



Decision of the Accreditation Commission of AQAS

on the Licenciante in Humanistic Studies (Bachelor degree programme):

- “History”

offered by the Moldova State University



AQAS

Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch
Akkreditierung von
Studiengängen

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussion of the Accreditation Commission in its 59th meeting on 18th/19th of May 2015, as well as in circulation procedure on 19th of June 2015 the Accreditation Commission decides:

1. The Bachelors-level programme “**History**” (**Licenciante in Humanistic Studies**) offered by the **Moldova State University** is accredited according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The accreditation is **conditional**.

2. The study programme essentially complies with the requirements defined by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version. The required adjustments can be processed within a time period of nine months.
3. The conditions have to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the conditions has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **31st of March 2016**.
4. The accreditation is given for the period of **five years** and is valid until **30th of September 2020**.

Conditions:

1. Competence oriented aspects of teaching and learning are included in the programme but could be strengthened and be made more transparent. The module handbook has to be reviewed and the descriptions have to be more competence oriented. During this process the faculty should monitor if there are too many courses for a three year programme and reduce the overlaps.
2. A more transparent procedure is needed in order to reflect the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification. The results of the exams should be explained to the students.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programme:

1. The experts recommend that a more contemporary adapted approach should be inserted in the course development.
2. International mobility of students and professors should be improved.
3. The acquisition of books in foreign languages and books from Romania should be increased.
4. The information given on the faculty website are not sufficient (especially on different parts like online courses, employment, tutors) and therefore the experts recommend to provide more information.

5. A committee (e.g. “qualifications committee”) including representatives of teaching staff, students, alumni and employers should be installed to review the curriculum and courses as well as the module descriptions.
6. The concept of lifelong learning and lifelong professionalization should be integrated in the strategic plan of the programme. In this plan it should be explained how the teaching staff gets supported with courses or trainings whose aim is to learn new teaching methods or research/teaching strategies adapted to the contemporary technological development.

1. Accreditation Procedure

This report results from the external review of the Bachelor programme “History” (Licenciate in Humanistic Studies) offered by the Moldova State University (MSU) in Chisinau, Moldova. The review is based on the criteria that were developed jointly as part of a TEMPUS project under participation of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova. They are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) that were developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and presented to the Bologna Follow-Up group in 2005.

The university provided a Self Evaluation Report (SER) as an application for accreditation. The accreditation procedure was officially initialized by a decision of the AQAS Accreditation Commission on 18 and 19 August 2014. The Accreditation Commission nominated the before mentioned expert panel and the university did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

The site visit at the university took place on 31 March and 1 April 2015. On site, the experts interviewed different stakeholders and consulted additional documentation and student work. The visit concluded with the presentation of the preliminary findings by the group of experts to the university representatives.

Due to illness the student representative from ESU quit the participation in the site visit at short notice.

2. General Information

Moldova State University (MSU) was founded in October 1946 as classic institution of higher education. It has been the first higher education institution accredited initially by the Government of the Republic of Moldova in 2001 and then in 2006. In May 2005 MSU joined the Bologna Process and Lisbon Convention. Since July 2006 it is a member of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova. MSU is a public state institution of higher education functioning according to the rules of university autonomy that refers to the way it is governed, structured and functioning, as well as to the teaching activity and scientific research, administered and financed, benefiting at the same time from the non-profit status and financial autonomy.

MSU is a university centre with educational, research and cultural purposes. MSU has 13 academic Faculties and one Faculty of Fine Arts, divided in academic departments, academic chairs, administrative departments, laboratories, research centres.

MSU as an institution has 1 134 teaching personnel, including 8 full and corresponding members of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, 99 full Professors and Doctor Habilitat, 364 Associate Professors and doctors in sciences (Ph.D.) working in 34 academic chairs, 15 departments, and 6 centres of research as well as 24 laboratories. There are also 418 auxiliary didactic personnel.

The first BA level corresponds to a number of 180-240 transferable study credits (ECTS). The study programme’s duration is 3 years, consisting of 60 transfer credit for a year of a study programme, and minimum 180 transfer credit for the whole study programme.

At the moment, MSU has about 14 672 students (2013/2014 a.y.): 11 872 are in the first level, BA, 2472 – are in the master study programs and 328 in the doctoral study programs.

The study programs within the Faculty have been accredited at the national level by the Government of the Republic of Moldova in 2001 and renewed in 2006. The scientific research activity of the Faculty has been accredited by the National Council for the Attestation and Accreditation in 2005 and renewed in 2011.

The Department History of Romanians, World History and Archeology was founded in June 2013 and is in charge of the History degree programme. The Department is structured in 3 sections (History of Romanians, World History and Archeology), 3 centres of research. The DHRWHA is responsible for the training of specialists in 5 study programs at the 1st level, BA, 180 credits in the domain of Humanistic Sciences as follows: History, Archeology, Museum Studies, Ethnology, Study of Religions; one study programme in the domain of Sciences of Education – History, and 2 study programs of 240 ECTS credits in the domain of Sciences of Education too – History and Geography, and History and Foreign Languages. There are also 7 programs at the level 2nd master. The students can get a degree „Licentiate of Humanities” at the end of their studies.

The university as a whole has a large international network in which it is involved through numerous projects and bilateral or multilateral collaboration. It has 103 bilateral agreements of collaboration with universities and other higher education institutions from 29 countries.

The panel of experts was impressed by the application for accreditation provided which gave a good insight in the situation of the programme History at the MSU. It was obvious that the requirements of the Bologna process are known.

3. Profile and Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The study programme in History is aimed at the professional formations at three levels: of undergraduate – level I, the master – level II, and doctoral studies – level III and tends towards ensuring quality education; promoting the mobility of students and academic staff; revising the curriculum in correspondence with the European standards of higher education as well as expanding the possibilities of continuous education.

A particular emphasis is given to the implementation of modern educational technologies based on increasing the role of students in working with various institutions, organizations and businesses in order to strengthen their professional capacity and adaptability to the labour market. As the National Qualifications Framework stipulates, the study programme History focuses on the training of specialists in the general field of education (humanities) as well as on a professional formation field (history).

The purpose of the study programme History is the formation of professional skills in order to work in the field of education, research and other more applied domains (archives, museums, tourist industry etc.). According to the National Qualifications Framework the outcomes of the study programme History corresponds to the qualification - Licentiate of Humanities, obtained as a result of higher education, level I (undergraduate). This level of qualification is equivalent to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the qualifications of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 6).

The target of the profile study programme History is to prepare qualified specialists in the field of History both in full-time and part-time programme. In accordance with the regulations in force, the part-time studies contain between 30-40% of the materials provided in the plans for the full-time studies with a special focus on the individual work of the student.

Experts' Evaluation

The significance of “history” in the public realm of contemporary Moldova differs significantly from other societies in Europe, and this for several reasons: Here, the tradition of statehood is feeble, nation-building was initiated from above in Soviet times, and there is a competition concerning the adjectives for “nation”, “language” and “history” - “Moldovan” or “Romanian”. Accordingly, “history” in the Republic of Moldova is one of the most politicized topics, “historical” arguments are fre-

quently used in the political debate, and governmental politics of history do more often than not clash with civic society and its memory. Thus, teaching and even more so studying history in today's Moldova requires a high degree of resistance against pressure by political factors as well as by non-historians and pseudo-historians alike. On the other hand is a degree in history an entrance ticket not only to positions in academia, archives, museums, and the private sector but even more so to positions in the public service and in politics. The panel of experts was told that graduates of the history programme are employed not only in the field of education but also in the army, police and secret service ("Securitate") as well as in government, parliament, and presidential administration.

Having in mind the high degree of politicization of "history" and its importance for the shaky national identity in Moldova, it is to be highlighted that despite the department's somewhat arbitrary division into "History of the Romanians" (including the Romance-speaking titular nation of Moldova), i.e., national history, and "World History" the programme encompasses also European history (West European as well as East and Southeast European history), the history of ancient Greece and Rome, and of Byzantium plus the history of other continents like Africa and the Americas. This demonstrates that the History Faculty is well aware of the danger of an instrumentalization of "history" in a purely national sense by the political sphere.

Entrance requirements, transition possibilities and selection processes are clearly defined and adequate.

The panel of experts comes to the conclusion that the aims of the programme comply with the profile of the institution. The programme is consistent with the profile of the department in respect to teaching and research. The title of the programme reflects the contents of the curriculum.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme exist and are published. The design of the programme supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. The concept of the curriculum follows a very broad approach (e.g. including African history) with a focus on Moldovan history. The outcomes reflect both academic and labor market requirements. An advantage of the programme is that it leads primarily into practical fields - schools, archives, museums, libraries, Academy of Science etc. The graduates are specialists in history and have the skills to become teacher or researcher and can follow in master programme or PhD. Graduates have a good analytical mind which enables them to follow careers outside schools and universities, e.g. they go to ministries, army, secret service, parliament.

The academic level of the content corresponds with the requirements of the appropriate level of the European and National Qualifications Framework.

4. Curriculum

The study plan contains all the components registered in the ideal-type diagram of the programme:

- a) basic/fundamental mandatory (History of Romanians (divided in historical periods), State, society and mentalities in different historical epochs, History of Europe and America (divided in historical periods), History of Asia and Africa (divided in historical periods), and others;
- b) pertaining to the formation of general skills - mandatory (Languages, Philosophy);
- c) socio-humanistic orientation – optional (History of Philosophical Ideas, Philosophy of History, Historical Geography, History of World Culture, etc.);
- d) professional orientation - mandatory/optional (Archaeology-Archival Studies, Museum Studies, Palaeography, Numismatics and Chronology, Codicology, Heraldic Studies etc);

- e) related to the orientation toward another domain of formation in the second level (master) - optional (Psychology, Pedagogy, Anthropology, Ethnic and religious minorities, etc.).

According to the SER MSU sustains and promotes the internationalization of studies, especially in terms of Europeanization, aiming at the improvement of the quality of educational services. The MSU explains that internationalization is about the matching of educational plans and curricula with those of higher education institutions from Europe, elaboration and implementation of common study programmes at the master level, encouragement and assuring academic mobility for the students and teaching staff in both senses, cooperation and partnerships with institutions from Europe and beyond as well as participating at various educational and research international projects, organization and participation at educational and research conferences/seminars/congresses etc.

According to the SER the results of scientific research of the members of the DHRWHA are becoming a part of the modernization of the degree programme in History as a whole and of the curricula in particular. The MSU describes that students are involved also in other scientific activities and research activities such as field seminars, institutional, national and international conferences. The degree of their involvement in the scientific activities varies according to their abilities.

Experts' Evaluation

The visit and discussions with teaching staff and students and the further analysis of the preliminary observations managed to clarify some issues and create a clearer image on the scene than it was presented in the SER. For the first instance it is clear that the study programme is well structured on a solid base that may represent a consolidated opportunity for its development and enlargement in the future. In the second instance the preliminary observations made on the base of accreditation dossier were clarified by the university representatives and this clarification helped to understand some issues related to the curricula and the relation of teaching with research. It is clear that the programme can sustain not only a consolidated teaching pillar but it can sustain a solid research dimension which can bring only positive outcomes for students and staff members. The faculty has good relations to the Academy of Science and therefore projects are assessed by the Academy. Students are involved in different research projects. Therefore the aims of the programme contribute to the employability of the students and their personal development. Moreover the programme enables graduates to reflect social, scientific and ethical aspects in their decisions.

The panel of experts discussed some issues which refer to the needs of the students and of the modern academic society (p. 5 of the SER) which can't be influenced by the university but which are related to the economic context and which lie in the responsibility of governmental actors. On the other hand there are some issues which need to be influenced by the university to improve the study programme. History at MSU is a classical programme which includes a lot of disciplines and auxiliaries. But it doesn't become clear how the Strategic Plan (p. 6-8 SER) offer perspectives to the students and how the programme shall open their horizon to new study and research approaches. For this reason the merits of this programme may not be harvested properly by the society and academic sphere due to the lack in dynamic approach to the study programme. The university should implement measures to check if the programme is up-to-date with the teaching and research in other European countries.

The panel of experts comes to the general impression that the learning outcomes of the courses are not synchronized with the contemporary research and study development in the field of history study and research. It is clear that the courses are based on a strong academic basis and background, but the lack of modern perspective and approach can be seen in several course

descriptions. For this reason the experts recommend that a more contemporary adapted approach should be inserted in the course development. **(Finding 1)**

The panel of experts got the impression that there are some initiatives concerning the internationalization of the programme but there seems to be a lack of vision regarding the flow of know-how and how to establish cross border networks which can affect the contact of students contact with academic centers abroad. Here the MSU hasn't managed to explore to the full extend all the opportunities. The international mobility of students and professors should be improved. **(Finding 2)**

All these issues are also addressed to the university leadership because they are related to the acquisition of new books and teaching materials in foreign and Romanian language which are relevant for the success of the teaching process. **(Finding 3)**

The teaching materials need to be more target oriented and clearly more updated to contemporary issues and trends. Of course this can be solved only with projects dedicated to this problem.

In general the curriculum is well-suited to achieve the intended learning outcomes, which were defined beforehand. The documentation of the study programme is sufficient, all elements of the curriculum are described in the module handbook. The learning outcomes of the individual elements contribute to the overall learning outcomes of the programme. The module descriptions distinguish between different types of competencies, which is helpful for the students as well as for the reviewers. The handbook is publicly available to the students as a central means of information but some of the learning outcomes are too similar although they address different courses. Therefore the module handbook has to be reviewed carefully, especially with a focus on clear and transparent descriptions of the learning outcomes of the courses. **(Finding 4)**

The programme uses a credit point system to describe the student workload. The student workload is transparently calculated for all elements of the programme. There are procedures to monitor the student workload and to adapt the curriculum / the credits if necessary.

5. Feasibility and Student Support

The MSU describes in the SER that Career Guidance Center offers various trainings and events such as Career Fairs, volunteer activities, meetings with employers etc. for students during the study years. The person responsible for the consultancy services is the dean.

Internships are organized within the study programme in History in accordance with the plan of studies. For a proper organization of the internships/practices both the university and faculty administrations have signed agreements with partner institutions (as for example with National Museum of History, State Archives' Service, Military Center for culture and history, colleges and high schools in Chisinau and countryside). Students also can do their practices within the laboratory for scientific research „Tracology” at MSU. In cases when some of the internships/practices involve costs, the university covers them.

Experts' Evaluation

During the discussion with all the stakeholders, e.g. the management of the MSU as well as of the FHF, representatives of the employers, members of the teaching staff and moreover representatives of the students, an important conclusion was drawn: the relation between the staff and the students is very close, they rely on and support each other. It is obvious that a kind of corporate identity was created and it is also important for the students from the beginning of the first year of study to the final exam and beyond. The students mentioned that the professors constantly encouraged them to participate in research projects and scientific conferences in order to develop their knowledge as well as soft skills as teamwork or critical thinking. The teaching staff is offering frequent consultation hours and is available to students.

The students are well informed about the curriculum and the assessment regulations which are published. On the faculty website (<http://istorie.usm.md>) it is possible to get information about the curriculum and a guide in order to draft the thesis for the final exam of Bachelor or Master degree. Although the assessment seems to look more on the knowledge level, the skills and competences are also evaluated by different methods as: research projects, seminar presentations, internships etc. Therefore a more transparent procedure is needed in order to reflect the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification (**Finding 5**).

Changes to the examination concept could be documented and explained. Both written and oral assessment are used. Usually the evaluation form is proposed by the head of the teaching unit and is discussed in the Quality Assurance Committee meetings and approved by the Department in the field of specialization. Especially during the oral examination the assessment is conducted by 2-3 examiners, mostly for the final exam for the Bachelor thesis. During the site visit the panel of experts got the opportunity to get insight in different BA thesis. The final thesis proves that the intended level of qualification is achieved through the programme.

The responsibilities and structures with regard to the organisation of the exams are clearly defined. The organization of the exams is appropriate with regard to timing. Examination dates are published to the students with appropriate timing.

MSU provides lectures and seminars. Lectures are published on moodle platform for students. Power point presentation are used and students are motivated to use this tool. During seminars mandatory literature is demanded and other literature that can be used. One task in the lectures is that students should present a book to the other students. Commentary of documents by students and discussion with professor follow afterwards. Students conferences are organized (anniversaries, events).

Team work is strengthened in last years, problems are given for groups to solve. Professor will provide subproblems. Curriculum descriptions are given to students to inform them before the course. Students have to present results on students conference and give marks to each other. Working group while research: students go to archives and study sources. Everybody does research and presents the results. Students can also learn how to use different methods to conduct research projects while internship.

The students are aware of the existence of the Career Guidance Centre of MSU and some of them were involved in different actions in order to promote this programme of the university in high schools. According to the presentation of the Career Guidance Centre on the university website, there are some other services and activities provided by the centre, including training offered to the students in order to prepare them for the labour market. The proper link with the labour market seems to be ensured by the teaching staff of the FHF or by alumni having leading positions in governmental institutions, scientific or cultural organizations. The pedagogical career seems not to be the first option of the students because the level of payment of teachers in Moldova seems to be relatively low. But in order to support the (later) choice to work as a teacher the FHF offers a separate psycho-pedagogical module. This was a reaction on the feedback of the students/graduates. The panel of experts appreciates this offer but the module seems to be placed out of the main structure of the 180 ECTS and therefore the university should consider the option to offer it as a mandatory module.

According to the discussions during the site visit 20 students are inscribed in the first year, 18 in the second year and 30 in the last year. Data on the drop-out-rate seem to be available at MSU (around 20%) but haven't been provided to the experts. The lecturers informed the experts that either these students haven't met the standards or went to Romania for study.

An important issue for the students is the library, which is quite indispensable for a humanistic domain like History. They have full and free access to the university library, and also to the faculty and department library. Some of the books and courses are online (about 40 titles coming from no more than 4 members of the teaching staff). The most of the publications are in Romanian or Russian language. During the discussions with the panel of experts the students mentioned the need of more books in English, German or French in order to get up-to-date-information on some European approaches towards historiography or to simply allow them to exercise the foreign languages in the professional purposes. Therefore the panel of experts recommends to improve the availability of publications in other European languages (**see Finding 3**).

ICT facilities are available for the students, including the WIFI network. Both students and teaching staff are using the ICT means for the teaching and learning process. The panel of experts had the opportunity to convince themselves that an electronic platform and other ICT means are used within the teaching-learning-process.

The experts consider the information given on the faculty website (<http://istorie.usm.md>) not to be sufficient (especially on different parts like *Online courses, Employment, Tutors*) and recommend to provide more information (**Finding 6**).

The MSU supports the students of History with the following measures: The institution provides up to date information on its programme. Student advisory service is available to students. These services are offered continuously and information on these services is made available to students in an adequate way. Teaching staff offers frequent consultation hours and is available to students.

MSU has 5 Erasmus plus programmes at the university. In History there is an exchange within an Erasmus programme, 12 students went abroad. History is ranked on first place of the faculty at MSU. Nevertheless the mobility of students and staff could be improved with the support of the Erasmus programme or DAAD grants (**see Finding 2**).

There are regulations for the recognition of credits gained at other higher education institutions but in Moldova till now it's unclear how competencies which have been gained outside a higher education institution can be recognized. This is a national problem which can't be solved by one university.

The faculty tries to keep in contact with the graduates via social platforms and ask for recommendations for improvement of the programme.

6. Employability

Under the official classification of professions of the Republic of Moldova, the study programme in History is oriented towards the following professional positions: history, history teacher, archivist, curator, local advisor, ethics advisor, political adviser, ethnologist, museum advisor etc. The theoretical basis of the programme allows the graduates of the programme to be employed in jobs under the category in humanistic studies.

For the programme of study History to ensure the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for filling the mentioned professions/jobs and improving the employability of graduates in the labour force, in the process of formulation / drafting skills the Licentiate in History and Humanities programme, of adjusting the programme to labour market requirements, the programme managers continually consult experts in the field, employers of labour market's segments traditionally claimed by current students and graduates of the programme itself. A part of the teaching staff that assure the study programme in history are employed at other institutions and thus bring their own expertise in the classroom and make the necessary changes when needed in order to adapt the study programme to the needs of the labour market.

Of the more than 140 graduates of the programme History in 2009 to 2013 academic years, there were identified the following employment opportunities: 12 are employed as archivists at the National Archives of the Republic of Moldova; 6 at the National Museum of History; 4 are curators at the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History; 7 work in the Central Scientific Library of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM). 5 researchers are employed at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences, 3 researchers at the Institute of Encyclopedic Studies of ASM. 7 are specialists in archeology at the National Archaeological Agency, 2 at the MSU Museum; 10 works as specialists in the national cultural heritage and advisors to the Ministry of Culture; 19 are teachers in secondary education. During the above mentioned period 10 graduates of the programme were enrolled in doctoral study at MSU, ASM, and Pedagogical university "Ion Creangă" and approximately on third of the graduates of the first level are enrolled in the master programmes offered by the Faculty in other specialization domains.

Experts' Evaluation

The management of the FHF as well as the teaching staff paid a lot of attention in having good relation with the potential employers of the History programme graduates. Although that the personal contacts are very important through alumni and former or actual professors and collaborators of the teaching staff, some institutional agreements have been signed, especially for the purpose of internships. The students have access to different kind of information and get even to recommendations from the professors.

A diploma supplement is handed to the students upon completion of the programme reflecting the qualifications achieved through it, according to the model from the Appendix no. 18.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme exist and are published. The management of the FHF states about the attention paid to the labour market demands and the projection of the competences, which is done by the teaching staff during the meetings of the DHRWHA and the Council of the Faculty. But, looking into the manual of modules/courses it is noticed that the generic and professional competences listed for the study programme are repeated in the description of several courses (like: *History of Ancient Orient*, *Ancient History of Romanians*, *Prehistory*, *General Archaeology* and so on). The learning outcomes of each module/course should be reformulated in order to point out the contribution of each of them to the generic and professional competences of the History programme (**Finding 4**).

In order to reflect both academic and labour market requirements in the structure of the study programme and intended learning outcomes it could be useful to establish a so called "qualifications committee", including representatives of teaching staff, students, alumni and employers (**Finding 7**). On the basis of a transparent procedure this structure should report to the FHF Council on the requirements of the labour market as well as to propose improvements of the curricula in order to allow students and graduates to acquire the most important learning outcomes to facilitate their integration into social.

7. Resources

There are 31 teaching and research staff at the DHRWHA (in 2013/2014 academic year): 7 full Professors and having all the degree of Doctor Habilitat, 14 Associate Professors, doctors (Ph.D.), 3 Senior Lecturers and 6 Lecturers, 1 auxiliary personnel. Out of the 31 staff members, 22 are titulars, and 9 are employed through non-titulars (internal non-titulars – 4, external non-titulars – 5).

The study programme in History has 4 class rooms for 60-90 places and 7 study rooms for seminars of 25-40 places, 7 study rooms for seminars of 25-40 places; one Center for Assistance

which is equipped with 4 computers, printer, copying machine and specialized library; one Museum of Antiquities named after „Tudor Arnaut”, used also as archeology laboratory and other auxiliary disciplines (numismatics); 2 archeological basis (Saharna and Butuceni); 1 ITC laboratory equipped with 13 computers; 1 education centre equipped with 8 computers and interactive board; one reading room in the bloc 4 of the MSU Library with 30 computers; 1 library equipped with 3723 of specialized book titles; 4 libraries of the centers of research of the Department with 3607 specialized book titles; 2 section of 'rare books' that provides literature for Paleography and Codicology courses of about 15 000 book titles.

Experts' Evaluation

Thanks to the study programme affiliation the resource management is integrated within the universities resource management plan and from this perspective several areas are covered.

The university explains that professors get support concerning didactical abilities. Contests on didactics for young professionals, professor of the year and financial resources based on criteria exist. Institution has strategies and mechanisms of performance promotion and staff motivation. All staff involved in the teaching of the programme are documented including their academic and other relevant qualification as well as research activities and quantitative involvement (teaching hours) in the programme. It is ensured that the teaching capacity is available for the period of accreditation. Therefore the panel of experts comes to the conclusion that concerning the human resources the programme has a positive situation and its staff can cover all major teaching dimensions. On the other hand the qualification of the teaching staff is crucial and should be supported also in the future by trainings or professionalization courses. The concept of lifelong learning and lifelong professionalization should be integrated in the strategic plan of the programme. In this plan it should be explained how the teaching staff gets supported with courses or trainings which aim is to learn new teaching methods or research/teaching strategies adapted to the contemporary technological development. **(Finding 8)** Furthermore the development of IT dimension of the programme should bring a higher impact to the staff's efforts. During the visit and discussion the staff and administrative structure presented several ideas of involving external professionals to the teaching process which will bring for sure a positive outcome to the programme's structure and aim.

There are part time lecturers from the labour market involved in the programme and the panel of experts has no doubts that these people are very professional and able to teach on a high standard.

The numerical relation between teachers and students is quite good but the number of students is declining since some years which causes also difficulties for the university.

Research results of professors are assessed and published if good. Nevertheless some students mentioned in the discussion with the panel of experts that the teaching methodology could be improved.

Appropriate material resources (finance, computer workplaces, laboratories etc.) are available for carrying out the study programme. The equipment of laboratories and specific work places reflects current professional standards. Facilities are appropriate in terms of room and space required for the number of students enrolled. Concerning teaching rooms and learning resources the panel of experts comes to the conclusion no recommendation has to be given.

There is an appropriate amount of literature, journals and information sources to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. MSU provides students' access to information by internet network. On the other hand the access to databases or new literature is the backbone of every teaching process at university level, and during the discussion with the representatives

from the university and during the visit of the premises the panel of experts got the impression that here is room for improvement - although this issue is not affecting the basis of the teaching process. **(Finding 3)** Of course, the situation lies in the responsibility of the MSU as an institution and not only in the hands of faculty. The MSU should check if there is a chance to explore external funds or grants.

8. Quality Assurance

In the application for accreditation the MSU points out that since 2005 they started to implement Quality Management Systems (QMS) based on a defined policy stating an organizational structure and procedures that aims to ensure management, evaluation and continuous improvement of the quality of the all university's activities.

According to MSU there are various structures of QMS:

- At the level of the university: e.g. Senate, Bureau of the Senate and the Council of Quality, Quality Management, Assessment and Curricula Development Department (QMACDD) - offer methodological support and monitor the activity of QMS.
- At the level of Faculties: a) The Council of the Faculty plans, implements and improves QMS at the level of the Faculty, b) Quality Assurance Committees monitors the process of quality assurance at the level of the Faculty
- At the level of departments/Chairs: a) Chair/department has the responsibility toward the quality of processes that take place within its framework (education, research, organizational issues and external relations), b) QMS works according to the principle of representation. The teaching personnel, students and employees are involved in all of its activities of SMC.

The quality assessment is of two types, the continuing assessment and periodic assessment. These two types of assessment are part of the internal evaluation. The former is achieved through self-assessment and institutional assessment. Students, as integral part of the academic community, participate in the process of the internal assurance of quality, as their participation is guaranteed by their involvement at all levels of QMS at MSU as well as at all stages of quality management such as discussion of the innovative ideas, assessment etc.

Experts' Evaluation

The panel of experts could convince themselves of the fact that the programme is subject to a policy and associated procedures for quality assurance. The MSU has defined quality standards which recognize the importance of quality and quality assurance. To achieve this, there is a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving different stakeholders. The students' opinion is considered.

The report on the internal QA goes to an internal council with deans where decisions are taken. On the basis of the findings and the students' feedback the curriculum has been changed.

Crucial is the evaluation of the quality of actual teaching. This because the staff of the Department "History of Romanians, World History and Archeology" consists of elder historians who got their education in Soviet times, primarily in Moscow and Leningrad, as well as of younger ones who were trained already in the post-1991 Republic of Moldova and got their PhDs either there or in neighboring Romania or elsewhere abroad, e.g., at the Central European university in Budapest. It can be assumed that their style of teaching is quite different. The fact that at MSU there is no defined retirement age slows the generational change of the teaching staff down.

The course/module descriptions are available to the students. They contain the intended learning outcomes, methods of learning and teaching, assessment methods, and the expected workload. A recommendation to improve the descriptions has already been formulated (**see Finding 3**).

It is defined how the course offer is coordinated on the substantive and organizational level to avoid overlap. The programme (including internships) is implemented in a way that allows students to complete their studies in the advertised regular course duration.

The quality-related information system covers: students' satisfaction with their programmes, employability of graduates and evaluation of the programme by graduates and results of teaching-staff and course evaluation.

9. Recommendations of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends to accredit with conditions the Bachelor programme "History" (Licenciate in Humanistic Studies) offered by the State university of Moldova in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

Findings:

1. The experts recommend that a more contemporary adapted approach should be inserted in the course development.
2. International mobility of students and professors should be improved.
3. The acquisition of books in foreign languages and books from Romania should be increased.
4. Competence oriented aspects of teaching and learning are included in the programme but could be strengthened and be made more transparent. The module handbook has to be reviewed and the descriptions have to be more competence oriented. During this process the faculty should monitor if there are too many courses for a three year programme and reduce the overlaps.
5. A more transparent procedure is needed in order to reflect the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification. The results of the exams should be explained to the students.
6. The information given on the faculty website are not sufficient (especially on different parts like Online courses, Employment, Tutors) and therefore the experts recommend to provide more information.
7. A committee (e.g. "qualifications committee") including representatives of teaching staff, students, alumni and employers should be installed to review the curriculum and courses as well as the module descriptions.
8. The concept of lifelong learning and lifelong professionalization should be integrated in the strategic plan of the programme. In this plan it should be explained how the teaching staff gets supported with courses or trainings whose aim is to learn new teaching methods or research/teaching strategies adapted to the contemporary technological development.