



Agencia Andaluza del Conocimiento
CONSEJERÍA DE ECONOMÍA, CONOCIMIENTO, EMPRESAS Y UNIVERSIDAD

Dirección de Evaluación y Acreditación

Final Assessment Report for program accreditation

Psychological Counseling Master's Degree

Philological Faculty

**People's Friendship University of Russia
(RUDN University)**



1. Information on accreditation procedure

Subject of accreditation procedure

Educational program	Degree to be acquired	ETCS	Duration	Form of education	Language of instruction
PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING	MASTER'S DEGREE	120	2 years	Full-time	Main - Russian

Date of on-site visit: May 21-22, 2019.

Panel members:

DEVA's Experts:

Rosa María Rodríguez Izquierdo, Full Professor, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla (Spain). Evaluator appointed by DEVA.

Andrés Molero Chamizo, Full Professor, Universidad de Huelva (Spain). Evaluator appointed by DEVA.

María Paz Espinosa, Full Professor, University of the Basque Country (Spain). Coordinator appointed by DEVA.

AKKORK's Experts:

Tatiana Suslova, Ph. D. in Psychology, Assistant professor, Department of General and Social Psychology in the Institute of Liberal Education and Informational Technology and Department of Social Work in Moscow Region State University; family psychologist; member of the Professional Psychotherapeutic League.

Albina Nesterova, Doctor of Psychology; Chief Research Scientist of the Psychology and Self-regulation Laboratory in the Institute of Fundamental and Applied Research; Chief Research Scientist of the Department of



Advanced Scientific Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences.
Professor of Department of Social Psychology in Moscow Region State University and Department of Psychology in Plehanov Russian University of Economics; Psychologist of Britain Psychological Centre; Researcher in Centre of Reanimatology and Reabilitology.

Mariya Stupicheva, Student of the Moscow State Psychological and Educational University.

Manager from AKKORK

Marianna Rubina.

Interpreter

Artyon Tarhanov.



2. Introduction: aims, structure and general provisions of the accreditation procedure

DEVA (Direction of Evaluation and Accreditation) and AKKORK (Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development), agencies for assessment, accreditation, and control of the quality of higher education and career development, have signed an agreement on cooperation in international accreditation of educational programs in the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN) (Moscow, Russia). To this end, a panel group was created, consisting of three international experts (university professors) and three Russian experts including a representative of the student community, with the assistance of a manager from AKKORK, Ms. Marianna Rubina. Mr. Artyon Tarhanov acted as interpreter.

All members of the group participated in a two-day visit to the university in May 2019. During the visit, meetings and interviews were held with the university's top management, the Dean, students and graduates of the educational program under evaluation, as well as with employers and the teaching staff. Earlier, the University had provided AKKORK with a self-assessment report and additional documents, which were forwarded to DEVA and the international members of the reviewers' committee. The evaluation of the educational program by the reviewers is based on the self-assessment report, the additional documents provided on request, and the results of the visit.

3. Review of the institutional profile of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN)

Russia joined the Bologna process in 2003 and since then it has consistently adhered to the basic objectives of the Bologna Declaration at the national and institutional levels. Part of this process was the introduction of a two-cycle system of education at the national level in accordance with the "Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area". The program for the first cycle usually lasts 4 years and graduates acquire a



bachelor's degree. The second cycle includes two years of study and ends with a master's degree. Graduates can later continue their education to pursue a PhD (PhD - Doctor of Philosophy), and then the Doctor of Sciences degree. It should be noted that the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN) is a pioneer in the introduction of the Bologna process in the educational system of the Russian Federation.

Federal state educational standards define the learning outcomes of each educational program at each level of qualification. The structure and content of the curriculum depends largely on the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. All bachelor's and master's programs consist of several modules, that is, courses from different disciplinary areas. The educational programs do not focus only on a specific educational area, but offer more general education, such as the humanities and the social sciences. This is especially true for bachelor students.

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN) was founded on February 5, 1960 by the decision of the Government of the USSR. On February 22, 1961, the University was named after Patrice Lumumba - one of the symbols of the struggle for the independence of the peoples of Africa. The Russian language classes at the preparatory faculty for foreign students began in 1960, and at the six basic faculties of the University (Engineering, History and Philology, Medical, Agricultural, Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Economics and Law) - on September 1, 1961. In 1964, the University became a member of the International Association of Universities (IAU).

Nowadays, the structure of RUDN comprises 5 main faculties: Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Faculty of Ecology, Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Economics, Engineering Academy; and 10 institutes: Medical Institute, Law Institute, Institute of Foreign Languages, Agrarian-technological Institute, Institute of World Economy and Business, Institute of Hospitality Business and Tourism, Academic Research Institute of Gravitation and Cosmology, Institute of



Medical and Biological Problems, Academic Research Institute of Comparative Educational Policy, and Institute of Space Technologies.

The distinctive features of the educational process at RUDN are:

- ECTS Credit system.
- European Diploma Supplement.
- Worldwide academic mobility.
- Teaching in foreign languages.
- Up to 800 academic hours of foreign languages learning.
- Diploma in translation (2-3 foreign languages).
- Over 1500 courses for continuing education.
- All levels of education (master, PhD, DSI, Clinical residency, internship).

RUDN has the right to set its own educational standards (sanctioned by Russian President, 2012).

The University has a team consisting of more than 5,000 employees, among them about 2,500 teachers, including 500 academics and doctors, more than 1,200 professors and candidates to the degree of Doctor of Science, 57 full and correspondent members of the Russian Academy of Science and field-specific academies, 28 Honored Scientists of Russia, and 26 full members of foreign academies and scientific societies.

The educational process and research activities of the University are supported by sufficient infrastructure, material resources and technical equipment. For example, the following indicators can describe the fully computerized library of RUDN:

- Library branches and reading halls in 5 University buildings,
- More than 17,000 users,
- 1,800,000 copies and library items at the library stock.
- Online access to more than 36 foreign and Russian databases.
- 90,000 foreign literature pieces in 70 languages.
- Electronic collections of RUDN professors' publications.
- The University has 45 educational and scientific centers and 150 scientific laboratories.



The outcome of the academic activity of professors' and researchers of RUDN includes: 870 copyright certificates, 160 patents of the Russian Federation and 2 scientific inventions, and 84 certificates for computer programs and databases (RUDN intellectual rights).

According to international ratings, RUDN is included in the World Top-500 in the QS World University Rankings (position 446 in 2019). In 2011-2014, in the annual National universities, Interfax and Echo proposed an assessment of Moscow RUDN in a ranking of 4-6th among all Russian universities, and the most internationalized university. RUDN University is also a member of the Russian Academic Excellence Project 5-100.

4. Introductory remarks

Albeit, currently there is not an internationally agreed protocol for assessing the quality of higher education degrees, it seems appropriate to employ criteria roughly analogous to those that would apply if the evaluated institution were located in the same country as the agency. Therefore, the seven criteria used in this report correspond, with some necessary adaptations, to the structure of the Quality Handbook elaborated to that effect by the Andalusian Agency for University Quality Evaluation and Accreditation (DEVA). Specifically, this evaluation process relies on the last edition of the "Guide for Renewing the Accreditation of University Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Andalusia".

For each of these seven criteria, one of four possible ratings was assigned, namely:

- "Fully conform",
- "Substantially compliant",
- "Partially compliant", and
- "Not compliant".

As applied here, the latter implies very serious shortcomings and might, depending on the criteria in question, originate an unfavorable overall assessment. A rating as "Partially compliant" implies some shortcomings,



sometimes severe enough to demand changes in some aspects of the educational process. A "Substantially compliant" rating implies a satisfactory situation; however, there may be some, or even considerable, room for improvement. "Fully conform" corresponds to excellent quality. Therefore, whatever the rating chosen for each criterion, the university is encouraged to pay close attention to the provided comments and recommendations.

5. Assessment of key quality criteria

CRITERION 1. PUBLIC INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Critical information on the Master's degree program (such as program's criteria and details, program implementation schedule, curriculum, competences, learning process and outcomes, practical trainings, requirements for admission, number of places, internal quality system, employment rate, complaint and appeal procedures, student mobility, etc.) is public and available to students in several University platforms and external websites.

In general, the websites provide most of the information on this Master and RUDN University. Some of these webs are available even in six different languages, which is something very useful for potential foreign students. The work of the "School for Masters" is specially organized to make it easier for future students to understand the programme professional orientation and their personal and professional development.

However, the specific information regarding the courses that constitute the program should be publicly available (before registration). In this way any potential student would know the added value of the program at RUDN. Also more detailed information about the features of the program, its specifics should be placed for applicants in the public domain. Applicants and other stakeholders should have a complete understanding of the disciplines, their scope, practice bases, the specificity and uniqueness of the program at the stage of choosing an educational program for themselves



Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1.- It is recommended that information on the results of the Internal Quality Assurance System of the program and the Improvement Plan are published in the official website as well.

RECOMMENDATION 2.- It is recommended that the English version of the official website contains the same information as the Russian one.

RECOMMENDATION 3.- It is recommended that the specific information regarding the courses that constitute the program, bases of practice, the main accents of the programme, as well as more advanced information about the prospects of scientific and professional development of graduates is publicly available.

Assessment: SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT

CRITERION 2. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The self-assessment report of the Psychological Counseling Master's degree includes clear information about the quality assurance system (QAS, named RUDN University Educational Quality Assurance Management System -EQAMS-) applicable to this Master's degree (pages 22 to 27 of the self-assessment report). Specific information is provided regarding the quality policy, quality management model (QMN), quality assurance service and quality assurance program (QAP), and procedures for updating the education quality assurance system, with respective websites for additional information.

Documents of the QAS were provided during the visit to the University. The documents available in the Department also confirmed the implementation of this system.

Nevertheless, the Improvement Plan is not defined or implemented for the degree. Certain lack of precision on important aspects related to the improvement process was identified. The procedures should be explained with precision. Specific actions should be established with the planning of



well-defined initiatives, expected outcomes and the people in charge should be appointed, as well as a precise calendar for the development of the measures indicated. In addition, the procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the improvement plan should be established. It would be desirable more visibility and clear explanation of the way in which the improvement plan is reviewed and updated and factors (reasons) for the evaluation and updating of the plan.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 4.- It is recommended to specify the Improvement Actions and the Improvement Plan, specifically for this degree.

RECOMMENDATION 5.- It is recommended an increase in the overall participation of the different stakeholders in the Quality Assurance System.

Assessment: SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT

CRITERION 3. DESIGN, ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

The educational program is well organized and includes information on competences and curricular structure, recognition of credits and complementary training. The design of the program is updated in accordance with the requirements of the disciplines and benefits the educational level of Master`s degrees. The training program has an appropriate design, an organization and curricular development according to the nature and scope of the degree. It is worth mentioning several positive aspects such as the concern for freshmen adaptation to University study, the availability of preparatory courses for applicants to the master's program, the interdisciplinary of the formation plan and the search for uniqueness of the offer. Special emphasis is placed on the important role of external internships in the training of students, and the sensibility towards people with health impairments as well as the organization of additional courses for students and graduates with a certificate, providing students with the improvement of their professional status.



The Department provided complete and detailed guides during the visit, with more academic information available to students. The disciplines have syllabi, methodological recommendations which are publicly available for students. Reviewers note that the syllabi contain international and Russian experience in the field of psychological counselling practice. In general, the evidences provided demonstrate that it is a training program with an adequate design.

However, the inclusion of more specific courses related to the topics of this Master's degree that are in demand in the world and Russian psychological community should be considered, such as cross-cultural counselling and negotiation, ethno psychology and professional ethics (deontology).

It is recommended to provide an opportunity for faculty and students to study and improve the English language, which will strengthen the language adaptation of students.

It is important to ensure more active participation of employers and students in the optimization and development of the programme. World practice and the needs of Russian science and practice in the field of psychological counselling demonstrate the importance of including employers in the conduct of scientific research of students and teaching staff. This can be independent research carried out within the framework of grants including at the request of employers as well as in the framework of master's theses. It will greatly improve the programme. There should be foreseen time for curriculum and extra-curriculum activities that employers should lead. Such activities could be practical training, master classes, etc. Activity in relation to students can be manifested in conducting student monitoring of the demand for various psychological technologies in practice and their inclusion in the programme.

Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 6.- It is recommended to update the design of the curriculum including cross-cultural counselling and negotiation, ethno psychology and professional ethics.

RECOMMENDATION 7. To expand the practice of student internships in



Russian and foreign universities.
RECOMMENDATION 8. It is important to ensure more active participation of employers and students in the programme optimization and development.

Assessment: SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT

CRITERION 4. ACADEMIC FACULTY

The teaching staff is in accordance with the characteristics of the educational program. Academic categories, teaching and research experiences, and professional experience are optimal for the educational program. Therefore, teaching staff is adequate for the characteristics of this Master's degree. There are specialists for the different areas of Psychology, and contents of the program are represented by the specialization of the teaching staff. There are Professors, Associate Professors, Senior lecturers and Lecturers (with high education and practical experience on average) for covering the different subjects of the program. Reviewers note the good training of teaching staff for the organization of scientific work of masters characterized by a pronounced practical orientation. Moreover, there exists a remarkable balance between senior professors and professors with less experience in the field.

Students are satisfied with the qualification of teaching staff and their academic availability. This is also true for the employers, who have close contact with teaching staff. Professors and lecturers also demonstrate to be very committed with students. In general, students appreciate their dedication and availability to deal with their concerns. The documents provided, as well as the employers' opinions coincide in pointing out that the profile of the teaching staff is appropriate to the nature of the degree and its training program. Students' satisfaction with the teaching activity of academic staff is considered notably high.

Recommendations:



RECOMMENDATION 9. It is recommended to provide an opportunity for teaching staff to study and improve the English language, as well as the practice of internships for teaching staff in foreign universities. This could strengthen the language adaptation of students from other countries.

Assessment: FULLY CONFORM

CRITERION 5. INFRASTRUCTURES, SERVICES, FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The infrastructure and resources are appropriate to the characteristics of the Master's degree. Information on academic services is provided in the website. In general, the support personnel and the resources seem appropriate to the qualification and the students' characteristics.

Facilities, services and resources are completely appropriate, and in particular the digital resources available in the library are highly appreciated by students. The library is well equipped, and it has a virtual classroom and enough computer tools for its development. There are enough infrastructures to develop teaching activities. The students count on several websites to follow the different courses. It is worth mentioning the collaboration with the Dental Education program in the use of their laboratory for educational and scientific purposes. Common research interests include the analysis of the impact of the level of stress on the performance of dentists. The program could benefit from the use of these resources to improve its international projection.

Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 10.- It is recommended to take full advantage of the services and resources of this University to facilitate a stronger international interaction with other universities.

RECOMMENDATION 11.- It is recommended to diversify the locations and destinations for student and teaching staff internships.

Assessment: SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT



CRITERION 6. LEARNING OUTCOMES

It is worth noticing that students are involved in publishing scientific articles in indexed Journals and they are in general successful. This involvement is highly appreciated by this panel. The teaching syllabuses of the courses provide enough information about the methodology and evaluation systems. During the visit, general criteria for evaluation of the Master's courses were clarified, and students state that these evaluation criteria are clear for them. Overall, the educational activities and results of learning are consistent with the graduate profile.

Recommendations:

None

Assessment: FULLY CONFORM

CRITERION 7. INDICATORS OF SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

The program has mechanisms to determine the degree of satisfaction among professors, lecturers, students, administrative and support staff, graduates and employers. Different surveys show that students are satisfied with the teaching performance of the academic staff, and this satisfaction was confirmed during the visit. The reported alumni employment appears appropriate in the context of the degree.

According to the information provided, the evolution of academic indicators (percentages of graduates, etc.) is considered optimal. A meeting with the employers involved in the program confirmed an effective relationship between the Institution and different employers, and an effective functioning of the Internship and Employment Organization Department. The assessment made by students about the learning quality of the degree is considerably high. The degree of satisfaction with the quality of education by the academic staff, employers and alumni is high as well. The employment rate reported seems quite optimal. The short- and



long-term feasibility or sustainability of the Master has been revealed during the visit, taking into account the different aspects evaluated.

In short, from the educational profile of the degree and the resources available, the degree is potentially sustainable. Besides, there is sufficient evidence of satisfaction indicators.

Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 12. It is recommended to organize a survey or other forms of feedback from employers during internships and practices (on the preparedness of students for the practical work of a psychologist, on the level of competences).

Assessment: FULLY COMPLIANT

6. CONCLUSIONS

After studying the self-assessment report, a vast range of internal documents, and holding extensive on-site meetings with the program's administrators, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers, as well as with staff of RUDN's quality management and general leadership, the Evaluation Committee appreciates the program's quality.

Considering the positive results of the analyzed indicators, as well as the full achievement of the criteria, we can conclude that the result of the evaluation of this program is quite optimal. The educational profile of the Master is appropriate and the quality of the degree is high.

Also, the Evaluation Committee is confident that the program's administrators and teaching staff, in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders at the University level, are fully committed to the objective of permanently monitoring and improving the program's quality.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT: FAVOURABLE