



Report



of the foreign evaluator for

“Universitatea Națională de Educație Fizică și Sport”
din București

FOREIGN EVALUATOR EXPERT

Date:December 2016.....

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Signature:



Foreword

On October 19th 2016, I received an invitation from ARACIS to participate in the evaluation of UNEFS. My participation was finalized by a contract which was accepted at the beginning of November.

Links to download the self-evaluation report and its annexes were sent by the university on November 28th 2016. Although this left 2 weeks to read the documents, a longer notice would be appreciated since other competing activities also need time to complete.

As is customary with institutional ARACIS evaluation, the foreign expert participates in the activities of the institutional group whereas the programme group is composed exclusively of Romanian auditors.

Language was not an issue as many professors spoke French or English.

Personal background

I have been a full member of the French accreditation agency for engineering programmes, Commission des Titres d'Ingénieurs – CTI, for two 4-year mandates (which cannot be extended) and one 4-year mandate as an “expert” to CTI, participating in CTI international promotion and helping the full members during the evaluation visits.

I occasionally collaborate with foreign accreditation agencies. My most recent involvements were with Belgian AEQES¹ (2016-2017: intermediate evaluation of computer science programmes in French-speaking universities and institutes), with Spanish ANECA² (2015, institutional evaluation of National Polytechnic University of Armenia in Erevan) and with ARACIS (2015, institutional evaluation of Technical University in Iași).

My experience with institutional evaluation should compensate for my lack of knowledge in the field of physical education and sport.

Considering this background, I focused my attention on the normative quality aspects present in UNEFS.

Preliminary work

The [English] university self-evaluation report is a 57-pages document structured in sixteen short chapters grouped in three thematic sections. It gives a synthetic overview of the institution with pointers to extensive annexes (written in Romanian, out of which I painfully extracted the general idea).

The self-evaluation report addresses the essential items expected from a quality point of view. However, they lead to questions whose answers are to be collected from the meetings with various people from the University. Since this is a self-evaluation report, a SWOT (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats) analysis would have been a plus to show that UNEFS staff has an objective knowledge of its institution

1 Agence pour l'Évaluation de la Qualité dans l'Enseignement Supérieur, agency for quality evaluation in higher education

2 Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación



and its place in Romania, notably in relation to its competitors.

Mission

Missions are presented in the mandatory normative requirement part. They are developed in standard “administrative” form with all legal references.

Organization and governance is shown through charts, but information about how this used in day-to-day work is missing: What are the various boards advising the rector? How frequently do they meet? What are their interactions? What is the degree of autonomy granted to the deans?

In particular, there seems to be redundancy between Senate committees and executive structures, e.g. where quality is concerned.

The strategic statement described in p. 13 of the English report is clear.

Resources

Teaching staff

UNEFS seems to pay strong attention on age distribution in its teaching staff. Active recruiting measures are taken to keep an average age compatible with sport practice.

Permanent teaching staff (74) leads to a supervision ratio of 20 students per professor. Since this is a global figure, it may vary in UNEFS structure (FEFS or KT), but it is a very high ratio according to Western European standards.

Recommendation: *the Ministry for Higher Education should allocate resources so that a better supervision ratio can be attained.*

Equipment

Visit of the facilities showed numerous sport training rooms and fields reflecting the large number of disciplines taught. However, the general maintenance state could be improved. Although many rehabilitation works are in progress, reaching a satisfactory state will require many years.

Recommendation: *UNEFS and the Ministry for Higher Education should sustain a continuous maintenance effort during the next years to upgrade the facilities.*

Training outcome

Employers and graduates were met in separate sessions. Unfortunately, these sessions were not very



productive because both populations unanimously acclaimed positive aspects of the programmes and university in superlative terms without making the necessary objective analysis to highlight a few points needing improvement.

Despite the rather narrow spectrum of possible jobs, mainly in the educational field, the audience showed an extraordinary sample of individual successes in *a priori* unexpected domains, such as journalism or start-up companies.

While kinetotherapy addresses a global health demand, labor market seems to be more limited with FEFS. A better knowledge of the employment possibilities would help to adjust the correct number of students admitted in the programmes.

Recommendation: *UNEFS should improve its knowledge of the job market for its programmes.*

Students

Student meeting was more interesting as, while really satisfied with the contents of the programmes, both in sports and kinetotherapy, they reported problems related to accommodation or university functioning.

One issue, which impacts quality management, is communication between students and university direction. There does not seem to exist a formal permanent channel of discussion between university higher staff and students. Students are among the University important stakeholders, as “material” upon which the training process acts to produce graduates and as “prospects” to attract. Presently, apart from the student delegates to the Senate, relations are based on personal voluntary initiatives without guarantee to produce effect.

In the same manner, courses evaluation is regularly performed but its result is not reported back to students, nor is it known whether this has consequences.

Recommendation: *UNEFS should formally organize a permanent dialogue channel with the students.*

Students also reported that UNEFS charged various fees for services or documents (named “own revenues”) which, from Western Europe standards, are thought as part of implicitly granted free service in government-owned Universities, such as mark record or diploma.

Programmes

A team member responsible for evaluating a bachelor programme taught in French asked for help to assess the discipline coverage and confidence.

From the description of teaching units, work load (about 1500 hours including personal work) is consistent with the professional objectives (limited autonomy under supervision of a qualified coordinator).



Competences are described in a matrix linking knowledge and professional abilities. Permanent transverse competences, such as communication skills and life-long training, are provided in a supplementary table.

Recommendation: *UNEFS is encouraged to extend the competences description to all its master programmes.*

Quality management

The self-evaluation report showed excellent disposition for quality management but, from discussions, it appeared quality culture has to mature first before being fully operative. For example, there is a misconception about quality assurance and a confusion between it and quality management. Premises are present and constitute a solid foundation to a global quality culture provided fundamental notions are mastered by the quality team.

The quality team is full of goodwill and tries its best on doing things right but needs some help (or training) to achieve results compatible with the level of target objectives. They are not far away of this goal, considering the commitment of the rector and the executive staff.

A negative point has been noted: although the ethical committee meets on a regular basis, the minutes registry bears no mention of meetings between 2012 and 2016 on the basis “no incident was reported”. In the absence of “quality records”, an auditor might erroneously conclude that the management structure does not work.

Recommendation: *UNEFS should improve his quality management and training for its team.*

Conclusion

UNEFS presents a unique profile among universities. It has achieved an impressive record of success in the sports domain and provides highly qualified professionals to the Romanian society.

The debate about the affiliation of the kinetotherapy to a medical faculty is secondary as long as graduates show the expected professional competences and health safety is guaranteed.

