

Report on the Accreditation of Study Programmes

at the
**National Research University
Higher School of Economics**
- Faculty of Social Sciences -



(Reference Number: IP-0570-1)

15th Meeting of the ZEvA Commission on 22nd March 2022

Item **X.XX**.

Study Programme	Degree	Programme Duration	Type of Programme	Maximum annual intake
Psychology	Bachelor	4 years	full-time	173
Psychology of Business	Master	2 years	full-time	70

Date of digital site visit: 24th-25th November 2021

Contact person at the higher education institution: Alina Borisovna Lyapota

ZEvA programme officers: Anja Grube, Leonie Pessara

Expert Panel:

- **Prof. Dr. Thomas Rigotti**, University of Mainz, Department of Psychology, Professor of Work, Organisational and Business Psychology
- **Prof. Dr. Erika Spieß**, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Department of Psychology, Professor of Economic Psychology
- **Ms. Ines Kaiser**, free consultant, coach and mediator, Magdeburg/Germany (representative of the profession)
- **Ms. Laura Ritter**, University of Cologne: MA student of Psychology, University of Osnabrück: MA student of Cognitive Science (student expert)

Hanover, February 14, 2022

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I. Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission

1. Decision of the ZEvA Commission (22nd March 2022)

To be added upon decision-taking.

2. Final Vote of the Expert Panel

2.1 General Aspects

2.1.1 General Recommendations

Internationalization: the experts recommend...

- funding more places for international mobility.
- Enabling increased short-term international mobility through (funded) summer and winter schools for domestic students.
- including even more English-native speakers as lecturers to train the language skills of students.

Teaching Faculty: the experts recommend...

- increasing the number of professors amongst the scientific staff in long-term perspective.

Learning Environment and Student Support: the experts recommend...

- making communication with external partners even smoother with regards to the planning of lectures and workshops.

Transparency and Public Information: the experts recommend...

- making the admission requirements in Russian and English easily accessible by publishing them on the website.

Student Assessment: the experts recommend...

- implementing a standardized way of communicating grades confidentially to students.
- providing the same number of exam trials to all students regardless of their tuition payments.

Quality Assurance: the experts recommend...

- informing students about the evaluation results and, in case necessary, the means taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning of the respective courses.

2.1.2 General Conditions

Quality Assurance:

- The questionnaire for the assessment of teaching quality should include questions for the evaluation of student workload.

2.2 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

2.2.1 Recommendations

Admission regulations: the experts recommend...

- including a motivational letter or a personal interview with applicants into the admission process in order to reduce the drop-out rate.

2.2.2 Conditions

None.

2.3 Master's Programme "Psychology of Business"

2.3.1 Recommendations

Transparency and Public Information: the experts recommend...

- informing prospective students about the teaching hours on the website.

Structure and Content: the experts recommend...

- Turning the elective courses "Introduction to Psychology" and "Psychology in Communication" into obligatory courses.
- ensuring that General and Differential Psychology as well as Social Psychology are covered by all students in the introductory modules.
- improving the knowledge and application of state of the art multivariate statistical techniques.

Student Assessment: the experts recommend...

- focusing even more on the complexity of methodological standards and advancing the applied statistical techniques.
- Assessing the modules "Theory and Methodology of Modern Psychology" and "Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology" through written exams.

2.3.2 Conditions

None.

2.3.3 Recommendation to the ZEvA Commission:

The experts recommend the accreditation of the Bachelor's programme "Psychology" and the Master's programme "Psychology of Business" for a period of six years, provided the above-mentioned condition is fulfilled.

II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure

It is the purpose of the accreditation procedure to assess the quality of the study programmes **Psychology (Bachelor's degree) and Psychology of Business (Master's degree) run by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) Moscow** against international standards. The assessment is based on the framework as described in the ZEVA Manual for the External Assessment of Study Programmes. This assessment framework is fundamentally based on the "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)" (ENQA 2015), the "Framework for Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area" (2005) and the "ECTS Users' Guide" (European Communities, 2015).

In line with the ESG, the assessment was organized as a peer review procedure, involving an expert panel composed of two university professors in the discipline, one professional from outside academia and one student.

For the purpose of assessing the study programmes, the Faculty of Social Sciences at HSE was asked to submit a self-report in English containing a detailed description of the university, the faculty and the study programmes. Along with the self-report, a number of additional documents were submitted, including detailed course syllabi, CVs of teaching faculty, comprehensive statistical data as well as relevant rules and regulations. All documents were submitted in English translation. By special request, the expert panel also received additional documents such as admission regulations, final theses and survey summaries.

Due to the travel restrictions imposed by the Corona pandemic, ZEVA and HSE jointly decided to conduct a virtual site visit in November 2021. The expert panel conducted separate interviews with the leadership board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Deputy of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and the Senior Director for Full Degree Programmes, academic supervisors and programme coordinators, teaching faculty, students and graduates. Moreover, a brief video was shown to the experts in order to provide them with concrete impressions of the premises and infrastructure at the School of Psychology.

This report is based on the experts' assessment of the university's self-report and on their impressions gained during the site visit. It will serve as a basis for the ZEVA Accreditation Commission to decide on the accreditation of the two study programmes. In the case of a positive decision by the Commission, ZEVA will award its quality seal for a limited time period, after which the university can apply for re-accreditation of the programmes.

The experts would like to thank all involved members of the HSE faculty and staff for the professional organization of the online site visit and for the open and constructive atmosphere during the talks.

1. Governance, Management and Profile of the University

1.1 Mission and Profile of the University and the Faculty

1.1.1 University

Within a period of only about 30 years, the Higher School of Economics (HSE) has developed into one of the most renowned higher education institutions of its kind in Russia and beyond. Since its establishment in the early 1990s, HSE has risen to the top league of Russian universities and – as one of about 30 universities – has been granted the status of a National Research University.

At present, about 50.000 students are enrolled at HSE. Apart from the main HSE campus in Moscow, additional branch campuses have been opened in St. Petersburg, Perm and Nizhny Novgorod.

The university's core focus in research and teaching is still on Economics and Social Sciences, although the spectrum of disciplines has been constantly extended over the years, now including programmes in the humanities, engineering, physics and computer science. According to the self-report, HSE offers more than 110 Bachelor's programmes and about 190 Master's programmes at present.

According to the HSE Charter, the main goals of the university are as follows:

- *to meet demands of the state and society for highly qualified specialists with higher education;*
- *to ensure the University's competitive advantage as compared with the leading foreign educational and research centres;*
- *to foster integration of the Russian education and science into the international scientific and educational environment,*
- *to disseminate scientific and educational best practices, both foreign and accumulated at the University;*
- *to conduct research and development projects at the request of legal entities and individual clients on the basis of independent contractor agreements;*
- *to ensure comprehensive modernization of the higher education;*
- *to create a favorable environment for realizing intellectual and creative potential of the University's students and employees, including sports, recreational and healthcare infrastructure in recreational camps for students, recreation centres and guest-houses, operating on the basis of the University's property;*
- *to write, publish and disseminate textbooks, study guides and scientific monographs.*

In its development plan until 2030, approved by the Staff and Students Conference and the Academic Council in 2020, HSE has defined the following key strategic goal:

“to be the leading academic, educational, analytical, consulting and project-focused university, acting as one of the drivers for the modernization of the national system of education and

science, while also making considerable contributions to Russia's innovative development and competitiveness on a global scene.

By 2030, HSE University is expected to attain globally recognized standards in all fields of its activities, i.e., research, education and project work, as well as stand as one of the leading global academic institutions in all aspects of its operations."

Special emphasis is placed on the digital skills of future HSE graduates and the digital transformation of the whole institution. In the summer of 2020, a concept for the development of the digital skills of HSE students was approved by the academic administration. It defines the following digital skills as cross-curricular core competencies of all students:

- "1. Digital Literacy: for using digital technologies and tools for processing information in order to attain personal, educational and professional goals, as well as carrying out team projects in the digital sphere while observing basic security requirements, ethical and legal norms;*
- 2. Algorithm Thinking and Programming: From the setting of tasks and developing algorithms and solutions to using the latest programming tools;*
- 3. Analysis of Data and AI Methodologies: From using mathematical methods and models for retrieving knowledge to solving professional tasks and developing new approaches."*

A detailed assessment framework of these skills on the Bachelor's and Master's level is provided as well.

In the course of a large-scale structural reform in the year 2014, the academic units at HSE were re-organized into bigger faculties ("mega-faculties"), each one comprising a number of departments or schools. A major goal of this reform was to de-centralize the management structures of the university by assigning a higher degree of responsibility and decision-making powers to the collegial bodies at faculty level.

1.1.2 Faculty

The study programmes in Psychology are offered by the School of Psychology, which was established in 2002 as part of the Faculty of Psychology. During the process of re-organizing HSE into "Big Faculties" seven years ago, the former Faculty of Psychology was integrated into the newly created Faculty of Social Sciences.

The School of Psychology currently offers one undergraduate programme and nine Master's programmes. Moreover, the faculty members teach in the Doctoral School of Psychology. The School counts 97 faculty members at present, including 6 full professors. The Head of the School of Psychology is also a member of the HSE Academic Council.

On the HSE website, the School's mission is described as follows:

“The School promotes cutting-edge research, multidisciplinary studies, education in English. We are increasing the number of courses in English all the time and have started two English-speaking Master’s Programs. Our researchers have access to Eye trackers, TMS, multi-channel EEG, MEG and fMRI techniques.

The School also aims to train psychologists, who can apply their knowledge in the fields of economics, banking, human resources management, organizational development, ecopsychology and team-building.”

HSE in general and the School of Psychology in particular aim at a close alignment with international standards and developments, i.e. the “global mainstream” of the discipline. As it was put in the self-report and described in the online talks, the School aims at educating both highly skilled researchers and graduates apt to meet the requirements of the non-academic labor market. Special emphasis is put on the transfer of research results into real-life actions. In accordance with this, the School places a particular focus on theoretical preparation and problem-solving oriented project work.

Accordingly, many of the School’s graduates do not (or at least not immediately) proceed to the next educational level, but take working positions in commercial companies, HR analytics, consulting agencies, social research centers or as school psychologists.

1.1.3 Experts’ Appraisal

The talks with the members of HSE, the Deputy of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and the Senior Director for Full Degree Programmes, the Head of the School of Psychology and the Head of the Faculty of Social Sciences have confirmed that the School of Psychology has developed its own distinctive institutional profile, which is closely in line with the general HSE strategy and attaches particular importance to practical skills. These strategic cornerstones are also clearly reflected in the two programmes assessed here. The aims of the development strategy of the Faculty of Social Sciences until 2030 were laid out convincingly. This also applies to the internationalization strategy of the two study programmes and the Faculty of Social Sciences as a whole.

The competition between HSE and other leading Russian universities for the most attractive study programmes and the best students clearly has a positive effect on the general development of the institution and results in a convincing portfolio of state-of-the-art study programmes at the School of Psychology. The expert panel would especially like to highlight the interdisciplinarity of the educational programmes offered by the School of Psychology as a competitive asset.

1.2 Internationalization

Increasing internationalization is a core strategic goal of both HSE as a whole and the School of Psychology in particular. According to the self-report, the university’s main objectives in internationalization are to:

- *strengthen the international profile and reputation of HSE,*
- *develop key international academic partnerships,*
- *achieve international excellence in teaching and research,*
- *increase and diversify the international body of faculty and students.*

In order to reach these objectives, HSE decided upon a number of strategic initiatives which were contained in a general action plan (“Global Competitiveness Programme”) for the period 2013-2020. In 2020, a new Development Strategy for the upcoming decade was launched. The new key development areas formulated there place a particularly strong focus on national interests, i.e. the university’s role in promoting Russia’s social, technological and political advancement:

1. *Ensuring the global competitiveness of Russian education, modernization of professional education, including through the introduction of flexible, practice-oriented and versatile educational programmes.*
2. *Ensuring the advanced implementation of Russia’s R&D potential in the context of profound technological transformations, as well as allowing the country to become a global leader in research and technological development.*
3. *Supporting social stability in Russia, increasing life expectancy and living standards with due consideration of social and territorial differentiation.*
4. *Digital transformation of the Russian economy and government.*
5. *Russia’s global positioning in the context of today’s volatile geopolitical environment.*

The Head of the Faculty of Social Sciences is quoted as follows on the faculty website: “We encourage professional independence and develop both education and research. Synergy is one of our key objectives.” In order to reach this key objective, the prime teaching strategy “is to prepare students to meet global demands and requirements as successful professionals.” Students of the Faculty have the opportunity to participate in the HSE-wide international mobility programmes or to study as exchange students at foreign partner universities for one or two semesters. Professors and lecturers of the Faculty can participate in academic mobility programs at faculty level or, for instance, the Erasmus+ programme.

Exchange programs and double degree MA programmes in co-operation with several European universities are in place. Besides European universities, the Faculty of Social Sciences has recently welcomed a Chinese higher education institution among its partners. Moreover, to further strengthen “internationalization at home”, the Master’s programme in “Russian Studies” was recently opened for foreign students.

The efforts of the university and the School of Psychology to internationalize are also reflected in the teaching body. Further details on this topic can be found in chapter 1.3. of this report.

Both in the self-report and during the online talks, the representatives of the School emphasized that internationalization was not the main objective of the study programmes, since they were primarily directed at the Russian and Russian-speaking labor markets. International

elements in the study programmes were of particular importance for students seeking to pursue an academic career.

With the switch to digital teaching due to the pandemic in Spring 2020, more international teachers held lectures and workshops for HSE students. Participation in international conferences, which is highly encouraged by the teaching faculty, became easier for students, too.

1.2.1 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

The goals of the Bachelor's programme "Psychology" are in line with the above-mentioned goals of the Faculty of Social Sciences: preparing students for the demands of the global academic and national non-academic labor market. Therefore, fluency in English (especially for research purposes) is one of the programme's intended learning outcomes.

With a view to that, mobility programmes are offered which include stays at Western European partner universities or facilitate participation in international conferences. The programme management and the teaching faculty support students in these endeavors by providing reference letters and contacts from their professional networks. Some elective courses are offered in English. Also, all undergraduate students of HSE Bachelor's programmes, have to take obligatory classes in English during the first two years of study.

In the course of the past five years, eight students of the programmes spent one semester at European or US American universities. All costs incurred usually have to be covered by the students themselves.

The share of incoming international students (most of them from former Soviet countries) lay at around 11.5% in 2020. First experiences with incoming students from China are now being made, and were described as positive.

1.2.2 Master's programme "Psychology of Business"

According to the self-report and the online talks, the Master's programme "Psychology of Business" primarily prepares graduates for the Russian labor market. It is thus mainly taught in Russian. Graduates are prepared to work, for example, in HR departments or as business consultants.

The goal of internationalizing the learning experience is nonetheless supported by several means. The curriculum offers the possibility to complete one or two semesters abroad with the support of Erasmus+-funds. Moreover, an internship can be absolved abroad or at an international organization based in Russia.

Incoming student mobility is possible. During the period from 2016-2021, 13 international students studied the Master's programme most of whom came from former Soviet countries.

1.2.3 Experts' Appraisal

The topic of internationalization was discussed with HSE students, faculty and staff throughout the online talks. The experts have gained the overall impression that HSE has already come a long way in enhancing its international profile – especially when keeping in mind that, like all Russian universities, HSE is facing considerable external challenges in this undertaking,

including language barriers, financial obstacles, and volatile external circumstances. Without doubt, there is a need for optimization in some regards, but the general direction taken by the university is certainly very promising. This is also reflected in the 8th international conference on student learning and teaching, which was hosted by the School of Psychology in November 2021.

The experts also see a plausible link between the institutional internationalization strategy and the two study programmes in Psychology: for instance, there are well-established partnership ties with foreign universities at programme level, allowing students (especially the Bachelor's students) to participate in student exchange. Partners include, for instance, public universities in Potsdam (Germany), Bilbao (Spain), Ghent (Belgium) and Perugia (Italy). Furthermore, guest lecturers from foreign universities are frequently invited and students are encouraged to participate in scientific conferences.

Since the main purpose of students enrolled in the Master's programme appeared to be career advancement within Russia, international experience was rather not perceived as a competitive advantage for jobs. Moreover, the majority of the students interviewed during the talks reported that they preferred not to go abroad, as this may seriously interfere with their professional duties and may therefore constitute a serious risk to their employment situation. The experts see that given the circumstance that most students enrolled in the Master's programme are already working full-time, the international dimension of the study programmes should be measured by the number of incoming students rather than by the number of outgoings.

Incoming students are supported by additional Russian language trainings, if they are deemed necessary, and orientation courses. According to the teaching staff, their integration into the university usually works smoothly.

The experts encourage HSE and the School of Psychology to maintain the strong efforts that have already been taken at various levels. The experts recommend paying particular attention to the following aspects in the future:

- If funding can be allocated, more funded places for international mobility should be offered to the students. During the on-site-talks, the experts gained the impression that far more students are potentially interested in studying abroad than those, who actually do so. This is mainly due to financial limitations.
- Summer and winter schools might be a possibility to enable short-term international experiences for domestic students.

The experts highly appreciate the increased level of international teachers at the School, which is not least due to the efforts of the teaching and administrative body of the study programmes.

1.3 Teaching Faculty

At present, the School of Psychology counts more than 97 faculty members, including 6 full professors. There are lecturers from Russia and from abroad in both study programmes. Some of the lecturers are currently enrolled as Ph.D. students or are graduates of HSE. Almost all members of the core staff have an academic background in Psychology.

For each study programme HSE appoints an Academic Director or “Supervisor” from among the teaching faculty. The Academic Directors bear the main responsibility for the design and contents of the programme and for the appointment and coordination of the teaching staff.

CVs of the core teaching faculty were submitted to the experts as part of the self-report. Also, the experts had the opportunity for talks with the Academic Supervisors of the programmes and other members of faculty during the online site visit. A publication list of members of the School of Psychology during the past three years was made available to the experts.

As a general rule, faculty members are employed on a temporary basis and have to undergo a regular process of internal re-evaluation (and re-application). All professional activities of the faculty members (research output/publications, results of course evaluation, projects, etc.) are included in the evaluation process. There is also an annual “Best Teacher Award” to reward particular excellence in teaching, which also comes with a financial bonus. All members of the teaching body hold at least basic qualifications in the field of Psychology. Teachers delivering lectures have to hold a Ph.D. degree in the relevant area. As was reported during the talks, at least half of the teaching body has obtained Ph.D. degrees in Psychology.

There are multiple options for further professional development. During the online talks the programme “Teach for HSE” was mentioned, which is meant to increase the quality of teaching in general. Some of the core members of the School of Psychology are teaching in professional development courses, for example on eLearning.

Moreover, the Academic Writing Center was highlighted which supports staff members in enhancing their writing skills. A working group on research grants and Erasmus+-applications was also highlighted by the teaching staff.

According to the self-report, most members of the teaching faculty are active in the international academic community, either as lecturers, editors of international journals or as members of international research societies. It was reported, that permanently employed teaching staff had the opportunity to take a research sabbatical every five years. The teaching and administrative workload is to be reduced accordingly during the sabbatical. Each member of the teaching staff has to deliver a certain publication index due to the status of HSE as an “National Research University”.

Lecturers are involved in research laboratories such as the “International Laboratory of Positive Psychology of Personality and Motivation”, the “Laboratory of Ability Psychology”, and the “Cognitive Psychophysiology Laboratory” which are all based at HSE. This is especially helpful to attract international researchers to HSE.

In order to release the teaching burden on faculty members, routine tasks such as preparing and grading tests are performed by students who are trained and employed through the “Teaching Assistants Project”.

HSE also provides funds for participation in conferences, summer schools or workshops for all lecturers. Recently, this form of funding was extended to the faculty level. In addition to that, funding from the government or other third parties is available.

1.3.1 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

The majority of the lecturers are of Russian nationality, but possess rich international experience, holding degrees from European or American universities or having taught at foreign universities. Almost 40% of the teaching body are below the age of 35 and thus qualify as "young faculty". 15% of the core teaching staff are heads of professional psychological associations. The interviewed teachers mentioned that they had visited Dutch, German and US-American universities for research stays.

1.3.2 Master's programme "Psychology of Business"

The core teaching body is constituted of Russian teachers, most of whom have international experience (especially through research stays at universities in Great Britain, as was emphasized during the online talks). Additionally, researchers from abroad are regularly invited for guest lectures and workshops on current research topics. In the academic year 2020, visiting lecturers from the US, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands taught in the programme. Mutual visits and close cooperation with Croatian, Icelandic, Finnish, German, Dutch and Canadian universities and teachers were mentioned.

1.3.3 Experts' Appraisal

The experts are impressed by the excellent qualifications, the international profile and the open, self-reflected mindset of the teaching faculty they encountered during the digital talks. There is no doubt that the lecturers as well as the faculty leadership attach high importance to the quality of teaching and to their own professional role as teachers. The university's excellent staff resources are further supplemented by regular visiting lecturers from inside and outside academia, and the university ensures that students receive qualified training and supervision during internships and projects.

The panel also commends the School of Psychology on the high level of self-reflection and encourages the faculty to invest into digital competence and English skills as strategic areas of development, which were already identified by the School as future growth potentials.

The approach of making working contracts or conference participation dependent on publication scores and positive course evaluation results stimulates the research activities and research output of the teaching body and also results in a high quality of teaching. The professional qualification programmes offered by HSE, which include courses on blended learning or students' assessment, seem to be highly frequented and valued by the members of faculty. These training courses were offered online during the pandemic.

Furthermore, the experts commend HSE on the strong team spirit among the members of faculty who share responsibilities for the same programme. The efforts to internationalize the teaching staff are certainly a complex endeavor, especially considering the current political circumstances. Nonetheless, the faculty management and lecturers mentioned that international experiences had become more tangible due to eLearning opportunities. The approach of providing favorable working conditions and other incentives in order to attract international staff to HSE appears reasonable from the experts' point of view.

Taking the staff composition into consideration, the panel recommends to increase the number of professors amongst the scientific staff. The current share of six professor positions among 97 scientific staff members should increase in long-term perspective.

With regard to the desired qualification profile of graduates, which tailored towards the Russian labor market, international experience is a desirable but not a crucial component of both programmes. The involvement of practitioners, some of them HSE graduates, through workshops and project work is highly appreciated by the panel.

1.4 Learning Environment and Student Support System

The infrastructure, resources and student services provided at HSE are described in detail in the self-report. In addition, the experts were given a virtual tour through the premises of the School of Psychology in Moscow in the course of the online talks.

The main library comprises over 700,000 books and periodicals and is subscribed to approximately 400 Russian periodicals and 130 international journals. It is open 24/7. Approximately 500 workplaces are available to the students for self-studying purposes, as, for example, in the library or in separate rooms that are put at the students' disposal. Computers are also at the students' disposal.

According to the HSE website and the self-report, the library provides access to a wide range of electronic resources, including e-books and journals, databases of peer-reviewed literature, patents, business data and other data collections. The digital library resources can be accessed externally by both students and staff. Electronic resources include nearly 50 000 electronic journals, 475 000 e-books and more than 1 million theses. 90% of these resources are in English. Through governmental funding, HSE members can access subscriptions of SAGE, Taylor & Francis, Oxford University Press, Annual Reviews and Springer. The university itself provides access to the full-text databases JSTOR, ScienceDirect, EBSCO, ProQuest, ebrary, Web of Science and Scopus.

With the sudden shift to eLearning in Spring 2020, students had to rely on their private hardware during the first months of online teaching and learning. Staff members mentioned that laptops were bought occasionally for students in need by the Faculty of Social Sciences. The platforms MS Teams and Zoom were used for the conduct of online classes.

According to the self-report, students are provided with all necessary resources in the research labs to conduct research themselves, for example to encephalographs, eye movement trackers, galvanic skin response trackers and software such as Pavlovia.org, 1ka.si, PsychoPy and SPSS.

Student services include a career development center and a center for psychological counseling. HSE takes high efforts to create equal opportunities for students with disabilities. For instance, a social project was launched in 2016 with the aim of improving the learning environment for disabled students. As a general rule, disabled students can receive special assistance during the final state examination by using technical aids or by taking the exam in an alternative format. Student volunteers act as special consultants and tutors to disabled fellow students in

order to support them in their academic progress. HSE takes further equal opportunities measures for the benefit of socially vulnerable or disadvantaged students: for instance, special scholarships or other forms of financial assistance are provided.

In all matters concerning programme-related administrative issues, students can approach the support staff at the responsible programme office. In all academic matters, they may turn to their lecturers or to the Academic Director of their programme, depending on the particular question. It was mentioned that students with children receive support tailored to their needs from the academic supervisors. The study programme is usually completed in regular time. In fact, the Master's programme student support services were ranked highest on an internal survey of HSE.

A merit-based discount system on study fees is in place at HSE. In the Bachelor's programmes, students can receive up to 70% in case they reach good results. Moreover, out of a total of roughly 180 places in the Bachelor's programme, 60 places are completely state-funded.

Students can also contact the central student council or the student councils at faculty level for information and support. The members of this board are elected by the students in order to represent their interests. Members of the student council are also part of the faculty council and the university-wide academic council.

The alumni network seems to be vivid and working effectively. As was reported during the online talks, many alumni stay in touch with HSE and distribute information about vacancies or internship openings at their current workplaces through the HSE network. Career fairs are held on campus twice a year. HSE has close ties with partners from business and other non-academic organizations (such as medical or counselling centers).

During the online-talks, students mentioned that they sometimes experienced sudden changes in their timetable at short notice. The members of faculty explained that such events were due to last-minute changes in the schedules of external partners who delivered workshops or lectures at HSE.

1.4.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts have come to the conclusion that the students of the School of Psychology are provided with a very good learning environment. Infrastructure and equipment are modern and in very good condition, providing a motivating atmosphere and enough workspace for students. The central location of the campus in Moscow is a big advantage in itself. Teaching and learning methods appear modern and motivating, which was emphasized both by students and lecturers. It appears that the pandemic has not induced a substantial loss in teaching quality. The overall atmosphere amongst students and staff seemed very collegial, open and engaged.

Volunteering as mentors or tutors also provides a great opportunity for students to further develop their social skills and prepares them for active citizenship. Teaching and learning at the School of Psychology are clearly aimed at producing articulate, confident and independent personalities with highly developed self-management skills.

Considering all that, the experts were not surprised to find that the students and graduates of the Psychology programmes were very enthusiastic about their university and their studies and displayed a high level of satisfaction and commitment to their institution during the on-site talks.

Nonetheless, the expert panel recommends further improving communication with external partners regarding the planning of lectures and workshops.

1.5 Quality Assurance

The main responsibility for the quality of the study programmes lies with the Academic Director and with the so-called Academic Boards (one for each degree programme).

Various measures for the quality assurance and enhancement of teaching and learning have been implemented at HSE. These activities involve all relevant internal and external stakeholders, including students, teaching staff, employers and alumni. Students reported that they generally felt their voice was heard and that teachers were open for their feedback.

HSE Moscow applies several instruments for the quality assurance and enhancement of teaching and learning. As a general rule, students evaluate each of their classes based on standardized survey questionnaires. The surveys serve to determine the students' level of satisfaction with the quality of their courses, programmes and teaching staff. It is compulsory for the students to evaluate their courses. Even before the pandemic, the surveys were usually conducted electronically.

The results of the surveys are made available to the teachers and – in aggregated form – to other interested parties within the university (as e.g. deans, academic supervisors and programme managers) and serve as a basis for the continuous improvement of the programmes. The questionnaires are relatively short and concise, comprising only about eight questions, but also free comment options.

In addition, students may also provide face-to-face feedback to their teachers or, in case of general complaints, use the so-called “Expressive Button” hotline. Via this anonymous hotline, participants in the educational process at all HSE campuses may provide all kinds of feedback, lodge complaints or queries, or give recommendations for improvement. Students reported that they experienced great academic and personal support from their teachers during online teaching and learning. They highlighted that communication was facilitated via different means such as Social Media, Messenger channels but also email and the HSE learning platform.

In case the general evaluation of a course turns out to be substantially below average (reaching only three out of a maximum of five points), the Heads of Departments are entitled to exclude lecturers from teaching a course. During the on site-talks it was mentioned that in case of below-average evaluation results, teachers were supported through professional development programmes and counselling by their supervisors.

On the other hand, HSE has implemented some incentives for particularly good teaching. These include an internal “Best Teacher Award” that also entails monthly supplements to the winning lecturer’s salary. In addition to that, the publication activities of all permanent faculty

members are evaluated and rated annually. The publication index is not evaluated for practitioners.

Potential employers are often in close touch with the university, especially in the context of teaching and alumni networks, and hence provide a lot of informal input.

These means of quality assurance are complemented by graduate surveys. One survey is annually conducted in September among graduates just after their graduation, followed by a second survey six months later. It contains questions about the graduates' current salary, their satisfaction with their current employment situation or about whether the skills obtained at university are of use to them. This information is used for the further development of the study programmes.

1.5.1 Experts' Appraisal

During the on-site talks, the experts got the overall impression that quality assurance activities at the Faculty of Social Sciences basically fulfil their purpose. Students reported that they generally felt their voice was heard and that teachers were open to their feedback. The "Expressive Button" hotline is also a good idea that seems to be working well in practice.

HSE makes use of a wide variety of instruments for the continuous monitoring and review of its programmes. Apart from written surveys, these also include the analysis of performance indicators as e.g. dropout rates or the number and profile of applicants.

Students also mentioned that a teacher in the Bachelor's programme was replaced following rather low evaluation results.

As regards course evaluation, the experts consider it necessary to expand the questionnaires for the assessment of teaching quality by additional questions concerning the evaluation of the students' workload in the context of the course. It became clear during the talks that this aspect is still a "blind spot" in the internal quality assurance of HSE. For the sake of educational quality, it would nonetheless be helpful to monitor the students' workload more closely, as course requirements do actually seem to be a challenge at times, especially since a lot of students are already working part-time or even full-time. This applies especially to the Master's students, 50% of whom work full-time. As an alternative to integrating such questions into course evaluations, separate workload surveys at programme level may be another option.

Additionally, the panel recommends to inform students about the evaluation results and, in case necessary, the means taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning of the respective courses.

Another particularly strong point is the tight network between the university and the employment market, which is especially facilitated by the compulsory internships. By repeatedly accepting HSE students as interns, many employers stay in touch with the university on a permanent basis and get a chance to provide regular feedback not only on the performance of the interns, but on the study programmes in general.

During the online talks, a graduate reported that HSE had taken great efforts to develop the quality of the study programmes and of the institution itself. It was confirmed that during the last decade, the system of electives, summer and winter schools, the interaction with the

teachers, the quality of lectures, the accessibility of research laboratories for students and the general presence of HSE in the city had strongly developed and improved. The expert panel would like to encourage HSE to further pursue this path, also by means of adapted quality assurance mechanisms.

1.6 Transparency and Public Information

All key information on the School and its study programmes (intended learning outcomes, profile, contents, course syllabi, etc.) can be found on the HSE website, almost all of it in both English and Russian language. Also, there is extensive additional information available for international students, concerning, for example, tuition fees, trial admissions tests, possible sources of funding, contact persons in case of questions etc. University-wide regulations on student assessment, term papers and theses, projects and internships are officially documented and accessible to students at all times. However, despite the very detailed and well-organized website, admission regulations for Russian and international students were not available online.

Graduates of the study programmes receive a Diploma Supplement which is in line with European standards and requirements.

1.6.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts commend HSE on the high degree of transparency and easy accessibility of its website. For all enrolled students, maximum transparency regarding course requirements and assessment procedures is warranted. Information for prospective students on content of the study programmes and administrative procedures is provided as well.

In order to make the admission process even more transparent, the panel highly recommends to publish the admission requirements in Russian and English on the university website. The panel also learned during the talks that the Master's programme is taught in the evening hours, since most students are working during the day. This should be made transparent on the website, especially for international students.

2. Assessment of the Study Programmes

2.1 Common Features and Strategic Dimension of the Programmes

General Structural Features

In terms of structure, the study programmes follow the Russian “4 + 2” model, which comprises four-year undergraduate programmes (240 credit points) and 2-year Master’s programmes (120 credit points). HSE was the first university in Russia to adopt this two-tier model and has now fully disestablished the pre-Bologna “specialist” programmes.

The study programmes are based both on Federal Educational Standards that are binding for all higher education institutions in the country, and on HSE’s own standards, which it is entitled to apply due to its status as a National Research University. The self-report names the following innovative features that distinguish HSE educational programmes from those offered by other universities:

- *General cycle of courses in all Bachelor’s programmes (so-called Mago-Lego subjects): taken by students from different departments, these courses are to broaden intellectual horizons and to cast a firm foundation for the development of a scientific worldview;*
- *Bachelor’s students get not only a specialized education in a selected area (Major), but can also choose a secondary specialization in a different area (Minor) to complement the Major;*
- *From the academic year 2021/22 onwards, all Master programmes will be designed along the three basic trajectories “General”, “Applied” and “Research”. Master students will have more freedom of choice through the inclusion of Mago-Lego courses. Additionally, they will be able to visit lectures and exams of other Master programmes. If the final examination of the additional study programmes is passed successfully, they are awarded state-issued diplomas of several programmes. If only some elements of the other study programmes are completed, HSE diplomas will be issued.*
- *Master’s and Bachelor’s programmes offer a lot more research, project and internship activities than required by Federal Educational Standards.*
- *All HSE graduates are equipped with at least basic skills regarding digitalization (including the principals of statistics, Excel and a programming language such as Python) and professional English language skills (supported by additional language trainings in case necessary. Bachelor students are required to present their Thesis Project Proposal in English to the Commission Board.*

The general teaching language in both programmes is Russian. Nonetheless, around 15% of the Bachelor’s programme and 25% of the Master’s programmes are delivered in English. It was stated that smaller units of courses generally taught in Russian are conducted in English.

Students can also be hired as assistants and participate in research projects in the above-mentioned research laboratories of the School of Psychology.

Strategic Dimensions

Both in the self-report and during the online talks, the combination of research and practice was emphasized as a strength of the programmes. Since the programmes are designed to qualify graduates primarily for the Russian labour market, internationalization of the programmes seemed to be of interest, but not a top priority for the further development of the programmes. HSE conducts regular research on the demands of the labour market. The design and content of the programmes are adapted accordingly.

Due to the pandemic, the shift to online learning was described as challenging for some areas of Psychology which rather require face-to-face-interaction.

2.1.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts commend the School of Psychology at HSE on the high degree of applied project work it has implemented in both research and teaching. The freedom of choice given to students, appears to be unique in the Russian Higher Education sector. The experts appreciate the academic support system which supports students in choosing their classes. All students interviewed reported that the Minor-Major-System enabled them to focus on their personal interests and enhance their career perspectives.

Students and graduates mentioned that the high level of practical knowledge application and the internships that were part of their programmes helped them in finding suitable employment.

In 2021, the School of Psychology received a price from a Russian recruitment agency due to the fact that its graduates are the most demanded on the national labour market in the field of Psychology.

The current obstacles for some areas of teaching due to the pandemic in the field of Psychology are understandable. The experts are convinced that HSE implements online teaching in an adequate way, conveying the necessary skills to students.

2.2 Key Data

2.2.1 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

HSE offered in the academic year 173 places on the Bachelor's programme, out of which 60 are state-funded, 80 are for fee-paying Russian students, 15 are funded for international students and 15 places are for fee-paying international students. Three study places are reserved through a quota system for students with special needs. Lecturers are not informed whether students are studying on a fee-paying or state-funded place.

The goal of the Bachelor's programme is to prepare graduates for the dynamic Russian labour market and research positions. Special emphasis is placed on a solid theoretical preparation in the realm of research and digital skills. The programme offers specialisations in cognitive, social, organizational and counselling psychology. The majority of courses are taught in Russian, though some courses are offered in English. It is possible to deliver the final thesis in English.

According to the provided documents, a total of 589 students were enrolled in the academic year 2020, 75% of whom were female and 10% came from abroad. The admission process is highly selective, as the number of applicants usually exceeds enrolment capacities by about 4 times.

According to the self-report, there was an average student drop-out rate of 33% after one year of study between 2018 and 2020. Almost 100% of the remaining students completed their studies in nominal time. In order to reduce the drop-out rate, students can repeat exams three times. In case an exam was failed three times, students studying with a fee reduction can continue their studies paying higher tuition fees. A “day of open doors” is held annually to attract and inform prospective students about the programme.

The majority of graduates continue their studies in a Master’s programme at HSE, other Russian universities or abroad. When graduates of the Bachelor’s programme enter the labour market, they are mostly employed in commercial organizations working in human resources, research and analytics or IT and programming. The career trajectories of the graduates are monitored through graduate surveys.

2.2.2 Experts’ Appraisal

The experts congratulate HSE on the implementation of its undergraduate programme in Psychology. Graduates are both apt to succeed on the non-academic labour market or to continue their studies with a focus on research or business. Nonetheless, the panel recommends making the admission process even more selective. In order to reduce the drop-out rate which results in a waste of resources on both the university’s and the students’ side, the panel recommends including a motivational letter or even a personal interview with applicants in the admission process. During the digital talks, members of the School management and teaching faculty reported that some applicants arrived with wrong expectations about the programme content and the job perspectives and therefore dropped out during the first year. This might be prevented if applicants were in need to express their ideas about the programme and their future employment during the application procedure.

Moreover, the panel takes a rather critical stance on the option to continue the study programmes after three failed exams with higher tuition fees in case a student benefited from a cost reduction. The number of trials should not be related to the tuition payment of the students. It is recommended to provide the same number of exam trials to all students regardless of their financial obligations to the university.

2.2.3 Master’s programme “Psychology of Business”

Annually, HSE offers 63 places on the Master’s programme, out of which 60 are for fee-paying Russian students and 3 are for fee-paying international students.

The “Psychology of Business” programme was opened at the School of Psychology in 2006. The Master’s programmes qualifies graduates for the Russian labour market, especially for positions in commercial business enterprises. The programme emphasizes practice-based learning and project work and offers three specialisations: “Business & Organisational Psychology”, “Marketing & Consumer Psychology” and “Research & Consultancy Skills”. The

majority of courses are taught in Russian, though some courses are offered in English. It is possible to deliver the final thesis in English.

The Master's programme focuses on current developments in the business sector. Students are involved into real-life business projects via internships. The international teaching body, the involvement of international guest lecturers and collaborations with the University of London, the University of Westminster, Carlton University and the University of Toronto as well as Utrecht University offer various opportunities for international learning experiences. Internships abroad are also offered.

The majority of courses are conducted in Russian or with Russian translation. As was mentioned by the programme coordinators, roughly 25 % of courses are offered in English.

According to the provided documents, a total of 70 students were enrolled in the academic year 2021, almost 80% of whom were female and roughly 10% came from abroad. The admission process is selective, the average admission rate lies at around 60-75%. Two target groups were mentioned during the talks and on the website: graduates from related Bachelor programmes or professionals who either seek to deepen their knowledge in a specific field of Business Psychology or who attend to open up new career perspectives for themselves.

According to the self-report, the average drop-out rate lay at an average of 14,5% between 2017 and 2021. There are several explanations for this above-average drop-out rate. Firstly, some students had graduated from Bachelor's programmes of other disciplines such as Sociology, Management or Economics. Another factor is that some students decide to drop out for personal reasons such as job or family obligations.

Graduates of the Master's programme mostly continue their professional lives in the commercial business sector: almost all graduates are working in the realm of HR management, organizational management, marketing and advertising or consulting and coaching. The career trajectories are monitored through graduate surveys. Upon graduating students automatically join the Association for Business Psychologist in Russia.

2.3 Intended Learning Outcomes

The university has defined Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for both programmes. They are rooted both in the Federal Educational Standards and in the HSE standards. The ILOs include *Universal*, *General Professional* and *Professional Learning Outcomes*. All three categories cover academic research skills as well as soft skills and professional/management skills.

2.3.1 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

According to the self-report of HSE University, the intended learning outcomes are as follows:

"1) Practical activities

a) analysis of psychological properties and states, characteristics of mental processes, various types of activities of individuals and groups

- b) identification of the possibilities and limitations of psychological assistance in different situations*
- c) the use of standard diagnostic and treatment methods to optimize mental states and organize forms of interaction*
- d) analysis of social and psychological problems of modern Russian society, participation in the diagnosis and solution of these problems. Description and analysis of various forms of interaction between individuals, in order to support and optimize them*
- e) providing psychological assistance to representatives of various social groups in emergency situations*
- f) conducting professional activities in accordance with legal and ethical standards.*

2) Research activities

- a) participation in the conduct of psychological research, which makes it possible to carry out solutions of typical problems in various scientific and scientific-practical areas of psychology*
- b) study of scientific information, domestic and foreign experience on the research topic*
- c) application of standardized methods for organizing psychological research and diagnostics; the use of high-quality psychological research methods and the processing of data obtained with their help*
- d) data processing using standard software packages; meaningful interpretation of the results obtained.”*

Throughout the Bachelors' programme, special emphasis is placed on group work and self-management skills: *“Group forms allow students to develop teamwork skills, gain experience in team management. Individual and group work of students within the framework of academic courses in a third of cases involves a report on the completion of the assignment to the study group. Seminars organized in the form of students' reports allow for development the skills of presenting the results of their activities and public speaking.*

Moreover, professional and soft skills include the ability to communicate and interact in English.

2.3.2 Master's Programme “Psychology of Business”

The Masters' programme “Psychology of Business” prepares students for a career in all branches of business demanding psychological expertise.

According to the self-report of HSE University, the Intended Learning Outcomes are defined as follows:

“In psychological research:

- Setting the research problems;*
- Formulating goals, setting specific objectives for research, developing conceptual research models and proposing programmes for scientific research;*

- *Operationalizing the main research variables, choosing relevant data or planning and organizing its collection, analyzing and interpreting results; developing recommendations for results use in different practical areas;*
- *Preparing scientific reports, reviews and publications;*
- *Organizing scientific seminars, conferences and participating in its work.*

In practical and consultancy work:

- *Psychological consulting in social, educational, managerial, political and business areas;*
- *Organisational consulting on psychological problems related with human resource management, business processes organisation, consumer behaviour etc;*
- *Individual consulting and psychological therapy in areas of interpersonal relationship, career planning, personal development, conflict resolution and difficult life situations over heading;*

In the diagnostic work:

- *Realising psychological diagnostic of persons, interpersonal relations, groups and organisations, as well as intergroups relationships;*
- *Developing or choosing relevant diagnostic methods in accordance with goals, objectives and context of a current situation;*
- *Developing conclusions and recommendations for research, expert and consultancy activity;*
- *Analysing social, educational, political, economic and organizational projects from the point of view of their psychological consequences, taking into consideration a great number of complex factors;*
- *Developing and realizing of forms, methods and corrective measures corresponding to the detected problems.*

In the organizational and managerial work:

- *Psychological supporting of an organizational activity on the level of an individual, interpersonal relations, groups and intergroup relations, and an organisation as a whole;*
- *Planning of an organizational activity of the personnel learning and development; psychological supporting of such activities;*
- *Analysing the organizational situation, identifying the needs in changes, formulating projects' goals, limits and risks;*
- *Evaluation the personnel readiness for the changes' implementation, psychological supporting of organizational changes.*

In the project work:

- *Formulating of goals, objectives and expected results of the project activity, creating and supporting relationship with a client,*
- *Developing and choosing relevant instruments and informational materials for the research project activity;*

- *Designing and implementing research (individual or group) in the relevant research area, data collecting and analyzing;*
- *Formulating data-based conclusions and recommendations on the project results.”*

Graduates of the programme are to become specialists who “(1) are capable to develop and implement projects for the business success; (2) can manage business in a systemic way and to take into account a human factor. Another aim of the programme is to create a space for professional communication to share experience and find effective business solutions.”.

Professional and soft skills include the ability to “solve research, professional, managerial and interdisciplinary problems in their field under conditions of uncertainty and lack of information, respecting the principles of social responsibility and professional ethics.”

2.3.3 Experts’ Appraisal

From the experts’ point of view, the intended learning outcomes are formulated in a very detailed, yet precise manner and fully match the actual profiles of the programmes. The formulated goals of the programmes are demanding, yet they are adequately reflected in the curricula. The intended learning outcomes are closely aligned with the taxonomies of the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. It becomes clear from the descriptions that the programmes include both a thorough theoretical education in psychology and a practice-oriented preparation for the demands of the labour market.

As was mentioned during the online talks, graduates of the Bachelor’s programme are to be able to “close the gap” between the needs of business and information technology on a basic level. Graduates of the Master’s programme qualify for both the academic and non-academic job market.

However, the panel recommends that the knowledge and application of state of the art multivariate statistical techniques should be improved. Taking the delivered master theses into consideration, it is recommended to focus even more on the quality of methodological standards and advancing the applied statistical techniques in order to reach international competitive standards

Due to their tight schedules, students are not only to obtain the skill sets mentioned in the Intended Learning Outcomes, but will also develop good self-management skills. Graduates of both programmes are in strong demand on the labour market.

2.4 **Concept and Structure of the Study Programmes**

Both study programmes are designed along the standards for education, professional training and competence of the European Certificate in Psychology, based in Brussels. These standards are set by the European Federation of Psychologists’ Associations.

2.4.1 Bachelor’s programme “Psychology”

During the first year, students attend a number of courses that provide basic knowledge about Philosophy, Social History, Economics and Psychology. Moreover, introductory courses to

Psychology, such as “Anatomy and Physiology of the Central Nervous System”, “Psychology of Motivation and Emotion” or a “Research Seminar” are part of the obligatory courses. An English Language Test helps to classify the students’ respective skills and knowledge. Optional English language classes are offered. As mentioned above, special emphasis has been put on digital skills since 2016/17. Accordingly, students obtain basic knowledge in data analysis, programming as well as “Python” and “R”.

In addition, a range of electives covering mathematics, social theories or informatics is offered.

The second year deepens the students’ knowledge in social psychology, organizational psychology, cognitive psychology, personality research and data analysis. The students are introduced to experimental psychology, age psychology and developmental psychology. Students also need to choose minor classes in a discipline related to psychology (for example in economics, informational technology or philosophy). In the second study year, students are expected to hand in two term papers and conduct two practical projects. Again, optional English language courses are offered.

In the third year, students choose their educational tracks: “Social Psychology”, “Organizational Psychology”, “Cognitive Psychology”, “Personality Research and Data Analysis” are offered as areas of specialization.

A wide range of electives is offered, too, covering topics as diverse as “interview methods in psychological research”, “Neuropsychological Diagnosis and Correction”, “Modern Approaches to the Study of Dreams” or “Introduction to Individual Counseling” are offered. In addition to that, the basics of information technology are taught in compulsory classes for all students, complemented by minor subjects, practical work, an internship and term papers.

In the fourth year, the chosen educational tracks are deepened. As in the third year, the students are offered various electives in the field of psychology. Three practical trainings are integrated into the curriculum and a term paper as well as an internship report are to be presented. In addition to that, the fourth year is dedicated to the final graduation thesis and the final state exam. The final thesis may be delivered in English. Optional academic writing classes in English are offered as a supportive measure.

2.4.2 Master’s programme “Psychology of Business”

For students who do not have a background in psychology or business psychology, the course “Introduction to Psychology” is offered during the first half of the first year of study. Fundamental basics of psychology are elaborated upon. For students seeking to gain deeper knowledge, additional classes are offered. On top of that, students with an advanced knowledge in psychology are asked to serve as tutors for students without backgrounds in the relevant fields. The interviewed students reported that they had, for example, obtained degrees in law or economics before entering the Master’s programme.

During the first year all students attend the compulsory courses, introducing them to “Theory and Methods of Modern Psychology” and “Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology”. This part of the curriculum is followed by “basic components”, where students are equipped with more knowledge on “Organizations in Business”, “Basics of Psychological Assistance in Business”, “Business Psychology”, “Business Coaching” and “Contemporary HR

Technologies in Organizations". These two curricular elements of the first year are completed by a range of six elective courses. Amongst others, topics like "Managerial Consulting", "Psychology of Consumer Behavior, Advertising and Public Relations" or "Leadership and Team-Building in Business" are offered here. In the compulsory course unit on practical training, projects and research work, students learn how to design a research proposal and gain soft skills in the research seminar "Business Psychology" and the "Consultancy Skills Workshop".

The students absolve a work internship, stretching over the entire course of the study programmes and lasting for two years. It can be completed in an institute or organization of the students' choice. However, students also have the possibility to participate in mobility programmes offered by HSE.

The second year is very much dedicated to the graduation thesis. Ideally, the above-mentioned research proposal is already linked to the final state certification. The term paper and the accompanying research seminars serve to prepare and support the Master thesis proposal and the writing process.

Generally, the programme is described as practice-oriented, even though it provides a sound foundation in the field of research, too. Some students who absolved the educational track in cognitive science have continued their academic careers through Ph. D. programmes at leading universities in Belgium, Germany or Italy.

The programme is designed in collaboration with employers. Since nearly all students of the programme are working at least part-time, the classes take place in the evening. In order to offer more flexibility, classes are also offered online. All classes are recorded so that they can be accessed in case a student was unable to participate in class personally.

2.4.3 Experts' Appraisal

The experts fully embrace the overall profile and concept of both study programmes. With a view to the formulated objectives and intended learning outcomes, the curricula are designed in a convincing and plausible way, offering a good balance of mandatory and elective courses and thus enabling student-centred learning. The entrance qualifications of the students are taken into account. Students praised the Bachelor's programme for the possibility to study cognitive psychology already at undergraduate level, which is unique in Russia.

It appears that the required time for effective self-study is accounted for in the study programmes. The students reported that lecturers were always open to their questions and that individual solutions to obstacles blocking the study path were always found. Elective courses can be changed within the first few weeks of the semester.

The experts have no doubt that both study programmes effectively prepare students for careers in segments of the labour market that are linked to psychology, business and their intersection with the IT sector. The internships fulfil the key function of enhancing the employability of the future graduates. So far, internships have been conducted in organizations as diverse as the airline S7, the Russian federal government tourism agency or consultancy agencies. The experts commend the School on the combination of digital skills and psychological research methods in the Bachelor's programme.

Students reported that companies and professionals regularly presented themselves at HSE in order to establish contacts for internships or to give the students a realistic perspective on the different segments of the labour market for Psychologists. Especially the Master's students, who are from a wide variety of educational and professional backgrounds and age groups described this mutual exchange with external professionals as vivid and fruitful in terms of employability.

The experts recommend enhancing the capacities of both programmes to impart English language competences, with a particular focus on attracting even more native speakers as teachers. Even though students may deliver their final thesis in English, this option appears to be rarely used. The current shift towards online teaching is surely an asset on this path. Students also expressed their wish to receive more English language training. Moreover, the panel highly recommends monitoring the students' workload more closely (cf. chapter 1.5.)

From the experts' point of view, the overall structure and content of the study programmes are well-considered and convincing. However, the following recommendations are issued for the Master's programme. The courses "Introduction to Psychology" and "Psychology in Communication" could be turned from elective courses to obligatory courses for all students. Moreover, it should be ensured that General and Differential Psychology as well as Social Psychology are covered by all students in the introductory modules.

2.5 Methods of Teaching and Student Assessment

HSE attributes special significance to providing a solid methodological and theoretical training, analytical skills and general professional skills to ensure the employability of its graduates. Special attention is given to a solid theoretical preparation in both study programmes. Above all else, students are to learn how to approach and solve problems from an academic point of view and by means of scientific tools and methods.

In order to achieve this aim, a mixture of teaching methods is applied in both programmes, including lectures and seminars, research projects, internships and, of course, independent self-learning. The number of students per class depends on the type of course. In practical classes conducted in laboratories, a maximum of 15 students are foreseen. In seminars with discussions 25-30 students are estimated to participate. In lectures up to 200 students are allowed.

The applied methods of student assessment are diverse, ranging from regular written assignments, research essays and text analysis to (group) projects and presentations. Active participation in class has an impact on the overall course grade. On principle, it is the responsible lecturers' task to ensure a constructive alignment between intended learning outcomes, contents, didactic methods and the forms of assessment within their courses. The selection of course literature is at the lecturers' discretion as well.

Moreover, the university uses an anti-plagiarism software in order to detect copied text passages in the students' papers and theses. In case more than 20% of a document appear to be copied, the paper won't be accepted. Plagiarism may result in penalties or even expulsion from

the university, depending on the particular case. As was mentioned during the online talks by the academic supervisor of the Master's programme, cases of plagiarism are not common.

As a general rule, examinations are not clustered within one time period at the end of the academic year, but evenly distributed across the year to avoid excessive exam workload. If a student performed well during the semester, she or he doesn't need to attend the exam scheduled at the end of the course. Students in both programmes reported that exam dates, if possible, were also adapted to their needs.

According to the interviewees, the grading criteria are communicated at the beginning of the study programmes and are also published on the universities' website. Since special attention is paid to the practical aspect of the study programmes, internships are key elements of the curricula. In order to ensure that the grading process is as neutral as possible, exam results, reports and papers are supervised and assessed by different members of the teaching body.

Due to the pandemic, the teaching and students' assessment is currently conducted entirely online. In order to ensure that the necessary competencies are covered, quizzes, games, discussions or role plays are used.

2.5.1 Bachelor's programme "Psychology"

According to the self-report, HSE faculty are among the leading experts of Psychology in their respective fields. The School of Psychology is striving to actively introduce new forms of teaching. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) were introduced to the curriculum of Psychology in the academic year 2015/16.

It was reported that roughly 30-40% of classes are conducted in the form of lectures. The remaining classes are held in the form of seminars and tutorials with elements of blended learning. In addition to traditional lectures and seminars, the following formats are also used:

- E-learning
- Internships
- Students' participation in research labs
- Project work (either a research project, a practical applied project or a service project)
- Term papers
- Research seminar (supporting the preparation of papers and final theses)

In the first year, students take practical courses which provide them with the basic methods and knowledge in psychology. Building upon this common basis, the following teaching methods are applied in the areas of specialization:

a) Consulting: including workshops on practical counseling work such as consultant skills, individual and group counseling.

b) Social and organizational psychology: courses introduce students to the field of analysis and to the practical solution of socio-psychological problems in professional teams through input on group moderation, group dynamics, data analysis in HR and social research.

c) Cognitive psychology: includes courses on the applied use of cognitive and neuro-technologies, enabling students to work in IT and data-analytical companies through eye tracking

workshops, content on psychological research methods and technologies as well as experimental and applied psychophysiology.

The School of Psychology collaborates closely with scientific, government and commercial organizations. Students of the Bachelor's programme have the opportunity to directly participate in the work of a psychologist in various fields.

The assessment is designed according to the teaching content.

In the core courses of the first two years, the main goal is to form a theoretical and methodological foundation. Therefore, the most frequent forms of assessment are written tests and papers. Within the research seminars, the main goal is the development of research competencies. Individual and group research projects have to be conducted and presented.

In the third and fourth year, students are to develop practical and applied skills in the chosen educational tracks. Accordingly, the assessment is more strongly competency-oriented. The self-report names the following examples: *“For a counseling psychologist skills workshop, the key task is to provide an audio recording and transcript of an educational counseling session in which the student acted as a counselor. For the course ‘Training and Development of Personnel’ - a comparative analysis of several training companies. For the course ‘Psychology of Aggression’ - a psychological analysis of the case of manifestation of aggression.”*

The Bachelor's programme has introduced mechanisms allowing students to take any course exam three times without having to switch to an individual curriculum on a fee-paying basis. In case these three attempts are not successful, student can continue their studies but have to pay tuition fees.

2.5.2 Masters's programme “Psychology of Business”

In the Master's programme, lectures and seminars are the predominant teaching format. In addition to that, the following formats are applied:

- Consultancy Skills Workshops (during both years of study): including coaching sessions and mentoring for the students
- E-learning (students can always connect to classes or watch them as videos later)
- Internships (ranging from minimum four weeks to maximum two years)
- Project work: designing and conducting a practical project, based on the students' research findings
- Research seminar (supporting the preparation of the Master's thesis)

The structure of the Master's programme promotes the students' self-management skills, as roughly 1/3 of the total study load accounts for classroom hours, whereas 2/3 is foreseen for independent work.

Classes are scheduled in the evening and on Saturdays, leaving room for professional duties or other extracurricular activities. According to the on-site talks, roughly 50% of the Master students are already working on full-time positions, whereas the other 50% are holding part-time jobs.

Project work and reports are the most commonly applied form of student assessment. They are to be written about theoretical discussions or empirical-analytical questions, developing argumentative positions on the basis of scientific literature and applying analytical instruments – ideally to real-life cases. Students are also required to present their research results. The topics of the Master's theses are often connected to the employment positions of the students.

The modules "Theory and Methodology of Modern Psychology" and "Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology" require a final group project defense.

The programme applies the general HSE examination procedure, which allows students to retake exams three times if necessary. Students who are unable to pass a course exam after three attempts can also take advantage of the individual curriculum mechanism, which allows them to continue their studies on a fee-paying basis. According to the given information, it is not possible to schedule two exams in one day.

2.5.3 Experts' Appraisal

The students' assessment seems fair, tailored to the students' needs and addresses different competencies. This applies especially to the project work. The on-site talks have proved the success of these methods: students and graduates displayed a high level of commitment to their university and obviously possess excellent communication skills. It also became clear that due to their special skill set, the graduates enjoy a high degree of employability in a variety of professional areas.

The major-minor system, the different electives and the term papers and final theses provide students with a wide range of choices and facilitate student-centered learning. The planned extension of the Mago-Lego system to the Master's programmes is a useful asset in this regard.

The panel commends HSE on the swift and adequate reaction to the pandemic. Students mentioned that the high standard of teaching remained with the shift to eLearning. The panel understood that the faculty leadership and the teaching body are well aware of the challenges related to online supervision and student support and is sure that the university will be able to develop apt coping mechanisms for the time being.

The panel suggests that the above mentioned Master's modules "Theory and Methodology of Modern Psychology" and "Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology" might also be assessed through written exams. This might reduce the workload on the student's side without diminishing the learning success.

The interviewed students reported that some lecturers published the grades of all students in aggregated form on a sheet of paper which was accessible to everyone. With regards to confidentiality, the panel recommends finding a standardized way of communicating grades and course results confidentially to the individual students.

The final theses that were made available to the expert panel were of high quality but in terms of methods and statistical techniques were rather on a basic level. In order to match the goal to be internationally competitive and to prepare for an academic career, the complexity of applied methods and statistics in Master theses should be increased.

III. Appendix

1. Statement of the University in Response to the Expert Report