

Decision Regarding the Assessment of the Sports Study Programme Group

University of Tartu

28/01/2015

The Quality Assessment Council of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency decided to approve the assessment report by the Assessment Committee and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Sports study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at the University of Tartu in seven years.

The University of Tartu submitted for evaluation under the Sports Study Programme Group the following study programmes:

- Physical Education and Sport BA
- Physical Education and Sport MA

Assessment Committee

Karen Petry (Chair)	German Sport University Cologne, Deputy Head of the Institute of European Sport Development and Leisure Studies (Germany)
Susan Capel	Brunel University London, professor (UK)
Hans Hoppeler	University of Bern, Professor (Switzerland)
Jan Te Kloeze	Chairman of the Foundation WICE-DSL: Wageningen International Centre of Excellence on Development of Sustainable Leisure (Netherlands)
Alexandra Raijmakers	University of Amsterdam, student (Netherlands)
Toomas Tõnise	Estonian Olympic Committee, Vice-President (Estonia)

The Committee's Comments on the Study Programme Group and the Study Programmes

Physical Education and Sport BA/MA

Strengths

- *There is a very strong research tradition and clear focus within the Faculty, mainly in natural science. Teaching is also based on a strong foundation of natural science.*
- *Both the University leadership and the Faculty are well aware of the challenges arising from demographic trends in Estonian society.*
- *The study programmes of the study programme group are coherent, with well balanced objectives and learning outcomes. The study programmes comply with the requirements of the Standard of Higher Education and the Professional Standard for Coaches.*
- *The study programmes contain a sufficient number of practical modules; students appreciate the distribution of practical studies throughout the whole period of study. Cooperation with the Academic Sport Club is good.*
- *Resources for conducting educational activities are appropriate and support the achievement of objectives and learning outcomes of the study programmes.*
- *Teaching staff have appropriate qualifications; some staff members are undertaking very high quality research.*

Areas for improvement and recommendations:

- *Although the study programmes have served the needs of students and Estonian society well until now, their further development is necessary. It is recommended that the University of Tartu and Tallinn University together discuss the future directions of the study programmes and agree upon a common approach for sport education in Estonia. It is also advisable to promote cooperation between these universities and to reach an agreement on the further distribution of tasks. Besides the discipline of physical education teachers, more consideration should be given to health and exercise science in the study programmes.*
- *To support teaching in small groups according to students' specialisation on different sports, it is necessary to improve collaboration with the Estonian Olympic Committee, sports federations and sports clubs.*
- *It is necessary to expand cooperation with foreign universities. To attract more international students, the provision of modules taught in English should be considered. Staff and student mobility in both directions should be increased. It is necessary to examine how best to facilitate student mobility. The accreditation report in 2006 also included recommendations to expand international cooperation.*

- *Both the BA and MA programmes could benefit from more effective interdisciplinary collaboration between the two Faculty institutes.*
- *A shift from the subject-based approach in teaching to a more problem-based approach should be considered.*
- *The numbers of students currently studying under the BA programme as well as anticipated future enrollees are in decline.*
- *Future directions of the MA programme should be carefully thought through. The current programme is suitable for those students who wish to become physical education teachers. Given the decline in student numbers, it is essential to offer other options as well. The service sector is rapidly expanding and offers a wide spectrum of sports/health/physical activity-related jobs. Consideration needs to be given to whether to incorporate various specialisations in one study programme or offer several master's degree programmes with different fields of study.*
- *The involvement of employers, alumni and other stakeholders in the study programme development is insufficient.*
- *The study programmes have a strong focus on natural science. To expand the range of future job opportunities in the field of sport and physical education, greater attention should be paid to the inclusion of more social sciences in the study programmes, and to allocate appropriate resources for this purpose. The number of well qualified staff in social science should be increased and staff's contributions to the programmes strengthened. The accreditation report in 2006 also pointed out as a concern the lack of adequate attention given to social and behavioural sciences in these study programmes.*
- *Since international research in the field of sport is becoming more and more interdisciplinary, a change of focus in research at Institutes should also be considered.*
- *Educational activities must be planned in such a manner that students have enough time to move between different buildings.*
- *The choice of teaching and assessment methods to be used is made independently by each individual staff member. Primarily in the interest of students, it is necessary to agree on a uniform approach which is also understood by students.*
- *The system of student feedback needs changes. Currently students give feedback on only four modules per semester and therefore some staff members may receive very little feedback.*
- *Many practitioners participate in teaching the Bachelor's degree programme but participation by the Faculty's highly qualified teaching staff is too low.*
- *Development of teaching skills and teaching methods needs more attention.*
- *It is necessary to include more international and visiting teaching staff with strong research backgrounds to, inter alia, stimulate discussion about different*

approaches to teaching and learning.

- *Forty percent (40%) of the points for entry to the BA programme are for physical abilities. The assessment committee believe that this focus limits the student profile and ultimately affects master degree studies (teacher training), and recommend that admission requirements be changed.*
- *It is recommended to include an internship in the BA programme.*
- *It is necessary to establish a system to collect information about alumni and their employment, and to take it into account in the process of study programme development.*

Further information: [Assessment Report](#)