

29.08.2019

The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education
Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education
adopted the following decision:

To consider the secondary condition imposed on the assessment decision on the first and second cycles of studies in the Business and Administration study programme group at Estonian Business School to be met.

Based on subsection 53 (3), clause 66 (2) 3) and subsection 66 (3) of the Administrative Procedure Act, and on the basis of subsection 10 (4) of the Universities Act, point 3.7.3 of the Statutes of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (hereinafter referred to as 'EKKA') and point 41.1/41.2 of the document, 'Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups in the First and Second Cycles of Higher Education', and authorised in point 3.7.1 of the above-mentioned EKKA Statutes; the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') affirms the following:

1. On 11.04.2017 the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') adopted the decision to approve the assessment report¹ and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Business and Administration study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at Estonian Business School in seven years with the secondary condition that Estonian Business School would submit to the Council an action plan and report on eliminating the shortcomings referred to under point 11 of the assessment decision², by 11.04.2019.

According to clause 53 (1) 2) of the Administrative Procedure Act, a secondary condition of an administrative act is an additional duty related to the principal regulation of the administrative act, and clauses 53 (2) 2) and 3) establish that a secondary condition may be imposed on an administrative act if the administrative act cannot be issued without the secondary condition, or if issue of the administrative act must be resolved on the basis of an administrative right of discretion.

2. On 11.04.2019 Estonian Business School submitted to the Council the following documents: 1) *Response to the Decision Regarding Assessment of the Business and Administration Study Programme Group at Estonian Business School of 11*

¹ Assessment report is an integral part of the decision and can be found on EKKA website.

² Assessment decision is published on EKKA website.

April 2017 by EKKA, 2) Interim Report for Quality Assessment of Study Programme Group in Estonian Business School, 3) Employment Regulations for Academic Staff of Estonian Business School. EKKA invited the following assessment committee members to evaluate the progress made on the secondary condition imposed:

1) **Tanja Dmitrovič**, Professor, Vice-Rector for Knowledge Transfer, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

2) **Abdul Rauf**, Head, School of Business, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

3. Committee members submitted to EKKA on 1.07.2019 a report on the elimination of the shortcoming detailed in point 11 of the 11.04.2017 Council decision. The verdict of the committee was as follows:

The shortcoming underpinning the imposition of the secondary condition	Verdict of the committee
<p>According to the Regulation of the Government of the Republic 'Standard of Higher Education' subsection 6 clause 7 (1) <i>The conduct of studies conforms to the requirements if:</i></p> <p>1) <i>Ordinary teaching staff and research staff are available for the studies, who meet the qualification requirements established in legal instruments and whose number is, based on their responsibilities, the volume of conducted studies and research and the number of supervised students, adequate for achieving the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme. According to (2) of the same clause a member of the teaching staff or research staff who conducts studies in a given subject (including visiting members of the teaching staff) has the necessary teaching competence and his or her qualification supports achievement of the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme;</i></p> <p>According to the report of the assessment committee, the weakest link for Estonian Business School is the low number of full time teaching staff on the study programmes. In comparison with</p>	<p>Shortcoming has been substantially eliminated.</p> <p><u>The assessment committee outlined the following positive developments:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) EBS has devised a new teaching staff recruitment policy in order to ensure more full time teachers and more efficient distribution of workload. Resources have been allocated for the implementation of this policy and new teachers have been recruited over the last two years. The share of full time teaching staff members is approximately 40% and share of teachers with a doctoral degree approximately 50%. The number of full time teachers has risen from 14 to 21 and number of full time professors from 10 to 12 over the last two years. 2) EBS has conducted an international recruitment campaign to find teachers from abroad. As a result, the share of international teachers has grown to 9% and 67% of all teaching staff members have experience of working or studying abroad. 3) The new recruitment policy states

<p>other study programmes at Estonian Business School, the share of ordinary teaching staff is particularly low for the Business Innovation Master's Program – only 15,7% (3 teachers out of 19, see p 71 of the self-analysis report by Estonian Business School). The number of ordinary teaching staff members has increased by 8 members and by 4,96 full time equivalent positions. These numbers indicate that new teaching staff members were employed on average at 0,62 full time equivalent workload. The number of teaching staff employed on contract for services basis increased by 10 members over the same period. The workload of the latter category has constantly decreased over the years. On average the contract for services teaching staff members worked at 0,17 full time equivalent workload in academic year 2014/2015, in the subsequent 2015/2016 academic year at 0,145 full time equivalent and in the 2016/2017 academic year at 0,136 full time equivalent workload. The indicated numbers have been calculated as averages across the whole institution and in essence show that teaching is spread out between an increasingly high number of teachers.</p>	<p>in detail the eligibility criteria for teaching staff, such as scientific publications, publication of textbooks, administrative tasks.</p>
<p>According to the 'Standard of Higher Education' subsection 15 clause 1 (1) a prerequisite of becoming a university professor is active engagement in scientific and development activities or other creative activities. Research is also expected from assistant professor (SHE subsection 16 clause 1) and lecturer (SHE subsection 17 clause 1). According to data from the Estonian Research Information System and the EBS self-analysis report for the Business and Administration study programme group (p 12) in 2013–2015 ordinary teachers at EBS published 70 high level (Estonian Research Information System</p>	<p>Shortcoming has been substantially eliminated.</p> <p><u>The assessment committee outlined the following positive developments:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In order to strengthen scientific research, EBS has employed new teachers, whose research profile is similar to that of research groups at EBS. EBS has established intra-university criteria on the level and quality of scientific publications.

<p>grades 1.1, 1.2 and 3.1) publications per 39 full time equivalent (56 physical) ordinary teaching staff members. It transpires that the scientific activity rate of ordinary teaching staff members at EBS over the three year period has been on average 0,6 publications per year per full time equivalent teacher, which shows a clear downward trend in the scientific capacity of the institution (i.e. in 2012 it was 0,99 publications per full time equivalent teacher). In 2016 there was a rise in the number of high level publications, but it nevertheless falls below the 2012 rate. Furthermore, the scientific activity of ordinary teaching staff members is unevenly distributed – some teachers with a doctoral degree have several high level publications, others have none.</p> <p>It can be concluded from the above mentioned that the number of full time teaching staff members teaching the Business and Administration study programme group study programmes at EBS is low and academic research is not adequately prioritized. As a result the scientific activities of teachers fail to support sufficiently the achieving of objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme nor to ensure adequate supervising competence in all speciality fields as required in the 'Standard for Higher Education'.</p>	<p>2) As a result of quality requirements imposed on scientific publications the number of high-level publications (ERIS 1.1 and 3.1) per full time equivalent teacher has risen. In 2016 it was 0,32; in 2018 it was 0,68 respectively.</p> <p>3) EBS constantly applies for new research projects. National financing of research projects has doubled amounting to 85 thousand euros.</p> <p><u>The assessment committee's recommendations for future development activities:</u></p> <p>1) The overall scientific activity of teaching staff members with an obligation to conduct scientific research is declining. Whereas in 2016 there were 1,8 scientific publications per member of teaching staff, in 2017 the figure was 1,48 and in 2018 1,04. Striving for higher-level publications is understandable, but should not lead to a fall in overall publication rate.</p> <p>2) A comprehensive model of remuneration needs to be devised for teaching staff members with an obligation to conduct scientific research that would be based on the results of their scientific and pedagogical work.</p>
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4. Taking into account that the shortcomings listed in the secondary condition have been substantially eliminated, the Council

DECIDED:

To deem the secondary condition imposed on the quality assessment decision adopted on 11.04.2017 on the first and second cycles of higher education in the Business and Administration study programme group at

Estonian Business School to be met and to leave in force the decision to conduct the next quality assessment in seven years.

The decision was adopted by 10 votes in favour and 0 against.

5. A person who finds that his or her rights are violated or his or her freedoms are restricted by assessment procedures conducted by EKKA or by a decision made by the EKKA Quality Assessment Council may file a challenge pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Administrative Procedure Act. The challenge shall be filed with the EKKA Quality Assessment Council within 30 days after the person filing the challenge became or should have become aware of the contested finding.

The Assessment Council shall forward the challenge to the Appeals Committee who provides the Assessment Council with an unbiased opinion regarding the validity of the challenge within 5 days after receiving the challenge. The Assessment Council shall adjudicate the challenge within 10 days after the challenge is delivered to the Council, taking into account the justified opinion of the Appeals Committee. If the challenge needs to be further examined, the Assessment Council may extend a term for review of the challenge by up to 30 days.

A decision by EKKA Quality Assessment Council may be challenged within 30 days after its delivery, filing an action with the Tallinn courthouse of the Tallinn Administrative Court pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure.

Eve Eisenschmidt
Chair of the Council

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council