



INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

2011/2012

(Third accreditation cycle)

Accreditation Report on the

**CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
BUDAPEST**

July 6, 2012

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**ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION
OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY BUDAPEST**

I. ACCREDITATION DECISION

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| <p>Central European University Budapest</p> | <p>No. 2012/7/V/2. HAC RESOLUTION</p> <p>A (Accredited)</p> <p>The accreditation of the University – <i>provided it continues to comply with the accreditation requirements</i> – is valid until 31 December 2017.</p> |
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Reasons for the accreditation decision

On the basis of the pertaining paragraphs of the Higher Education Act 2005/CXXXIX in force at the time of the accreditation, and on the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (HAC) requirements, the **HAC GRANTS ACCREDITATION AS A UNIVERSITY TO THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY**, for the following reasons.

- In accordance with the University's Organizational and Operational Regulations, it is registered as an international-type higher education institution (Education Authority Resolution OHFHF /229-1/2010.). Consequently, § 138 of Act 2005/CXXXIX applies until September 1, 2012 when the new Act goes into force.
- The University conducts education in several fields of training¹, in several programs on the Master level², and has the right to provide doctoral education and confer Ph.D. degrees in at least one discipline³. Additionally, it provides special postgraduate training.
- In accordance with its activities as laid down in its Deed of Foundation, the University integrates programs on various academic levels and the organizational units that provide basic, core education for other programs offered at the University and relating to the profile of the University. Thereby the University ensures that it is capable of organizing education in joint or similar academic areas.
- The University has permanent academic and research staff necessary to conduct its tasks: *at least sixty percent* of its research and academic staff required for conducting its basic activities hold permanent contract or employment status at the institution (**173 persons of a total of 216 persons, that is: 80.1%**).
- Of the academic staff with permanent contract or public employment status, *more than one third* holds scientific degrees (**152 persons of a total of 173 persons, that is: 87.8%**).
- An average of the total number of students enrolled in the different levels of education in the last three academic years was **1,586 students** (full- and part-time).
- The University has the necessary facilities and material resources to conduct education and research (buildings with spaces suitable to fulfill its functions, such as lecture halls, seminar rooms, institutional library, a computer infrastructure with adequate access possibilities, laboratories, experimental and practice rooms, equipment, as well as a dormitory, sports and cultural facilities, and cafeterias).

¹ The fields of training of master or doctoral programs at CEU accredited by HAC are: humanities, business and economics, and social sciences. Additional fields of training of programs registered with the Education Authority (Oktatási Hivatal) are: law and public administration, natural sciences.

² Please see the list of programs in the *Annex*.

³ The disciplines of doctoral programs accredited by HAC are: humanities, and social sciences. Additional disciplines of doctoral programs registered with Education Authority (Oktatási Hivatal) are: natural sciences.

- The University's quality assurance and development processes – including their management, planning, control, assessment and evaluation procedures – fulfill the requirements.

For establishing a faculty (school), Government Decree 79/2006. (IV.5.) includes the following conditions:

- in the year prior to submission of the application the total number of students registered in all levels was at least 200 (part-time students calculated with a multiplier of 0.5);
- the average number of students enrolled in Bachelor and Master studies is at least 80 per degree program;
- there are at least 40 teaching staff in the faculty employed full time.

The fact that the above three conditions are not met *does not automatically preclude accreditation*. In the present case one of the above conditions is not met but the HAC has considered the circumstances, namely that the CEU is a graduate institution and has no separate faculties, and acknowledges that the average number of students enrolled in Bachelor and Master programs does not meet the requirements set down in Government Decree 79/2006. (IV.5.).⁴

⁴ The 2011 Higher Education Act, which comes into force on September 1, 2012, exempts private, foundation universities from these requirements (§104 (7)), provided its educational structure complies with the general requirements and that is set down in its Deed of Foundation.

II. EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF THE INSTITUTION'S OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATION

1. Conditions in general at the University

Founded in 1991 with the financial support of George Soros, the *Central European University* (CEU) is an English-language single-faculty private university offering graduate programs in the humanities, social sciences and business and economics. Originally, the major target region of student recruitment was Central and Eastern Europe, but the institution gradually extended its boundaries to countries of the former Soviet Union and beyond. As a result, today CEU can rightly be called a university with a global outreach.

Indeed, one of the most unique features of CEU is its *multicultural character*. Whereas the academic staff has been recruited from 30 countries (Hungarians make up 40% of the staff), the student population comes from around 100 countries, even though close to 50% are EU citizens (including 18% from Hungary). The international composition of staff and the student body rhymes nicely with CEU's primary mission, conceived by the founding father, which is the spread of open society and democracy all over the world. In all the documents made available to the HAC, the commitment to promoting civic engagement and academic excellence via socially and morally responsible intellectual inquiry and critical thinking is reiterated again and again. While CEU has undergone various kinds of transformation over the years, its mission seems to have remained stable.

CEU is led by the Rector-President, who is appointed by and accountable to the Board of Trustees. Meeting three times a year, the self-sustaining Board consists of distinguished academic and non-academic figures with the mandate of overseeing any aspect of CEU as they deem fit. Second in the hierarchy is the Provost, who is in charge of all academic affairs, whereas the Chief Operating Officer (COO) is responsible for matters relating to budget and infrastructure. In turn, the heads of academic units and the heads of service report to the Provost and the COO, respectively. The highest governing and decision-making body is the Senate, which consists of the Rector, the Provost and elected members of the academic and non-academic staff, as well as representatives of the student body. Comprising a wide range of CEU employees, the Academic Forum is commissioned to prepare recommendations for submission to the Senate. In addition, around ten committees are in operation, covering all aspects of CEU activity.

CEU maintains a double identity in that it is an institution accredited both in the U.S. and in Hungary. In the U.S. it was chartered by the Board of Regents of the New York State Education Department and accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 2004 and subsequently in 2009. In Hungary CEU was accredited as a full-fledged Hungarian university by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (Magyar Felsőoktatási Akkreditációs Bizottság) in 2005, pending review by the present HAC in 2012. Based on the HAC accreditation, the University received state recognition by the Hungarian Parliament in 2005.

As Rector-President John Shattuck explained, CEU attaches great significance to being a Hungarian university for several reasons. This status enables CEU to engage in (informal rather than institutionalized) partnership with other universities in Hungary and elsewhere in Europe, but it also helps gain access to EU funds earmarked for educational purposes. In order to facilitate the process of integration with partner institutions, the post of Pro-Rector for Hungarian and EU Affairs was created in 2007, whose function includes representing CEU at the Hungarian Rectors' Conference. Thus far, CEU has obtained Hungarian accreditation in four fields of study at Master's level and in two disciplines at doctoral level; 9 out of the 14 departments run at least one program accredited in Hungary. In addition, all the U.S. accredited programs have been registered by the Hungarian Education Authority (Oktatási Hivatal).

CEU recently launched the Strategic Plan for 2012-2017 to replace the Strategic Plan for 2003-2013. Although the values formulated in the Founding Charter had not been modified and the objectives set in the previous strategic plan are reported to have been largely achieved, new priorities necessitated by the transformation of the external and internal environment were identified.

At the top of the priority list stands the aim of enhancing academic excellence through quality assurance and continuous assessment. With this in mind the Institutional Assessment and Quality Assurance (IAQA) system was adopted by the Senate in 2010/2011. While still in its pilot phase, IAQA ensures compliance with U.S. and Hungarian accreditation requirements, as well as observance of the standards of the European Higher Education Area. Steps have already been taken for IAQA policy to be implemented in every academic and non-academic unit of CEU. The high academic standards reached at CEU received acknowledgement by the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (Magyar Rektori Konferencia), which in 2009 and 2010 ranked CEU as the best Hungarian university in terms of the number of academic publications and of its capability to attract EU research funding. Its excellence is ensured, among other things, by the exceptionally low faculty/student ratio (1 to 8) and the moderate teaching load of the academic staff. Incidentally, over 80% of the academic staff is in a permanent employment relationship with CEU and 87.8% of them hold an academic degree. Fresh academic staff is employed for a probation period of four years, prolonged for one more year if necessary, before they are appointed as permanent staff members.

Compared to other Hungarian and regional universities, CEU is much better equipped with facilities necessary for quality teaching and research; it has an exceptionally rich library in the respective sciences, a publishing house of its own (CEU Press), as well as free and unlimited access to ICT equipment and connectivity.

Feedback obtained from students may be regarded as a reliable indicator of quality education. In the fall of 2010 an entry survey was conducted at CEU, followed by an exit survey a year later. Among the host of items in the entry survey questionnaire, one item inquired about the motives of the new cohort of students for their decision to apply to CEU. The top four reasons for their choice, in decreasing order, are the quality of professors, the academic profile of the department of their choice, the availability and amount of financial aid and the international character of the University. Given these data, it is no surprise that CEU succeeds in attracting gifted candidates, and in fact the application rate in 2011 increased by 6% compared to 2010. Applicants from the other four continents have made up for the slight fall-off of European candidates. Although equal opportunity considerations do not take priority over academic achievements in the admissions procedure, a special „catch-up” year is offered to disadvantaged Roma students.

The ratio of successful and unsuccessful applicants is 1:5 (21.3% according to the Self-Study Report Appendix 34) and selection is made on the basis of submitted written documents, but all Ph.D. candidates and most MA applicants are evaluated in an oral examination/interview as well. Being an English-language university, a good command of English is an obvious prerequisite for admission, but students are offered further language instruction during their studies in the Academic Writing Center, as well as by tutors based in the departments.

Although several of CEU's departments and programs place high in various international rankings, the institutional leaders are keenly aware of the need to retain a competitive edge. Together with financial security, arguably the most important safeguard of the distinctiveness of CEU lies in its uniquely regional character. The University also takes advantage of the support offered by its Alumni Union, which comprises over 10,000 members from about 100 countries. The Union assists not only in recruiting potential candidates (half of CEU students report having been informed about the University from alumni), but also in the mother institution's fund-

raising activities. Incidentally, CEU stores information about the future career of 70% of its alumni.

To keep pace with the growth of student population and scope of activity, CEU is intent on expanding the campus space available. With its headquarters still at 9 Nádor utca, several buildings have been bought in the neighborhood and, according to the Campus Redevelopment Project, the Business School (Frankel Leó út) and the Cognitive Development Center (Hattyú utca) are about to be integrated into the core campus. However, the new project does not include the relocation of the well-equipped Student Dormitory (Kerepesi út), nor does it plan to have a brand new campus built in the suburbs of Budapest.

Another priority is the development of the practice-oriented School of Public Policy and International Affairs. The new school, officially opened at the beginning of the current academic year, is scheduled to be fully operational with the launch of a two-year Master's program in 2013/2014. Another recent initiative is the establishment of the School of Historical Studies, albeit it is as yet in its incubation period. Both schools are designed to foster interdepartmental cooperation and strengthen the interdisciplinary character of teaching and research conducted at CEU.

As regards contacts between the two „Soros” institutions, CEU and the Open Society Institute, they are completely separate entities even though they occasionally run joint (non-degree) programs. CEU recently took over some of the activities pursued at the now defunct Collegium Budapest, offering 10-15 fellowships to scholars annually.

With the new rector at the helm, CEU's governance and administration have become more systematic, transparent and streamlined. Concerning its finances too, CEU appears to stand on firm ground. While over 80% of its annual budget is secured by the Maintainer (Central European University Foundation Budapest), the rest of the budget comes from grants, student fees and other sources. However, as pointed out by the Rector during the site visit, efforts are being taken to decrease the relative proportion of contribution received from the Maintainer and diversify the funding scheme. Overall, there has been a definite move towards strengthening the financial sustainability of the institution. This may be secured, for example, by more intense participation in the EU-sponsored Erasmus Mundus program. Another way of generating funds is to increase the number of fee-paying students. To quote the COO, “Though tuition fees will not save us, we can't afford the luxury of having only 22 students who pay full tuition.” Nevertheless, it remains a standard policy that the financial circumstances of the students should not bar anyone from studying at CEU.

The size of the student body at CEU was dynamically expanding in the 1990s and 2000s until it reached its peak above 1,600 students enrolled in 2009. In the judgment of CEU leadership, no further growth is desirable because it might hinder the process of raising academic standards – another priority formulated in the Strategic Plan. For similar reasons, CEU is determined to retain its basically graduate character and refrains from extending its small-scale undergraduate business program for part-time students to other disciplines. Consequently, even the BA. program in the Business School is destined to be phased out in two years' time.

At Master's level, CEU offers two alternatives: students may choose to enroll for a study period of either one year or two years. Whereas the one-year MA. programs are recommended for candidates whose BA. studies took four years, students who obtained their undergraduate degree in Bologna-type three-year programs are eligible for admission only to the two-year MA. programs. The Provost mentioned that the two-year programs pose many challenges related, among other things, to recruitment and admissions, as well as the allocation and redistribution of financial aid. CEU is actively involved in the Erasmus program to the extent of 90 visiting

students per year. “CEU hosts more Erasmus students than it has the means to send,” says the COO, hence the imbalance in the proportion of 30 outgoing versus 60 incoming students.

Taking up about a quarter of the student population, the doctoral programs at CEU are also confronted with challenges. According to a recent review prepared by a doctoral student, less than 7% of the students complete their studies by the end of the fourth year when the stipend provided by CEU and other funding opportunities available for students run out. By the end of the sixth year and tenth year, respectively 27% and 50% of the students reach graduation. However, as the Rector pointed out, this is not a unique phenomenon: many research universities in the U.S., Hungary and elsewhere cope with the same problem, particularly in the field of social sciences and humanities. In parenthesis, CEU doctoral students are entitled to spend one term abroad.

2. Organization and operation: evaluation of the current situation and processes

2.1. The organization of the institution, its governance structure as reflected in its mission statement

Since CEU is a small institution, for the time being it is primarily divided into academic departments (14 of them) complemented by 17 research centers and 12 research groups.

In addition, there are “Schools” and they seem to be searching for their proper role. One of them is the Business School, which runs an undergraduate program, but as it is planned to be integrated into the University more closely its undergraduate program is due to be eliminated. Nevertheless, the Business School is planned to retain an adult education component.

In addition, two more new Schools are in the process of creation. The School of Public Policy is already in operation, and its dean was recently appointed. The model for the School of Public Policy is the Woodrow Wilson School (rather than the Kennedy School), hence it has a practical orientation. SPP is presently searching for faculty and is likely to make some twenty appointments and offer new educational programs. It will also draw on faculty resources already available at CEU (viz. the departments of Political Science; International Relations and European Studies; Public Policy).

What exactly will be the relationship between the Schools and Departments and what will the emergent organizational chart of the University look like remain to be seen. Does the University really need a Department of Public Policy when it creates a School of Public Policy? What exactly does “cooperation” between the Schools and the Departments mean? Will the Departments in any matter report to the Dean of the School? The HAC believes that a clear line of policy is necessary for the predictable functioning of an academic organization. If the Department wishes to retain full autonomy and report only to the provost, without any obligation to report to the Dean of the School, would it not be a better arrangement to transfer the more practice oriented faculty from the Department of Public Policy to the School of Public Policy and transfer the rest of the faculty into the Department of Political Science? The difference in terms of the mission between the School of History and Interdisciplinary Studies and the cooperating Departments is even less obvious.

It also may need clarification what the difference is between the Departments and Schools in their educational mission. Are the Schools the organizational units which offer vocational degrees, such as Master of Business Education, Master of Public Policy, while Departments offer Ph.D.s and academically oriented Master’s Programs? But what kind of vocational degrees can a School of History and Interdisciplinary Studies offer? In an organization which has existed for 20 years it may be difficult to change the organizational chart and this can create unnecessary conflicts. *So we urge the leadership of the University to act with care and establish*

clear principles about the boundaries between the new organizational units and the existing Departments.

The HAC would like to express one more concern about the study program structure of the University. CEU typically used to offer a one-year Master's program, since most of its students came with a 5-year university degree from European institutions. With the Bologna system in place, this all has changed: now most European universities offer a 3-year BA. and require a 2-year-long Master's program. CEU for the time being operates with a mixture of one year and two year Master's programs. It is not that clear whether this is just a transitory phenomenon and whether eventually all Master's programs will require two years of study or the one-year-long Master's programs will remain operative in the long run. If the two alternatives remain, *it needs clarification what the criteria for a one year and a two year Master's program respectively are.* Will students from U.S. type universities (hence a four-year-long BA.) qualify for a one year Master's program (though most U.S. Master's programs are also two-year programs) and the Bologna system BA.'s will have to take the two-year program? Will the value of the two programs be the same?

2.2. Evidence for compliance with the accreditation criteria

Academic structure

As mentioned earlier, CEU consists of 14 academic departments and nine of them run at least one program accredited by the HAC. Two-year accredited MA. programs are offered by the following Departments: Economics, Gender Studies, History, Medieval Studies, Philosophy, Political Science and Nationalism Studies. Further, a two-year Master's program, run by the Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy has been accredited after the Self-Study Report for the current accreditation was already submitted.

From among the Doctoral Programs, two have been granted accreditation by the HAC as doctoral schools in compliance with Hungarian legislation; these programs belong respectively to the Department of Economics and, as a joint program, to the Departments of History and Medieval Studies.

In addition, postgraduate specialization programs (*szakirányú továbbképzés*) are offered by the following departments: Economics, International Relations, Legal Studies, History, Political Science, and Nationalism Studies.

As for the CEU Business School, nine of their adult education programs have been accredited by the Hungarian Adult Education Accreditation Board.

Every CEU department also offers one-year M.A. programs which fit into the U.S. system but are incompatible with the Bologna system implemented in EU institutions of higher education. Generally speaking, these programs have been accredited by the U.S., but not by the HAC. Two remarks are due in this regard: (1) all the U.S. accredited programs are registered by the Hungarian Educational Authority; (2) the graduates from „registered programs” receive a U.S. (and not a Hungarian) degree. Although this dual-accredited character of CEU appears to be somewhat complicated, the Self-Study Report stresses that „in order to maintain full institutional transparency, CEU as a Hungarian university regularly reports data also on [recognized] programs through the Higher Education Information System and thus fulfils the requirements described in Article 5 (2) of the HEA [Higher Education Act, CXXXIX Act of 2005]” (p.16). The HAC can only confirm the validity of this statement.

On the suitability of the academic and research staff

According to the data found in the Self Study Report, the total number of CEU academic staff is 216, recruited from over 30 countries, partly with the aim of strengthening the international character of the institution. 70% of the faculty is in full-time employment with CEU, with a

male/female ratio of 4:1. With respect to faculty with employment or public employment status, over 80% have earned Ph.D. or a higher degree. Whereas all members of the full-time faculty can speak at least one foreign language, half of them can speak two or more foreign languages. Out of the 19 researchers, 17 work full-time at CEU. While more than half of the researchers are women, all full-time researchers have a Ph.D. degree as a minimum.

The leadership of CEU does its best to attract and retain highly qualified faculty. This goal is largely achieved by a combination of offering competitive salaries, keeping the teaching load relatively low (24 ECTS per academic year) and ensuring an ideal faculty/student ratio (below 1:8), hence class sizes are quite small. Furthermore, efforts are not spared to create ideal circumstances for faculty to offer high-quality teaching and conduct cutting-edge research at the same time. On the other hand, faculty is expected to provide any support, academic and personal, for the students, including the continuous supervision of progress with their theses.

In view of the above, CEU meets the requirements described in, respectively, Article 12 (4) and Article 18 (3) of the 2005 Hungarian Higher Education Act (CXXXIX Act of 2005).

Incoming and outgoing students

Similarly to the faculty, the student body at CEU is international in character: students come from close to 100 countries. Whereas all five continents of the world are represented at CEU, for understandable reasons Hungary provides the largest cohort of students, making up 18% of the entire student body. Statistics further reveal that the ten new member states of the EU constitute about 45% of all the students and a further 17% come from countries of the former Soviet Union.

CEU would not be able to recruit the brightest and most motivated students to pursue graduate and postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences if it were not for the extremely generous support offered. Namely, all doctoral and most Master's students are granted financial support, except those studying in the Business School which enrolls mostly fee-paying students.

In the 2010/2011 academic year, the total number of CEU students was 1573, 232 of whom (nearly 15%) were doctoral students. This number includes those who enrolled into accredited or „registered” programs. Between 2003 and 2010, the number of CEU students increased by over 60%, mainly due to the introduction of a few Master's and doctoral programs, either at CEU's own initiative, or with the sponsorship of Erasmus Mundus. In recent years, the annual drop-out rate at CEU has stayed well below 10% – an acceptable proportion on an international scale. As for graduating students, in the 2010/2011 academic year 447 students submitted and defended their theses.

In addition to assistance provided by the faculty in academic matters, the CEU Student Services supports Master's and doctoral students, and Alumni Relations and Career Office (ARCS) alumni, through a wide range of resources and services. According to the Self-Study Report, „[i]n 2010/2011 approximately 200 new organizations/companies were added to the employer database” (p. 54). In some sense, ARCS can be regarded as a „match-making” office, giving assistance to both employers and potential employees, that is, CEU graduates.

In all respects, CEU takes great care in recruiting and enrolling the best graduate students and strives to follow them up throughout their studies at the institution – and beyond.

2.3. Evaluation of the key results of the institution, with special consideration of its research, development, financial management, and its Hungarian and international relationships.

The management of the University demonstrated its commitment to high quality teaching and research and it has been formidably successful in achieving its aims. According to its Self-Study Report, CEU currently has 17 research centers and operates 12 research groups, “that are

normally initiated cross-departmentally by doctoral students under the academic supervision of faculty members” (p. 3). CEU attracts high quality international faculty and student body, and is way ahead of any other Hungarian university in terms of per faculty extramural research grants and publications in refereed journals.

Compared to other Hungarian universities, CEU is by far the most productive institution in terms of publication performance. CEU academic staff members have 1.244 publications per person per year; the excellence of CEU’s publication performance was also acknowledged by the Hungarian Rectors’ Conference in 2011.

To facilitate research, CEU has a Research Support Office that was set up in 2005 and in 2007 it established the position of Director for Research and Academic Cooperation. A Development Office was added. The recently overhauled structure serves to assist faculty in acquiring international research grants, help them with grant applications and other research-related administrative work.

CEU also continues the tradition of Collegium Budapest, closed in the summer of 2011, by having recently established its own Institute for Advanced Studies. CEU-IAS can play an important role in bringing to Hungary outstanding international scholars and young researchers and building an important bridge between Hungarian academics and the rest of the world. Fellows of CEU-IAS come to conduct research here, and while they are not allowed to teach regular classes, they may give lectures.

CEU by Hungarian standards is a well endowed institution. The main sources of funding of Central European University are (1) the funds received from the Maintainer, the Central European University Foundation Budapest; (2) grants received through application processes in line with the public benefit goals of the University, for which the European Commission is the main source; and (3) tuition, enrollment and other education related fees paid by the students. According to the University’s Self-Study Report the total revenues rose from HUF 3.928 billion in 2006 to HUF 16.104 billion in 2010. Within the total revenues, the proportions of funding per sources are the following:

- Funds received from the Maintainer: 81%
- Grants received through application processes: 8%
- Tuition, enrollment and other education related fees paid by the students: 6%
- Other income: 5%.

Among Hungarian universities, the average amount of grants per academic staff member obtained through the 7th Framework Program in 2009 and 2010 was the highest at CEU (21,128 thousand HUF).

At 6% of its budget, the modest tuition revenue is unlikely to increase substantially even in the future. This is a realistic aim – as long as CEU remains a primarily social science graduate school it has to provide funds to its students and cannot generate substantial tuition revenues. According to its strategic plan, CEU intends to diversify its funding scheme, but since academic salaries and fellowships for students are unlikely to increase very fast in the near future, CEU is in an enviable position.

CEU continuously develops its financial model that enables providing scholarship-based financial aid for its students to maintain its fundamental commitment to equal opportunity and access to education.

The University will diversify its funding basis, in particular through the enhancement of its fund-raising capacity among alumni, foundations, corporate sponsors, and private individuals, and through the development of fee-for-service executive education programs.

CEU is a small, faculty and student friendly institution, consequently the leadership of the University has close ties with faculty and students. The governing body of the University is the Senate, which consists of elected members of the faculty, as well as students and top administrators. The Senate is the main policy making institution, which initiates academic programs, establishes standards of admission and sets the rules governing academic personnel. New educational programs may be initiated by the leadership of the University or faculty, but it has to be approved by the Senate. In a private university the powers granted to the Senate are exceptionally great. This reminds the HAC more of UCLA (a public institution) rather than of Yale (a private university).

CEU performs its dual American-Hungarian mission superbly. CEU appointed a Pro-Rector for Hungarian and EU Affairs, attracts a substantial number of Hungarian students and places many of its graduates in leading Hungarian universities. The Board of Trustees of CEU is international (it includes former presidents of Stanford University and Bryan Mawr College, the current president of Bard College), together with Hungarian academics.

Three departments are participating in the EU Erasmus Mundus program, which provides scholarship funds for CEU students. This is a great achievement for a small university! These fellowship programs will on the other hand expire and it remains a challenge – as the Self-Study Report acknowledged – how CEU will be able to compensate for the eventual shortfall of fellowships. The Erasmus Mundus program helps CEU to bridge the transition gap from the one-year Master's programs to two-year Master's programs, but *since the funding of Master's programs initially was planned for one year the transition to two years poses serious financial challenges* (which includes the problem of funding for the summer period between the two years).

The Self-Study Report (p. 39) mentions that five departments participate in early research training through the Marie Curie Program. An additional measure to promote international cooperation is the recently set up Institute for Advanced Studies, whose task is to “create further ties both with Hungarian and international academic institutions” (p. 86).

CEU is in its essence an international university and its international staff and students provide ongoing links with the international academic community. “As its student body extends beyond the Central and Eastern European region, it is imperative that CEU faculty continue to raise the university's international profile by publishing in top-rated academic journals and publishers while establishing networks with educational institutions across Europe and North America” (p. 16).

3. Principles and practice of quality assurance

3.1. Policy and procedures for quality assurance (organization, documents)

Given its solid funding, it is not surprising that substantial resources are committed to monitoring quality. The University established an Institutional Research Office (IRO), which performs various assessment tasks. It had a budget of \$162,000 in 2010/11 and it may spend \$208,000 in 2011-12 (gathering data for quality control is done by faculty and staff as part of their normal job duties). This is an impressive budget – even in a well funded university. The quantity and quality of the work IRO does are truly impressive: it analyzes recruitment and admission data. In addition, CEU generates a great deal of information on faculty and student performance and satisfaction. There are faculty surveys, regular departmental reviews, entry and exit interviews with students, course evaluation by students and data on grades by courses, as well as surveys carried out among alumni about their vocational destinations. The quantity and quality of data available to CEU is to be envied.

With regard to quality assurance, during the past six years the University has made considerable progress in becoming integrated in the Hungarian higher education environment. As mentioned above, the post of Pro-Rector for Hungarian and EU Affairs was created in 2007 to oversee Hungarian accreditation matters and to liaise with Hungarian educational authorities and other partners in higher education. Since 2005, CEU has conducted various surveys and reviews in order to assess the operation and efficiency of the system that is responsible for quality. The CEU Institutional Assessment and Quality Assurance (IAQA) system has been established as a comprehensive means of ensuring the achievement of the desired quality and supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The IAQA system at CEU is evolving in response to Hungarian and European requirements and expectations as well as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Characteristics of Excellence. The IAQA Policy⁵ defines the main principles, organization and mechanisms of institutional assessment and quality assurance at CEU. It is based on the involvement and ownership of faculty and staff; on a continuous planning, feedback and improvement loop; and on a differentiated systematic approach. Distinct processes at various units and programs are organized and managed in a coherent and systematic way so that they inform and support each other. The Policy further defines the organizational responsibilities for assessment and planning at the institutional, unit, and program level.

The IAQA policy meets the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (known as European Standards and Guidelines, or ESG), since it includes

- the relationship between teaching and research in the institution;
- the institution's strategy for quality and standards;
- the organization of the quality assurance system;
- the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties and other organizational units and individuals for the assurance of quality;
- the involvement of students in quality assurance;
- the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

However, the IAQA Policy was approved only on March 4, 2011, so there is no evidence yet for the systematic application of an internal quality assurance system. For example, "Program specifications prepared defining the goals, the learning outcomes of the program as well as syllabi of individual courses" have not been prepared (with respect to programs see also the following *section 3.2*).

Although former accreditation procedures formalizing the ratio between credits and contact hours (HAC resolution 2005/2/V/4.) have been suggested, *the HAC found no documented curricula where the number of contact hours is defined* (different for full-time and part time programs). *It seems that the one-year "postgraduate specialization programs (szakirányú továbbképzés) are not documented properly.*

The CEU Mission and Strategic Plan commit the University to striving for excellence in its research, education and outreach activities.

Although there were very informative ad hoc reviews (like Faculty survey (2008), Ph.D. improvement@CEU in 2008, the two-year Master's program review (2010) there is a need for the systematic (annual) review and monitoring of the strategy. From this viewpoint the Self-Study Report contains only plans for the future, since till now none of the following documents have been prepared:

⁵ IAQA Policy at <http://www.ceu.hu/documents/p-1103-3>

- “Annual review – should reflect on the quality and outcomes of the program and may lead to adjusting the Program Specifications”
- “Each research center should have an annual plan of action and provide annual reports (preferably in electronic form) available on the Center’s website.”

The HAC recommends that CEU shorten the planned four year period for the review of the academic activity of Departments and Schools.

“IAQA processes at CEU are included in the planning, assessment and review cycle. At the institutional level, IAQA processes are designed to support the preparation, implementation, monitoring and periodic revision of the CEU Strategic Plan, budget plans and other CEU-wide plans. At the level of schools and departments, IAQA processes include the collection of information related to the teaching, research and outreach activities at the Unit, as well as strategic and other reviews of the unit’s activities. It is prepared in accordance with the IAQA Policy and is a CEU official document. It will be fully reviewed by the SAQAC and approved by the COO and the Provost in December 2011” (Self-Study Report p. 42).

This part of the Self-Study highlights that CEU recently developed a sound quality assurance system that is able to support continuous development. There is no evidence for its application as yet and it seems this concept will be new in the life of CEU.

CEU decided to explore the feasibility of introducing a computerized system for managing assessment and planning data related to monitoring quality assurance processes. Based on expert reviews, CEU purchased a subscription for the WEAVEOnline system for 2011/2012.

However, at the interviews nobody knew about the existence of this system at CEU, so *it seems the application of this information system to support the monitoring of the strategy and the quality assurance processes is only a (good) plan for the future.*

3.2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programs

The Self-Study Report notes, “As regards program level assessment and planning, according to the IAQA Policy, each degree-granting CEU program should have a program specification, defining goals and learning outcomes and other key aspects of the program; a process for continuous assessment of the quality of the program, especially in terms of achieving the program’s learning outcomes; and an annual review process.”

CEU does a formidable job in measuring the quality and efficiency of its educational programs. Surveys are conducted on student’s expectations when they enter, their satisfaction when they leave, and their placement after they received their degree. All courses are carefully evaluated and grades are reported course by course.

CEU is a selective institution, offering admission to 21.3 % of the applicants (Self-Study Report Appendix 34) and half of them accept the offer. Students are generally satisfied with the courses they take. Their evaluation ranges on a scale from 1 to 10 between the low 7th to the high 9th. Mathematics, Medieval Studies, Philosophy and Gender Studies are among the better ranked, Political Science, Sociology and Environmental Studies are on the lower end. Upon leaving CEU student satisfaction is very high: over 70 % reported they would “definitely” do their studies at CEU if they were to start it all over again (only 4 % said they would definitely not!). Students upon leaving are especially satisfied with the intellectual climate of their department, the supervision of their thesis, faculty availability (in all these respects graduating students give a 4.33-4.44 grade on a scale of 1 to 5). They are a bit less satisfied with the coherence of their programs and the extent to which CEU prepared them for their professional careers, but even in those dimension the satisfaction rate is high.

The placement record – arguably the best indicator of the efficiency of any educational program – is excellent. Over 90 percent of those who graduated are employed, over 90 percent of them in jobs for which CEU prepared them. CEU places their graduates mainly in the non-profit/educational sector (over 75%). Ph.D. degree holders are mainly placed in respectable regional universities but many of them have been appointed to teaching and research positions at internationally highly valued institutions. Many M.A. students from CEU end up in the very best graduate programs in the leading universities of the world (Harvard, Princeton, Berkeley, UCLA, LSE).

The Policy and Guidelines on Developing, Launching and Changing Degree Programs (scheduled to be approved by the Senate in January 2011) provides detailed requirements on developing and operating degree programs at CEU, with particular attention to defining and measuring student learning outcomes.

At the program level, the IAQA Policy requires that mandatory annual reviews take direct evidence of student learning into account in program planning and management. Section IV.C of the IAQA Policy reads: “[...] an annual review process; the review should reflect on the quality and outcomes of the program and may lead to adjusting the Program Specifications, the planned number of students or other aspects of the Program; The Program Specifications and the documented process and outcomes of program review should be available to the Provost and the Academic Secretary. [...]”

Given that the IAQA policy only went into effect in March 2011 there is little evidence that with the exception of the periodic accreditation procedures, the above mentioned procedures have been applied. The HAC recommends that in this regard the European Standards and Guidelines should be strictly applied: “Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.”

The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective quality assurance activities which ensure that programmes are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency. The quality assurance of programmes and awards are expected to include:

- development and **publication** of explicit intended learning outcomes;
- careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content;
- **specific needs of different modes of delivery** (e.g. full time, part-time, distance learning, e-learning⁶) and types of higher education (e.g. academic, vocational, professional);
- availability of appropriate learning resources;
- **formal programme approval procedures** by a body other than that teaching the programme;
- **monitoring of the progress and achievements of students**;
- **regular periodic reviews of programmes** (including external panel members);
- regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other
- relevant organisations;
- participation of students in quality assurance activities.”

Beyond the fact that the Hungarian-accredited programs necessarily contain intended learning outcomes, there have been no documents available that illustrate the activity of CEU in these issues in the past five years. *The HAC, therefore, recommends that in line with the ESG, CEU set up a system to collect regular feedback from employers, labor market representatives and other relevant organizations.*

⁶ See the previous remark related to the undefined relationship between credits and contact hours

Here is a stakeholders' opinion about the organization and its performance. "CEU Alumni Relations and Career Services Office (ARCS) has established and maintained permanent contact with representatives of the labor market (i.e. inter/national companies and organizations) and also supports Master's and doctoral students and alumni in reaching their career goals through a variety of useful services and resources. As part of assessing institutional effectiveness, it has conducted regular alumni surveys since 2007: First Destination Surveys focusing on the careers and satisfaction of recently graduated alumni and the Doctoral Career Destination Survey (2010) focusing on careers of doctoral graduates from all years and their level of satisfaction with studies at CEU. In the future, the IAQA Plan envisions a regular integrated alumni survey, which will systematically address the matters of CEU institutional effectiveness and learning from the alumni perspective. In particular, information from alumni surveys will be communicated to the individual Departments and discussed at the Academic Forum, the Senate, the SDC and the SAQAC."

As noted earlier, CEU conducts an entry survey of incoming students annually, at the time of their enrollment, and an exit survey, which focuses on satisfaction with the student learning experience at CEU. The main results and conclusions of the exit survey are first reviewed by the Vice-President for Student Services and then discussed by the leadership of the University in which the heads of departments are also involved. In this way, student opinion is channeled back in the program review process. Additionally, academic departments administer course satisfaction surveys. The results of these surveys are analyzed at the departmental level (also included in the departmental self-assessment processes) and then shared with the Provost.

3.3. System of assessment of students and the effectiveness of teaching

Educational rules, exams

Under the "Student Policies" menu on the CEU website it is easy to find the regulation for students. Within the numerous regulations, the document titled "Student rights, rules and academic regulations" summarizes the information about the course requirements, grade system, exam rules and student records. The amount of information in the regulation and its structure definitely differs from the rules of other Hungarian higher education institutions. It is shorter, simpler, less detailed and thus less complicated.

The regulation has good motivational elements, for instance the students should fulfil the course requirements at least at the level of "satisfactory" in order to get the financial aid (reduced tuition fee, scholarship, etc.) from the institution. One week of unjustified absence may result in the loss of financial aid.

During the student interview at the site visit, students verified that the lecturers clearly inform them about the course requirements, as written in the regulation. The situation of students is facilitated by the uniformly required 50% performance for each course.

The regulation guarantees only one extra possibility to make up for an unsuccessful exam, which is much stricter than the requirements of the new higher education law (CCIV Act of 2011); however, according to the students it generally does not cause them any major obstacles, presumably due to the severe quality filters applied during the selection process of the students.

3.4. Quality assurance of teaching staff

Faculty recruitment and evaluation of performance

In addition to what was described in Section 2.2, the Self-Study Report spells out the requirements set for applying for a faculty position at CEU. Apart from occasional personal invitations, all vacancies are announced in a world-wide open search. Established and

administered by search committees, the selection procedure includes not only a thorough study of the personal documents submitted by the candidate, but also interviews and guest lectures.

With the aim of assuring outstanding quality, every faculty member has to submit a yearly Individual Academic Activity Report (IAAR), which reports the achievements in research, teaching and service to the academic community. This latter implies contributions to administration within CEU or participation in worthwhile undertakings outside CEU. An important element of the self-report is reflection on student evaluations received in the given academic year. Since all faculty members have online access to the student evaluations, they may compare their own achievements to those of their colleagues. The IAARs are stored in the faculty member's Academic Staff File. Heads of departments conduct a review of junior faculty members every year, and of senior faculty members every three years. In the review, all three aspects of the faculty member's performance are measured against CEU's institutional standards.

The next step in the evaluation procedure is a discussion between the faculty member and the department head. The outcome of this meeting is recorded in a memorandum which reflects the faculty member's evaluation performance and academic plan. At the end of the evaluation procedure, the memorandum is filed in the Academic Staff File. Reappointment and promotion chances are dependent to a large extent on the content of these evaluation files.

In line with the ESG, *the HAC recommends that the teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and should be encouraged to value their skills. On the other hand, a standard policy to remove teachers who continue to be demonstrably ineffective should be worked out* (ESG 1.4: "Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.")

Students' evaluation of the teaching performance

One of the core values of the institution is the quality-focused approach that covers all details. Students regularly participate in surveys that – beyond the quality of education – evaluate the infrastructure, student services, dormitory conditions, eating facilities, etc. The meeting with the students also reflected what has been stated in the self study report of the institution, namely that the management considers student feedback a key element in the development of the institution.

The online teaching performance evaluating system that the institution applies is used in forty higher educational institutions in the U.S., which also proves the effectiveness of the system. The structure of the surveys on the professors' performance is relatively simple, but at the same time these surveys cover all important aspects to measure teaching quality. They also contain descriptive parts to provide the students with the possibility to give their opinion about their professor's performance. The simple survey structure is firstly not demotivating for the students; secondly it is easier to compare the professors' performances based on the results.

Such an evaluation system can only be successful if the number of responding students is high enough. During the academic year, in the first trimester, the return rate is often more than 70% and that decreases to 30-40% till the end of the third semester, but it is still enough to communicate the necessary conclusions about the professors' performance. Compared to other Hungarian higher educational institutions, this result is excellent, though the institution should strive to keep the high return rate of the first trimester throughout the whole academic year. Naturally, the question arises about how to motivate the students to fill in the surveys when they are expected to complete many other surveys due to the quality-focused attitude of the institution.

According to the regulations of the University, the professors are obliged to inform the students about their results within three weeks after the exam. Thus the students are motivated to fill out

the evaluation surveys about the course or the professor because consequently they can get their exam results in less than three weeks. Those students who do not take this opportunity can gain access to their exam results at the end of the three weeks.

It was reported in the accreditation visit that in the survey answers, students ranked most of the professors very high, between 8.5 and 9.5 on a 10-grade scale, which reflects high student satisfaction. During the meetings, the question was raised if the management was applying certain forms of sanction against the professors who get negative performance feedback regularly. It turned out that currently no direct sanction system is being used but the head of the given department, on receiving the survey results about the professors, will notice in the table the evaluation of their own department compared to the others in the institution. Therefore, during the department or institute meetings, the responsible directors can indicate to the professors any possible fields for development and improvement. Besides the institutional management, the head of the department and the evaluated professor, *it would also be practical to share the survey results with the president of the students' council*. Otherwise the students reported that the professors take the results of the evaluating surveys seriously. Professors tend to implement changes based on the annual feedback in order to improve. The students were also positive about the fact that the professors often expect survey feedback from the students during the trimester, in order to introduce necessary and reasonable changes in their education methodology for the rest of the academic year.

All in all, compared to the Hungarian average, the system of students' evaluation of teaching performance is constructed well at CEU although it could be further improved by increasing the return rate of the questionnaires.

Publication performance

According to the CEU Academic Staff Handbook, it is required that all faculty members and research staff publish with reasonable regularity in scholarly periodicals and at academic publishing houses of international stature. In general, CEU faculty fulfills these publication requirements. The number of publications per academic staff member (including both faculty and researchers) was the highest at CEU among Hungarian universities – with 1,244 publications per person per year and by calculating exclusively papers available in the Web of Science. More concretely, faculty members are required to have one article per year accepted in a refereed journal or a chapter in a book published by a respected academic publisher. A book is worth four articles whereas the worth of co-authored and edited books is negotiable. As a general rule, publications are expected to have been written in English but those written in other languages, especially in German or French, may also be considered in the evaluation procedure.

The Hungarian Rectors' Conference granted similar credit to CEU's successful involvement in research and development projects. As indicated by the statistical data issued by the National Office of Innovation, CEU ranked the highest in terms of the average amount of grants per academic staff member obtained through the 7th Framework Program in 2009 and 2010. In fact, CEU's achievement was over ten times as high as that of the second ranked Budapest University of Technology and Economics.

CEU is outstanding in hosting projects financed by the European Research Council. The University has been one of the largest recipients of grants in the social sciences among the EU countries since 2004.

3.5. Learning resources and student support

CEU provides excellent facilities for its students, including 31 classrooms, computer study rooms (four computer labs with approximately 30 computers per lab), research and work spaces, free printing, a modern e-mail system and wireless internet in all its buildings, and a

modern library, including a great number of online resources which are accessible for the students also remotely. CEU welcomes applications from students with disabilities, and aims to provide suitable support where possible.

According to the ESG, institutions should routinely monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of the support services available to their students. Although Library review (2011) is a good example for such a review, *it would be useful to standardize and broaden the focus of this review to other infrastructural issues (also including the requirements of research work)*. Such an analysis could also support the monitoring of the planned Campus Redevelopment Project.

Scholarships and fees

The majority of the students of the institution (approximately 80% –apart from the Business School) receive some form of financial support to finish their studies successfully. The students can apply for various scholarships, and the institution – besides providing them with scholarships – also secures accommodation in its own Residence Center (dormitory) for all MA students who receive a stipend. The institution contributes to the accommodation costs for all dormitory students, therefore we can conclude that the student support system is quite developed in the institution. The rate of doctoral (Ph.D.) scholarships is worth highlighting since it is twice as high as the Hungarian state-financed doctoral scholarships. The preservation of the current student support system and ratio of the supported students, possibly the development or extension of it, should be kept as an institutional priority in the future too.

Student services, infrastructure

As noted earlier, despite the fact that the University was not built for educational purposes, some of the facilities have been reconstructed in a way to suit educational functions. At the student forum, a German student declared that the quality of the facilities is identical with what he was used to in Germany. It must be mentioned that the architects paid special attention to natural lighting, especially in the library.

The library

The library has a central role in the institution, as it provides the students with a wide variety of professional resources covering all scientific areas taught in the institution. The library also contributes to learning and research activities by ordering and borrowing such materials from partner institutions that cannot be found in the library archive and which they are able to deliver to the students in a relatively short time. It is also possible to digitalize and send the students online those pages that they need from abroad.

During the interview with students, the respondents gave a positive opinion about the variety of available digital materials which are easier and more flexible for them to use.

Students also highlighted the importance of copying and printing opportunities free of charge. The library generously also allows students from other universities to get access to the wide variety of social sciences documents.

Eating opportunities

Based on the accreditation visit, many positive aspects can be mentioned about eating facilities. Several buffets, cafés and restaurants are available in the institution. The quality-focused approach can also be witnessed in this respect, since the management sets high expectations for the suppliers and regularly checks the quality of services. If the level of the services is not satisfactory or there are student complaints, the contract with the supplier may be terminated. Quality food at affordable prices, good menu offers and discounts are also granted for the students and employees of the institution.

Dormitory

A dormitory (CEU Residence Center) that belongs to the institution is located on Kerepesi Street and it offers services for the students identical to three star hotels. It is very positive that for most students the services of the dormitory are included in their scholarship package. Financial support consists of three parts: education without tuition fee, free dormitory accommodation and financial support. The condition of the infrastructure, the facilities and the cleanness of the dormitory are excellent. Students have various sports opportunities: swimming pool, gym, table tennis, tennis, etc. The canteen in the dormitory tends to satisfy the needs of all students who arrive from different cultural backgrounds. Based on the student feedback provision is made to prepare meals at affordable prices that fit the national custom of the students.

There is one area for possible improvement, namely the expansion of cooking facilities, since the students pointed out that there are only two available kitchens utilized at full capacity, therefore in the future more space should be arranged for this purpose.

The single negative feedback from the students was that the dormitory is relatively far from the institution, which is also quite common in the case of higher educational institutions of Budapest. At the beginning of the year, the management of the dormitory chooses floor monitors from among the applicants, who relay to the management the student opinions, proposals about dormitory services and also help to organize social events at the dormitory. This practice of appointing floor monitors is not typical in other Hungarian higher educational institutions; at CEU the students elect the representatives of the dormitory committee from among themselves.

Center of student services

Although physically the student services are not located at the same place, from the students' point of view it is beneficial that the same department unit is in charge of all important student administration services. This is also reflected on the website of the institution, where – under the Student Services menu – detailed information can be found about the available opportunities. The so-called Student Life Brochure and CEU Student Handbook, which can be downloaded from the website, are also a great help for the students.

It is certainly positive that the services are available in a wide time frame, and it was further extended last year at the students' request. Therefore students are queuing up only in the first week of the academic year, but during the rest of the semester they can enter the office without having to wait for their turn.

The Student Life Office also belongs to the same Student Services unit; it arranges cultural and free time programs for the students. It would be worth strengthening cooperation between the Student Union and the Student Life Office in the future in order to offer an even wider range of programs.

The orientation week, launched at the beginning of the semester, is useful help for the students since thus they get all necessary information about the institution, their stay in Hungary and their studies. *The students would prefer to have a bit more social activities during the orientation week, since they face many bureaucratic duties and this could be eased with more colorful programs.* The Student Union ought to be a partner in this undertaking. Since there are many foreign students, it is vital that they are informed prior to their arrival about their duties and studies. All the necessary information that foreign or Hungarian first year students might need can be found on the website under the online orientation menu in a logical structure.

Alumni and carrier services

Just like American universities, CEU puts a considerable emphasis on fostering alumni relations. On the website of CEU that covers alumni activity, nine full-time employees' contacts are provided who are in charge of alumni and career services. The relations with the students are not lost after graduation, since most of the graduates use the career services. Many alumni events are organized all around the world, in which CEU leaders and even the rector occasionally participate. Alumni relations are considered crucially important since they bring various advantages for the alumni and the current students. Besides this, the alumni can offer internship positions and often job opportunities for CEU students, therefore career services are closely related with alumni services. The strong relations with the alumni community also contribute to the financing of the institution as former students often provide financial support to CEU.

The Students Union

The Student Union operating at CEU represents the students' voice and interests in the governing bodies and committees. The feedback is positive about the student representatives who are delegated to every unit, participate in department meetings, and contribute directly by sharing the opinion of the students with the professors about the courses, the quality of the lectures and possible problems.

It is a fundamental problem in the operation of the Student Union that since only Master's and Ph.D. programs exist in the institution, any student spends only a relatively short period in the institution and that is not sufficient to fulfill all tasks and duties in student representation. The time they spend in the student movement is generally enough only to learn how the structures work. The handbook prepared for student representatives is a very useful manual in that it helps the newly elected representatives to get acquainted with the mechanisms and frameworks of the council itself and the University as a whole. It must be a priority for CEU to combat the challenges that are rooted in the nature of the institution and to further develop student representation, since a well-functioning and effective Student Union contributes not only to the benefit of the students but also to the whole university. Events and traditional social programs, the coordination of the registration and orientation week are all activities in which the student representatives can take part.

3.6. Internal information systems

The well-functioning internal information system provides several channels for sharing the most important information in the institute.

Twice a year, faculty, staff, students and alumni all receive by email the Rector's Reports (with all of the annexes), providing detailed information on current issues of concern to CEU. A short memo in the electronic CEU Internal Communications Bulletin is circulated to the CEU community on the main decisions taken by the Senate in order to ensure their implementation. The minutes of Senate meetings, as well as the decisions and policies adopted by the Senate, are accessible at the CEU Document Repository, which is regularly updated with the relevant information. The communication of the result of deliberations in the Academic Forum to other members of faculty and staff are left to the attending heads of departments, whose performance of this task has varied widely by department.

A biweekly electronic bulletin is distributed by email to standing constituencies, such as current students, staff, faculty, and members of the CEU Board of Trustees. The bulletin consists of four parts: important events and developments, achievements (faculty awards, outstanding grants received, etc.), operational/work related information (new policies, administrative decisions, changes in legal and regulatory environments, new appointments, employment opportunities, etc.), and call for proposals (available application possibilities for grants and

scholarships). Information is collected with the help of the heads of academic and administrative units, using a dedicated template on the CEU website.

According to the ESG, institutions should ensure that they collect, analyze and use relevant information for the effective management of their programs of study and other activities. It is important that institutions have the means to collect and analyze information about their own activities. The quality-related information systems required by individual institutions will depend to some extent on local circumstances, but it is at least expected to cover the following, several of which CEU has already introduced:

- Student progression and success rates;
- For the purposes of monitoring student progress and performance, and also indirectly teaching effectiveness, CEU uses its own (self-developed) information system. The University Information System (UIS) is an integrated database, which serves to store and manage various data related to university administration. It has several interfaces used in different units of the institution. The Students Records Office stores all data about students with respect to their enrollment status, their courses and their grades.
- *However, there is no formal procedure and documented result related to the analysis of this data. The HAC, therefore, recommends that CEU set up a method of regular analysis of student data as a way to improve the quality of the academic programs.*
- Employability of graduates;
- The IRO has been especially active in analyzing recruitment and admission data. In the future, the IRO will also play a role in analyzing student and alumni information. The role of the IRO is expected to increase as the assessment procedures become more routine and well defined by the SAQAC, the IAQA Group and other CEU stakeholders.
- Students' satisfaction with their programs;
- As noted earlier in this report, CEU has been conducting exit surveys, which focus on finding out the level of student' satisfaction concerning their learning experience at CEU. The results of the exit survey are expected to be used to improve student services, CEU campus and facilities operation, and selected aspects of teaching and learning. CEU is also planning to conduct surveys focusing on student experiences during their studies.
- Effectiveness of teachers;
- The above mentioned student evaluations of teachers can be said to be very effective, providing quality feedback about teaching performance.
- Profile of the student population;
- CEU annually conducts entry surveys of incoming students at the time of their enrollment. These surveys also focus on improving the effectiveness of recruitment and admission services.
- The Student Recruitment Office confers with academic departments and programs to determine recruitment priorities and strategies, and provides statistical information to departments about application numbers, application yield, country representation, and other elements of recruitment-related data.
- Learning resources available and their costs;
- This analysis has already been suggested in this report (Section 3.5).
- The institution's own key performance indicators;
- It seems these KPI-s are not defined yet. CEU might find the WEAVEOnline system useful for the monitoring of these values.

3.7. Public information, website

CEU has a robust web presence. Over 100 interconnected websites, comprising the institutional site (<http://www.ceu.hu>), departments, schools, centers, administrative units, and more, are

published via the University's central content management system. Most of the website content is directly supplied by the CEU community itself.

The practice of CEU meets the ESG standards that claim that institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programs and awards they are offering:

The CEU Student Recruitment Office provides information about the University to prospective students through a variety of channels, including direct e-mail, education portal sites, Facebook postings, Google advertising, print advertising, posters and brochures distributed throughout the region and worldwide. A network of local representatives is maintained to conduct recruitment presentations and provide information to applicants in several countries.

The Alumni Relations and Career Services (ARCS) mini site (<http://alumnicareer.ceu.hu>) provides a wide array of information for alumni (such as job vacancies), as well as for visitors interested learning more about experiences of CEU alumni after they graduate. Other departmental websites also offer alumni stories and statistics pertaining to their specific programs.

The HAC recommends that CEU put more effort to the standardization of the content and design of the website of the departments. Information related to course syllabuses and degree programs needs a central website with revision control functionalities.

4. C-SWOT analysis – conclusions drawn, actions planned

As indicated in the Self-Study Report, the SWOT analysis, designed by the Strategic Development Committee of CEU, has been summarized around challenges in five areas of the University's operation: educational programs (research, teaching, civic engagement), students, faculty, institutional resources (infrastructure, campus, financial model), and administration and governance. In the following, the HAC will briefly respond to some of the elements of the SWOT analysis as formulated in the Self-Study Report.

Strengths

The HAC can confirm the validity of the points of strengths as highlighted in the Self-Study Report, most notably the University's "uniquely international community, multicultural ambiance, open-minded, tolerant atmosphere; inter- and multi-disciplinary academic culture; faculty of international recognition, outstanding faculty-student ratio; widely recognized academic excellence and sound finances." This evaluation report has supplied several examples as evidence. However, one remark is due in this regard. If a single determining factor is to be identified that helped CEU become a place of recognized academic excellence, HAC believes it is its independence from state funding and tuition revenues. Thanks to the generous private funding scheme, CEU is much less subject to the ups and downs of the economic and financial situation of the region and the country where it operates than its state-funded fellow institutions. This has enabled CEU to abide by its original mission, pursue a stable and balanced educational policy, and develop relatively predictable long-term plans.

Weaknesses

The HAC gives due credit to the CEU leadership for its self-critical attitude and its awareness of the areas where further improvement seems to be required. The Self-Study Report and the site visit convinced the visiting team that while certain steps had already been recognized or taken (such as the planned integration of the Business School into the campus, or the need to redress the gender imbalance of the academic staff), other concerns are still waiting to be addressed. The need that the HAC found the most pressing is the lack of transparency regarding the relationship between the newly established schools and the relevant departments.

Opportunities

The Self-Study Report is rather modest in its judgment of the opportunities CEU is afforded. Its unique status as a graduate university with dual institutional identity and accreditation (U.S. and Hungarian), its embeddedness in the European higher education system and its access to EU funds together create excellent opportunities for CEU to make further progress.

Threats

The HAC takes notice of the opinion of the CEU leadership that one of the greatest threats facing the institution is rather general, one could say ideological, in nature and is related to the apparent aversion to values of open society and critical thinking in certain quarters.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INSTITUTION FOR ITS QUALITY DEVELOPMENT

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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.

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.
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.
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.
12. Students are overwhelmingly positive about their life at CEU. Nevertheless, two recommendations may be due in this regard:
 - 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.
 - During the orientation week, more time should be allocated for incoming students to do social activities.
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.

ANNEXES

List of programs provided by the institution⁷, grouped by fields of training and disciplines:

PROGRAMS ACCREDITED IN HUNGARY:

Field of training in *business and economics*

Master (MA)

közgazdasági elemző - economic analysis

Postgraduate specialization

economic modeling

Doctoral school (Ph.D.) (disciplinary field: social sciences)

közgazdaságtudományok - business and economics

Field of training in *social sciences*

Master (MA)

társadalmi nemek tanulmánya - gender studies

kisebbségpolitika - nationalism studies

politikatudomány - political science

környezetpolitika és menedzsment - environmental policy and management

(MESPOM / Erasmus Mundus)

nemzetközi közpolitika – public policy

(MAPP / Erasmus Mundus, accredited after submission of Self-Study Report by CEU)

Postgraduate specialization

specialist in nationalism studies

comparative political science

global policy studies

Field of training in *humanities*

Master (MA)

történelem - history

filozófia - philosophy

Postgraduate specialization

Comparative history of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe 1500-2000

Doctoral school (Ph.D.) (disciplinary field: humanities)

történelemtudományok - history

Field of training in *law and public administration*

Postgraduate specialization

International constitutional foundations of human rights

⁷ Cut-off date: November 2011

PROGRAMS REGISTERED WITH EDUCATION AUTHORITY (OKTATÁSI HIVATAL)

Field of training in business and economics

Master

Master of Arts in economic policy in global markets – a globális piacok gazdaságpolitikája mesterképzési szak

Master of Arts in economic and legal studies – közgazdasági és jogi tanulmányok mesterképzési szak

Master of Arts in economics – közgazdaságtan mesterképzési szak

Master of Arts in public policy – közpolitika mesterképzési szak

Master in business administration (MBA) - Master in business administration (MBA) mesterképzési szak

Doctoral program (disciplinary field: social sciences)

Doctor of Philosophy in economics – közgazdaságtudományok doktori képzés

Field of training in natural sciences

Master

Master of Arts in applied mathematics – alkalmazott matematika mesterképzési szak

Doctoral program (disciplinary field: natural sciences)

Doctor of Philosophy in mathematics and its applications – matematika és számítástudományi doktori képzés

Field of training in law and public administration

Master

Master of Arts in human rights – emberi jog mesterképzési szak

Master of Laws in human rights – emberi jogi szakjogász mesterképzési szak

Master of Laws in economic and legal studies – közgazdasági és jogi tanulmányok mesterképzési szak

Master of Laws in international business law – nemzetközi üzleti jogi mesterképzési szak

Master of Laws in comparative constitutional law – összehasonlító alkotmányjog mesterképzési szak

Doctoral program (disciplinary field: social sciences)

Doctor of juridical science – jogtudomány doktori képzés

Field of training in humanities

Master

Master of Arts in philosophy –filozófia mesterképzési szak (2 semesters)

Master of Arts in philosophy –filozófia mesterképzési szak (4 semesters)

Master of Arts in medieval studies –középkortudomány mesterképzési szak

Master of Arts in historical studies – történelem mesterképzési szak

Master of Arts in Central European history - történelem mesterképzési szak, Közép-Európa történelme specializáció

Doctoral program (disciplinary field: humanities)

Doctor of Philosophy in philosophy – filozófia doktori képzés

Doctor of Philosophy in medieval studies – történettudományi doktori képzés, interdiszciplináris középkortudomány specializáció

Doctor of Philosophy in comparative history of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe – történettudományi doktori képzés, összehasonlító történettudomány specializáció

Field of training in social sciences

Master

Master of Arts in nationalism studies – kisebbsépolitika mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in environmental sciences and policy – környezettudomány és közpolitika mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in environmental sciences, policy and management – környezettudomány, közpolitika és menedzsment mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in international relations and European studies – nemzetközi kapcsolatok és európai tanulmányok mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in political science – politikatudomány mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in sociology and social anthropology with specialization in global and urban studies – szociológia és társadalomantropológia mesterképzési szak, globális és városszociológia specializáció

Master of Sciences in sociology and social anthropology – szociológia és társadalomantropológia mesterképzési szak

Master of Sciences in gender studies – társadalmi nemek tanulmánya mesterképzési szak

Doctoral program (disciplinary field: social sciences)

Doctor of Philosophy in environmental sciences and policy – környezettudományi doktori képzés

Doctor of Philosophy in political science – politikatudomány doktori képzés

Doctor of Philosophy track in international relations under the Doctor of Philosophy program in political science – politikatudomány doktori képzés, nemzetközi kapcsolatok specializáció

Doctor of Philosophy in sociology and social anthropology – szociológia és társadalomantropológia doktori képzés

Doctor of Philosophy in comparative gender studies – társadalmi nemek tanulmánya doktori képzés

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