

# Fulfilment of the conditions – International Accreditation of the Bachelor-Programme and the Master Programme „Accounting and Audit“

## University of International Business, Almaty (Kazakhstan)

At its 33<sup>rd</sup> meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the Board of AQ Austria **decided to grant accreditation** to the

**Bachelor-programme “Accounting and Audit” and the**

**Master-programme “Accounting and Audit”**

at University of International Business in Almaty, Kazakhstan for a period of six years (i.e. 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022), **under the following conditions:**

### **Condition 1**

Contents on conceptual models from accounting and finance theory underlying the IFRS-framework as well as conceptual models underlying the international accounting standards (IAS) have to be integrated either in existing or in additional courses in the Bachelor and Master programmes. (Standard 1.5)

### **Condition 2**

The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)



AQ Austria, 1010 Wien, Renngasse 5, 4.OG

**Condition 3**

Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

**Condition 4**

Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

Fulfilments of these conditions have been documented in writing and were subject to assessment by the head of the expert panel. At its 40<sup>th</sup> meeting on 23 May 2017 the Board AQ Austria **regarded the conditions as fulfilled.**



Agency for  
Quality Assurance  
and Accreditation  
Austria

# Statement on the fulfilment of the conditions

## International Accreditation of the Cluster „Economics“

**Accounting and Audit** (Bachelor, Master),

University of International Business,  
Almaty (Kazakhstan)

30. April 2017

## 1.1 Information on the study programme

<b>Name of the programme</b>	<b>Accounting and Audit</b>
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor in Accounting and Audit
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	8 semesters / 4 years
<b>Name of the programme</b>	<b>Accounting and Audit</b>
Academic degree awarded	Master in Accounting and Audit
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	2 semesters / 1 year ("Profile" Master <sup>1</sup> ) 4 semesters / 2 years ("Pedagogic" Master)

## 1.2 Accreditation procedure at University of International Business

### Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation report by UIB	1 November 2015
Decision on Panel members by the Board of AQ Austria	2 October 2015
Preparatory Skype meeting of the Panel	19 November 2015
Site-visit to UIB by the Panel	2-4 December 2015
Draft report of the Panel	22 January 2015
Formal statement by UIB	28 January 2016
Final report of the Panel	08 February 2016
Statement on the final report by UIB	22 February 2016
Accreditation decision by the Board of AQ Austria	17 March 2016
Deadline for the fulfilment of the condition	17 December 2016
Provision of the documents to prove the fulfilment of conditions	8 February 2017
Decision to accept the belated transmission of the materials by the Board of AQ Austria	15 March 2017

## 1.3 Verification

Name	Institution	Role
Assoc.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Maria Hofer	Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria	Peer from academia

<sup>1</sup> UIB Master programmes in the same disciplines are delivered in two modes: a 1-year ("profile") programme for students progressing from the same Bachelor degree, and a 2-year ("pedagogic") programme for students changing degrees and those wishing to pursue an academic future.

## 2 Assessment results of the Panel report (February 2016)

### Standard 1: Study programme and programme management

(...)

1.4 The application of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is appropriate and plausible. It meets the recommendations of the European Commission<sup>2</sup>.

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

(...)

#### (a) Statements (February 2016)

**Standard 1.5:** The discussion with the UIB President showed that he has a clear understanding of the needs and challenges of Accounting and Audit in an international context (e.g. his visit at the Carnegie Mellon University related to the Accounting/IT education sponsored by software providers). His intention is to align the accounting and audit study programmes at UIB with the educational system at Carnegie Mellon University. This seems to be beneficial as in this system the US-GAAP (generally accepted accounting principles) and the IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) regulations are covered equally, so that the IFRS content is covered sufficiently. To implement this intention he will promote the UIB professors in Accounting and Audit in order to find and implement suitable new programme structures. This is a challenging task due to the generational mishmash of the faculty staff. Furthermore the content of IFRS is steadily changing.

There is a clear strategy for developing the Accounting and Audit study programmes on the side of the UIB President. On the other hand, the management of the study programmes is not clearly structured at UIB. A clear assignment of legislative and executive powers to the involved responsibility centres is missing.

The qualification objectives of the study programmes are clearly defined in the UIB self-assessment report. The study programmes have an applied science image due to their focus on practical contents and problems.

The self-evaluation report shows that the practical orientation is reflected in the study programme structures. The principle based IFRS-framework requires a more conceptual approach compared to local GAAP. Furthermore the IFRS-framework is more closely related to the finance discipline as it covers different financial pricing models (e.g. present value approach and option pricing theory) for evaluating balance as well as off-balance sheet positions.

#### (b) Assessments (February 2016)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide_en.pdf) (ECTS Users' Guide)

**Standard 1.5:** The conceptual approach needed for a profound IFRS understanding is missing in the study programmes. The discussions with the Deans and Head of Departments showed a clear separation of accounting and finance at UIB. In the IFRS context this separation is not adequate. The problem can be seen in the scientific projects for the last 3 years as well where “Finance” is often the responsible department and not “Accounting” although the projects relate to the Accounting and Audit degrees.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 1: Contents on conceptual models from accounting and finance theory underlying the IFRS-framework as well as conceptual models underlying the international accounting standards (IAS) have to be integrated either in existing or in additional courses in the Bachelor and Master programmes. (Standard 1.5)

**(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 1 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that conceptual bases underlying the IFRS-framework and international accounting standards (IAS) are parts of the curriculum in both the Bachelor and Master programmes. Specifically, in the Bachelor Programme the course “Introduction to IFRS Framework” in the third year held in English covers theoretical foundations of the IFRS framework. The undergraduate course “Methodological basis of the audit and their applications in the IAS” covers basic theoretical and methodological principles. The postgraduate course “Theory and methodology of accounting” aims at developing knowledge of accounting theory and different approaches to accounting theory. Finally, the Master’s course “IFRS Framework. Theory and Practice.” held in the English language by a visiting professor includes conceptual foundations of IAS and IFRS frameworks.

**(a) Statements and (b) assessment (February 2016)**

**Standard 1.4** UIB uses the Kazakhstani national credit system stipulated by the Law on Credit Technology (2011) which provides a fixed conversion rate between Kazakhstani (KZ) credits and ECTS credits as 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation that ECTS counts should be provided in full digits. As a result, the following ratios of KZ credits to ECTS credits are used: 1 KZ credit =2 ECTS credits, 2 KZ credits =3 ECTS credits, 3 KZ credits =5 ECTS credits, 4 KZ credits=6 ECTS credits.

The conversion of KZ credit points into ECTS credits is documented in the UIB self-evaluation reports. The conversion process is institutionalized in the modified Moodle system which allows for a continual process of administering the complete grading process. However, the panel notes that a detailed check of the module descriptions showed that not all of them are following this conversion system. A minor number of courses of the Bachelor programme violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ to 9 ECTS credits in the course “Basis of Life Safety”; “Politics and Evolution of Modern Economic Thought” equaling 2 KZ credits with 4 instead of 3 ECTS credits, “Microeconomics” 2 KZ to 3.6 ECTS credits, “Practice of doing Business” 4 KZ credits to 11 ECTS credits. In the Master programmes, and especially in the two-year ‘pedagogic’ Master programmes, a number of courses violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ credits to 8 ECTS credits in the “anti-crisis” electives.



The panel also notes that the module descriptions in all programmes under review do not contain information on the content and amount of the workload allocated to internships, thesis writing and defence, nor on the preparation and taking state (graduation) examinations.

Therefore, a thorough revision, modification and completion of module descriptions is necessary, with the workload specified in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits with regard to each course, each module, each term (semester), and in total for each study programme. The calculation and allocation of Kazakh and ECTS credits should follow one single standard in compliance with the national educational legislation.

The appropriateness of the ECTS is regulated by law. However, the panel has some doubts that the legally required translation reflects the real workload of the students for the different courses according to the recommendations of the European Commission.

The discussion with the UIB students showed that they are used to the local credit system and it gives them a sufficient orientation. But with respect to internationalisation the local credit system is quite restrictive. Foreign students will probably not understand the local system, which decreases to them the attractiveness of the UIB study programmes. The use of the ECTS system is encouraged to ensure transparency for students from abroad.

The defined workload adds up to a minimum of 45 hours a week for all students as defined by the Kazakhstani law. During the site visit the panel had several chances to discuss the workload with students of Bachelor and Master levels as well as with alumni. They all showed satisfaction with the required workload. The UIB standards were called high but fully doable. UIB students and alumni who attended the interviews with the panel can/could do their internships and pass their exams on time. Thus, the required students' workload allows the achievement of the specified qualification objectives. Concerning internationalisation a real workload-based (ECTS) system would be beneficial.

UIB examination methods cover a broad range of instruments. The combination of methods allows for in-depth assessment of various learning outcomes. The Master profile corresponds with more mature nature, focusing on essays, case studies, presentations, open-ended questions.

At the beginning of each semester relevant methods in the respective course are discussed. Questions for oral examinations must be approved by the Department Head and Vice Rector. An Academic Methodological Council is in place, reviewing examination principles and even questions including those for dissertations. Different control systems are installed (such as cameras in the rooms in which examinations take place).

Students are informed about the assessment system (through Student's Guide booklets among other communication channels). It should be noted, however, that the Student's Guide booklets dedicated to fully inform students on important issues have been split and shortened. They still fulfill the needs but the more comprehensive version used in the past may provide a higher level of transparency for the students.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:



Condition 2: The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)

**(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of the condition 2 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows a list of all modules of the Bachelor in Accounting & Audit programme including writing and defence of thesis, academic internship and examinations. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the degree total workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS follows the official national transfer modus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, and 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits throughout the Bachelor programme in Accounting & Audit. Minor inconsistencies occur in the second bachelor year, where 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 4 ECTS credits in the course "Physical Education", slightly deviating from the official transfer modus. The course "Physical Education" in the first bachelor year follows the 2 Kazakh credits to 3 ECTS credits rule.

The review of the modules of the one-year Master in Accounting & Audit shows a list of all modules of the programme including writing and defence of thesis, pre-thesis research internship and examinations. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module and the year, i.e. degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the one-year Master in Accounting & Audit.

The review of the modules of the two-year Master in Accounting & Audit shows a list of all modules of the programme including research, writing and defence of thesis, pedagogical and pre-thesis internships and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the total degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the two-year Master in Accounting & Audit. A minor inconsistency occurs in the second year, where the defence of the thesis is converted from 3 Kazakh credits into 4 ECTS credits.

**(d) Final assessment for standard 1 (April 2017)**

The final assessment shows an inclusion of conceptual foundations of IFRS and IAS frameworks into both the Bachelor and Master programmes in Accounting & Audit. Condition 1 may thus be regarded as fulfilled, contributing to a positive assessment of standard 1. The inclusion of thesis writing and defence, internships and examinations in the complete list of modules in both the Bachelor and Master programmes contributes to the fulfilment of the

standard. The workloads are displayed in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, term and degree. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits consistently follows the official national transfer modus in the vast majority, supporting internationalisation efforts. Minor inconsistencies occur. Overall, condition 2 may be regarded as fulfilled, leading to a **positive assessment of standard 1**.

### Standard 3 Quality assurance

(...)

3.3 The participation of students in reflections on the study programme, the study conditions and the programme organisation has been institutionalised. (...)

#### (a) Statement (February 2016)

A comprehensive monitoring system has been developed, including the evaluation of study conditions. Complaint routes are installed. Student surveys are integrated into the system and the return rate is by 100% because the surveys are an important part of the UIB MOODLE-based platform. However, these surveys only include closed-ended questions which does not allow students to provide extra information or concerns that they would like to share beyond the pre-selected options. Open-ended questions are very important for getting significant results, which can be useful for the future.

#### (b) Assessment (February 2016)

The institutional quality management system is supported by the Moodle system through all levels of the university. Surveys, through which students can give feedback on the quality of teaching and other educational services and conditions, are monitored by the Deans and other staff members in charge. At the moment, only closed questions are used. More useful information could be gained by offering the opportunity of open-ended statements as part of the questionnaire.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 3: Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

#### (c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 3 (April 2017)

The review of the evaluation form for students reveals that besides closed questions, three comment fields are part of the survey in a screenshot of the electronic evaluation form in Russian language (translation of the word comment via GoogleTranslator from Russian to English by the peer and clarification via e-mail by AQ Austria). The specific areas where comments can be stated were verified by AQ Austria staff as curriculum design (line 7), administrative work (line 15) and communication (line 18). The presence of comment fields in

the student evaluation form provides sufficient evidence that students are given the chance to share their thoughts on the study conditions.

**(d) Final assessment standard 3 (April 2017)**

Three comment fields present in the evaluation survey form for students are designed in an open-ended manner. This allows students to provide specific extra-information and UIB to receive valuable feedback. **Condition 3 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.** Overall, this contributes to a comprehensive monitoring system supported by the Moodle system that is implemented to ensure evaluation of the study conditions and an effective quality management system. The standard can thus be regarded as fulfilled.

Standard 6: National and international co-operations	
(...)	
6.1	In line with the study programme's profile, national and/or international co-operation projects with higher education institutions or institutions outside the higher education sector have been established.
(...)	

**(a) Statement (February 2016)**

On the national level UIB is doing a lot of cooperative activities: competitions, conferences, joint projects, Olympiads, business games, career centre, job fairs, and 186 business partners join UIB in projects. 100 top partners are defined with whom close cooperation is realised: with those companies thesis writing and internship placements are practiced. The managers are even involved into curricular development, teaching and examinations as we learned throughout the interviews with companies, alumni, faculty and others.

On the international level the practice has not been fully developed yet. "At present time, UIB has initiated contacts with European universities in the hope of joining various EU-funded consortia for the current funding period, but the process is expected to take a considerable period of time. To this moment, several individual applications were completed but proved unsuccessful (e.g. for the Jean Monnet grants)." ...."At this point in time, there are no cooperative projects between staff engaged in teaching on Bachelor/Masters in Management and external partners."

The international mobility is low. Only short-term visits, called "international internships" have been realized in a remarkable volume. These trips are required by the law and highly appreciated by the students.

UIB presents the following reasons for non-existing incoming mobility:

- Lack of dormitories
- Costs of Living in Almaty

UIB is aware of this weakness. Strategies are in place. Dormitories will be available as an effect of the "Winter Universiade" in 2017 whose facilities will be usable by students afterwards. A multilayer approach has been developed: national cooperations, regional ("neighbourhood") cooperations, cooperations throughout Asia, and cooperations in Europe, all over the world. Steps have been taken such as negotiating contracts on Erasmus plus with



European universities. Mevlana University, Turkey, is valued as a good opportunity for cooperation development. Good partnerships have been already developed with Poland. Further countries as Eastern European ones are targeted and budgets are set up.

At the very end of the site visit, the panel had a possibility to discuss such issues in more detail with UIB President and the Vice-President in charge of International Affairs. Cooperation involving Double or even Triple Degree programmes has been started. UIB plans to further develop this approach, currently looking for more partners. Strategic directions 2013 – 2018 have been presented, among which the aspect of internationalization is stressed. Based on this a comprehensive “Implementation Plan for 2015 – 2017” was set up and presented during the site visit, covering actions on all levels of UIB.

The national projects definitely encourage and support the UIB internationalisation initiatives. On the international level, however, the number and scope of projects is not yet satisfying. Anyhow, good development in good direction is on its way.

The advancement of the programmes is clearly encouraged and supported. At the meeting with the panel, the UIB President presented his strategy to find open and internationally competent staff members, providing them with special tasks and making them responsible to identify good practices all over the world to be implemented in UIB practice. So selected teachers are encouraged and enabled to work internationally, to identify relevant programmes and get them into use. From those the improvement process is supposed to spread and deepen.

#### **(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

On the national level, strong cooperations exist, encouraging and supporting collaboration and mobility. Weaknesses have been identified on the international level (low mobility, reduced array of international partnerships). A strategy has been developed and an implementation plan is in action. Therefore improvement should be visible soon.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 4: Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

#### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 4 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that a number of ERASMUS+ agreements between UIB and institutions from various European countries have been signed or are currently being developed. Specifically, cooperation in the context of the ERASMUS+ programme for the exchange of students and staff is active with the following institutions: ISMA University (Latvia, signed October 2016), Kozminski University (Poland, agreement starting 2015), Pan-European University (Slovakia, signed May 2016), University of Dunaujvaros (Hungary, signed July 2016), University of National and World Economy (Bulgaria, agreement starting 2016) and Varna University of Management (Bulgaria, signed June/July 2016).



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**(d) Final assessment standard 6 (April 2017)**

Strong cooperations on the national level being beneficial for collaboration and mobility have already been stated. Through cooperation in the ERASMUS+ programme with various European universities in different countries, international partnerships in the exchange of staff and students have been established. Thus, visible improvement regarding the international cooperations can be stated, leading to a **positive assessment of standard 6**.

# Fulfilment of the conditions – International Accreditation of the Bachelor-programme and the Master-programme „Management“ University of International Business, Almaty (Kazakhstan)

At its 33<sup>rd</sup> meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the Board of AQ Austria **decided to grant accreditation** to the

**Bachelor-programme “Management”** and the

**Master-programme “Management”**

at University of International Business (UIB) in Almaty, Kazakhstan for a period of six years (i.e. 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022), **under the following conditions:**

## **Condition 1**

More space should be given to leadership topics, such as introducing a module “Leadership Basics” on the Bachelor’s level and integrating intercultural aspects of leadership on the Master’s level. (Standard 1.2)

## **Condition 2**

The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)

## **Condition 3**

Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

#### **Condition 4**

Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

Fulfilments of these conditions have been documented in writing and were subject to assessment by a member of the expert panel. At its 40<sup>th</sup> meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 the Board of AQ Austria **regarded the conditions as fulfilled**.



Agency for  
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# Statement on the fulfilment of the conditions

## International Accreditation of the Cluster „Economics“

**Management** (Bachelor, Master)

University of International Business,  
Almaty (Kazakhstan)

30. April 2017

## 1.1 Information on the study programmes

Name of the programme	Management
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor in Management
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	8 semesters / 4 years
Name of the programme	Management
Academic degree awarded	Master in Management
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	2 semesters / 1 year ("Profile" Master <sup>1</sup> ) 4 semesters / 2 years ("Pedagogic" Master)

## 1.2 Accreditation procedure at University of International Business

### Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation report by UIB	1 November 2015
Decision on Panel members by the Board of AQ Austria	2 October 2015
Preparatory Skype meeting of the Panel	19 November 2015
Site-visit to UIB by the Panel	2-4 December 2015
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Decision to accept the belated transmission of the materials by the Board of AQ Austria	15 March 2017

## 1.3 Verification

Name	Institution	Role
Assoc.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Maria Hofer	Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria	Peer from academia

<sup>1</sup> UIB Master programmes in the same disciplines are delivered in two modes: a 1-year ("profile") programme for students progressing from the same Bachelor degree, and a 2-year ("pedagogic") programme for students changing degrees and those wishing to pursue an academic future.

## 2 Assessment results of the Panel report (February 2016)

### Marketing

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

(...)

1.2 The qualification objectives of the study programme (learning outcomes of the study programme) have been clearly defined and meet the technical, scientific and professional requirements and are in accordance with the respective levels of the qualification framework of the European Higher Education Area.

1.4 The application of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is appropriate and plausible. It meets the recommendations of the European Commission<sup>2</sup>.

(...)

#### (a) Statement (February 2016)

**Standard 1.2:** In management staff a generation change (older experienced and title-rich teachers from economics, teaching in Russian and Kazakh, plus younger and broader internationally oriented teachers in core management disciplines) is on its way making emerge a specific “mishmash” which creates a tension field between traditionally educated and highly qualified experts on classical disciplines and younger internationally oriented and qualified teachers, i.e. those who are currently increasing their formal qualification as PhD professors.

In total the staff quality is good on the national level and further increasing. UIB is using this inter-generation tension to create new approaches to harmonize scientific excellence and employability.

#### (b) Assessment (February 2016)

**Standard 1.2:** The number and qualification of teachers and research staff meet the requirements to educate the current student population, to support the attainment of learning objectives and to meet the UIB’s strategic goals on the national level. The international dimension has been started to be addressed, especially by younger faculty members.

A large part of the faculty body are highly experienced and qualified in a rather classic form and on national level. Younger staff members with very good English language skills are on a good way but must be further supported (gaining PhD titles, gaining international experiences and contacts).

UIB is very active in the field of academic human resource development. Progress could be faster as soon as Kazakhstan opens up for additional PhD possibilities.

The Panel agree that the standard is partially met subject to the following condition:

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide_en.pdf) (ECTS Users’ Guide)



Condition 1: More space should be given to leadership topics, such as introducing a module “Leadership Basics” on the Bachelor’s level and integrating intercultural aspects of leadership on the Master’s level. (Standard 1.2)

**(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 1 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that leadership topics have been introduced in both the Management Bachelor’s and Master’s levels. Specifically, on the undergraduate level in the second year, the course “Leaderships Basics” (2 Kazakh credits, 3 ECTS credits) aims at developing an understanding of contemporary leadership theories and their application based on up-to-date core literature from an international and noted academic publisher. On the graduate level in the first year, the course “Leadership” (2 Kazakh credits, 3 ECTS credits) deals with key theories of cross-cultural management and related practical solutions. Intercultural aspects and global leadership topics are widely covered in the course and supported through up-to-date literature from an international and noted academic publisher. Condition 1 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.

**(a) Statements and (b) assessment (February 2016)**

**Standard 1.4:** UIB uses the Kazakhstani national credit system stipulated by the Law on Credit Technology (2011) which provides a fixed conversion rate between Kazakhstani (KZ) credits and ECTS credits as 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation that ECTS counts should be provided in full digits. As a result, the following ratios of KZ credits to ECTS credits are used: 1 KZ credit =2 ECTS credits, 2 KZ credits =3 ECTS credits, 3 KZ credits =5 ECTS credits, 4 KZ credits=6 ECTS credits.

The conversion of KZ credit points into ECTS credits is documented in the UIB self-evaluation reports. The conversion process is institutionalized in the modified Moodle system which allows for a continual process of administering the complete grading process. However, the panel notes that a detailed check of the module descriptions showed that not all of them are following this conversion system. A minor number of courses of the Bachelor programme violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ to 9 ECTS credits in the course “Basis of Life Safety”; “Politics and Evolution of Modern Economic Thought” equaling 2 KZ credits with 4 instead of 3 ECTS credits, “Microeconomics” 2 KZ to 3.6 ECTS credits, “Practice of doing Business” 4 KZ credits to 11 ECTS credits. In the Master programmes, and especially in the two-year ‘pedagogic’ Master programmes, a number of courses violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ credits to 8 ECTS credits in the “anti-crisis” electives.

The panel also notes that the module descriptions in all programmes under review do not contain information on the content and amount of the workload allocated to internships, thesis writing and defence, nor on the preparation and taking state (graduation) examinations.

Therefore, a thorough revision, modification and completion of module descriptions is necessary, with the workload specified in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits with regard to each course, each module, each term (semester), and in total for each study programme. The calculation and allocation of Kazakh and ECTS credits should follow one single standard in compliance with the national educational legislation.

The appropriateness of the ECTS is regulated by law. However, the panel has some doubts that the legally required translation reflects the real workload of the students for the different courses according to the recommendations of the European Commission.



The discussion with the UIB students showed that they are used to the local credit system and it gives them a sufficient orientation. But with respect to internationalisation the local credit system is quite restrictive. Foreign students will probably not understand the local system, which decreases to them the attractiveness of the UIB study programmes. The use of the ECTS system is encouraged to ensure transparency for students from abroad.

The defined workload adds up to a minimum of 45 hours a week for all students as defined by the Kazakhstani law. During the site visit the panel had several chances to discuss the workload with students of Bachelor and Master levels as well as with alumni. They all showed satisfaction with the required workload. The UIB standards were called high but fully doable. UIB students and alumni who attended the interviews with the panel can/could do their internships and pass their exams on time. Thus, the required students' workload allows the achievement of the specified qualification objectives. Concerning internationalisation a real workload-based (ECTS) system would be beneficial.

UIB examination methods cover a broad range of instruments. The combination of methods allows for in-depth assessment of various learning outcomes. The Master profile corresponds with more mature nature, focusing on essays, case studies, presentations, open-ended questions.

At the beginning of each semester relevant methods in the respective course are discussed. Questions for oral examinations must be approved by the Department Head and Vice Rector. An Academic Methodological Council is in place, reviewing examination principles and even questions including those for dissertations. Different control systems are installed (such as cameras in the rooms in which examinations take place).

Students are informed about the assessment system (through Student's Guide booklets among other communication channels). It should be noted, however, that the Student's Guide booklets dedicated to fully inform students on important issues have been split and shortened. They still fulfill the needs but the more comprehensive version used in the past may provide a higher level of transparency for the students.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 2: The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)

### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 2 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows a list of all modules of the Bachelor in Management programme including writing and defence of thesis, academic/professional/pre-thesis internships and graduation examinations. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the degree total workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits,



and 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits throughout the Bachelor programme in Management.

The review of the modules of the one-year Master in Management shows a list of all modules of the programme including research, writing and defence of thesis, pre-thesis research internship and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module and the year, i.e. degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS follows the official national transfer modulus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the one-year Master in Management.

The review of the modules of the two-year Master in Management shows a list of all modules of the programme including research, writing and defence of thesis, pedagogical and pre-thesis research internships and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the total degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS follows the official national transfer modulus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the two-year Master in Management. A minor inconsistency occurs in the second year, where the defence of the thesis is converted from 3 Kazakh credits into 4 ECTS credits.

#### (d) Final Assessment Standard 1 (April 2017)

The final assessment shows an inclusion of conceptual foundations of leadership aspects into the Bachelor programme in Management and global leadership topics into the Master programme in Management. Condition 1 can thus be regarded as fulfilled, contributing to a positive assessment of standard 1. The inclusion of thesis research, writing and defence, various internships and examinations in the complete list of modules in both the Bachelor and Master programmes further contributes to the fulfilment of the standard. The workloads are displayed in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, term and degree. The conversion of Kazakh credits to ECTS credits consistently follows the official national transfer modulus in the vast majority, supporting internationalisation efforts. Minor inconsistencies occur related to the defence of the thesis in the second year of the Master programme in Management. Overall, **condition 2 may be regarded as fulfilled, leading to a positive assessment of standard 1.**

#### Standard 3 Quality assurance

(...)

3.3 The participation of students in reflections on the study programme, the study conditions and the programme organisation has been institutionalised.

(...)



**(a) Statement (February 2016)**

A comprehensive monitoring system has been developed, including the evaluation of study conditions. Complaint routes are installed. Student surveys are integrated into the system and the return rate is by 100% because the surveys are an important part of the UIB MOODLE-based platform. However, these surveys only include closed-ended questions which does not allow students to provide extra information or concerns that they would like to share beyond the pre-selected options. Open-ended questions are very important for getting significant results, which can be useful for the future.

**(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

The institutional quality management system is supported by the Moodle system through all levels of the university. Surveys, through which students can give feedback on the quality of teaching and other educational services and conditions, are monitored by the Deans and other staff members in charge. At the moment, only closed questions are used. More useful information could be gained by offering the opportunity of open-ended statements as part of the questionnaire.

The Panel agreed that the standard is partially met subject to the following condition

Condition 3: Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

**(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 3 (April 2017)**

The review of the evaluation form for students reveals that besides closed questions, three comment fields are part of the survey in a screenshot of the electronic evaluation form in Russian language (translation of the word comment via GoogleTranslator from Russian to English by the peer and clarification provided by AQ Austria). The specific areas where comments can be stated were verified via e-mail by AQ Austria staff as curriculum design (line 7), administrative work (line 15) and communication (line 18). The presence of comment fields in the student evaluation form provides sufficient evidence that students are given the chance to share their thoughts on the study conditions.

**(d) Final Assessment Standard 3(April 2017)**

Three comment fields present in the evaluation survey form for students are designed in an open-ended manner. This allows students to provide specific extra-information and UIB to receive valuable feedback. Condition 3 can thus be regarded as fulfilled. Overall, this contributes to a comprehensive monitoring system supported by the Moodle system that is implemented to ensure evaluation of the study conditions and an effective quality management system. **The standard 3 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.**

(...)

6.1 In line with the study programme's profile, national and/or international co-operation projects with higher education institutions or institutions outside the higher education sector have been established.

(...)

**(a) Statement (February 2016)**

On the national level UIB is doing a lot of cooperative activities: competitions, conferences, joint projects, Olympiads, business games, career centre, job fairs, and 186 business partners join UIB in projects. 100 top partners are defined with whom close cooperation is realised: with those companies thesis writing and internship placements are practiced. The managers are even involved into curricular development, teaching and examinations as we learned throughout the interviews with companies, alumni, faculty and others.

On the international level the practice has not been fully developed yet. "At present time, UIB has initiated contacts with European universities in the hope of joining various EU-funded consortia for the current funding period, but the process is expected to take a considerable period of time. To this moment, several individual applications were completed but proved unsuccessful (e.g. for the Jean Monnet grants)." ...."At this point in time, there are no cooperative projects between staff engaged in teaching on Bachelor/Masters in Management and external partners."

The international mobility is low. Only short-term visits, called "international internships" have been realized in a remarkable volume. These trips are required by the law and highly appreciated by the students.

UIB presents the following reasons for non-existing incoming mobility:

- Lack of dormitories
- Costs of Living in Almaty

UIB is aware of this weakness. Strategies are in place. Dormitories will be available as an effect of the "Winter Universiade" in 2017 whose facilities will be usable by students afterwards. A multilayer approach has been developed: national cooperations, regional ("neighbourhood") cooperations, cooperations throughout Asia, and cooperations in Europe, all over the world. Steps have been taken such as negotiating contracts on Erasmus plus with European universities. Mevlana University, Turkey, is valued as a good opportunity for cooperation development. Good partnerships have been already developed with Poland. Further countries as Eastern European ones are targeted and budgets are set up.

At the very end of the site visit, the panel had a possibility to discuss such issues in more detail with UIB President and the Vice-President in charge of International Affairs. Cooperation involving Double or even Triple Degree programmes has been started. UIB plans to further develop this approach, currently looking for more partners. Strategic directions 2013 – 2018 have been presented, among which the aspect of internationalization is stressed. Based on this a comprehensive "Implementation Plan for 2015 – 2017" was set up and presented during the site visit, covering actions on all levels of UIB.

The national projects definitely encourage and support the UIB internationalisation initiatives. On the international level, however, the number and scope of projects is not yet satisfying. Anyhow, good development in good direction is on its way.



The advancement of the programmes is clearly encouraged and supported. At the meeting with the panel, the UIB President presented his strategy to find open and internationally competent staff members, providing them with special tasks and making them responsible to identify good practices all over the world to be implemented in UIB practice. So selected teachers are encouraged and enabled to work internationally, to identify relevant programmes and get them into use. From those the improvement process is supposed to spread and deepen.

#### **(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

On the national level, strong cooperations exist, encouraging and supporting collaboration and mobility. Weaknesses have been identified on the international level (low mobility, reduced array of international partnerships). A strategy has been developed and an implementation plan is in action. Therefore improvement should be visible soon.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition

Condition 4: Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

#### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 4 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that a number of ERASMUS+ agreements between UIB and institutions from various European countries have been signed or are currently being developed. Specifically, cooperation in the context of the ERASMUS+ programme for the exchange of students and staff is active with the following institutions: ISMA University (Latvia, signed October 2016), Kozminski University (Poland, agreement starting 2015), Pan-European University (Slovakia, signed May 2016), University of Dunaujvaros (Hungary, signed July 2016), University of National and World Economy (Bulgaria, agreement starting 2016) and Varna University of Management (Bulgaria, signed June/July 2016).

#### **(d) Final Assessment Standard 6 (April 2017)**

Strong cooperations on the national level being beneficial for collaboration and mobility have already been stated. Through cooperation in the ERASMUS+ programme with various European universities in different countries, international partnerships in the exchange of staff and students have been established. Thus, visible improvement regarding the international cooperations can be stated leading to a **positive assessment of standard 6**.

## Fulfilment of the conditions – International Accreditation of the Bachelor-Programme and the Master Programme „Marketing“

### University of International Business, Almaty (Kazakhstan)

At its 33<sup>rd</sup> meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the Board of AQ Austria **decided to grant accreditation** to the

**Bachelor-programme “Marketing”** and the

**Master-programme “Marketing”**

at University of International Business in Almaty, Kazakhstan for a period of six years (i.e. 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022), **under the following conditions:**

#### **Condition 1**

To reflect the actual range of the marketing domain, statistics and quantitative research methodology should be introduced as compulsory modules. Statistics should be a compulsory course, in both the Bachelor and Master programmes. (Standard 1.2)

#### **Condition 2**

The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)

#### **Condition 3**

Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

### **Condition 3**

Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

Fulfilments of these conditions have been documented in writing and were subject to assessment by a member of the expert panel. At its 40<sup>th</sup> meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 the Board AQ Austria **regarded the conditions as fulfilled.**



Agency for  
Quality Assurance  
and Accreditation  
Austria

# Statement on the fulfilment of the conditions

## International Accreditation of the Cluster „Economics“

**Marketing** (Bachelor, Master)

University of International Business,  
Almaty (Kazakhstan)

30. April 2017

## 1.1 Information on the study programmes

Name of the programme	Marketing
Academic degree awarded	Bachelor in Marketing
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	8 semesters / 4 years
Name of the programme	Marketing
Academic degree awarded	Master in Marketing
Date of introduction	03.02.2010
Regular study period	2 semesters / 1 year ("Profile" Master <sup>1</sup> ) 4 semesters / 2 years ("Pedagogic" Master)

## 1.2 Accreditation procedure at University of International Business

### Timetable of the accreditation procedure

Procedural step	Date
Delivery of self-evaluation report by UIB	1 November 2015
Decision on Panel members by the Board of AQ Austria	2 October 2015
Preparatory Skype meeting of the Panel	19 November 2015
Site-visit to UIB by the Panel	2-4 December 2015
Draft report of the Panel	22 January 2015
Formal statement by UIB	28 January 2016
Final report of the Panel	08 February 2016
Statement on the final report by UIB	22 February 2016
Accreditation decision by the Board of AQ Austria	17 March 2016
Deadline for the fulfilment of the condition	17 December 2016
Provision of the documents to prove the fulfilment of conditions	8 February 2017
Decision to accept the belated transmission of the materials by the Board of AQ Austria	15 March 2017

## 1.3 Verification

Name	Institution	Role
Assoc.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Maria Hofer	Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria	Peer from academia

<sup>1</sup> UIB Master programmes in the same disciplines are delivered in two modes: a 1-year ("profile") programme for students progressing from the same Bachelor degree, and a 2-year ("pedagogic") programme for students changing degrees and those wishing to pursue an academic future.

## 2 Assessment results of the Panel report (February 2016)

### Marketing

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

(...)

1.2 The qualification objectives of the study programme (learning outcomes of the study programme) have been clearly defined and meet the technical, scientific and professional requirements and are in accordance with the respective levels of the qualification framework of the European Higher Education Area.

1.4 The application of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is appropriate and plausible. It meets the recommendations of the European Commission<sup>2</sup>.

(...)

#### (a) Statement (February 2016)

**Standard 1.2:** The goal of the Bachelor programme in Marketing is stated as “offering a degree which incorporates ministry standards/requirements, international knowledge and academic practices, a sizeable amount of real-life contact and inviting business into classrooms so that its marketing students are exposed early on the realities of 21st century Kazakhstani and international marketing”. This responds to the calls of the national economy that is in need of marketing specialists.

The learning outcomes of the Bachelor programme are defined by law as “general education (fundamental knowledge in the areas of social humanitarian and economic disciplines), social-ethical competencies, economic and general-managerial competencies” and the “flexibility of changing social, economic and professional roles”. UIB learning outcomes for the Bachelor in Marketing integrate state standards and institutional perspectives into the fields of knowledge and understanding, applying knowledge and understanding, making judgements, communication and learning skills. The student of the UIB Bachelor Marketing programme becomes “a strategic marketing planner, a creative thinker, and a real-world practitioner who knows how to satisfy the customers’ needs and wants.” [...] Students acquire “a concentration of marketing knowledge within a broad base of business concepts and to utilise both theoretical concepts and real-world cases to develop skills in marketing decision making and problem solving”.

The aim of the UIB Master programme in Marketing is “to enhance the student’s skills in strategic marketing planning, creative problem solving, advanced market analytics and develops the skillsets required for effective marketing management in a changing business environment”. Furthermore, students are equipped “with the knowledge and skills required to identify and develop products and services that meet customer needs. It trains marketing researchers to work in industry, consulting firms, non-profit organisations, government, and other organizations where marketing analysis adds value”. Graduates of the 2-year “pedagogic” programme “are provided with knowledge and skills applicable in their later

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide_en.pdf) (ECTS Users’ Guide)



careers as academics or researchers, able to work in higher education and/or pursue a doctorate qualification". Also for the Masters' program, the learning outcomes integrate state standards and UIB institutional perspectives into the fields of knowledge and understanding, applying knowledge and understanding, making judgements, communication and learning skills.

The scope of teaching methods applied to the curriculum shows a wide variety of approaches and adheres to international standards. The formats of guest lectures by business practitioners, discussions, role plays, business games, mainly written exams and problem solving through case studies are widely used.

The contents of the Bachelor and Master programmes cover a range of interesting basic and advanced topics, e.g. services marketing or gamification; especially the latter being highly innovative and up-to-date. There is a "Club of Marketers"; members of this club compete in business games with students from other universities from Kazakhstan. In 2014 marketing students from UIB won the first prize in the game held at the New Economic University in Almaty. The good level of students' knowledge was proven by an external assessment (Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan) of student achievements where UIB marketing students scored 165 out of 200. UIB students also perform well at academic disciplinary competitions, i.e. "Student Olympiads", proving their skills and knowledge.

#### **(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

**Standard 1.2:** The Bachelor and Master programmes in Marketing offer a wide range of basic and advanced content through a broad scope of teaching methods meeting international standards. Technical, scientific and professional requirements are met. The curriculum with its modules and examination procedures is suitable to achieve the intended learning outcomes that are in line with the UIB strategy. The qualification objectives are transparent and clearly defined. UIB Bachelor and Master programmes meet the standards provided by AQ Austria.

Nevertheless, in the Marketing area avenues for improvement may be highlighted with regard to the following aspects. The current situation shows that students have very limited knowledge about statistics and quantitative marketing research methodology. Marketing is viewed as a predominantly creative subject. Mathematics is being taught in the first year of the Bachelor programme and in the economics courses, which gives the students a good foundation of their marketing education. It could be further improved by adding courses in statistics. At the moment statistics can be chosen as an elective but it should rather be a compulsory subject due to its central importance in marketing. Also, the use of statistical software packages such as SPSS should be taught. Furthermore, internationalisation aspects and intercultural issues should be included in both the Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

The programmes rely to a large extent on well available translations of original English literature. It should be an aim to include more original sources in all of the modules. The courses focus on practical aspects of Marketing thus providing students with education that is highly appreciated by business practice and employers. To improve the students' Marketing education towards a more integrated and wider applicable view, the study programmes at the Bachelor and Master levels should include aspects of Marketing theory.

The Panel agreed that the standard is partially met subject to the following conditions:



Condition 1: To reflect the actual range of the marketing domain, statistics and quantitative research methodology should be introduced as compulsory modules. Statistics should be a compulsory course, in both the Bachelor and Master programmes. (Standard 1.2)

### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 1 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that quantitative methods are parts of both the Marketing Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Specifically, on the undergraduate level in the first year, the course "Econometrics" (3 Kazakh credits, 5 ECTS credits) including laboratory work with different software has been added to the Bachelor programme in Marketing as a core type of course. The course aims at the acquisition of knowledge of statistical tools and research design for empirical studies. It is based on up-to-date core literature from an international and noted academic publisher. On the graduate level in the first year, the course "Applied Statistics" (2 Kazakh credits, 3 ECTS credits) was added as a profile course. It is designed as a refresher course aiming at training the postgraduates in statistical methodology including data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation. The course is based on up-to-date textbooks from international and noted academic publishers. **Condition 1 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.**

### **(a) Statements and (b) assessment (February 2016)**

**Standard 1.4** UIB uses the Kazakhstani national credit system stipulated by the Law on Credit Technology (2011) which provides a fixed conversion rate between Kazakhstani (KZ) credits and ECTS credits as 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation that ECTS counts should be provided in full digits. As a result, the following ratios of KZ credits to ECTS credits are used: 1 KZ credit =2 ECTS credits, 2 KZ credits =3 ECTS credits, 3 KZ credits =5 ECTS credits, 4 KZ credits=6 ECTS credits.

The conversion of KZ credit points into ECTS credits is documented in the UIB self-evaluation reports. The conversion process is institutionalized in the modified Moodle system which allows for a continual process of administering the complete grading process. However, the panel notes that a detailed check of the module descriptions showed that not all of them are following this conversion system. A minor number of courses of the Bachelor programme violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ to 9 ECTS credits in the course "Basis of Life Safety"; "Politics and Evolution of Modern Economic Thought" equaling 2 KZ credits with 4 instead of 3 ECTS credits, "Microeconomics" 2 KZ to 3.6 ECTS credits, "Practice of doing Business" 4 KZ credits to 11 ECTS credits. In the Master programmes, and especially in the two-year 'pedagogic' Master programmes, a number of courses violate this rule, for example transferring 3 KZ credits to 8 ECTS credits in the "anti-crisis" electives.

The panel also notes that the module descriptions in all programmes under review do not contain information on the content and amount of the workload allocated to internships, thesis writing and defence, nor on the preparation and taking state (graduation) examinations.

Therefore, a thorough revision, modification and completion of module descriptions is necessary, with the workload specified in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits with regard to each course, each module, each term (semester), and in total for each study programme. The calculation and allocation of Kazakh and ECTS credits should follow one single standard in compliance with the national educational legislation.

The appropriateness of the ECTS is regulated by law. However, the panel has some doubts



that the legally required translation reflects the real workload of the students for the different courses according to the recommendations of the European Commission.

The discussion with the UIB students showed that they are used to the local credit system and it gives them a sufficient orientation. But with respect to internationalisation the local credit system is quite restrictive. Foreign students will probably not understand the local system, which decreases to them the attractiveness of the UIB study programmes. The use of the ECTS system is encouraged to ensure transparency for students from abroad.

The defined workload adds up to a minimum of 45 hours a week for all students as defined by the Kazakhstani law. During the site visit the panel had several chances to discuss the workload with students of Bachelor and Master levels as well as with alumni. They all showed satisfaction with the required workload. The UIB standards were called high but fully doable. UIB students and alumni who attended the interviews with the panel can/could do their internships and pass their exams on time. Thus, the required students' workload allows the achievement of the specified qualification objectives. Concerning internationalisation a real workload-based (ECTS) system would be beneficial.

UIB examination methods cover a broad range of instruments. The combination of methods allows for in-depth assessment of various learning outcomes. The Master profile corresponds with more mature nature, focusing on essays, case studies, presentations, open-ended questions.

At the beginning of each semester relevant methods in the respective course are discussed. Questions for oral examinations must be approved by the Department Head and Vice Rector. An Academic Methodological Council is in place, reviewing examination principles and even questions including those for dissertations. Different control systems are installed (such as cameras in the rooms in which examinations take place).

Students are informed about the assessment system (through Student's Guide booklets among other communication channels). It should be noted, however, that the Student's Guide booklets dedicated to fully inform students on important issues have been split and shortened. They still fulfill the needs but the more comprehensive version used in the past may provide a higher level of transparency for the students.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 2: The existing syllabi must be revised. It is necessary to provide a complete list of all modules (including thesis writing and defence, internships, state examinations) displaying the workload, both in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits, with regard to each module, each term, and the total workload of each study programme. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits should consistently follow the official national transfer modus. (Standard 1.4)

### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 2 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows a list of all modules of the Bachelor in Marketing programme including writing and defence of thesis, academic/professional/pre-diploma internships and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the degree total workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh



credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, and 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits throughout the Bachelor programme in Marketing.

The review of the modules of the one-year Master in Marketing shows a list of all modules of the programme including research, writing and defence of thesis, pre-thesis research internship and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module and the year, i.e. degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modulus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the one-year Master in Marketing.

The review of the modules of the two-year Master in Marketing shows a list of all modules of the programme including research, writing and defence of thesis, pedagogical and pre-thesis research internships and graduation examination. Workloads are given in both Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, semester, year and the total degree workload. The conversion of Kazakh credits into ECTS credits follows the official national transfer modulus of 1 to 1.5-1.8, with the additional stipulation of providing ECTS counts in full digits. Specifically, 1 Kazakh credit is converted into 2 ECTS credits, 2 Kazakh credits are converted into 3 ECTS credits, 3 Kazakh credits are converted into 5 ECTS credits and 4 Kazakh credits are converted into 6 ECTS credits throughout the two-year Master in Management. A minor inconsistency occurs in the second year, where the defence of the thesis is converted from 3 Kazakh credits into 4 ECTS credits.

#### **(d) Final Assessment Standard 1 (April 2017)**

The final assessment shows an inclusion of quantitative methods and statistics into the Bachelor programme in Marketing as a core course as well as into the Master programme in Marketing as a profile course. Condition 1 can thus be regarded as fulfilled, contributing to a **positive assessment of standard 1**. The inclusion of thesis research, writing and defence, various internships and examinations in the complete list of modules in both the Bachelor and Master programmes further contributes to the fulfilment of the standard. The workloads are displayed in Kazakh credits and ECTS credits for each module, term and degree. The conversion of Kazakh credits to ECTS credits consistently follows the official national transfer modulus in the vast majority, supporting internationalisation efforts. A minor inconsistency occurs related to the defence of the thesis in the second year of the Master programme in Marketing. Overall, **condition 2 may be regarded as fulfilled, leading to a positive assessment for standard 1**.

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

(...)

3.3 The participation of students in reflections on the study programme, the study conditions and the programme organisation has been institutionalised. (...)



**(a) Statements**

A comprehensive monitoring system has been developed, including the evaluation of study conditions. Complaint routes are installed. Student surveys are integrated into the system and the return rate is by 100% because the surveys are an important part of the UIB MOODLE-based platform. However, these surveys only include closed-ended questions which does not allow students to provide extra information or concerns that they would like to share beyond the pre-selected options. Open-ended questions are very important for getting significant results, which can be useful for the future.

**(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

The institutional quality management system is supported by the Moodle system through all levels of the university. Surveys, through which students can give feedback on the quality of teaching and other educational services and conditions, are monitored by the Deans and other staff members in charge. At the moment, only closed questions are used. More useful information could be gained by offering the opportunity of open-ended statements as part of the questionnaire.

The Panel agreed that the standard is partially met subject to the following condition

Condition 3: Open-ended questions have to be added to Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys to allow more freedom for students to provide feedback on the quality of educational provision. (Standard 3.3)

**(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfilment of condition 3 (April 2017)**

The review of the evaluation form for students reveals that besides closed questions, three comment fields are part of the survey in a screenshot of the electronic evaluation form in Russian language (translation of the word comment via GoogleTranslator from Russian into English by the peer and clarification provided by AQ Austria). The specific areas where comments can be stated were verified via e-mail by AQ Austria staff as curriculum design (line 7), administrative work (line 15) and communication (line 18). The presence of comment fields in the student evaluation form provides sufficient evidence that students are given the chance to share their thoughts on the study conditions.

**(d) Final Assessment Standard 3 (April 2017)**

Three comment fields present in the evaluation survey form for students are designed in an open-ended manner. This allows students to provide specific extra-information and UIB to receive valuable feedback. **Condition 3 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.** Overall, this contributes to a comprehensive monitoring system supported by the Moodle system that is implemented to ensure evaluation of the study conditions and an effective quality management system. **The standard 3 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.**

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

(...)

6.1 In line with the study programme's profile, national and/or international co-operation projects with higher education institutions or institutions outside the higher education sector have been established.

(...)

**(a) Statement (February 2016)**

On the national level UIB is doing a lot of cooperative activities: competitions, conferences, joint projects, Olympiads, business games, career centre, job fairs, and 186 business partners join UIB in projects. 100 top partners are defined with whom close cooperation is realised: with those companies thesis writing and internship placements are practiced. The managers are even involved into curricular development, teaching and examinations as we learned throughout the interviews with companies, alumni, faculty and others.

On the international level the practice has not been fully developed yet. "At present time, UIB has initiated contacts with European universities in the hope of joining various EU-funded consortia for the current funding period, but the process is expected to take a considerable period of time. To this moment, several individual applications were completed but proved unsuccessful (e.g. for the Jean Monnet grants)." ...."At this point in time, there are no cooperative projects between staff engaged in teaching on Bachelor/Masters in Management and external partners."

The international mobility is low. Only short-term visits, called "international internships" have been realized in a remarkable volume. These trips are required by the law and highly appreciated by the students.

UIB presents the following reasons for non-existing incoming mobility:

- Lack of dormitories
- Costs of Living in Almaty

UIB is aware of this weakness. Strategies are in place. Dormitories will be available as an effect of the "Winter Universiade" in 2017 whose facilities will be usable by students afterwards. A multilayer approach has been developed: national cooperations, regional ("neighbourhood") cooperations, cooperations throughout Asia, and cooperations in Europe, all over the world. Steps have been taken such as negotiating contracts on Erasmus plus with European universities. Mevlana University, Turkey, is valued as a good opportunity for cooperation development. Good partnerships have been already developed with Poland. Further countries as Eastern European ones are targeted and budgets are set up.

At the very end of the site visit, the panel had a possibility to discuss such issues in more detail with UIB President and the Vice-President in charge of International Affairs. Cooperation involving Double or even Triple Degree programmes has been started. UIB plans to further develop this approach, currently looking for more partners. Strategic directions 2013 – 2018 have been presented, among which the aspect of internationalization is stressed. Based on this a comprehensive "Implementation Plan for 2015 – 2017" was set up and presented during the site visit, covering actions on all levels of UIB.



The national projects definitely encourage and support the UIB internationalisation initiatives. On the international level, however, the number and scope of projects is not yet satisfying. Anyhow, good development in good direction is on its way.

The advancement of the programmes is clearly encouraged and supported. At the meeting with the panel, the UIB President presented his strategy to find open and internationally competent staff members, providing them with special tasks and making them responsible to identify good practices all over the world to be implemented in UIB practice. So selected teachers are encouraged and enabled to work internationally, to identify relevant programmes and get them into use. From those the improvement process is supposed to spread and deepen.

#### **(b) Assessment (February 2016)**

On the national level, strong cooperations exist, encouraging and supporting collaboration and mobility. Weaknesses have been identified on the international level (low mobility, reduced array of international partnerships). A strategy has been developed and an implementation plan is in action. Therefore improvement should be visible soon.

The Panel agreed that the standard is *partially met* subject to the following condition:

Condition 4: Additional cooperation agreements/MoUs have to be signed with European universities in a greater variety of countries with regard to the programmes under review. UIB has to develop mobility partnerships within the ERASMUS+ framework. Even if the ERASMUS+ application timeline cannot be met during the period of the current accreditation process, practical steps towards application submission in 2017 must be documented for the programmes under review. (Standard 6.1)

#### **(c) Statement on evidence for the fulfillment of condition 4 (April 2017)**

The review of the documents shows that a number of ERASMUS+ agreements between UIB and institutions from various European countries have been signed or are currently being developed. Specifically, cooperation in the context of the ERASMUS+ programme for the exchange of students and staff is active with the following institutions: ISMA University (Latvia, signed October 2016), Kozminski University (Poland, agreement starting 2015), Pan-European University (Slovakia, signed May 2016), University of Dunaujvaros (Hungary, signed July 2016), University of National and World Economy (Bulgaria, agreement starting 2016) and Varna University of Management (Bulgaria, signed June/July 2016).

#### **(d) Final Assessment Standard 6 (April 2017)**

Strong cooperations on the national level being beneficial for collaboration and mobility have already been stated. Through cooperation in the ERASMUS+ programme with various European universities in different countries, international partnerships in the exchange of staff and students have been established. Thus, visible improvement regarding the international cooperations can be stated leading to a **positive assessment of condition 4, standard 6 can thus be regarded as fulfilled.**