

## **Accreditation report**

### **ESCP Europe Berlin**

### **„Bachelor in Management“ (B.Sc.)**

#### **I Procedure**

**Date of Contract:** December 20<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Receipt of self-evaluation report:** October 4<sup>th</sup> 2016

**Date of the on-site visit:** October 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> 2016

**Standing Expert Committee:** economics, law and social sciences

**Attendance by the ACQUIN Office:** Tobias Auberger

**Decisions of the Accreditation Commission:** December 6<sup>th</sup> 2016

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

- **Karl-Peter Abt**, Associate Partner Stanton Chase International
- **Prof. Dr. Reinhard Bachmann**, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, International Management
- **Anika Bittner**, Student of the program „Volkswirtschaftslehre“ (B.A.) at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
- **Jun.-Prof. Dr. Matthias Rätzer**, Technische Universität Chemnitz, European Management
- **Prof. Dr. Axel Schlich**, Hochschule Koblenz , International Marketing,
- **Prof. Dr. Pei Wang-Nastansky**, Hochschule Aschaffenburg, International Management & Business Information Systems

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 Hamburg that they were available for the discussions and have been prepared to provide information on programmes and university.

**Evaluation Criteria** have been the “criteria for accreditation of study programs” by the German Accreditation Council in the actual official version. At the same time the national context, particularly the national rules regulating the establishment of study programmes, has been taken into account.

## **II Introduction**

### **1 Short profile of the ESCP Europe Wirtschaftshochschule Berlin**

ESCP Europe (École supérieure de commerce de Paris) is a pan-European business school which has campuses in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Turin, and Warsaw. Originally established in 1819 in Paris, it is the oldest business school in the world and one of the French "Grandes écoles". Since then being a french institution, in 1973, the concept of a multi-campus business school was founded with the consecutive inaugurations of campuses in the United Kingdom (London in 1974, move to Oxford in 1975) and in Germany (Düsseldorf in 1975, move to Berlin in 1985). Since then, the school has deepened its European presence to become an integrated paneuropean business school. With respect to legal requirements, every campus is university of its own governed by the local legal framework. Thus, ESCP Europe Wirtschaftshochschule Berlin is a state-recognized higher education institution according to German / Berlin law. ESCP's general aim is to prepare high-level students for top executive functions. ESCP Europe welcomes approximately 4,000 students and 4,000 executives from 90 different nations every year, offering them a wide range of general management and specialised programmes for undergraduate, graduate/doctoral studies and at the executive education level. The School's alumni network has 40,000 members in 150 countries and from 200 nationalities.

### **2 The program and its framework**

The study programme "Bachelor in Management" (B.Sc.) is run by the campus in Berlin. It is the only bachelor program within the ESCP network. The six semester program comprises 180 ECTS credits.

### III Evaluation

#### 1 Objectives of the study programme

With campuses in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Torino and Warsaw plus a network of about 100 partner universities worldwide, ESCP Europe has a clear focus on cross-cultural management education. In order to achieve the various objectives, the didactic approach at ESCP is characterized by small learning groups and a comparatively high number of contact hours, multinational faculty staff, practical real-life cases and business simulations and last but not least a highly interactive relationship between students and professors.

The study programme has been designed as a three-year general management programme to be completed on three different campuses. With its implementation ESCP aims to meet the increasing demand for cross-cultural bachelor programmes. Characteristic for the study programme under review is the multicultural experience for students resulting from both a highly international student body and the need to change the study location every year. Thus, the study programme consequently implements ESCP Europe's mission statement and reasonably complements the existing degree programmes at ESCP Europe. With regard to its interdisciplinary curriculum, the programme may be lacking a clear profile as modules in the field of business administration, economics, languages, mathematics, statistics, and personal development are included. ESCP Europe has an international network of about 45,000 active alumni based in more than 150 countries worldwide. Last but not least, this can be a central asset in order to provide students with internships.

Generally, the study programme under review provides the students with professional competences in management (specifically finance, international business, and accounting), economics (specifically micro, macro, and international) and law (specifically basics, business, and taxation). A further distinctive field of study in the curriculum is labelled with "liberal arts". In order to broaden the students' perspectives and to follow comparable programmes in the Anglo-Saxon area the curriculum has been enriched with modules like "World History and International Relations", "Introduction to Psychology and Sociology" and "Key Scientific and Technological Issues in Business Fields". Conceptually, the professional competences seem to follow a very broad approach. Considering the aims of the study programmes, it is questionable if the inclusion of liberal arts content leads to a substantial improvement of quality of the degree. Moreover, the students are provided with methodological competences mostly in the field of mathematics including statistics. Research methods are almost completely outside the scope of the study programme what might be hindering for students wishing to attend a Master programme after the Bachelor at ESCP at another university. With respect to the degree as Bachelor of Science the mathematical parts seem to be well adjusted. Alumni of the programme maybe feedback the goods or bads of the

curricular approach regarding the methods. Finally, the study programme includes generic competences like language courses, computer skills, collective projects, presentation and discussion skills as well as intercultural skills. Considering the target group of the programme, the generic competences provided with programme fit well with general objectives of the ESCP and the programme. As generalists with an international background, graduates from ESCP Europe most likely will have a wide variety of opportunities. In combination with a Master's degree and/or an intensive training on the job they are prepared for a professional career. The teaching methods used, i.e. case studies, guest speakers from industry, built-in intern-ships, etc., are likely to increase the employability of graduates from ESCP Europe.

All in all, it can be concluded that the attractiveness of the study programme under review results from a multicultural experience for students. Hence, the study programme fits to ESCP Europe's mission statement and reasonably complements the existing degree programmes. In order to shape the profile as a general management programme it is recommended to enrich the curriculum with more modules in the field of business, e.g. human resources management, entrepreneurship, or organisational behaviour.

## **2 Concept of the study programme**

### **2.1 Structure of the study programme**

The most outstanding aspect of the six-semester program is that the studies take place at three ESCP Europe locations in different European countries. The program starts in London for the first year and ends obligatory in Berlin (third year). Concerning the second year, students can choose between the campuses in Madrid and Torino. This supports diversity of the student-body, as well as providing a convincing backdrop for a general, cross-culture business education. The following is a more detailed evaluation regarding the conceptual approach and program structure of the Bachelor in Management at the ESCP Europe.

The first half of the programs aims at acquiring basic knowledge and competencies. Therefore the first three semesters consist of the modules "Micro-Economics", "Mathematics", "Introduction to business administration and organisation", "International Relations and World history", "Statistics 1", "European institutions and comparative political systems", "Financial Accounting", "Introduction to Psychology and Sociology", "Macro-Economics", "Statistics 2 and advanced statistics", "Business law: contract and corporate law" and "Financial statement analysis and cost accounting". The following semesters provide a more specific curriculum offering the modules "Advanced statistics", "International Business Law & Taxation", "Marketing", "Finance", "Key Scientific and Technological Issues in Business", "International economics", "Operations and Information systems", "Seminar: Business Game", "CSR and business ethics", "International management & Strategy International management & Strategy" as well as two management and two

liberal arts elective courses. During the sixth semester the thesis should be written which comprises nine ECTS-credits.

Additionally the curriculum comprises two rounds of student internships to enable students to apply in real life situations their knowledge, skills and competencies and two collective projects. This practice will be held in an actual workplace environment and will be recorded in the students' internship portfolio.

Basically, this degree program has outlined the following three core objectives:

- Discovery of foundation of business and its multicultural facets, by “following standards adopted in the management education community”;
- Bachelor graduates are to “Become international and multicultural business leaders...”
- Understanding “the humanistic aspects of business, and how liberal arts, multilingualism, and interdisciplinarity contributes to a better understanding of business...”

The expert group is convinced that the study programme has a sound concept. However, within the six semester program, the objective of “following standards adopted in the management education community” is slightly compromised, apparently by the abundant addition of a variety of core “liberal art” subjects, 1-2 per semester. This leaves no space for fundamental as well as emerging future-centred general management topics. Thus, important areas, usually attributed to Management Studies, are missing in the study program, for example: Human Resources Management (HRM), Organizational Behaviour, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, e-Business, Business Digitalization, etc. During the on-site visit, as one reason of not offering, for instance, Human Resources Management, it was pointed out that ESCP's future bachelor level students do not have previous working experiences. This argument is not coherent with the given “Study Regulations” and Syllabi Collection because other management topics, which usually assume even more practical experience, are offered in the study program, such as “Business Law: Contract and Corporate Law”, “Financial and Managerial Accounting II”, “International Management & Strategy”, and more. This argument is also backed by ESCP's evaluation results. Thus, the field of General Management should be extended in the study program, for instance by introducing modules on Human Resources, Digitalization or Organizational Behaviour. Otherwise, the liberal arts perspective of the study program should be presented more transparently in advertisement and stated aims of the program.

ESCP's orientation and core competencies lie in business and management education. Apparently, there is no liberal art department/faculty/chair at ESCP campuses. Given the explicitly and manifold highlighted focal point in liberal arts this looks conceptually questionable. During the on-site visits, students from the ESCP Europe cohorts of two generations have reflected that liberal arts subjects are taught by PhD and/or PhD candidates or external staff, not full-time ESCP faculty members.

This adds questions with respect to the liberal art aspects in a Bachelor of Science Degree in General Management.

## **2.2 Modularisation, Teaching methods and Admission criteria**

The programme holds 180 ECTS credits consisting of modules with at least six ECTS credits. 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. The workloads of Internship 1 and Internship 2 have not been defined coherently in the syllabus. Thus, the workload of the internship has to be defined correctly and in correspondence to the weeks stated in the exam regulations.

ESCP Europe has implemented its own methodology for conducting continuous and final assessments. On the one hand, 'common' types of assessments are used, e.g. group work, presentation skills, written qualification, research and decision making and judgment. On the other hand, student's participation is assessed individually. The expert group agrees that taking into account students' participation in the assessment is necessary. Nevertheless, this leads to a challenging task at the same time with respect to a consistent realistic and operationally feasible procedure during the entire time span of semester. Rating standards for the quality of participation is a highly subjective matter and will most likely vary between instructors. In practice, currently the grading result of individual class participation is given to students at the end of the semester, according to ESCP Europe students comments during the on-site visit. This end-of-semester approach could be improved to be more frequent or at least a mid-term feedback process in order to offer awareness as well as opportunities for performance improvement.

ESCP's teaching approach focusses on fostering active participation and discussion of the students during course sessions. Lecture slides are delivered to students before the course. Further teaching materials are also made available online to the students. Seminars are conducted in teamwork and role play (e.g. thesis defence). During the on-site visit, ESCP students have revealed that the e-learning component in language training, especially for beginners of a foreign language, is with very limited personal contact hours. It is the view of the expert group that students have individual styles. At the beginning of learning a new foreign language, many students need intensive personal communication during their learning progress to be motivated in order to successfully follow the pedagogy processes. None of ESCP students are graduates from distance learning based high school systems, and thus, not trained to systematically relying on e-learning new subjects without limited tutorship. Hence, ESCP Europe should add reasonable personal contact hours for tutoring students at the beginner level of foreign language studies.

The selection process and procedures have been adequately explained and documented on the web as well as in the given documentation. ESCP Europe has already recruited a student body of 28 countries with 28 different standards of secondary school examinations; the expert group sees

that ESCP Europe has managed this admission process well. Given that the number of applicants is each year much higher (377 in 2016) than the actual intake (114 in 2016) there is a selection process in place which is led by an admissions committee. The latter applies a point system for various achievements (e.g. good personal statement or positive references) in addition to non-negotiable requirements that prospective students have to fulfil (e.g. Abitur or equivalent; English language skills). Overall the admissions process is transparent and fair

### **3 Implementation**

#### **3.1 Resources**

The faculty at ESCP includes full-time professors, visiting professors and guest-lecturers. In addition, the faculty is complemented by more than 500 adjunct contributors, i.e. academics teaching at other universities, professionals, or Ph.D. students. Each of the six universities integrated in the study programme has its own practices and requirements with regard to the qualification of teaching staff. The local Academic Directors are in charge of the qualifications. A minimum educational level for teachers involved in the Bachelor programme under review is a Master's Degree.

The university guarantees an adequate number of personal, which is going to be extended reacting to growing numbers of students. The personnel development plan annexed in the self-documentation states that ESCP will employ 132 full faculty, 109 affiliate faculty and 30 visiting professors in the year 2016/17. According to the discussion during the on-site-visit the business school has a small turnover rate. At the campus Berlin twelve full faculty and 29 administrative staff are employed. However, ESCP Europe should extend the proportion of full faculty members. That is why it is planned to recruit 28 new faculty members and twelve additional in 2018/19. Taking into account student's choices regarding the campus of the second semester, it is likely that staff is not adequately allocated regarding the demands of the different campuses. Thus, ESCP Europe should continuously monitor the teaching capacities at the different campuses. If necessary, ESCP Europe should adapt its resource allocation accordingly. Moreover, the business school privileges recruiting women in areas, in which they are not adequately represented. On average one professor supervises 30 students. New faculty are expected to have previous experience teaching at undergraduate and/or post-graduate level. Teachers are offered workshops and participation in international programmes to improve their teaching skills. Faculty members can be offered a mentor to improve their teaching abilities. Finally, classroom visits contribute to a regular assessments of teaching quality.

ESCP is financed by tuition fees of students and resources of the chamber of commerce in Paris. The expert group is convinced that financial resources are sufficient. One quarter of the budgets is reinvestigated in scholarships of the students. The infrastructural resources are very good as well. The library in Berlin offers 60 periodicals (besides books and eBooks), the campus comprises

nine servers, 62 desktop PCs, 57 Laptop PCs and eight lectures rooms with IT and audio-visual equipment. According to the discussion with the students the facilities in the library and the access to online resources is good.

### **3.2 Organisation, counselling and cooperation**

Responsibilities and contact of the individual programmes are clearly defined. The decision-making processes within ESCP are well documented. First is the primary level: faculties and their teachers – both full-time and tenured teachers and second is the network level. At programme level, the Academic Progress Committee gets together at the end of each semester to make an assessment, analyze results and validate credits. The committee is under the responsibility of the program director resp. director of studies. At ESCP network level, the board of Examiners meets every year to analyze the overall results of ESCP Europe students. The Board of Examiner's role is to analyze each student's situation concerning his/her satisfaction of the Bachelor in Management (BSc) requirements. It informs students of the obligations they have not yet fulfilled and decides which students can or cannot pass on to the next academic year.

Elected Class representatives are regularly in touch with the program administration, with the local academic director of the program and with the director of undergraduate studies. They are also invited to the examination boards, as well as to the board of examiners to report on their experience in the program. The mission of Agora, ESCP Europe's student body representation, is to play an informative as well as participative role to constantly improve education and student life at ESCP Europe. During the on-site-visit, some students articulated the wish to get more support organizing an internship. Though, ESCP wants the students to apply for internships by their own in order to prepare them for the job market. ESCP supports applications by counselling with regarding CVs, but does not provide completely organized internship for students.

### **3.3 Examination system, documentation and transparency**

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. Students are assessed through examinations and coursework and at least 50% of the course is evaluated through individual assessment. Different types of assessments are used, e.g. group work, presentation skills, written qualification, research and decision making and judgment. Most courses include a final exam, which often counts for 50% of the module evaluation, and a midterm exam, all being held as individual exam. According to the discussion with the students, stress level is high in the exam period, but feasible.

The study and exam regulations are published, though partly with wrong (module) titles. In principle, the programme is well documented in the syllabus, self-descriptions and curriculums. However, exam regulations, study regulations and module handbook must be revised with regard to mutual consistency. The module handbook has to comprise all modules. 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. All necessary data for the admission procedure are transparent, well documented, and accessible to students and to the public. Though, regulations on the recognition of competences according to the Lisbon Convention and on the recognition of professional competences are not part of the exam regulations. Rules governing the recognition of competencies students have acquired outside higher education institutions as well as rules governing the transfer of credits from other universities have to be added to the exam regulations; they have to be in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon convention. As some module descriptions are lacking the desirable accuracy with regard to both the description of the contents dealt with and the work load, it is recommended to edit the text accordingly.

Each student is assigned a personal advisor who will give particular support and guidance. The programme office is in charge of managing the programme and is the link between students and professors. The student affairs is helping on registration, visas and finding accommodation. The career service is counselling on CV and internship search.

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

Although no concept concerning gender justice is provided by ESCP Europe, there appeared to be a fair number of women in leadership positions. The student admission process does not have separate quotas for males and for females. According to the ESCP, diversity is taken into consideration during recruitment procedures. 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.

## **4 Quality Management**

The ESCP Europe 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 while every campus of the ESCP network is responsible for implementing the QM system by its own. Courses are evaluated each semester. In the course evaluation the questionnaires are including questions regarding the student's actual workload. Evaluation results are discussed at campus level while the local academic director passes the (aggregated) results to the faculty. ESCP uses the '360° method' in order to receive feedback from

students, teaching staff, administrative staff as well as program and academic directors and to take actions respectively. Due to the fact that the program has recently started (fall 2015) there are only little data available up to now. Finally, the quality management system is fully functional and it gathers all the relevant information including the real student workload through evaluation procedures and data analysis.

## 5 Summary

The study programme “Bachelor in management” (B.Sc.) is a sound programme. The curricular concept of the programme is 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, e.g. a slight re-organisation of modules, are suggested by the reviewers. The implementation of the study programme is based on an appropriate infrastructure, an efficient organisation and well-developed co-operations. Nevertheless rules governing the transfer of credits from other universities as well as the recognition of professional skills have to be established. Additionally the workload of the internship has to be defined correctly and accordingly to the weeks stated in the exam regulations. All proposed steps for the improvement of the study programme can be evaluated by ESCP itself, since a quality management system is established, which guarantees the further development of the study programme.

## 6 Recommendation of the expert group

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

### Conditions

1. Rules governing the transfer of credits from other universities have to be added to the exam regulations; they have to be in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon convention.
2. Rules governing the recognition of competencies students have acquired outside higher education institutions. The rules must allow the recognition up to fifty percent of the study program.
3. The workload of the internship has to be defined correctly and accordingly to the weeks stated in the exam regulations.
4. Exam regulations, study regulations and module handbook must be revised with regard to mutual consistency. The module handbook has to comprise all modules.

## IV Decision of the ACQUIN Accreditation Commission

### 1 Decision

On the basis of the report of the expert group, the statement of the HEI and the statement of the standing expert committee, on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 the Accreditation Commission took the following decision:

**The Master program „Bachelor in Management“ (B.Sc.) is accredited without conditions.**

**The accreditation is valid until September 30<sup>th</sup> 2022.**

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

- The field of General Management should be extended in the study program, for instance by introducing modules on Human Resources, Digitalization or Organizational Behavior. Otherwise, the liberal arts perspective of the study program should be presented more transparently in advertisement and stated aims of the program.
- ESCP Europe should extend the proportion of full faculty members.
- ESCP Europe should continuously monitor the teaching capacities at the different campuses. If necessary, ESCP Europe should adapt its resource allocation accordingly.
- ESCP Europe should revise the title of the program in order to avoid repeating the degree in the title.

#### Changes of conditions

- Rules governing the transfer of credits from other universities have to be added to the exam regulations; they have to be in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon convention.

Justification:

ESCP Europe Berlin has already revised the documents with regarding the critique stated by the peers.

- Rules governing the recognition of competencies students have acquired outside higher education institutions. The rules must allow the recognition up to fifty percent of the study program.

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- The workload of the internship has to be defined correctly and accordingly to the weeks stated in the exam regulations.

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