more than any other indicator in the ranking, which is challenging for most of the teaching staff, especially those without good command of English. However, free English courses are offered to faculty and staff, which should be noted as a good practice in encouraging and upgrading necessary skills among teachers.

The Panel believes however that position on internal and international rankings is not to be considered part of QA.

The study programmes are supported by the institutional quality assurance system. However, there is no well-designed quality assurance unit at the faculty level. Since the faculty is a strategic allocation unit, strategic aims cannot be successfully met without a faculty level quality assurance programme (which may be different at technical and science faculties and at the faculties for humanities due to laboratory and other prescriptions).

No clear guidelines have been provided for evaluating the outputs and outcomes of the study programmes. Quality review of study programmes through student feedback ("Teachers by the view of students"), alumni and employer surveys are carried out on a regular basis. However, when it comes to the quality enhancement, neither the self-evaluation reports of the study programmes, nor the onsite interviews provided evidence of the analysis and interpretation of the survey results. Thus, student evaluations are conducted twice a year, but there are no signs of changes resulting from the feedback provided.

Evidence of periodical reviewing and updating the study programmes are also missing. There is no clear policy for evaluation of student advancement and performance, as well as of the evaluation of departments and faculties by student outputs and achieved learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the study programmes undergo periodic reviews by external panel members, and it is proved by this evaluation.

The expert commissions at Methodological bureaus use performance assessments to evaluate the level of student knowledge, as well as double grading by other professors, this system is not linked to the performance-based ranking.

The interaction with external stakeholders (employers) is established in a good way by regular meetings, though their influence on decision-making is not clear.

There is no clear procedure for peer evaluations of teaching staff: teachers visit each other's classes, exchange experience and ideas, but there is no (documented) follow-up procedure based on the peer review. Student, alumni and employer surveys need a thorough follow-up procedure in order to consider the feedback and suggestions from important stakeholders.

There is a need to develop a broader approach to quality (public responsibility, social commitment, quality of life, sustainability and risk management). There is no clear quality assurance system for realisation of the strategic aims.

There is lack of adequately trained staff responsible for quality assurance at the faculty level. There is no clear evidence of performance measuring system at the faculty level. In the absence of faculty-level quality aims it is problematic to assess the staff performance.

Information policy and system for the information provision to stakeholders and public is not in place at the faculty level. The quality assurance policy, strategy, and procedures have no formal status at the faculty level.

The education standards are developed at the national level and need to be internationalised. No sufficient evidence has been provided concerning student involvement in quality matters. In the course of the current accreditation procedure the faculties involved were weakly prepared for presenting documents and evidence of student satisfaction and other related matters. ESG-ENQA and AQ Austria standards are very good tools for quality system development. The ESG indicators need a strategy on the faculty, department and programme director level of knowledge. It is necessary to develop a strategy with the levels of excellent, good and weak performance clearly distinguished.

The learning outcomes are developed and are available to students. A complementary description concerning professional practice and internship needs to be developed. The learning outcomes have to be better aligned with instruction methods and evaluation of student performance, especially in case of project tasks (authentic evaluation).

The descriptions of the content of knowledge within modules are too schematic, there are overlapping themes; theories and methods used in education are not clearly aligned which makes it difficult to understand what is meant. The compulsory and suggested literature needs further elaboration; the number of sources should be reduced, but they should better fit the study courses.

If the university wants to give internationally recognised awards and diplomas, it is suggested that the ECTS and EHEA qualification framework with internationally recognised credit numbers should be used (180/210/240 ECTS credits for Bachelor programmes, 60/90/120 for Master programmes, 180 for PhD programmes). It can be done within a clear University Education Framework System. The differences can be treated by freely opted courses.

The university has not developed a policy for part-time teaching regarding all study programmes offered, which could be very useful in terms of professional development for young professionals involved in practice.

2.4 Standard 4: Funding and infrastructure

(a) Statements

The Panel notes that scarce information on funding available for projects in Cluster C study programmes was made available by the university during the evaluation process. No information was available about the technical and administrative staff and the finances.

Al-Farabi KazNU is almost fully budgeted on an annual basis from the State budget via the Ministry of Education and Science RK. Its annual budget is 70 billion tenge, of which 45% is from state grants, 35% is coming from research grants, and 20% is from student fees. Average tuition fee is 643 000 tenge (\$3,475) per year, the upper limit for fee is set by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

There are established mechanisms to support socio-economic and ethnic background of students at university level, which include sponsor support scholarships (from potential employers) and loans from Financial Centre of the MES RK. For example, 35 million tenge was distributed among low-income students in 2013, including 300 scholarships from sponsors. Students have the possibility to apply for grants from the university, additional to the public grants. The university gives tuition fee discounts for special groups of students.

Rooms and multi-media facilities of the study programmes are adequate for the current student population, although some facilities and equipment relevant for the study programmes are missing (e.g. psychological services and laboratories for psychology programmes, a swimming pool for physical education and sport programmes). Students can ask at the department to arrange meeting rooms for small group learning, but there are no rooms specially arranged to facilitate working group activities.

During the site-visit, the Panel visited the new library complex, which is expected to open soon and has an impressive number of books and publications, computer labs, study lounges, conference halls, project labs and etc. Al-Farabi KazNU has access to electronic databases like Springer, Elsevier, Thomson Reuters, but they have limited number of electronic articles and books it terms of publication dates (only 2008 and earlier is free) and ranges of subject areas, especially in humanities and social sciences. There is evidence that academic papers students need for their study and research are inaccessible at the university library, so students use other libraries in the city (National Library).

Scarce information was provided regarding the infrastructures for research, training and social engagement in the field of Psychology. The site visit regarded classes, the campus library, a new computer facility and a new conference centre, but it did not include the psychology offices and the laboratories which were mentioned in the onsite interviews as quite recent and still limited in number and in equipment.

The study programmes in Social Work have good science resources in the Russian language though there is evidence of the shortage of resources in the Kazakh language. The international research databases for social work are excellent.

The facilities for the Bachelor and Master programmes in Physical Education and Sport are reasonably good, which was also the impression of the students: "we have quite good facilities for volleyball, aerobics, basketball, but no swimming pool. The university is currently renting a swimming pool from the Association of Sports, but there are plans to build its own pool soon". The plan to build a swimming pool was also confirmed by members of staff.

The descriptions of the study programmes are available to students through a yearly published catalogue of study courses. The courses and modules descriptions are too comprehensive, the course content descriptions are given in a very red tape style and do not provide realistic information to the students. The description of internship and practice activities is weak.

The university student administration system "UNIVER" is in place.

(b) Assessments

Though no documentation evidence on the state subsidy for the study programmes, or on the allocation of resources for the faculties and within the faculties, was not provided to the Panel either before or during the site visit, it is obvious that funding of the study programmes is mainly based on the state budget.

Most students of the study programmes under review, especially at graduate level, study on a state grant basis. This means that the study programmes' budgets cover all the costs, including salaries of faculty and staff, and are very limited in terms of allocating more resources towards necessary technical facilities. The number of students, their division into two language groups (Kazakh and Russian within each study programme), gives an impression that the cost of the study programmes is high.

The infrastructure for most of the study programmes is in general appropriate. Even though the new library complex and university library fund have an impressive number of materials necessary for students, during the interview with students, it was mentioned that there is a limited number of electronic resources (books).

From the self-evaluation reports on study programmes, it appears that currently there are scarce and not fully equipped computer labs at each faculty (both at the Faculty of Political Science and Philosophy and at the Faculty of Biology and Biotechnology), which could provide access to quick web searching, printing, copying and etc. For example, students mentioned about only one-hour free Internet access at Student Centre and there is also no computer facility at the dormitory. In contrast, students were very satisfied with the conditions of dormitories and their convenience in living. This suggests that there is still a room left for improving the conditions of study programmes in order to increase the students' satisfaction.

The handbooks on modules and courses need a new style of description to provide relevant and up-to-date information to students and other stakeholders. If the descriptions of the study programmes' learning outcomes contain numbers and sub-numbers, the latter should be more evident to students. The description about the skills to be acquired is too comprehensive to be realistic and useful, and so is the information about the course content. It is necessary to provide a new description of practice and internship for different levels of the study programmes.

In order to issue Diploma Supplement to students, all student records should be maintained adequately. The university should consider developing an efficient information system to maintain all student records and information relevant for the Registrar's Office.

In order to develop as adequate research university, a competitive research infrastructure including labs, computers, programmes etc. needs to be developed for all disciplines in the cluster. The information support to maintaining faculties' and departments' homepages is weak.

2.5 Standard 5: Research and development and appreciation of the arts

2.5.1 Psychology

(a) Statements

Among the nine research institutes that organise research at the al-Farabi KazNU Faculty of Philosophy and Political Sciences, two are focused on psychological investigations: a Centre of Psychological Technologies and Innovations and a Centre for Psychological Services.

Among 14 scientific projects only two are centered on psychological issues, namely a "Prevention of suicide among adolescents" and a "Prevention of professional deformation of teachers" projects, both have a prevalent psycho-pedagogical approach and are shared with the Department of General and Ethnic Pedagogics.

None of the four International projects listed in the report concerns psychology, while 3 out of 8 projects financed by external contracts deal with trainings in the psychological aspects of social work and on psychological technologies in education.

In the audits other interesting ideas and projects were mentioned, aligned to international current trends in research in applied psychology. Particularly interesting were a project regarding self-cognition and emotional self-regulation applied to the fields of legal and forensic psychology; and a project on interpersonal communication and creativity in the area of computer sciences.

Among the circles/clubs and activities of the students as well as among the conferences and symposia listed none seems focused on psychological issues.

An integration of research into the teaching process is claimed, but there is no evidence that student's curricula at the Bachelor and Master levels include research activities other than delivering questionnaires and interviews. Although the students who volunteered for the audits appeared strongly committed to support the accreditation process, the capacity to acquire competences to participate in research activities- one of the expected and declared features of the programmes -found little correspondences in the audit. The students are aware that the Department should establish more teaching and research laboratories, and acquire modern equipment (such as, poligraph, eeg for brain imagining, magnetic resonance and transcranial magnetic and/or DC stimulators), computers and software.

(b) Assessments

The CVs of the teaching staff, confirm that many of them are competent, interested and involved in research activities, but their competences and interests are circumscribed to psycho educational and psycho social and cultural issues. Competences in health and clinical psychology and in work and organizational psychology are scarce or missing.

There is a substantial lack of research in cognitive and social neurosciences, psychometrics and statistical data analysis, work and organizational psychology, clinical neuropsychology, psychopathology, clinical and health psychology. These are important areas both as main trends in international psychological research and necessary for the professional training of psychologists.

Most of the staff's publications are communication at international conferences and teaching books, which are not highly valued in most European research assessment exercises and usually gain few citations.

Students are enthusiastic about the perspective to have more practical training in laboratories and in psychological services.

2.5.2 Pedagogics and Psychology

(a) Statements

The study programmes are linked basically to two research topics of the Department – causes for acts of suicide among adolescences in Kazakhstan, and the role of family education for human development. Several staff members and students are taking part in these activities.

(b) Assessments

These topics are very relevant in the local context, and the research activities on them are well established. Nevertheless, relevant research on current international trends in education would be important in order to increase awareness not only of local issues, but also global issues and thus to facilitate forecasting future challenges in the field. This could also promote publications in internationally recognized academic journals, which is required by the university performance ranking.

2.5.3 Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition

(a) Statements

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

(b) Assessments

At the individual level, the new academic staff members receive clear objectives regarding research outputs through their individual performance agreements ("indicative plans" based on key performance indicators) which are reviewed. On the other hand, the "older" academic staff members do not have specific research objectives and it seems that they are very well established in many teaching processes. They, of course, have to contribute to the overall performance of the departments and the faculties.

The MES RK requirement for PhD students to publish papers in internationally recognised scientific journals within the limited time (3 years) imposes considerable pressures (including financial) on students.

2.5.4 Social Work

(a) Statements

The university has deep research traditions; the staff are well trained and highly qualified. The university aims at getting the status of a research university, but the aim and related objectives are not deployed for the level of faculties and study programmes. There is a clear university-wide policy for personnel qualifications. The university is highly engaged in applied research programmes nationally and internationally. However, there is no clear policy what is expected from the social and humanity disciplines in the context of the research oriented university.

(b) Assessments

There is no clear policy for the research university strategic aims in regard to the faculties of social sciences. The faculties have to decide which disciplines are competitive, which are nationally recognised, and which are emerging research fields, after which strategic decisions are made concerning directions of research and their integration into the PhD programmes. A clear and distinctive strategy is to be developed regarding student involvement at different levels of study programmes. It is also necessary to develop quality management tools for research and research infrastructure for different disciplines, especially for social sciences and humanities.

There is insufficient evidence concerning the transfer of research outcomes into the educational processes. The documents provided by the teachers do not illustrate the basic research results well but rather reflect practice-oriented and applied research outcomes. For achieving excellence in research nationally and internationally, a deeper science base for professions needs to be developed, especially at the Master and Doctorate levels; a special emphasis should be made on internationally recognised innovations. Applied research should be conducted at the Bachelor level, as well as at other types (not research oriented) of universities.

2.5.5 Physical Education and Sport

(a) Statements

The aim of the University is to become a research university and to increase internationalisation. The vision of the Department of Physical Education and Sport is the "formation of a national model" which is "integrated into the world educational space by comparison with foreign educational programmes".

Only very few staff members are involved in high-quality research (e.g. publications of more than ten pages and international visibility). Students are involved in research projects. Statement on research examples: „research of national traditional sports, sports in mountainous areas"... "Skiing and Injury is another research topic. Research is done in Shymbulak mountain area; statistical data are collected"... "the Department of Physical Education and Sport carries out research into Ss' health"... "doing research project using statistics of basketball games for the last two years"... "How to improve environment in schools and make kids healthier".

To the question about research in the field of humanities the following answer was received: „The innovative approach ... is the connection between Pedagogics and traditional sports".

(b) Assessments

Although generally the aim of the university and the vision of the Department partially match, the Department has not managed to make their vision to become a reality. In order to reach the ambitious aims set by the university and the department, the quality of research needs to be improved. As a consequence of the rather low level of research, the interaction of research and teaching needs to be improved as well.

Although students are involved in research projects they do not get credits for their involvement in research projects.

The organizational and structural conditions are suitable for the scheduled research activities but they are misbalanced in regard to research in the natural sciences and in the humanities of sport science. The larger share of research is undertaken in the natural sciences.

2.6 Standard 6: National and international co-operations

(a) Statements

According to the information provided by al-Farabi KazNU and interviews during the site visit, the university has established long-term partnerships with more than 400 higher education institutions and international/national organizations. Al-Farabi KazNU actively participates in the university consortiums within the Erasmus, Tempus, DAAD and other programmes to support student and staff mobility. All PhD students have international co-supervisors; students do have a very positive attitude to this form of international co-operation and participate in it intensively and actively. The Ministry of Education and Science provides full financial support for academic mobility of students.

Staff development opportunities are available through the Presidential programme of "Bolashak", in which 26 faculty members (though few from the study programmes under review) participated in 2013 to conduct studies and undergo trainings at top universities of the world. Staff members and students are involved in a significant number of international co-operations. However, most of them take the form of short-stay visits that are not always linked to the courses of the programmes. The curricula have no mobility windows foreseen.

There are no full-time foreign professors teaching in the study programmes, and there are very few international students, which was indicated as one of the university's weaknesses by the First Vice-Rector of al-Farabi KazNU during the site visit. The Panel is aware that it is not easy for the university to invite international professors or researchers, because the university is acquiring the autonomy to decide on these issues.

Cooperation at the national level is facilitated by the al-Farabi KazNU Training Institute, where faculty and staff are trained from other universities in Kazakhstan. Internal mobility is also supported for students coming from other universities within the country to study at al-Farabi KazNU for one semester.

Cooperation with regional partners including Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries is not well-established. International mobility grants are not available to fee-based students, only to those on state grants.

International cooperation is also in place regarding the study programmes under review. However, the initiatives are weakly developed by the programmes and are mostly limited to cooperation with a few universities of Russia, Bulgaria and Germany, in particular, to short-term visits of students and faculty (from 2-week up to 2-3 months only).

Lack of English language skills among students and staff of the study programmes was evident during the site visit. The students claimed that they want to have more classes in English to improve their language skills from the first semester onwards.

Regarding the PhD programme in Psychology, cooperation at the national and international level is highly valued but still scarcely reflected in the publications and in the self-documentation concerning research and study programmes in Psychology. Only a few CVs of the academic staff in the Department of General and Ethnic Psychology show that they have collaborations with national and international colleagues. The strong institutional strategic interest to enlarge international cooperation appears narrowed in the psychological disciplines

by the relatively limited field of the present competences and research interests which are circumscribed to general psychology and to psychosocial and educational issues.

In the PhD programme the dual mentors systems (one at al-Farabi KazNU and one international) for each doctoral candidate assures adequate supervision and represents the main contribution to the international collaboration in psychological research at KazNU.

Assessments

Research projects are state and international aid based; they are rarely developed by local, national and international co-operations on the basis of strategic research plan. There is no clear faculty- and department-level strategy of international cooperation – memberships in professional associations, professional co-operations with international and national experts.

Regarding the study programmes in Social Work and Social Pedagogics and Self-Cognition, international cooperation is in place mainly due to personal interest of the staff, not as a response to the needs of the study programmes. Membership in international organisations for the study programmes in Social work and Social Pedagogics is needed (there are good professional NGOs all over Europe and the world) to be in line with the global trends and achievements.

Strong relationship between the study programmes and employers should be noted as one of the strengths of study programmes.

The Panel believes that the short-term academic mobility and limited scope of international partners are holding back full-scale internationalization of the study programmes.

Onsite interviews revealed the necessity of extending the time of their visits to the host foreign universities in order to allow PhD student more time for cooperation with their international academic co-supervisors. It is mainly the responsibility of PhD students to find a foreign co-supervisor, which is rather challenging and time consuming. A broader scope of partnerships with foreign universities would facilitate finding the foreign research co-supervisors for PhD students and also contribute to more active international cooperation at the level of the study programmes under review.

Improvement of English language skills among students and staff of the study programmes, attracting more international teachers and students to provide the international perspectives are areas for improvement for all the study programmes within the cluster.

International cooperation in research might increase rapidly since al-Farabi KazNU leadership demonstrate that they are highly motivated to develop it by allocating an appropriate budget for this purpose. Funding international cooperation in research is a smart short-term investment that could lead to more academic staff and researchers involved in funded projects and capable to attract external funding in different areas of the cognitive sciences and of applied psychology.

The decision of the university leadership to invest resources to promote internationalization is part of an intelligent strategy aimed to increase the research output, the reputation and the capacity of al-Farabi KazNU that can and should involve also psychology and the cognitive sciences.