

## **Accreditation report**

Accreditation procedure at

**European Polytechnical University (EPU) Pernik/Bulgaria**  
**“Management and Administration” (B.A.), “Psychology” (B.A.) and**  
**“General Psychology” (M.A.)**

### **I Procedure**

**Date of Contract:** 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**Receipt of self-evaluation report:** 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Date of the on-site visit:** 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Standing Expert Committee:** Humanities and Economics, Law and Social Science

**Attendance by the ACQUIN Office:** Dr. Stefan Handke

**Decisions of the Accreditation Commission:** 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015

#### **Members of the Peer Group:**

- **Christopher Bohlens**, Student of Economics (M.A.), Leuphana University Lueneburg
- **Professor Dr. Jürgen Deller**, Business Psychology, Leuphana University Lueneburg
- **Professor Dr. Dominik Endres**, General Psychology, University Marburg
- **izr. prof. dr. Marjana Merkač Skok**, Management, Faculty of Commercial and Business Sciences, Celje
- **Dr. Stefan Schmid**, Professional Psychology, Intercultural & Organisational Psychology, Munich

The **Evaluation report** of the peer group is based on the self-evaluation report of the HEI and extensive discussions with the heads of the study programmes, staff representatives, students and employers. The reviewers thank the organisers and the participating teachers and students of the on-site visit in Pernik that they were available for the discussions and have been prepared to provide information on programmes and university. The participation is perceived as very valuable not only for evaluating the programmes, but also for a better understanding of the legal and socio-cultural background of the Bulgarian higher education system, in particular the European Polytechnical University.

**Evaluation Criteria** have been the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) and – where not contradicting national regulations – the German standards for the accreditation of study programmes („Regeln des Akkreditierungsrates für die Akkreditierung von Studiengängen und für die Systemakkreditierung“) in the actual official version.

**Content**

<b>I</b>	<b>Procedure .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1	Short Profile of the European Polytechnical University .....	4
2	The programmes in their organisational frameworks .....	5
<b>III</b>	<b>Evaluation .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1	Targets of university and departments.....	7
2	Bachelor programme “Management and Administration” .....	8
2.1	Targets of the study programme .....	8
2.2	Concept of the study programme .....	11
2.3	Conclusion.....	13
3	Bachelor programme “Psychology” .....	14
3.1	Targets of the study programme .....	14
3.2	Concept of the study programme .....	16
3.3	Conclusion.....	17
4	Master programme “General Psychology” .....	17
4.1	Targets of the study programme .....	17
4.2	Concept of the study programme .....	19
4.3	Conclusion.....	21
5	Implementation.....	21
5.1	Resources.....	21
5.2	Organisation, counselling and cooperation.....	23
5.3	Examination system.....	25
5.4	Documentation and transparency .....	26
5.5	Gender justice and compensation opportunities for disabled people .....	26
5.6	Conclusion.....	27
6	Quality Management.....	27
7	Summary .....	28
8	Recommendation of the expert group.....	29
<b>IV</b>	<b>Decision of the ACQUIN Accreditation Commission .....</b>	<b>30</b>
	Management and Administration (B.A.).....	30
	Psychology (B.A.) .....	31
	General Psychology (M.A.) .....	31

## **II Introduction**

### **1 Short Profile of the European Polytechnical University**

The European Polytechnical University (EPU) is the youngest educational institution in the higher education system in Bulgaria. It was founded on an initiative of a group of prominent Bulgarian scientists and recognised business representatives from various fields of science and practice and supported by private investments. The project for opening the University went through all state procedures for approval required by the Higher Education Act. The University received positive evaluation by the Bulgarian Accreditation Council (resolution of 9 July, 2009) supported by the Council of Ministers and was opened by an official act of the National Assembly in 2010. With the decision of the Accreditation Council the European Polytechnical University has been granted a capacity of 2000 students and doctoral students and the opportunity to develop programmes in other areas of higher education and professional fields. The National Assembly authorises the university to train Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral students in all programmes in two languages - English and Bulgarian. Since 2011/2012 the training in Bachelor's programmes has been conducted only in English language.

EPU currently offers five Bachelor's programmes and ten Master's programmes. During the academic year 2013/2014 at EPU a total 434 students were trained in five professional fields, including 302 students in Bachelor's degree (in eight majors) and 132 students in Master's degree (in 12 majors). The study programmes cover the fields of psychology, administration and management, communication and computer technology, energetics, civil engineering, architecture, geodesy and applied computer sciences.

For all programmes enrolled students have to pay fees, in Bachelor's programmes ranging from 750 Euros per semester for students from EU countries up to 1500 Euros for students from non-EU countries. Fees in Master's programmes reach from 1000 to 2000 Euros per semester.

According to the mission of EPU, the university strives to be a centre of interaction among modern education, scientific research and innovations and international academic and business cooperation. The university wants to personalise its relationship with its students and tries to conform to their individual abilities and preferences to prepare them for professional realisation in the market environment of the dynamically changing world. With its mission EPU seeks to distinguish the university from other universities in the Republic of Bulgaria and confirms its identity as a messenger of the progressive ideas of modern higher education with a strong focus on European development.

In the line with the attempt of integration into the European Higher Education System, EPU pursues a strategy of internationalisation. The international policy of EPU is governed by the idea of using all opportunities which the cooperation with universities, business organisations, NGOs and public authorities from abroad can contribute to its mission and strategic objectives. Further, the institutional profile of the university as polytechnic is in harmony with its internationalisation. The specialties that EPU offers are the most popular in Europe and in the countries from which the students of the university are from. One of the ways to internationalisation is joint work with foreign universities of similar profile. For its four years of operation EPU concluded a number of contracts and agreements with 30 universities in Asia and Europe.

## **2 The programmes in their organisational frameworks**

EPU has implemented an organisational structure, which is adequate for a still comparably small university. As a key trace it is to point out that the faculty – the intermediate unit in the classic three-tier structure of a higher education institution – is conceived as redundant at present and not necessary for the implementation of the development strategy and current goals of EPU. Therefore, the university has replaced faculties by so-called Programmes of Study (i.e. academic or study programme). EPU has an organisation with departments as static academic units, and the Programmes of Study as dynamic units. As the closest analogy to the “Programme of Study” unit EPU mentions the “specialty field” concept.

At the university the following seven departments are established: “Natural Sciences”, “Social Sciences”, “Construction, Architecture and Surveying”, “Applied Computer Sciences and Communication Technologies”, “Green Energetics”, “Economy, Management and Administration” and “Psychology”.

The study programmes “Psychology” (B.A.) and “General Psychology” (M.A.) are run by the department of Psychology. Another programme at this department is the Master’s programme “Leadership and Organisational Development”.

The department Economy, Management and Administration is responsible for the Bachelor’s programme “Management and Administration” (B.A.). Further, the Master’s programmes “Education Management”, “Project Management”, “Business Administration” and “Public Administration” are located at the department. The Economy, Management and Administration department has designed its current Bachelor’s Programme in “Management and Administration” drawing on the experience from working on two currently separate programmes: “Business Administration” and “Public Administration”. These two programmes have been modified into majors (specialisations) within the new programme. The newly proposed programme offers its students the opportunity to choose to select one of these two majors after their fourth, and to

subsequently pursue a master's degree in the same professional field in view of their future careers.

### **III Evaluation**

#### **1 Targets of university and departments**

According to its mission statement EPU in Pernik wants to create interactions between academic teaching, research, innovations and academic-business co-operations. The university aims at the preparation of students for professional work in the market environment of a dynamically changing world. Hence, the focus is on applied research, interdisciplinarity and the denomination "polytechnical". Further, the European Polytechnical University is committed to introducing the European standards in education, offering instruction of contemporary educational content, developing a faculty of scholars from European universities and international academies, carrying out teaching and evaluation according to the latest methods in an avant-garde professional environment, and instilling in its students the values of European civilisation. Following this strategy, EPU defined students from abroad as the main target group, who are interested in Europe and who share European ideals. The regional focuses of students to be attracted are south-eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. Since the Lisbon convention on the "Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region" is implemented at the university, the option of academic mobility is guaranteed for students and graduates of EPU.

From 2015 onwards, 50-60 students will be admitted to the Bachelor's programme in "Psychology" (B-P), and 30 to the Master's in "General Psychology" (M-GP). The M-GP programme was not yet started at the time of writing the report. In the Bachelor programme, 69 students are currently enrolled in three academic years. The future plan aims at 60 students per academic year. The programme "Management and Administration" will start in 2015/2016 with the capacity for admission of 25 full-time students with prospect for intake of 60 students in the following years. Currently around 10 – 15 percent of the enrolled students at EPU do not finish their studies.

Study conditions at EPU are much better than at state universities. EPU believes that the standards at state universities are not so high and business and public administration is not taught on state of the European art. This means that the programme context and implementation quality at EPU is higher. Job expectations for EPU graduates are much better, since they graduated at a EUROPEAN university, which is crucial for job chances.

Due to its profile and its features – especially the in Bulgaria unique offer of study programmes taught in English –, the programmes are competitive in the education market. The market position has been analysed in detail and it is obvious for EPU that job perspectives in Bulgaria are not the best for graduates in all disciplines. Therefore, the university tries to attract students from abroad, in the programmes of Psychology as well as Management and Administration mainly

from Greece, Turkey and Nigeria. The group of experts explicitly encourages EPU to pursue this strategy and to expand promotion measures.

## **2 Bachelor programme “Management and Administration”**

### **2.1 Targets of the study programme**

#### 2.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

The Bachelor programme “Management and Administration” (M-A) focuses on the sciences of management, preparing students for a global labour market. It is a 4 years (8 semesters) programme, with 240 ECTS credits. The programme aims to establish a close connection between the field of management and administration on one side and the business environment and social organisations on the other. Students should learn the rules that govern business and economy as well as municipal and state administrations. The programme predicts that all existing organisational structures in business sectors, administrative body or geographic region operate on a set system of management. Including the specific topics of both, business and public sector, the programme shall enable graduates to be equipped for professional careers in a wide spectrum of professional fields.

The programme M-A will replace the two existing programmes at EPU: “Business Administration” and “Public Administration”. As stated from EPU teaching staff, the reason for merging the two former programmes is that in the past there have been too many graduates in public administration – but labour market demands are more diverse. Therefore, business aspects were added to give graduates more opportunities on the labour market. One of the aims is that the branch in business administration wants to prepare graduates for running own businesses, since at the moment there is hardly any preparation in Bulgaria. The branch public administration should make students familiar with the European culture in public administration and also special traits of welfare states. From the reviewers’ perspective the idea of the programme is positive, but the objectives of the study programme should be stronger aligned to the title of the programme.

In addition, EPU will continue to offer Master’s degree programmes in Business Administration, Public Administration and Project Management, where the graduates of the Bachelor M-A programme can continue their studies and specialise in their chosen field on master level at EPU or other institution.



### 2.1.2 Objectives and competences

The goal of the M-A programme is to train professionals in the baseline knowledge and skills necessary for the field of public and business administration, as well as to prepare them for successful careers in the fast-paced modern world. The curriculum of the programme includes two majors: Business Administration and Public Administration. The instruction will be entirely in English. Though, the curriculum does not have any course in professional English business language. The programme offers scientific and practical, job-oriented knowledge and skills, prepares students for employment flexibility and for further study. New communication technologies are employed and the students' creative potential is developed. The programme provides in-depth training in general theories and in courses, which cover all major aspects of the work of the future graduate. Regarding the programme structure, it would be more appropriate to talk about generalist. The bachelor obtains basic wide-profile training in the field of economics, management, administration, law and management information technologies and through the activities provided in the auditorium and extracurricular activities and self-preparation can improve their knowledge and skills in order to meet the requirements of today's rapidly changing information society.

With the specialisation in "Business Administration" students will gain competencies for starting and developing of own business, the strategy to increase market share of the enterprise, to understand human resources management, the knowledge about supply chains management, and the knowledge of organisational and market mechanisms. These competences are adequate to respond to changes or new issues. The specialisation in "Public Administration" provides competences for development and implementation of strategies in the work of the administrative-territorial units, for effective management of administrative structures and activities as well as to take rational management decisions and to monitor their performance. The practical work is integrated into the programme in several levels.

### 2.1.3 Personal development and capability for civic engagement

Given the international orientation of the programme, the mandatory course on European values and culture will certainly be beneficial for students, and helps to integrate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Also the course "Fundamentals of Economics" is obligatory for all students of the first study year. In the academic year 2013/14 EPU students actively participated in an interactive seminar on the topic of "Diversity in Team". Students at EPU come from nine countries: Bulgaria, Russia, Greece, Nigeria, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania, Egypt and China.

The lectures and study materials are in English. Even if the admission requirements demand the certain level of English, and there are preparatory courses for the candidates with inadequate level of English language before enrolling the study programme, there is no course in the study programme that would teach students Business English. The reviewers suggest to include such a

course in the curricula, since the understanding of professional terminology is crucial for personal development and career prospects.

There are also some Erasmus exchange students in EPU programmes, but EPU students are still not prepared to participate actively in study exchanges. Therefore, EPU is encouraged to improve international office activities and to explore possibilities also in other programmes (like Anima fest etc.) offering short study practice abroad.

#### 2.1.4 Employability

The graduates of the programme “Management and Administration” will be prepared to find employment in companies, organisations and institutions in several professional fields. In addition, they have the option to work as teachers in specialised business and economic high schools acquiring additional teaching qualification.

The graduates of the specialization in Business Administration will be ready to start their own businesses as they will have the skills to assess and implement a project from start to finish, i.e. from evaluation of a business idea to the establishment of the actual business. They will also be able to find employment as company managers, as sales representatives or distributors, and as company representatives for engineering and/or consulting businesses.

The graduates of the specialisation in Public Administration will have an array of professional career options in the administrative field, such as managers in the field of public administration, experts/chief experts and inspectors/head inspectors in the public administration sector (both on the national and local administration levels), consultants and advisors in the public administration sector, or researchers and instructors in high schools, colleges and academic institutes.

Graduates of both branches will possess the combined professional qualifications of both a manager and an administrator. The graduates will be professionals who are competent to pursue a variety of professional and social roles such as: administrators, entrepreneurs, analysts, managers, consultants, innovators, agents of change, communicators and mediators, and financial and social managers. In this context it is positive that EPU is implementing a complex project to establish a Career Centre, as a connection between university and labour market.

Some companies are prepared to finance the fees for the prospective students. Around 30 percent of the students, which had internships in specific companies, were sign an employment contract.

#### 2.1.5 Conclusion

The objectives of the programme are to develop Bachelor graduates with extensive basic general knowledge for practical work in business and public sector as well as in entrepreneurship. The

objectives, content and variety of courses could be better aligned, if more subjects in creativity, entrepreneurship – perhaps as electives, and business English would be introduced.

## **2.2 Concept of the study programme**

### 2.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

All of the students have equal rights and the academic requirements. They apply equally to all of them regardless of the academic programme that they are enrolled in. Presently, over 80 percent of EPU students are foreign citizens.

Admission requirements for EPU are completed secondary education recognised by the Bulgarian state, average results from the diploma – minimum Good (4 in the Bulgarian grading system), minimum score in mathematics Good 4, English language – certificate for completed system: TOEFL minimum 70 points, SAT, ACT, IELTS minimum 5.5. If the prospective students do not have the required certificates, they can attain the required levels by attending 3, 6 or 9-month long additional education classes at the university which are tailored to the students' individual level of proficiency.

In general, the competence based admission criteria are conceived as sufficient and adequate for the study programme. At the same time it has to be pointed out that Bulgarian visa requirements for foreign students are often problematic and hamper applicants to study at EPU. However, this formal threshold cannot be influenced by the university, even though EPU tries to support applicants.

### 2.2.2 Structure of the study programme

The programme is designed with three modules – one theoretical module, which is taught to the students enrolled in all programmes at the university and two specialised training modules: Business Administration and Public Administration, under the principles of integrating theoretical and practical knowledge. In the terminology of EPU a module describes a composition of several courses. Courses usually contain seminars and lectures and are equivalent to modules at German universities. For writing the thesis, students have the entire 8th semester. The maximum of the thesis is 60 pages.

The first module encompasses the first two years of education: its objective is to lay the foundation for the field of study as it focuses on acquiring key knowledge. This module consists of basic knowledge of the science of management and administration. It includes expertise in the areas of economics, law, administration, management, information technology, social sciences and technology.

At the end of the second year students are able to choose between one of the two specialised training modules: Business Administration or Public Administration. In the last semester the students in the two specialised training modules are grouped together again for the “Research Methods” course. Since students are encouraged to work on seminar papers and research assignments from the first year on and they are encouraged to be involved in practical research after first and second practical training, it is recommended to introduce the research course in the first or second, instead of the last study year. In line with the philosophy of the university, theoretical knowledge is not the main aim, but a precondition for acquiring professional skills and competences. In each module 11 elective subjects and a practical training are included, allowing students to acquire additional expertise in their desired field. In the long run, elective courses could offer more subjects in areas, where students are expected to gain competence, such as entrepreneurial contents, creativity and problem solving.

It is positive for students that the connection to practice is secured by teachers, who are not only working as lecturers at EPU, but also as civil servants in leading positions in public administration as well as in business companies. In Public Administration students have internships in municipalities and ministries; most of the internships take place in regional entities. EPU has already several contracts with companies and state institutions for internships. Practice is located in the 6th semester during summer time. For the 8th semester a “government internship”, which is obligatory by law, is scheduled.

The curriculum comprises two rounds of student internships to enable students to apply in real life situations their knowledge, skills and competencies. The first round consists of: student practice in management for the students specialising in business administration, and student practice in administration for the students specialising in public administration. These internships are scheduled to take place in the sixth semester and are awarded with 9 ECTS credits. The second round of internships is referred to as a “pre-graduation internship”: it is scheduled for the 8th semester and consists of 150 hours. This practice will be held in an actual workplace environment and will be recorded in the students’ internship portfolio.

In practical work English language could be an obstacle, but employers and teachers believe that English is not a problem for internships, since most of the contracts exist with branches of international companies. For student support, EPU has contracts with 50 government institutions which often use English and receive money from the EU for internships. In the business sector EPU has contracts for internships with around 10 big companies, such as Nestlé, Telekom and Siemens.

### 2.2.3 ECTS and modularization

The programme holds 240 ECTS credits. Like in every study programme, EPU calculates the workload in M-A with 25 to 30 hours as the basis for one ECTS credit. In the programme struc-

ture there are 22 obligatory, 11 elective and 3 facultative courses, with 2055 hours in the academic curriculum (1095 lectures and 960 seminar exercises) and with 3075 hours of individual student work. The weekly student workload is about 20 hours of contact hours on average and 30 hours of independent study with the exception of the last semester. According to the reviewers the workload is high, but manageable and adequate from the student's perspective. Therefore, the structure of the programme guarantees the academic feasibility.

#### 2.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

EPU implements contemporary teaching methods to empower students with competencies such as taking initiative, creativity, independence, as well as taking responsibility for one's own development, failures and successes. Students learn how to plan and work towards their own development. According to the programme and course syllabuses, teachers foster active participation and discussion of the students during course sessions. They encourage creative thinking and problem solving. Lecture slides are delivered to students before the course. Further teaching materials such as textbooks, which teachers are obliged to write under EPU regulations, are also made available to students online. Seminars are conducted in individual work, teamwork and role play. Examinations comprise written and oral exams, including student presentations throughout the semester, to ensure competencies in communication skills, argumentation and continuous rehearsal and learning of the study material. It is planned to ensure teaming up students with teachers or professionals from the industry to work on joint science and business projects along with their ongoing classroom.

Most of the students in "Public Administration" are from Bulgaria, the courses are mainly taught in Bulgarian. In "Business Administration" courses are taught in English. Teachers are expected to be very good in English and well connected with business environment and public administration. Nevertheless, it is suggested that also teachers should take regular seminars on professional Business English language, which are partly offered already by the state.

### 2.3 Conclusion

The expert group is convinced that the study programme "Management and Administration" has a sound concept. The objectives of the study programme should be stronger aligned to title of the programme. Content and structure of the study programme lead more to generalisation than to specialisation. It would be an important improvement, if the course in Business English would be included in the curricula, since the fluent use and understanding of professional terminology is important for personal development and career prospects. If Bachelor graduates should be able to start their own business, the list of elective courses could offer more subjects in areas, where students are expected to gain competence, such as entrepreneurial contents,

creativity and problem solving. Currently there is only one course in entrepreneurship in the curriculum.

### **3 Bachelor programme “Psychology”**

#### **3.1 Targets of the study programme**

##### 3.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

According to EPU's self-description and the discussions with the teaching and research staff during the on-site visit, the eight-semester programme “Psychology” (B.A.) focuses on applied science, research and practice. The programme is taught in English, which is a unique selling proposition in Bulgaria and is aimed at attracting students from the neighbouring countries and beyond. Graduates of the Bachelor's degree in Psychology can continue with EPU's Master's programme “General Psychology”. The successful consecutive graduation from both programmes results in the education of psychologists who are trained to European standards, as documented by an “EuroPsy” certificate.

More specifically, the objective of the Psychology major is to teach students knowledge and skills and to instill in them attitudes and values which are coherent with the dynamic environment of their professional field. As the reviewers learned from the documents and meetings at EPU, the academic courses cover all major aspects of theory and practice of psychology. While the programme introduces in an encompassing way to the field of psychology and scientific research planning and practice, it falls short in the intensity of practical knowledge and experience in professional practice as reflected in the duration of internships (90 hours). Practical training at EPU results in 225 hours. It is strongly recommended to continue the practical elements of the education. At the same time, the overall internship requirement in fields of practice outside of the university should be raised to between three and six months. Such internships should be supervised by psychologists. They can take place in Bulgaria or abroad, depending on the language proficiency of the student.

##### 3.1.2 Objectives and competences

Students of “Psychology” receive in-depth training in general psychological theories as well as in specialised fields (required and elective courses). The specialised training includes many different fields with an interface to psychology from a psychological perspective, including economics, engineering computer science, human resources.

Graduates shall be able to work in various professional fields, such as companies, banks, business and organisations, where they are able to facilitate interpersonal relationships, help to en-

hance the organisational climate, conduct individual or family counselling, or provide support in issues like handling stress. From the perspective of the expert group the acquired competences of graduates are sufficient for the described tasks.

### 3.1.3 Personal development and capability for civic engagement

Given the international orientation of the programme, the mandatory course on *European values and culture* will certainly be beneficial for the students, and helps to integrate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. EPU's teaching approach is constructivist, where the lecturer encourages high student involvement in the teaching process through interactive discussions and shared coursework. In general, the personal development is an essence of the study programme "Psychology", since students acquire ethical and social responsibility, are trained in communication and are used to deal with personal, interpersonal or organisational problems.

### 3.1.4 Employability

Given that the target group for students in "Psychology" (B.A.) usually do not speak Bulgarian, it will likely be difficult for them to find employment in Bulgaria. This view was expressed by the group of employers and stakeholders during the on-site visit. In other businesses, English language skills are desirable. Based on interviews with prospective employers it became clear, that Bachelor graduates would be able to find work also in local organisations if they spoke Bulgarian and in internationally oriented organisations with English skills. Therefore, many graduates of the Bachelor's programme are expected to find employment (or internships) elsewhere (in Europe), using EPU as an 'entry point' to Europe. Furthermore, a need for Bachelor graduates with a specialisation in *clinical* psychology was expressed by many of the stakeholders.

A career centre for students is currently being established at EPU, which will provide help in finding internship positions and potential employers.

### 3.1.5 Conclusion

In summary, the objectives of the programme "Psychology" as outlined in the self-description suggest cores in personnel and organisational psychology as well as in social practices in the region. Further, the formal employability of graduates is not called into questions and the acquired competences are suitable for a wide range of professional applications.

## 3.2 Concept of the study programme

### 3.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

Having started with a smaller number of annual student intake, from 2015/2016 onwards EPU plans to admit 60 students annually to the Bachelor's programme. Student selection is based on documentation in written form. The prerequisites (course contents etc.) for credit transfer are decided by a committee at EPU.

As the programme is taught in English, sufficient language proficiency is a prerequisite for involvement in class. So far, students may choose an English test, to prove level C, at any time, regardless of what semester they are in. However, the language level needed to qualify for admission to the university is level B 2. This admission criterion should be strengthened. Maybe even level C proficiency could be required before admission. However, should the proficiency not be sufficient then, language courses need to be offered and level C should to be reached before the second semester commences.

### 3.2.2 Structure of the study programme

The 8 semester Bachelor's programme "Psychology" includes mostly psychological courses on subject-related competencies that build the foundation for understanding psychological processes (750 course hours) as well as courses on general and professional abilities, skills, and knowledge (1020 course hours). This overall structure is considered to be appropriate. However, the lists of subject-related competences and general and professional abilities (self-report pp. 22) show overlap, e.g. in Differential Psychology, which might be rectified.

The programme is divided into nine modules, namely "Introduction", "General Knowledge and Practice", "Psychological Assessment", "Fundamental Psychological Disciplines", "Clinical and Consulting Psychology and Psychotherapy", "Elective Courses", "Practice" and "Research Skills". These modules comprise core psychological courses, e.g. clinical psychology, as well as methods, e.g. statistics and research methods, and also European values and culture are covered on the curriculum. Elective courses allow students to gain additional knowledge in other fields of interest, e.g., differential diagnostics, marketing, and advertising.

### 3.2.3 ECTS and modularisation

Students are required to accumulate 240 ECTS credits for the 8 semester programme; in each semester 30 credits are acquired. For one credit 25 to 30 hours of student's work are taken as a basis. Credits are assigned based on the expected curricular and extracurricular workload necessary to complete course and are awarded based on examinations during or at the end of a course. Furthermore, credits are awarded for a thesis. With the credits, students also receive a grade on the 6-point ECTS scale. The module handbook specifies the general formula by which



these grades are computed, but in many instances the coefficients for this formula are not stated. The reviewers recommend that this is done before accreditation in the interest of transparency of the marking scheme.

#### 3.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

EPU's teaching approach is constructivist, i.e. teachers foster active participation and discussion of the students during course sessions. Lecture slides are delivered to students before the course. Further teaching materials, e.g. textbooks which the teachers are obliged to write under EPU regulations, are also made available on-line to the students. Seminars, in the spirit of constructivism, are conducted in teamwork and role play (e.g., thesis defence). Examinations comprise written and oral exams, including student presentations throughout the semester, to ensure continuous rehearsal and learning of the study material.

### 3.3 Conclusion

Assessed against the objectives of the study programme, the structure of the Bachelor's programme "Psychology" can be characterised as consistent. Except for the shortcomings mentioned above, the reviewers conceive the study programme to have a sound concept.

## 4 Master programme "General Psychology"

### 4.1 Targets of the study programme

#### 4.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

According to EPU's self-description and the on-site discussions with the teaching and research staff, the Master's programme "General Psychology" focuses on applied science, research and practice. The program is taught in English, which is a unique selling point in Bulgaria. There are two versions of the Master's programme: first, a two-semester course for students with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, and second, a three-semester course for students with a Bachelor's degree in a different discipline. The main objective of the "General Psychology" programme is to produce psychologists which are trained to European standards, as documented by an "EuroPsy" certificate. More specifically, the students should understand and predict human behaviour and thinking and acquire knowledge related to HR management and effective team-working. During the visit it became obvious that there is a need for HR-trained psychologists in recruitment companies in Bulgaria. This suggests that the programme should be a degree in

business psychology. EPU's decision to offer a Master's degree in *General Psychology* instead is driven by demands for such a degree by Greek students, who form a large fraction of the target group (South-Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia). Despite an expressed need for clinical/counselling psychologists, EPU chose not to offer a Master's degree with a clinical focus, because the non-Bulgarian target group members would not easily find practice opportunities during their studies in Bulgarian hospitals/practices.

#### 4.1.2 Objectives and competences

Students of "General Psychology" acquire competences which basically seem to be a continuation of the Bachelor's programme, with opportunity to take elective courses in business-related topics (PSYM219, 220,221,329,330,331). Here the expert group sees a clear miss-match between objective of the study programme (prepare for working in HR) and the program's structure: The few HR- relevant courses are offered as elective courses and many topics central to HR as leadership, personnel development, personnel selection, organisational development do not appear in the program curriculum at all. Consequently, the title of the study programme "General Psychology" and the content have to be aligned. The university must either change the title of the programme or adapt the content covered in the curriculum.

The 3-semester programme for students entering from other disciplines offers no research methods training, yet it is stated in the prerequisites of PSYM102 (Statistics I) that methods of research in psychology are needed. Likewise, course PSYM107 in the first semester requires that students know about the main concepts in psychology, including the use of statistical methods, but they will probably not have this knowledge. Basic knowledge and skills in research methods are a required for an "EuroPsy" certificate and should be included in this programme.

#### 4.1.3 Personal development and capability for civic engagement

Given the international orientation of the programme, the mandatory course on "European values and culture" will certainly be beneficial for the students, and helps to integrate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. EPU's teaching approach is constructivist, where the lecturer encourages high student involvement in the teaching process through interactive discussions and shared coursework.

#### 4.1.4 Employability

Given that the target group students for "General Psychology" usually do not speak Bulgarian, it will likely be difficult for them to find employment as psychologists in Bulgaria. This view, which is shared with the Bachelor's programme "Psychology", was expressed by the group of employers and stakeholders during the on-site visit. In other businesses, e.g. recruitment companies, English language skills are desirable. Therefore, many graduates of the Master's programme are

expected to find employment (or internships) elsewhere in Europe, using EPU as an 'entry point'. Furthermore, a need for graduates with a specialisation in clinical psychology was expressed by many of the stakeholders.

The mismatch between the programme's objective and the programme's structure in terms of qualifying for an HR position clearly affects the employability of students. The reviewers have severe doubts that the programme is suitable for preparing students to work in an HR position. Therefore the above mentioned revision of either title or concept of the programme is necessary.

In the current programme students are required to take internships up to 135 hours (second semester). The reviewers would like to encourage EPU to expand this period to at least 220 to 240 hours, since these internships add to the practical experience of the students and increase their chances of later employment. A career centre for students is currently being established at EPU, which will provide help in finding internship positions and potential employers. Due to the aforementioned language issues many students will be forced to take their internships in their home/ or English-speaking countries. To ensure comparability between these internships, the definition of clear criteria and documentation (e.g. internship report) of the internship would be helpful.

#### 4.1.5 Conclusion

In summary, the objectives of the Master's programme "General Psychology" as outlined in the self-description suggest a course in business-related psychology, whereas the contents of the module handbook indicate a kind of continuation of the Bachelor's programme. Therefore it is required to align objectives, content and title of the programme.

## 4.2 Concept of the study programme

### 4.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

From 2015 onwards, EPU plans to admit 30 students to the Master's programme "General Management", which has not begun at the time of writing. Student selection is based on documentation in written form. Applicants must have completed a Bachelor's programme in Psychology or in another subject, recognised in the EU. The grade point average of the diploma and the score of history must be at least "Good". Further, a document certifying the level of proficiency in English has to be submitted. The prerequisites (course contents etc.) for credit transfer are decided by a committee at EPU. The Lisbon convention on the "Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region" is implemented for student recruitment and credit transfer from other institutions.

#### 4.2.2 Structure of the study programme

As mentioned, the course content is mostly a continuation of the Bachelor's programme. The Programme contains a total of 9 provisionally differentiated modules. These modules comprise the "General Module", the modules "Physiology and Mind", "Development", "Fundamental Psychological Principles", "Psychology", "Applied Psychology" and "Elective Courses" with fields such as Development (Psychology of adolescence and Child development), Comparative Psychology (Gender psychology, Cross-Cultural Psychology), Psychology and Marketing (Communication Skills, Consumer Behaviour), Mental Health (Subjective Well-Being) and Work in Crisis Situations (Crisis Management, Stress, Coping, and Health). Further there exist the two modules "Practicum" and "Research Skills"

The modules are based on both curricular and extracurricular load in conformity to the regulations of weekly student workload and to the principles of combining theoretical and applied knowledge. The Master's Programme "General Psychology" has been developed in two versions, one with 1,5 years and one with 1 year of studies, respectively for bachelors in any major subject different from psychology and for bachelors in psychology.

The Master's programme for graduates in psychology is provided within one academic year, 2 semesters of 15 weeks each. The programme comprises a total of 1080 academic hours, as among them lectures - 510 hours, seminars - 330 hours, laboratory work - 240 hours. The total number of courses is 23, among these 14 mandatory and 9 elective. The total number of ECTS credits is 84 (the legal requirement is a minimum of 60 credits).

The Master's Programme for those who have obtained a Bachelor's degree in another subject is provided for one and a half academic year, within 3 semesters of 15 weeks each. The total number of academic hours is 1665, as 720 of them are lectures, 705 hours – seminars, and 240 hours - laboratory work. The total number of courses is 30, among these 21 mandatory and 9 elective. The total number of ECTS credits is 110.

The 3 semester Master's programme includes some more basic psychological courses (e.g. PSYM105) which is appropriate given the diverse backgrounds of the prospective students. However, since these students will probably also lack research methods knowledge, it should be taught here. Moreover, the reviewers recommend a course on the "Fundamentals of Motor Control", even though that is not strictly required by EuroPsy standards.

#### 4.2.3 ECTS and modularization

Students are required to accumulate 110 ECTS credits for the 3 semester Master's programme, and 84 ECTS credits for the 2 semester programme. One ECTS credits equals 25 to 30 hours of workload. Credits are assigned based on the expected curricular and extracurricular workload necessary to complete course. Credits are awarded based on examinations during or at the end

of a course. Furthermore, 20 ECTS credits are awarded for a Master's thesis. With the credits, students also receive a grade on the 6-point ECTS scale. The module handbook specifies the general formula by which these grades are computed, but in many instances the coefficients for this formula are not stated and should be done in the interest of transparency of the grading scheme.

#### 4.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

EPU's teaching approach is constructivist, i.e. teachers foster active participation and discussion of the students during course sessions. Lecture slides are delivered to students before the course. Further teaching materials, e.g. textbooks which the teachers are obliged to write under EPU regulations, are also made available online to the students. Seminars, in the spirit of constructivism, are conducted in teamwork and role play (e.g. thesis defence). Only in few of the courses teaching methods appeared less suitable for the topic taught e.g. in case of a lecture on communication skills (PSYM 220) – to acquire those behavioural skills, methods like role plays seem to be more appropriate than lecture and discussion. Examinations comprise written and oral exams, including student presentations throughout the semester, to ensure continuous rehearsal and learning of the study material.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The expert group is convinced that the study programme "General Psychology" is backed by very active and motivated staff members. Except for the shortcomings described above, the reviewers believe the study programme to have a sound concept. However, the concept of the study programme has to be stronger aligned to title of the programme.

## 5 Implementation

### 5.1 Resources

Plans for the further development of the university include a focus on the development of interdisciplinarity in research and education, which also has an effect on EPU's resources. In the first place, the new university building shall be finished by the end of 2015. Further, there will be improvements regarding financial and personal resources. Through consistent, dependable, and adequate funding, the university provides the personnel, resources, and facilities to support the delivery of curriculum, instruction, programmes and services.

### 5.1.1 Personal resources

Beyond the study programme, teachers are encouraged to spend 30 percent of their time on research activity. The close proximity and collaborative opportunities with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences should ensure that teachers continuously update their subject knowledge and deliver state-of-the-art teaching to EPU students. Teachers should be encouraged to update their English skills regularly. In general, a further education programme for teaching staff should be provided.

Teachers are available to counsel and discuss with students and the relations are personal, what is important to students. Teachers are also motivated to work at highest possible quality with the option to get a higher salary, which is a matter of several variables calculated in the complex formula.

It is very positive that EPU has a lot of teachers with real business life practical experience. At the same time, age distribution should be taken into account and succession plans (professors, assistants) should be implemented. The gender distribution is in favour of men, but EPU has also women on managerial and senior professional positions. The number and distribution (full time, civil contract) of teachers seems enough to cover the teaching need in all assessed programmes, as is shown below.

#### *Management and Administration*

Teaching staff for the programme "Management and Administration" comprises a total of 17 professors and associate professors, among these 9 Full Professors and 8 Associate Professors. 12 of them have a basic employment contract and 5 a civil contract. The Department "Economy, Management and Administration" also includes two foreign teachers from Italy and the UK. The average age of teachers working under an employment contract in the department is 56.7 years, and of those working under an employment contract is 64. The ratio of staff on an employment contract and part-time (civil contract) at the department are respectively 54.5 percent of employment and 45.5 percent of the part-time teachers.

#### *Psychology*

Teaching staff for the two Bachelor's programmes "Psychology" is comprised of faculty employees by EPU, scholars from academic partners in and outside of Bulgaria (e.g., Bulgarian Academy of Science, University of Sofia, University of Lausanne), guest lecturers, and part-time instructors. This seems sufficient to cover the teaching need.

#### *General Psychology*

Teaching staff for the "General Psychology" programme is comprised of 3/1 employed/fee basis professors, 6/3 assistant professors and 1/1 lecturers. This seems enough to cover the teaching need of 30 students.

### 5.1.2 Financial Resources

A draft of the financial plan for the teaching staff is provided in the self-report. EPU will be financed by tuition fees of students, donations and yields from patents. Administration plans on depositing 30 percent of the department's revenue into a separate account to be used primarily on research and conference participation. Money for research is acquired from the Bulgarian government and also from private donors or international institutions from Norway, the United States of American and other countries. Regarding the financial resources and minimum capital the university fulfils national requirements.

### 5.1.3 Infrastructural Resources

The University infrastructure seems appropriate for the planned and existing study programmes. Furthermore, EPU will soon move to a new campus that is currently being built in Pernik. Within the new building class rooms, offices, laboratories and a new library will be installed.

Currently EPU does not have a traditional paper-based library. But students and staff mostly use their electronic access to many international databases and online journals through the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Since March 2012 EPU had access to the databases of: SciVerse® Science Direct®; SciVerse® Scopus®; Web of Knowledge and also provided audio materials in English – Headway Class Audio CD Oxford. Student mostly use e-materials provided by their teachers and don't use the library capacities frequently. The library reading room has a seating capacity of 20 users; the work stations are outfitted for laptop use and offer Wi-Fi Internet. The EPU library's reading and storage rooms house 11980 library units.

The on-site laboratory equipment is fairly rudimentary. However, access to better equipped labs (e.g. for thesis work) is possible through the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which is guaranteed in cooperation contracts. Therefore, the resources available at this time are adequate.

## 5.2 Organisation, counselling and cooperation

### *Organisation*

Responsibilities and contact of the individual programmes are clearly defined. The decision-making processes within EPU are well documented. First is the primary level: departments and their teachers – both full-time and tenured teachers. And second is the university level: the University Administration - the Rector and the Vice Rectors, the President and the Academic Council.

The Programme Board is a collective body appointed to manage the so-called Programme of Study and its activity is overseen by the Chair of the Board. The Programme Boards of the Bachelor's Programmes consists of at least seven members: four full-time tenured teachers from

EPU who teach some of the disciplines included in the curriculum during the four years of education; one professor from a foreign partner university with experience in a related field; one representative of the business industry, a professional or creative organisation or another employer in the relevant professional field, and one student enrolled in the programme of study. The Programme Board makes decisions on curricula, qualifications profiles and descriptions of the courses included in the programme curriculum, suggestions about new educators and finally reviewing the teaching material.

The Chairperson of the Programme of Study is a tenured professor hired on a labour contract at the University with qualifications in the respective field of study and is appointed by the Academic Council following endorsement by the Rector. The Chairperson is responsible for organisational behaviour of the programme.

In general the administrative staff ensures the supervision of students. The support staff at EPU adequately uses technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

### *Cooperation*

Cooperation exists in different ways. First of all is a cooperation between EPU and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to access the library and online databases. EPU is also well integrated in the education system of Bulgaria and the academic community. The staff benefits from the state regulations.

EPU has a cooperative approach to networking with other HEIs, research institutes and representatives from business and administration. But there is no concept and regularity behind that, especially for the business sector. Therefore, EPU could adopt a concept to make it more mandatory and continuous.

The self-report vaguely describes that EPU cooperates in psychology with academic partners and guest-lecturers, no specific partners are named. During the on-site visit, the main academic partners appeared to be members of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Attico College in Athens. The former are heavily involved in EPU, as they form the core of the teaching staff.

There is the possibility for internships especially for the "Management and Administration" study programme. EPU has contracts for their internships. Students were able to convince the experts that it is a good opportunity for the university and for the students.

### *Counselling*

The programme management, teachers and support staff provide personal counselling and advice to students and faculty members where necessary in respect to their studies, academic issues and organisational issues. For instance, an official contact person for student affairs is



named. Applicants and students are substantially supported in regards to visa requirements, since most of the students at EPU come from abroad.

For students in need of tutoring, students from higher semesters are available to support students identified by teachers or guidance counsellors. The university's capacity to provide adequate varied support strategies promotes success for all students.

### **5.3 Examination system**

EPU has implemented its own methodology for conducting continuous and final assessments. Instructors monitor their students' progress at least once every two weeks. Therefore it is advisable to incorporate on an ongoing basis home assignments and a balanced ratio of open- and closed-book tests. The results of these tests and assignments are factored into the final grade for the semester. The module handbook specifies the general formula by which these grades are computed, but in many instances the coefficients for this formula are not stated. It is recommended that this is done in the interest of transparency of the marking scheme.

The programme "Management and Administration" provides 24 examinations, 10 continuous assessments, 4 course works and 1 diploma defence. The examinations in "Psychology" consist of biweekly continuous assessment by the teacher and two written tests in the middle and at the end of the semester. These written tests are blindly and independently marked by external examiners, to ensure objective assessment. The examination frequency is sufficient, and the proposed procedures are sound.

The academic feasibility of the programmes is guaranteed by a suitable curriculum design and appropriate testing organisation. Overall, the test system is appropriate. The tests are module-related, more knowledge- and skills-oriented. Examination procedures are suitable in quantity, frequency, and variation. In all study programmes the students gets a variety of different types of examinations. Continuous assessments are included in the curriculum. There is a minimum of two written exams at the beginning and at the end of semester. Two supervisors, one EPU lecturer and one external evaluator grade exams. External examiners are scholars who are independent of the primary course instructor of the discipline that they will be evaluating. External examiners may be instructors from the academic staff of other universities in Bulgaria or abroad or established professionals from the given field of study. They receive the students' exams in digital format and evaluate them anonymously according to the academic standards of the University and the specifics of the evaluated course material. External examiners are recruited by the Academic Council upon a request by the Chair of the Programme of Study and are hired on a civil contract by the President of the University.

The result is a harmonious picture in which it can be stated that the tests are working overall to determine module-related and competence-oriented learning outcomes to be acquired. The opportunity for repeating exams exists. Exams can be rewritten approximately three times. The experts assess the test frequency and organisation as adequate and appropriate load.

#### **5.4 Documentation and transparency**

In principle, the programmes are well documented in module handbooks, self-descriptions and curriculums. However, module descriptions should be revised in regard to workload calculations. The calculated ECTS credits should cover all kinds of students' work (class work, individual work, exams) not only in the work plan, but also in each course description.

Further, there are several 'bugs' which need to be fixed: first, as mentioned above, the grading scheme weighting coefficients should be written into the module handbook to make the grade transparent for the students. Second, the authors should decide on one terminology throughout: for example, what is the difference between 'term', 'semester' and 'course'. Third, all acronyms should be explained, since not all abbreviations, such as 'AG' in the curriculum description, are self-explanatory. Lastly, module handbook and curricula should be made available to interested students. EPU should publish the curricula (overview) of study programmes on the website of the university.

All necessary data for the admission procedure are transparent, well documented, and accessible to students and to the public. The same is true for regulations on exams and the recognition of competences according to the Lisbon Convention and the recognition of professional competences. Required legal documents such as final grade certificate, Transcript of Records and Diploma Supplement are contained in the self-report on the study programmes.

#### **5.5 Gender justice and compensation opportunities for disabled people**

Although no concept concerning gender justice is provided by EPU, there appeared to be a fair number of women in leadership positions; e.g. in the management department, 33, 3 percent of full-time teachers are women, some of them on senior professional and managerial positions.

The student admission process does not have separate quotas for males and for females. The university offers financial help to students coming from disadvantaged economic circumstances, as well as flexibility in the instructional activities for those students with permanent disabilities and lowered work capacity. Some of these accommodations include tutoring on an individualised curriculum and individualised time table, and testing outside of the regular final exam period.

The new building, which is currently being built, is designed to meet all regulatory requirements so as to allow people with disabilities equal education.

## 5.6 Conclusion

At EPU all requirements for the successful implementation of the study programmes “Management and Administration”, “Psychology” and “General Psychology” are met. For the realisation of the programmes adequate personal resources as well as an organisational and administrative framework, including a suitable examination system, is in place. Necessary documents are available and decision-making processes are transparent. Some potential for improvements is identified only in regard to the transparency for applicants and interested people and traceability of the examination system.

## 6 Quality Management

The European Polytechnical University has established a quality management system which is well documented. The goal of the system is to oversee, maintain and govern the quality of education and the academic staff in the professional fields of study it offers. SEAQE (Regulations on the Structure and Activity of the System of Evaluation and Assurance of Quality of Education) is a fully developed policy instrument which covers the admission of undergraduate and graduate students, management of the learning process, examination and evaluation, student motivation, attestation and development of academic staff and their workload, calculation of staff compensation on the basis of the quality of their performance, etc.

The quality of education is ensured by two types of measures: incentives directed to the students and such directed to the lecturers. It is provided through the system of motivation of the teaching staff by accounting for the feedback information received from the students. Both processes – provision of incentive to the lecturers and the feedback - are detailed elsewhere in this report.

The university applies its uniform policy for financial stimulation of the quality of lecturers’ work and the quality of students training assessed based on the results of their preparation. An incentive in the proposed organisation of the educational and research activity is the guaranteed freedom of teaching and research.

With regard to lecturers - their salary depends on the quality of their work quantified by 100-point training quality assessment and maintenance system. Defined are the requirements and rules, methods, order and scales for quality assessments are established. The main component in these assessments is the student feedback. Evaluators can also be future employers of the students. The volume of academic workload has two components: academic and research work

with proportions defined - not less than 60 percent of educational and not less than 30 percent of the research workload. Thus any member of the academic staff is requested to teach and do science in the defined ratio.

With respect to the students, an innovative financial incentive is provided. For their training they pay taxes by which the university is supported because it does not use state subsidy. Depending on their result they pay a decreasing fee under a 4-point scale.

Lecturers are stimulated by the assessment they receive and the related benefits. In addition, opportunities for continuous improvement and maintenance of their qualification are provided. This is ensured by the annual planned courses related to the principles of adult training and aimed at developing skills for interactive teaching style, promoting the students motivation and new forms of presentation of material.

In the course evaluation the questionnaires are leaking questions regarding the student real workload. Therefore, EPU should assess the real workload in the course evaluations.

Finally, the quality management system is fully functional and it gathers all the relevant information except the real student workload through evaluation procedures and data analysis.

## **7 Summary**

The reviewers come up with a positive statement on the programmes under examination. Strong points noted by the self-report and mentioned during the on-site visit are that the university is located near the Bulgarian capital; the departments are staffed with professors of high reputation in Bulgaria, and cooperation with Bulgarian authorities, such as the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences are active and tight.

The study programmes "Management and Administration", "Psychology" and "General Psychology" are sound programmes, which embody current trends in the fields. They impart knowledge on the subject, comprising professional skills and basic academic competences. The curricular concept of the programmes are planned thoroughly and executed properly. Objectives are defined and can be reached with the proposed modular structure. Therefore, only some minor steps for a further development are suggested by the reviewers. Only in regard to "General Psychology" it is necessary to align title and content of the programme.

The implementation of the study programmes is based on an appropriate infrastructure, an efficient organisation and well-developed co-operations. The peers appreciate the co-operations, which EPU maintains with local public administrations and national as well as international companies in the region of Sofia.

All proposed steps for the improvement of the study programmes can be evaluated by EPU itself, since a quality management system is established, which guarantees the further development of the study programmes.

Although existing just for five years, the European Polytechnical University is experienced in training young professionals from different countries in several subjects and in English, which is an innovative approach in Bulgaria. The group of reviewers is of the opinion that the programmes at EPU are of good quality and have an unique character in the Bulgarian system of higher education.

## **8 Recommendation of the expert group**

The group of experts recommends the following **decision**: Accreditation with conditions.

The group of experts proposes the following **conditions**:

### **Master “General Psychology”**

1. The title of the study programme “General Psychology”, its objectives and the content have to be aligned. The university must either change the objectives described in the self-report, or adapt the title of the programme and the content covered in the curriculum.

#### **IV Decision of the ACQUIN Accreditation Commission**

On the basis of the report of the expert group, the statement of the HEI and the statement of the standing expert committee, on 29th June 2015 the Accreditation Commission takes the following decision:

##### **General recommendations for all study programmes**

For the further development of the study programmes the following recommendations are given:

- Module descriptions should be revised in regard to workload calculations. The calculated ECTS credits should cover all kinds of students' work (class work, individual work, exams) not only in the work plan, but also in each course description.
- The real workload should be assessed in course evaluations.
- A further education programme for teaching staff should be provided.
- EPU should publish the curricula (overview) of study programmes on the website of EPU.
- Age and gender distribution should be taken into account and succession plans (professors, assistants) should be implemented.
- The module handbook specifies the general formula by which these grades are computed, but in many instances the coefficients for this formula are not stated. It is recommended that this is done in the interest of transparency of the marking scheme.

##### **Management and Administration (B.A.)**

**The Bachelor's programme „Management and Administration“ (B.A.) is accredited for the first time without any conditions.**

**The accreditation is valid through 30th September 2020.**

For the further development of the study programme the following recommendations are given:

- The objectives of the study programme should be stronger aligned to title "Management and Administration".
- It is recommended to add the course "Business English" to the curriculum.
- Since students are encouraged to work on seminar papers and research assignments from the first year on and they are encouraged to be involved in practical research after first and second practical training, it is recommended to introduce the research course in the first or second, instead of the last study year.
- It is recommended to enlarge the list of elective courses with entrepreneurial contents, creativity and problem solving.

## Psychology (B.A.)

**The Bachelor's programme „Psychology“ (B.A.) is accredited for the first time without any conditions.**

**The accreditation is valid through 30th September 2020.**

For the further development of the study programme the following recommendations are given:

- It is strongly recommended to continue the practical elements of the education. At the same time, the overall internship requirement in fields of practice outside of the university should be raised to between three and six months. Such internships should be supervised by psychologists. They can take place in Bulgaria or abroad, depending on the language proficiency of the student.
- The language level needed to qualify for admission to the university is level B 2. This admission criterion should be strengthened.

## General Psychology (M.A.)

**The Master's programme „General Psychology“ (M.A.) is accredited for the first time without any conditions.**

**The accreditation is valid through 30th September 2020.**

For the further development of the study programme the following recommendations are given:

- Basic knowledge and skills in research methods are a required for an “EuroPsy” certificate and should be included in this programme.
- The reviewers recommend a course on the “Fundamentals of Motor Control”, even though that is not strictly required by EuroPsy standards.
- The title of the study programme “General Psychology”, its objectives and the content should be aligned. The university should either change the objectives described in the self-report, or adapt the title of the programme and the content covered in the curriculum.

The Accreditation Commission changes the proposal of the expert group as follows

Reformulation of a condition into a recommendation

- The title of the study programme “General Psychology”, its objectives and the content have to be aligned. The university must either change the objectives described in the self-report, or adapt the title of the programme and the content covered in the curriculum.

Justification

The condition is reformulated as a recommendation since the university can show in the statement on the report of the expert group that there is no significant mismatch between title and content of the study programme.