INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

2018

KÖZÉP-EURÓPAI EGYETEM

EVALUATION REPORT

ANNEX to HAC DECISION NR. 2018/2/VI/3.

23 February 2018

Previous institutional accreditation: HAC decision Nr. 2012/7/V/2.

_____

CONTENTS

_____

Recommendation for accreditation

Közép-európai Egyetem	HAC DECISION NR. 2018/2/VI/3. **A (accredited)** **The accreditation of the university** *– in case of continuous compliance with the accreditation criteria –* **expires on 31 December 2022**

II. Brief explanation for the recommendation

The peer visit team explicitly wants to state its understanding of the accreditation task: Since CEU/KEE got the accreditation in 2012 – at that time there was obviously no strong need to formally separate the legal entities from each other for the purpose of accreditation – the current accreditation is considered to be a **re-accreditation** but focusing on KEE, since the legal situation of CEU/KEE has changed since 2012.

Therefore, the evaluation report is focusing on KEE, although there is a shared governance structure, a shared staff body, shared infrastructure and shared budgets with CEU. The programs under consideration are those offered by KEE.

The reasons for granting full accreditation to KEE are the following:

- KEE offers 2 doctoral and 8 MA programs under HAC accreditation. KEE has further non-degree, postgraduate specialist training courses accredited by the Hungarian Educational Authority. According to the quality assurance systems in place, responsibilities are distributed adequately and there is an extraordinary commitment of the management team, the staff, the faculty as well as the students to contribute to the university's further development.
- KEE has adequately responded to the HAC recommendations of the previous accreditation procedure.
- KEE has strong research record including many international and European Union research grants and projects. Institutional scholarships and talent management at the level of master and in particular at the doctoral level provide excellent opportunities for young researchers. KEE has strong research links with several Hungarian and foreign universities and research institutions.
- KEE has made an impressive progress in building up national and international partnerships at the research level as well as at the program level.
- KEE is currently developing a new strategy plan which is consistent with the strengths of the university and highly promising in terms of international competitiveness.
- KEE was very supportive during the peer visit: all documents and data requested were handed in immediately, the infrastructure was excellent and the hospitality extraordinary.

_____

KEE has been confronted with several major legal changes and changes in the accreditation standards within the last five years. Therefore, the accreditation panel is aware of the challenges KEE was facing and is appreciating the strong efforts made in order to adapt to the new guidelines and standards. The accreditation team sees that the turbulent times the university is exposed to have to be taken into account when evaluating the measures KEE has put in place. Hence, the accreditation panel has identified few technical shortcomings that have to be solved as soon as possible. The accreditation panel has labelled this set of recommendations as "serious recommendations", while others were classified as "areas of improvement" indicating the mid-term time horizon.

The accreditation team was highly impressed by the university's commitment to the Hungarian community and the strong identity of being a Hungarian Higher Education Institution. It also has to be emphasized that CEU/KEE is accepting the additional burden of having US-American as well as Hungarian accredited programs running and therefore functioning as a bridge between these two systems.

Further remarks on the re-accreditation of KEE and statements concerning HAC's recommendation of the last review

The current re-accreditation has followed the ESG 2015 standards, although the panel is aware of the fact that KEE was operating mainly on the previous standards and had to change their self-study report accordingly. The examined period of 2012-2017 is twofold. Until 2016 ESG 2005 was the guideline of the HAC accreditation, ESG 2015 has been in force since 2017. The introduction of new elements makes slight changes in the institutional QA system. These changes were introduced by a new version of the IAQA Policy on 1 December 2017, replacing the previous IAQA Policy and Handbook. The change of standards occurred only in the last year of the examined period and of the time frame covered by KEE's Strategic Development Plan 2012-2017. For this reason, the accreditation panel examined both the previous and present QA system and took into account that QA documents and surveys, reports were prepared under the IAQA Policy and Handbook 2013.

The former accreditation report of HAC recommended certain steps to be taken to improve quality. KEE was adequately responding to these recommendations:

1. "*The HAC believes that a clear line of policy is necessary for the predictable functioning of the academic organization of CEU, in consonance with its educational mission. With this in mind, care should be taken to clarify the relationship between the newly created schools and the respective departments and make their interconnectedness more transparent.*"

The university decided that they are too small for separate schools. The Business School merged into the Economics and Business Department, the School of Public Policy with the Public Policy Department. The units that are still called schools (like History) simply coordinate doctoral education.

2. *"At present, CEU runs both one-year and two-year Master's programs. The Self-Study Report has left the HAC in doubt whether this mixed system is to be maintained or discontinued. In the former case, the HAC recommends that clear criteria for the information of applicants be set"*.

Given the demand, both schemes have been maintained. Currently, in the framework of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, the university is re-thinking the role of MA programs, reflecting on the differences between academic and non-academic career-plans.

3. *"Thanks to the substantial financial support lent by the Erasmus Mundus program, the transition gap from the one-year to the two-year Master's program has so far been successfully bridged. The HAC recommends that CEU make preparations for the period after the EU sponsorship has come to an end."*

KEE managed to run its EU programs while they had no EU-sponsorship and managed to renew the EU support. The application rates remained sufficiently high across the years, but KEE monitors closely the relevant developments. Student mobility and student internship rates have soared in the last years. While in 2011/2012, only 13 students took part in mobility and internship projects, their number quadrupled in the last year.

4. *"As part of a systematic application of an internal quality assurance system, former accreditation procedures suggested that the ratio between credits and contact hours should be formalized in the curriculum. There is no evidence, however, that this issue has thus far been pursued, nor do the one-year „postgraduate specialization" programs appear to have been properly documented. The HAC recommends that these two gaps be filled."*

The Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations Sec. 4.3 clearly makes a difference between US credits and ECTS credits, while the Annex shows the transformation of US and ECTS credits. Moreover, syllabi provide information on both kinds of credits.

5. *"The IAQA Policy defines the main principles, organization and mechanisms of institutional assessment and quality assurance at CEU, as well as the organizational responsibilities for assessment and planning at the institutional, unit, and program level. The HAC recommends that CEU shorten the four-year period envisaged for the review of the academic activity of departments and schools."*

Since the academic year 2012/2013, there are annual teaching program reviews with required curriculum map. Departments present their strategic reviews every 5 years, but in different academic years that makes them unparalleled. As the Strategic Development Plan refers to a certain period (2012-2017), Departments should provide adequate inputs for strategic planning, i.e. providing necessary information for mid- or end-term comprehensive institutional reviews.

6. *"CEU decided to explore the feasibility of introducing a computerized system for managing assessment and planning data, related to monitoring quality assurance processes. As yet there is no evidence that the application of this information system has already been implemented.*

_____

The HAC recommends that by the time of the next accreditation process the results of the new system be reviewed."

KEE has piloted the WEAVE online system and concluded that the program was not suitable for their needs. They are now in the middle of the transition to SITS: Vision, a student data management system. A business data warehouse and a business intelligence project is in its early phase, they expect to have the first departmental dashboards with key indicators ready by September 2018.

7. *"CEU policy documents set detailed requirements on developing and operating degree programs, stressing that student learning outcomes should be specified in mandatory annual reviews. For lack of evidence to the contrary, the HAC recommends that such standardized reviews be prepared for all the CEU programs, including detailed program specifications stored and made accessible in a central document warehouse."*

Since 2012/2013, annual teaching program reviews are available and applied in almost all programs at all levels. The IAQA Handbook 2013 and IAQA Policy 2017 Annex 3 provide(d) guidelines for degree program reviews. Units, which have undergone a strategic review in the previous year, were exempt from the annual review for the respective academic year.

Learning outcomes have been specified for all programs. The annual review explicitly asks departments to discuss how those outcomes are met. Program specifications are included in the program handbooks.

8. *"While acknowledging the outstanding work of the Alumni Relations and Career Services Office, the HAC recommends that CEU find a formalized way of getting information directly from employers too."*

Given that KEE alumni work in more than 200 countries the university cannot apply standard models. However, a number of events have been organized with selected employers.
Surveys are run at Career Fairs.
The advice of employers is taken into consideration concerning the curriculum of some of the programs.

9. *"Whereas the quality of instruction at CEU has been found outstanding, the HAC recommends that the teaching staff be given opportunities to develop their teaching capacity and be encouraged to assess their own skills. On the other hand, a standard policy to remove teachers who continue to be demonstrably ineffective should be worked out."*

Mentoring new teaching staff provides adequate help for teachers facing some problem in teaching methods. The Center for Teaching and Learning is running a series of collaborative faculty discussion groups on issues that are of special interest to academics in their first years of university teaching. Mentoring Teaching Assistant system also helps to prepare teachers.

CTL launched specific programs aimed at enhancing teaching capacity. Weakly performing faculty staff receive warnings, followed by a grace-period of one year, and ultimately their contract is discontinued. The non-research track option for professors was abolished.

_____

10. *"The HAC recommends that CEU set up a method of regular analysis of student data as a way to improve the quality of the academic programs."*

Course evaluations by students are systematically taken into account in designing courses and curricula and for the promotion of the faculty. The evaluations of the courses are included in the instructors' self-evaluations, and are analyzed at the departmental and university levels. Together with the exit surveys and with the evaluations of supervision, such data contribute to the annual reviews of the programs and to the strategic reviews of academic units.

11. *"CEU provides excellent facilities for its students in all respects. Nevertheless, the HAC recommends that a standardized form of their assessment be devised, together with widening the focus of reviews to cover all aspects of facility provision."*

The Dean of Students Office regularly runs student surveys. The campus redevelopment and the reforms of catering, medical facilities, etc. were carried out relying on consultations with students, satisfaction surveys taken into consideration.

12. *"Students are overwhelmingly positive about their life at CEU. Nevertheless, two recommendations may be due in this regard:*

o With the aim of enhancing the quality of instruction, it would be useful if the president of the students' council were also informed about the aggregate results of students' feedback on their teachers.

o During the orientation week, more time should be allocated for incoming students to do social activities."

While the university does not inform students about the results of individual course evaluations, student representatives participate in bodies like the Quality Assurance Committee of the Senate or the Academic Forum, and thereby they take part in the evaluation of programs and units. During the pre-session several cultural and recreational events are organized that help students to get to know each other, the city and the country.

13. *"The HAC recommends that more effort should go into standardizing the content and design of the website of the departments. Furthermore, the HAC recommends that information related to course syllabuses and degree programs be made accessible through a central website with revision control functionalities."*

A new visual identity was created, with uniform standards across the university. Information on courses is placed at https://courses.ceu.edu, including title, instructor, credits, brief description, learning outcomes and syllabus. Furthermore, KEE's e-learning platform (http://ceulearning.ceu.edu) now comprehensively manages in-class communication and material dissemination. However, it should be checked, if the syllabi are updated.

_____

_____

III. Governance of the Higher Education Institution

KEE is an English-language Hungarian private university, offering academic programs in social sciences, humanities, and economics. The Rector is the representative and CEO of KEE following the guidelines of the Maintainer. The Provost is responsible for developing the educational, academic and research plans and for implementing these plans under the Rector's directive. Additionally, two Pro-Rectors (for research and teaching matters and for matters related to the integration into the Hungarian Higher Education System) assist the Provost.

KEE's stakeholders are involved in the decision-making processes by the Senate (chaired by the Rector and consisting of representatives of faculty, staff, and students). The Senate is mainly in charge of the educational programs, the quality assurance and all matters of the organizational structure of the University. Additionally, there are Senate Committees defined by the University's Organizational and Operational Regulations.

The Academic Forum and the Student Union are assisting bodies, whereby the Student Union is a self-governing body.

The governance structure of KEE is clear and seems to be rather efficient. All stakeholders are involved and have an important voice in decisions concerning the inner structure of the university as well as programs and quality assurance. The Strategic Development Committee of the Senate is developing new strategic plans for discussion and approval by the Senate and the Maintainer. The Strategic Development Committee is chaired by the Rector and the Senate Curriculum and Academic Quality Assurance Committee is chaired by the Provost, other Senate committees have chairs elected by the Senate.

Evaluation processes and performance indicators are put in place and surveys are regularly conducted (such as student exit survey and employee satisfaction survey). Different data sets are analysed by the Institutional Research Office – and also the departments get individualized reports.

The Student Union is the self-governing, representative organization of the student body covering both Masters and PhD level students and getting generous infrastructural support from the university. Students in general are adequately represented in the decision-making and advisory bodies at all levels, from the Senate to the departmental meetings of the faculty, however, the specific representation of KEE students might need clarification.

The focus group discussions showed there is a collegial culture at the university with flat hierarchies and many opportunities to be involved in evaluation and learning processes formally and informally. Staff members, academics, students and alumni are very proud of being members of the university and share a strong corporate identity.

IV. Quality Assurance

IV.1. Is the PDCA cycle ensured?

KEE is committed to quality assurance and set up an according policy (IAQA, see IV.5) specifying responsibilities and processes. It fulfils the goals and guidelines set out in its plans. There are cyclic reviews and evaluations as well as adaption-processes put in place. Performance indicators are defined and periodically assessed, external reviewers are involved (e.g. in the department evaluations). Degree-granting programs are evaluated annually, and the results are used for adaption if necessary.

The PDCA-cycle provides an effective system of feedback and reaction to internal and external changes. A wide range of indicators and reports is used.

Both staff and resident faculty members have to be reviewed – junior faculty members annually, senior faculty members every 3 years. Research activity and teaching performance are taken into account. Faculty members get personal feedback.

At the level of teaching programs, the annual review measures application trends, graduate rates, effectiveness of learning outcomes, performance of faculty. Department chairs and program directors also take into consideration the course evaluations, students' proposals and the "big-box" comments on teaching programs. Teaching program reviews are sent to the dedicated Senate Committee that sends recommendations back to the Department. Faculty members of the department discuss recommendations and make action plans. The next periodic report must include steps taken due to former recommendations.

Units prepare their strategic review in every 5 years. The structure of the review is defined in the IAQA Handbook 2013 and IAQA Policy 2017. Departments have to justify curricula and present research outputs. Their review is evaluated by an ad-hoc committee that has non-department in-house, and external members, too. During the site visit, looking at all aspects of the Department, the committee meets with faculty, students and staff. Giving feedback and recommendations, the committee report is sent to the dedicated Senate Committee. Finally, the Senate decides based on the final report on concrete suggestions.

There is a regular feedback system. The students confirmed that their opinion has immediate impact on course design, on content and on the lecturers, and in addition to that, they regularly receive feedback on changes based on their comments.

IV.2. To what extend are specific approaches practiced within the institution?

KEE does not have a dedicated unit for quality assurance, but – due to its governance structure – a dedicated Senate Committee is taking over these responsibilities. According to the governance of KEE this seems to make sense, since this committee includes stakeholder groups and is directly reporting to the Senate.

During the examined period, the IAQA Policy and Handbook 2013 was in force. The organizational structure was clear. The Provost oversaw QA and the assessment of teaching and

research activities, the Academic Secretary coordinated IAQA processes at institutional level. Heads of Departments and Schools, Heads of Teaching Programs, Central Administration Units and Services (Student Services, Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office, External Relations Office, Human Resources Office, Budget and Finance Office and Information Technology Department etc.) and Directors of Research Centres also took part in IAQA processes. The Senate Academic Quality Assurance Committee evaluated the strategy report, reviewed the Handbook, introduced changes of the Policy and provided advice to the Provost. Students did not take part in that organizational structure. However, by formal and informal course evaluation, and by providing opinion on program and strategic reviews, students and students' representatives are an active part of the processes.

The IAQA Policy 2017 has modified the organizational structure and expanded the mandate and adjusted the name of the pre-existing committee. Senate Academic Quality Assurance Committee (SAQAC) was replaced by Senate Curriculum and Academic Quality Assurance Committee (SeCur). IRO as the central unit for data collection and analysis has been accepted as the dedicated unit of the IAQA organization. Annex 1 of the IAQA Policy 2017 details the mandate of SeCur. The IAQA Policy 2017 involves more clearly all stakeholders in the IAQA processes giving a wide range of feedback facilities for strategic planning and decision making. Besides the student member of SeCur, students have an active role in processes by evaluating courses and providing opinion on reviews.

Both the IAQA Policy and Handbook 2013 and IAQA Policy 2017 provide(d) standardization by using the same methods at institutional levels with some exemptions, see Section IV.5. 1.1. Both versions enable further, specific surveys and reports on extraordinary matters that do not harm the unity of IAQA processes.

IV. 3. Dissemination of good practices

KEE can be characterized by a highly committed faculty and staff. Due to the rather small size of the university there is a rather informal way of meeting each other, learning from each other and exchanging ideas and best practice examples. Despite formal course evaluations there is also a constant exchange with students about their ideas and perspectives of programs and courses. Currently KEE is working on a list of university wide courses. This initiative causes an institutionalized way of exchanging best practice examples of course designs and is fostering mutual learning. There are also funding schemes for innovative teaching projects. The successful applicants have to publish their projects so that other colleagues can have access to the project results. A special program at the research level is the digital humanities initiative: to foster research cooperation among different disciplines in the humanities a funding scheme was set up resulting in various projects. To build up research groups is encouraged to foster the involvement of students. These research groups also serve as a learning opportunity.

KEE as university is participating in international networks and consortiums sharing best practice examples on various aspects of Higher Education such as on efficiency, quality cultures, gender equality, student centred learning and more. KEE is also a member of Europeum and the Hungarian University Lifelong Learning Network.

_____

IV.4. Developments supported by facts and information

KEE has established a culture of reviewing its strategic plan regularly and identifying strategic priorities. Based on this, annual implementation frameworks are elaborated for each teaching program, while Departments and Schools have to present their strategic review every 5 years. Based on reviews, actions are taken, e.g. the review of the faculty evaluation and promotion processes led to the establishment of a university-level Reappointment and Promotion Committee.

E.g. the exit survey of doctoral students showing the dissatisfaction of the students with their practical skills led to an adaption of the doctoral education.

IRO has an active role in data collection and data management. The institution collects data on student recruitment and applications, on complete life-cycle of students (e.g. entry and exit surveys, graduation and completion rate). Alumni data-analysis provide information on performance and first career destinations, while faculty and staff surveys focus on the core elements of employee satisfaction and performance. Data and results of analysis are used in everyday planning, e.g. recruitment surveys provided adequate data to raise the number of applicants.

Program reviews incorporate all data providing a standardized feedback system at institutional level. Data collection and analyses provide adequate resources for Program Directors to recommend future developments on teaching programs. Application numbers and trends are monitored not only on department- but institutional-level, too. SAQAC/SeCur and Senate receive application reports for discussion. E.g. the MBA program was closed after monitoring application numbers and trends (though this has not been an Hungarian accredited program).

Summarized it can be stated that KEE has established a good feedback culture.

IV.5. Evaluation according to ESG criteria
ESG 1.1 Policy for Quality Assurance

An Institutional Assessment and Quality Assurance Policy (IAQA Policy) is specifying the responsibilities for the quality of services and programs of the university as well as the interfaces. E.g. department heads are responsible for the assessment and quality assurance within their units, program directors for programs, directors of research centres for the quality of their research activities. Central Administration Units and Services (Students Services, Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office, External Relations Office, Human Resources Office, Budget and Finance Office, Information Technology Department, etc.) collect and provide information for institutional assessment processes such as the preparation of the Annual Report and the Strategic Plan. Heads of these units and services are also responsible for IAQA processes within their units.

The Institutional Research Office (IRO) supports the IAQA processes at the institution with collecting, processing, analysing and reporting institution-wide data (exit surveys, course and

_____

supervision evaluations, admissions and enrolment data, etc.) As core document, the IAQA Policy 2013 defines compulsory surveys and reports, naming recruitment surveys, entry surveys, alumni surveys, annual report, periodic review of Strategic Plan, program and department reviews, annual report and plan of action of research centres, annual report and work plans of non-academic units. Many surveys have detailed analysis, giving institutional level background information and explanation of data or executive summary (e.g. employee satisfaction surveys), while other, institutional level ones provide only data and graphs without explanation (e.g. alumni surveys, exit surveys). As the aim of KEE is the standardization of IAQA processes as well as survey and reporting system, more standardization of the reporting system providing not only data, but real analysis might be needed.

On 1st December 2017, a new version of the IAQA Policy was introduced. The IAQA Handbook 2013 has been repealed. Some elements of the former Handbook were incorporated into the December 2017 version of the Policy. The process of establishing, operating and modifying degree programs is detailed in the "Policy on establishing, operating and modifying degree programs at CEU" which is detailed under the next section (ESG 1.2. and 1.9.).

The reasons of the change were the new strategic planning period and giving adequate response to MSCHE requirements. As the IAQA Policy 2013 did, the IAQA Policy 2017 also defines MSCHE as the main accrediting agency. CEU and KEE are two distinct legal entities, but their IAQA Policy is the same. The terminology is misleading from the view of KEE, as MSCHE is not a main accrediting body of KEE. Besides MSCHE, HAC also has to be mentioned as main accrediting agency. The accreditation panel suggests the change of terminology of IAQA Policy 2017 Part I.

As the present report examines the period of 2012-2017, both 2013 and 2017 versions have to be taken into account. Both 2013 and 2017 versions determine the QA goals and strive to unify processes, as well as data collection and reporting. The main elements of institutional assessment, actors and processes are clearly stated; while the Handbook 2013 and the Policy 2017 clarifies processes, and gives transparent and evident guide to prepare expected QA documents that support unification.

The previous version of the IAQA Policy and the Handbook were issued in November 2013 as of ESG 2005. Besides the new actors, processes have also changed. The former Policy and Handbook enrolled all necessary points to measure and provide feedback for strategic planning and decision making. The IAQA Policy 2017 has shortened the list leaving more space for the SeCur to determine the necessary surveys. Strategic, extraordinary and teaching program reviews have remained, as of annual report and plan of action of research centres, work plans and annual reports of non-academic units. Annex 2 and Annex 3 define the structure of strategic and program reviews. On one hand, leaving previous compulsory reports, makes the system more flexible. On the other hand, an institutional level system that provides comprehensive data, analyses and feedback for strategic planning, has to be exactly planned and unified. ESG 2015 1.1 expects clear processes that translate policy into practice. In this way, all permanent processes, surveys, reporting and data collection methods have to be exactly detailed in the IAQA Policy. The university uses a standardized course evaluation form since 2009. Only the language courses and the academic writing courses use a different form, because their subject

_____

matter is different. Units may conduct additional, e.g. mid-term, course evaluations, but those are in addition to, not instead of, the standardized form, which is set up by default for all courses through the dedicated software program called Courseval.

It has to be mentioned that the Policy 2017 incorporated some parts of the previous Handbook without any change (e.g. use deadline September 10 2017 in Annex 3.).

Annual Program Reviews and Departments' Strategic Reviews are available since 2012. These reviews provide a comprehensive overview on teaching programs and departments/schools. The Strategic Development Plan is reviewed regularly by the Senate, the Director of Strategic Planning and Strategic Development Committee also supports the process of strategic planning.

ESG 1.2 and 1.9 Design and approval of programmes and on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

KEE offers two master programs classified as "theory focused", six master programs classified as "mixed" and two PhD programs classified as "theory focused". Theory and practice is combined according to the result of exit surveys and research topics of the programs.

The programs are annually reviewed. Mid-term and end-term course evaluation, students' demand, exit surveys provide feedback on teaching programs. Steps to make necessary curriculum/ learning outcome changes are taken.

All necessary policies exist in written form and are accessible online.

There exists a policy on establishing, operating and modifying degree programs clarifying the steps to be undertaken when launching a new program ("Policy on establishing, operating and modifying degree programs at CEU"). Program proposals derive from the departments, research teams, and international research co-operations (e.g. Erasmus MUNDUS program). Instead of centralized planning, initiatives come from bottom up. Teaching capacity, present and future students' thematic interest, results of exit surveys, potential co-work of departments, research topics determine whether proposals are supported. The Senate makes the final decision on new program proposals. New programs might run first as specializations (but not necessarily have to do so), and after supportive feedback and curriculum development undergo NYSED program registration and/or Hungarian accreditation. KEE does not foresee that Hungarian programs are established in the first place, but programs always have to undergo first the NYSED program registration and afterwards (occasionally) the Hungarian accreditation. NYSED regulations determine the procedure of program registration. Submission of programs to HAC depends on feedback and institutional capacity. In the case of new teaching programs, the Pro-Rector for Hungarian Affairs makes the final decision whether undergoing Hungarian accreditation.

The guideline for new programs requests all necessary information such as faculty who should teach, expected numbers of students, and the like.

The previous accreditation procedure suggested that the ratio between credits and contact hours should be formalized in the curriculum. Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations Sec.

4.3 explains the difference between US credits and ECTS credits and provide a conversion table in Annex 1. However, curricula of teaching programs refer only to core credits and elective credits without specifying the type of credit. To provide transparent information on KEE programs, the accreditation panel suggests the clear use of ECTS credits not only in syllabi but as a part of the curricula, too.

Curricula and syllabi are available online, prerequisites, learning outcomes and assessment are the part of syllabi. However, syllabi of more core MA courses are sometimes outdated (e.g. referring to 2015 ad 2016 Fall Semesters).

Career tracking is done at the program level, labour market demands are identified based on international studies and own experiences. A systematic feedback is available by Carrier Fair and alumni surveys.

Employer experiences are collected by the Career Services using surveys and also programs' rankings for monitoring labour market demands.

Students are involved in the development of academic programs at the department-level through course evaluation and informal feedback. Besides of this, students are represented with voting rights in the Senate where main curricular decisions are made and also in its advisory bodies dealing with these issues.

At the program-level e.g. the Department of Political Science has elaborated assessment guides for faculty members assessing master theses. Courses have explicitly to state their learning goals and offer various assessment methods. To guarantee objectivity the departments track grading records of each individual faculty member. Other examples show that there are sophisticated ways of students' performance tracking and consequences for courses and programs, such as e.g. introducing thesis writing workshops. As KEE mentioned in the self-study report (p. 25) there are still variations across departments in evidence-based assessment of program learning outcomes.

A systematic feedback from alumni and the labour market is collected by the organization regularly, which is supplemented by feedback collected via informal connections maintained with both groups. However, the way and scale, how these feedbacks are used as inputs to programme development differs from educational unit to unit, according to the orientation and other characteristics of the program.

ESG 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

KEE is providing several regulations and Policies related to students' rights, code of ethics, standards for syllabi as well as equal opportunity and student disability. Also, for course evaluation, supervision evaluation and reviews of application for academic positions documents are available.

Flexible learning methods are available with special elements of talent management.

Students with disabilities can request accommodation including extended time in examinations and individual study plans where appropriate. Working students can enrol in part-time programs

_____

and doctoral students are supported by grants, and students with family-issues are allowed to take leave of absence.

The university encourages students to handle complaints, if applicable, informally and directly with the responsible people involved. If less formal ways are not enough, there is a formal appeal process mandated by law in place. However, there are discrepancies in by-laws governing this process, since sections 2.4., 3.2 and 6.3. of the Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations and Section 19 of the Organizational and Operational Regulations are not in line with each other, regarding the role of specific committees and of the Provost in making the final decision on this kind of formal appeals.

Besides of this, for matters not involving academic matters, rather breach of Code of Ethics, or other disciplinary matters, students can make complaints, which are dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee in a transparent process. Second instance in these cases is the Grievance Committee. It should be mentioned, that appeals, and ethics complaints are very few in number. Both committees have sufficient student representation.

Feedback processes are common state-of-the art, where the Senate Quality Assurance Committee plays a crucial role in suggesting adaptions of grading rules and course design (as e.g. made at the Department for Medieval Studies for grading the thesis independently from the prior performances in classes).

The annual report of teaching programs includes a dedicated section of learning outcomes of students. The analyses are made at department-level – adaptions are proposed to the Senate committee.

Final exams and thesis-defences are held by committees, courses conclude with written exams only, students do have the right to review the assessment of their written tests. Some departments offer independent study courses and field trips.

Talent management is also focusing on financial aids and mobility grants. At KEE, master students have a supervisor, who provides them with guidance concerning their own research activities and they can participate in so called students' research groups, where they are able to share their results with other students involved in similar topics. Students are also highly encouraged and even financially supported to participate in international conferences. The funding is competitive, so only the best students are selected for these research grants. Students appreciate these programs very much. The reason, why students don't seem to be highly interested in taking part in the national students scientific conferences (TDK conferences) might be their focus on international events, and not that they wouldn't know about them. They also mentioned the language barrier since usually there would be only single tracks in English. The MA and PhD students were highly satisfied with the support they get in terms of academic skills.

ESG 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

KEE has a multi-dimensional system of regulations and rules specifying the internal policies with respect to student admission, progression, recognition and certification, all of these are available in English and some of these also in Hungarian. The principal rules on progression are specified in the Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations and there are also separate program-specific regulations for each program. Presentations at orientation sessions are offered to inform the students about ways of study progression as well as handbooks and information on the website are made available.

Registration of all courses is done via the university's online system. Students can take up to 4 credits (i.e. 8 ECTS) from other departments without permission from their own department. Students may request an individual study plan agreed on with the department and approved by the Provost.

Students are monitored in terms of completion in appropriate time. On average students are completing their studies in the average time, so KEE did not need to set any special actions on this topic. As the table in the self-study report (p. 34) shows, the overall completion rate of master students ranges in the last five years between 88% and 95%.

In the final examination committees there is at least one external member.

External cooperation is done in research projects, networks or in study programs and summer schools (e.g. at the department of Political Science) or as joint program (e.g. Mundus MAPP; GEMMA). International mobility is set up with partner universities and is seen as a comprehensive part of master studies. 229 students went to study abroad in the last 10 semesters.

Student admission rules and processes are defined, according to the Law, in the Admission Policy and Procedures of KEE, voted on by the Senate. However, the Senate delegates the right to set up additional requirements for each program to the Provost on the recommendation of academic units, and upon consultation with the Vice-President for Enrolment. These are published together with the Policy itself, as an annex. The selection process itself consists of three stages, and, according to the reports, the University puts emphasis to increase the number of programs using a point-system for ranking the applicants, to increase transparency.

Students are selected due to their merits, special support for students with disabilities is offered. Changes in admission rules have to be approved by the Senate. For each program a committee is established, responsible for screening the applications and deciding on a ranking of the students. The Admission Office is communicating the decisions on accepting students and deciding on financial aids, made by the Selection Committees and the educational unit, respectively. The Doctoral Committee decides on student's application for doctoral studies based on an overall assessment of the students. In line with the CEU Transfer of Credit Policy, a limited number of credits earned during the previous enrolment at another institution may be transferable. English proficiency is evaluated according to TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, CPE scores, additional admission tests might be set up. There are program-specific tests (e.g. in math in economics) and students have to submit a research proposal based on their field of interest.

_____

ESG 1.5 Teaching staff

KEE has an academic staff structure consisting of faculty (assistant professors, associate professors and professors) – who have to teach and to conduct research, teaching staff (lecturers, senior lecturers, instructors) and research staff (associate to senior research fellow). The promotion of assistant professors to the associate level can happen after the fourth year and KEE expects the promotion to be earned until the end of the seventh year. Furthermore, KEE is also offering visiting faculty positions. In the light of more practice-oriented programs new staff categories were introduced in 2012 (e.g. professor of Practice). The faculty hiring policy and expectations are formulated in the Academic Staff Handbook.

Faculty hiring is done by open search in which search committees (including at least two external reviewers) are established coming up with a short list as well as with a report on the application situation. Normally graduates from KEE's doctoral programs are not hired unless the scholar has completed an internationally renowned career. However, as stated in the self-study report (p. 39) around 10% of the doctoral graduates were hired by the university.

KEE is committed to a high diversity of their faculty in terms of gender and international profile and academic age (whereby gender imbalance is still a hot topic). The university set up several measures to deal with faculty assessment and consequences. Each faculty member has to submit an individual report which includes publications, course evaluations, awards, projects etc. Teaching competence updates are organized by the Centre of Teaching and Learning. Mentoring teaching assistants, offering teaching development grants and mid-course feedback and the CEU European award for excellence in teaching in the social sciences and humanities show the high commitment of KEE to teaching excellence.

Accordingly, several evaluation methods are applied (evaluation, exit survey, student town halls) and the results are used to adapt programs, course design, teaching methodology.

The university also conducts employee satisfaction surveys, the first done in 2014. The general satisfaction rate was about 90%. Less satisfaction (42 and 40%) was given with career opportunities (a result leading to the introduction of a job enlargement policy) and salaries (which lead to a university-wide pay raise).

The next survey will be conducted in 2018 (every two years) – this rather short cycle will provide the university with additional data and allows monitoring staff satisfaction.

ESG 1.6 Learning resources and student support

KEE has set up a broad range of student support activities – such as e.g. pre-departure information, orientation weeks, welcome services, buddy projects and providing incoming student Facebook groups. The Dean of Students acts as mentor with an open door policy and also two psychological consultants are available. Extra-curricular activities are provided, ranging from social and cultural events, to a variety of clubs to volunteering opportunities to the community. Additionally, students are involved in academic programs such as OLive and

the Roma Access projects. The Centre for Academic Writing as well as the Source Language Teaching Group provide language courses.

The Student Records Office at the Dean of Students is providing all necessary support and services to students according to official and unofficial transcripts, certificates of enrolment in English and Hungarian, registration related matters, diplomas and diploma supplements and apostille procedure. In addition, some work related to the administration of university studies is done at the departmental level and in case of doctoral studies at the Doctoral Committee level of each department.

There is an online system available for matriculation, registration, and graduation preparations and alike.

KEE offers a variety of scholarships and tuition awards at the master level and all doctoral students are automatically considered for doctoral scholarships upon the admission process. The selection process is deeply connected with the merit-ranking established during the admission process, and to ensure smooth administration, an online application form is put in place. The few doctoral students eligible for state-funded programs receive the state scholarship and also a supplementary sum so that their overall scholarship equals the scholarship of other students. At master level, due to the lack of state-funded programs, KEE offers an extensive system of scholarships, full and partial tuition fee waivers, based on merit and financial need. The scholarships themselves include besides a full tuition waiver a medical insurance, accommodation, and a sum equalling fully or partially the living costs. The system set forth in the Financial Aid and Student Fee Payment Regulations is complemented by a separate Student Travel and Research Grant Policy, a Family Support Scheme for Student Parents, and a special write-up grant for doctoral students (having exhausted their regular time frame of scholarship eligibility).

The financial management system is adequate and transparent by fulfilling international standards (procurement, accounting, budgeting, reporting and controlling). The IT system and the work of the financial administrative staff ensures that KEE's financial processes are handled separable from other entities of the CEU Group. The main part of the university's funding stems from the Endowment Fund (75%) followed by research grants (11%) and students' tuition fees (6%). The latter seems rather small for a private university. The university aims to depend less on the endowment and is planning to increase third party funding as well as the number of students paying fees.

While mostly not mentioned in the self-evaluation report, the panel could see that KEE offers sports facilities meeting the students' needs both at its Residence Centre and next to its Campus. The services of the first is open to every student, while the latter is available to the students for a symbolic annual fee of 1000 HUF, which includes the use of a gym and the reservation of the indoor court. Exercise classes are offered continuously, on a pay per occasion basis. The sport facilities at the Residence Centre include a swimming pool, fitness room, indoor and outdoor sport courts.

KEE has a well-structured administration to support educational as well as research activities. It is noteworthy that KEE places a great emphasis on the continuous improvement of the skills

of the administrative staff by the recurrent monitoring of missing skills and the organization of special trainings to develop skills in order to make the work of the administration more efficient. In addition to this, staff members have upon request also the possibility to participate in the courses offered for the students.

Alumni activities mean a big challenge and also a big opportunity for KEE, because the heterogenic alumni population resides all over the world. The staff makes big efforts, to supply each alumni subgroup (location of residence, type of work etc.) with the information relevant to them, and to maintain a living relationship. Efficacy of the alumni activities is constantly monitored, and measured with indicators, decisions for improvement are based upon these. It is noteworthy, that all facilities, including student services are open to alumni (and also to staff members).

The provided infrastructure is state-of-the-art: The library is expanded at the new campus allowing besides the traditional services also offering spaces for group work, hands-on training sessions. Through the Academic Writing Program librarians teach bibliographic management, research search-skills and good citation practice. Additionally, through a new media lab and a new certificate program, library staff co-tech and provide training in visual media production. IT services are also state-of-the-art. Wireless network and internet access is available all around the campus. The electronic resources of the library are all available when connected to this network, or from anywhere after authentication. Students are provided with online services such as a mailbox, cloud-based file storage, online communication and collaboration possibilities. Printing services on the printers distributed on the campus can be used from every computer connected to the network, scanning is free of charge, printing and copying is available on a pre-assigned quota which satisfies the needs of the students in practically every case, with the ability to purchase more if needed. Moodle, a Learning Management System is used to accompany courses electronically, which is widely used throughout the courses.

Assistance to students and staff with disabilities is provided extensively. Medical services on the campus include general practitioner services provided from 9 AM to 6 PM and psychological counselling, both free of charge for students.

The University Residence Center is a modern complex, offering 331 single and 60 double rooms for students, operated by a company of the university. All rooms are adequately equipped and offer hotel-like services.

KEE has a well-structured administration to support educational as well as research activities. It is noteworthy that KEE places a great emphasis on the continuous improvement of the skills of the administrative staff by the recurrent monitoring of missing skills and the organization of special trainings to develop skills in order to make the work of the administration more efficient.

ESG 1.7 Information management

KEE is collecting, computing and interpreting many data sources in order to be able to make evidence-based decisions. In particular, annual reports are used for creating and maintaining a feedback culture. However, facing the huge amount of data and decentralized data collections,

the university faces the severe problem of information management. Hence, it is planned to change the students' data management system to SITS: Vision.

For further details on information management see the relevant sections in this report.

ESG 1.8 Public information

The website is used as a main publicly accessible information source. There is a unified guideline for website principles and structures for sub-units. There is a Web Team as part of the Communication Office.

The university website provides different information extensively (e.g. annual reports, course lists, academic programs, student services). Some brochures are also available in printed forms.

Standardization of the website on the recommendation of HAC's former report was completed. Programs- and departments-descriptions are unified.

Information on membership of the decision-making and advisory bodies is comprehensively made available on the website which also includes a brief description of the functions exercised by the body. There is an online document repository containing the up-to-date policy documents and regulations. This repository is clearly arranged, and it also applies access control through which most of the documents are made available to the public, while some are accessible with authentication. When mentioning these documents at other locations on the websites, there are only links to the repository, ensuring that the up-to-date version is accessed in every case.

Information regarding academic programs and its courses is made public on the one hand, on the websites of the academic units, and on the other hand, centrally on the dedicated website of the university. The latter contains all programs and all courses (core, elective, and so-called additional, i.e. offered in addition to the contents of degree programs, e.g. foreign language, computer etc. courses) together with their syllabi, and is also equipped with user friendly functionalities making it easier to search courses after department, program, instructor etc., which helps both students and potential applicants in gathering relevant information easily.

ESG 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Since KEE is strongly linked to CEU, a private American-accredited university, it profits from the external evaluation done by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. This commission conducts regular peer reviews. Re-accreditation was granted in 2014. Moreover, the joint programs are additionally accredited by the partners' national accreditation agencies (e.g. Spain, Sweden, etc.).

_____

V. Evaluation of conditions ensured by the institution for its scientific and research activities

The university is strongly focusing on research and research-output. Hence all faculty members are expected to publish internationally, and to contribute to the university's excellent reputation especially in the fields of economic transformation, analytical philosophy and medieval studies. The university has a high international reputation showed in placements in various university rankings. Also, the impressive number of ERC grants show the excellence of research in faculties as well as the number of collaborative projects.

The promotion of junior staff members is heavily conditional on their publication activity: they are required to publish at least 1 or 2 articles a year in international peer reviewed journals. Publication activity is an important part of the annual individual activity report what KEE academics are to submit to their Head of Department. KEE has a well-established policy for supporting research activities: new faculty members are entitled for a reduced teaching load in order to establish themselves in the scientific community of the university. After teaching 6 semesters, a semester-long sabbatical is offered for staff members. A travel budget of approximately 2000 euros per annum helps them to attend conferences. KEE is strongly committed to promote inter- and multidisciplinary research. The basic institutions of these activities are interdepartmental research centres, and the Intellectual Theme Initiative has the same objective. This initiative serves as a good example of how to disseminate research findings since members of the research-team are required to give seminars on their topics with a multidisciplinary approach.

KEE developed a special administrative unit, Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office (ACRO) for providing help to academics as well as PhD students concerning their applications for research grants. ACRO plays a leading role in detecting application opportunities for research grants and it also has a task to seek and coordinate academic cooperation with other HEIs in Hungary and globally. The Erasmus office is also with ACRO.

A special focus is set on the students' participation in research, in particular at the doctoral-level. A doctoral research support grant is offered allowing students to spend three months at another university. The CEU Research Awards take into consideration the successful involvement of students. There are also other internal funding schemes set up to promote and foster initiatives to encourage cross-disciplinary research, in-house conferences, undergraduate summer schools and individual research. Special introductory courses to research methods are offered to students of master programmes what they declared extremely important in relation to developing their research skills.

Courses are open to incoming students, and there exist three joint master programs MundusMAPP, MESPOM and GEMMA.

In 2015 the global teaching fellowship program was launched offering doctoral candidates and recent graduates to teach at partner universities

_____

VI. Comments and recommendations by the panel for the development of the institution

The accreditation panel compliments KEE on its impressive national and international reputation not only as a research-led institution, but also as an excellent higher education institution. As the alumni and corporate partners emphasized the university is among the leading institutions in Hungary and a best practice example. The accreditation panel would like to highlight some top-level features of KEE:

- The commitment to excellence in research and teaching is impressive and a key element in KEE's identity. This is also demonstrated by the willingness of all groups to continuously learn and improve their performances.
- KEE has outstanding results in fundraising for research projects.
- The students support services and scholarships are really generous and highly appreciated by the students.
- KEE is doing very well in using their data collection for evaluation and feedback. KEE is working on the implementation of an integrated data system (SITS: Vision) which will improve the management system of quality assurance.
- The new campus is an extraordinary building with state-of-the-art infrastructure. In particular the library, also open to the public, which is the largest English collection in social sciences in Hungary.

As expected from an accreditation panel the members also identify areas of possible improvement, whereby it is distinguished between serious recommendations – that should immediately be followed - and mid-term areas of improvements.

Serious recommendations:
1. As the aim of KEE is the standardization of IAQA processes as well as survey and reporting system, the panel suggests the standardization of the reporting system providing real analyses and including all processes in the IAQA Policy 2017 or attach a new Handbook describing them. From the panel perspective a more detailed guideline on how to collect and analyse data is essential for the institutional-level strategy planning and decision-making.

2. Part I of the IAQA Policy (both version 2013 and 2017) is misleading from the point of KEE, when it names the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) as the "main accrediting agency". As the IAQA Policy is also valid for KEE, terminology should be changed mentioning HAC as the other main accrediting agency.

3. In order to guarantee the participation of KEE students in the KEE decision-making bodies, the relevant election processes have to be clarified.

_____

Areas of Improvements:

KEE has put structures and procedures as well as regulations and rules in place in order to guarantee transparent and clear policies. There is an adequate feedback culture and ownership of the programs is delegated to the departments' level. In order to support further improvement, the accreditation panel is recommending the following actions:

1. The accreditation panel suggests that KEE is considering additional elements of students' talent management, e.g.
    a. Extracurricular activities of students could be appreciated by setting up a kind of passport allowing students to use it for career planning.
    b. Participating in the national student science conferences would even strengthen the national identity and the bridging function of KEE by sending a student delegation to this event. It also could probably improve the standard of this event by having bright KEE students there.

2. KEE plans to be financially less dependent on the endowment and therefore will focus more on third party funding and tuition fee paying students. This clearly needs a strategy which is not yet elaborated. The accreditation panel recommends starting as soon as possible with the strategy development process.

3. KEE has regular evaluation processes of courses as well as programs. The overall picture could be clarified: given that KEE is a private university with a strong research focus the question immediately arises how the research strengths are translated and linked to study programs in terms of the program portfolio.

4. Even though KEE offers much better infrastructural as well as financial environment for research activities than most of the Hungarian higher education institutions, and many initiatives of the university are exemplary, it should be considered how to incorporate the already existing elements into a comprehensive and integrated research policy. This will be particularly important since KEE plans to push more interdisciplinary research and cooperation among departments.

5. The policy statements regarding admission allow the departments to ask for specific additional requirements and tests. In order to ensure that these additional requirements are in line with the strategic priorities of the university, they should be an integral part of the admission policy approved by the Senate. The same applies to program-specific students' achievement requirements being integrated to the Student Rights, Rules and Academic Regulations.

6. KEE should ensure that all necessary information on the university as well as specific information on KEE programs should be made available at the Website so that KEE students and prospective applicants can find them easily.

_____

7. KEE should clearly use ECTS credits only in course syllabi but as a part of the curricula of Hungarian-accredited programs, too.