

Accreditation Report

Master's Programme



“Business Administration: Organisational Transformations”

offered by

**Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics
(KhNUE), Ukraine**

Abertay University, United Kingdom

22nd Meeting of the ZEvA Commission on 5 November 2024

Agenda Item Nr. 04.07

Study Programme	Degree	Programme Duration	Type of Programme	Maximum annual intake
Business Administration: Organisational Transformations / Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Cybersecurity / Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Sustainability	Master/ MBA	16 months (5 terms)	Full-time	20

Date of online site visit: 2 July 2024

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Hanover, 8 November 2024

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I. Findings of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission

1. Decision of the ZEvA Accreditation Commission (5 November, 2024)

The ZEvA Commission follows the experts' report and recommendations and takes note of the universities' statement in response.

The ZEvA Commission decides to accredit the double degree Master's programme “Business Administration: Organisational Transformations” offered by Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics and Abertay University without conditions.

The accreditation of the study programme is valid for a period of six years.

This decision is based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and the recommendations of the ECTS Users' Guide as referred to in the ZEvA Manual for the External Assessment of Study Programmes.

2. Key Findings and Final Vote of the Expert Panel

2.1 Executive Summary: Key Findings

The experts commend the programme coordinators on the interdisciplinary design of the study programme, which is currently delivered fully online. The close linking of advanced studies of business administration with a focus on organisational transformations and cybersecurity, organisational transformations and sustainability respectively, is innovative and convincing. It addresses some of the key challenges Ukraine is highly likely to face in the future. The experts are confident that there will be a demand for graduates of the programme, primarily in Ukraine, but potentially also internationally. The programme also fits well into the individual strategic profiles of the two partner universities.

The collaboration between the two partners seems to have worked very well so far, and the dual degree could attract an increasing number of students. To this end, the international, collaborative nature of the programme should be made more transparent on a dedicated programme website and in other public sources of information, as well as in the official documents issued by the universities upon graduation.

Teaching, assessment and supervision workloads are almost evenly distributed across the two partners, which has created the very positive impression among the expert group that programme responsibility and ownership are also shared evenly. This balanced partnership may also be one central reason for the generally high level of student satisfaction that the expert group perceived.

Even though the programme is clearly practically-oriented – as evidenced by the central role of the pre-diploma internship – and primarily aims at preparing students for a career in business or government rather than academia, students also receive a solid methodological foundation that could act as a basis for further academic qualifications. The strong research capabilities of Abertay University in cybersecurity could possibly add to this foundation.

2.2 Final Vote of the Expert Panel

2.2.1 Recommendations for Enhancement:

- The general programme profile should be described in more detail on a dedicated programme website and in other relevant sources of information in both Ukrainian and English.
- The profiles of the two tracks should adequately reflect whether graduates have acquired general management knowledge including basic knowledge on either track topic or whether graduates could also be considered specialists in their respective tracks.
- Regular student evaluations should be carried out in a more systematic manner as outlined in the Procedures Manual of the two partners.

- From a didactic perspective, alternative teaching methods such as simulations or guided self-learning elements and new technologies such as artificial intelligence may be considered so as to stay up-to-date and improve the students’ learning experience.
- Both partners should prepare a plan for the time when mutual physical exchange of students becomes possible again. In this case, the module leads in the curriculum may have to be reconsidered or the curriculum be restructured.
- The diploma supplements should mention the degree-awarding partner and the dual nature of the programme. Ideally, they should also contain the intended learning outcomes.

2.2.2 Conditions:

- None

2.2.3 Recommendation to the ZEvA Commission:

The expert group recommends the accreditation of the Master’s programme “Organisational Transformations” for the duration of six years without conditions.

II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

1. Introduction: Purpose and General Context of the Accreditation Procedure

In December 2023, ZEvA was commissioned with the international accreditation of six Master’s programmes that had been developed and launched within the framework of the European Union’s (EU) Twinning Initiative, an institution-to-institution partnership framework to support Ukrainian higher education, both through short-term aid and long-term activities that help sustain and rebuild Ukrainian universities, the economy and society.

The initiative is coordinated by Cormack Consultancy Group with the support of University UK, the President’s Fund of Ukraine for Education, Science, and Sports and different private and state organisations.

Each of the six Master’s programmes is jointly offered by one Ukrainian university and one partner institution from the United Kingdom (UK). All programmes are fully taught in English and award a double degree, whereas the exact roles and responsibilities of the partners vary with each programme. At present, all programmes are primarily directed at Ukrainian students, but are, on principle, designed to be open to both international and domestic applicants.

As the programmes belong to a wide spectrum of different academic disciplines, they were assessed in six separate procedures across the year 2024. Each assessment procedure was organized as a peer review, involving an expert panel composed of two university professors from the area of the respective programme, one professional from outside academia and one student.

The quality assessment was based on the criteria laid out in the “ZEvA Manual for the External Assessment of Study Programmes”, which is itself 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).

For the purpose of the assessment, the universities were asked to submit a written self-report in English for each study programme. Each self-report contained detailed information on the higher education institutions and the programme and included an appendix of key documents, such as the course syllabi, curricula, CVs of teaching faculty and relevant regulatory documents (cooperation agreements, regulations for student assessment, graduation and recognition, quality assurance policies etc.). The programme coordinators in Ukraine bore the main responsibility for the reports.

Due to the travel restrictions imposed by the ongoing war in Ukraine, the experts conducted online talks with the representatives of the universities instead of on-site visits.

The present report refers to the Master’s/MBA programme “**Organisational Transformations**” (with tracks in cybersecurity and sustainability) offered by **Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics** (KhNUE) in cooperation with **Abertay University**. It reflects the outcome of the experts’

assessment of the written self-report and their impressions gained during the online talks with students, faculty and staff from both universities.

The report serves as a key document for the ZEVA Accreditation Commission to decide on the accreditation of the study programme with the ZEVA quality label. As ZEVA is a registered agency in Ukraine, the accreditation decision can be recognized as equivalent to Ukrainian national accreditation. In the United Kingdom, no external accreditation decision is required at programme level.

2. Outline of the Study Programme

The 16 months (5 terms) double-degree Master’s/MBA programme “Business Administration: Organisational Transformations” with tracks in cybersecurity and sustainability is an interdisciplinary management programme offered jointly by KhNUE and Abertay University under the EU’s Twinning Initiative. While KhNUE has a long tradition in business, management and economics in Ukraine, Abertay University is a recognized centre of excellence in cybersecurity in the UK. Upon graduation, students receive a Master’s degree from KhNUE and an MBA degree from Abertay University. Due to the current situation in Ukraine, the programme is delivered fully online.

The programme is directed at experienced graduates and professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds who would like to receive further international university education in the speciality of management in Ukraine. The two tracks in cybersecurity and sustainability are considered by the two educational partners as two topical areas in which key challenges of a post-war reconstruction of Ukraine will require suitably trained business and management specialists.

The first 18 students have been enrolled in the programme in September 2023. For the first cohort, only Ukrainian students have been admitted under the terms of the grant support scheme, but the programme partners hope to be able to open the programme also to applicants from other countries in the future once the political situation in Ukraine will have stabilized.

The programme comprises 90 ECTS credits and is taught entirely in English. Aside from two years of work experience and an undergraduate degree, an adequate level of proficiency in English is one of the core entry requirements. While students in both tracks attend compulsory courses in business and management together, they can choose electives in their respective area of specialization. For example, compulsory courses for students of both tracks include “Management of organizations”, “Leadership in a changing environment” and “Business research methods”, electives for the track in cybersecurity include “Fundamentals of computing” and “Cybersecurity”, and electives in the sustainability track “Cultural sustainability management and organizational dynamics”. In addition to attending university courses, students are required to complete an internship placement. In the context of this placement, students also usually conceive and write up their Master thesis.

Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, student or staff mobility is not possible at present, but is planned for the future once the general political situation permits cross-border exchanges again.

3. The Partner Universities and their Framework of Collaboration

Profile of the Universities

Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics (KhNUE) has developed out of the Kharkiv Engineering and Economic Institute, which was founded in 1930. After further restructurings, today, KhNUE ranks among the most renowned institutions of higher education in the field of economics in Ukraine. With seven faculties, 29 departments, 14 centres for international cooperation and almost 6,700 students, KhNUE offers a broad range of educational services in 25 specialties, including, for instance, Economics and Entrepreneurship, Finance and Accounting, Management and Administration, and Informatics and Computer Engineering.

Abertay University, whose institutional roots go back to 1888, is a technical university in Dundee, Scotland. Its four academic schools offer degrees, such as, for example, in Mental Health Nursing, Civil Engineering, Business Analytics and Ethical Hacking, that put the focus on teaching and preparing the university's 4,700 students for the world of work. Best known for its expertise in video games education, Abertay University is home to two UK National Centres for Excellence for both video games and cybersecurity education.

History and Framework of the Cooperation

The partners were introduced to each other in the context of the Twinning initiative in the summer of 2022, without having had any prior collaborative relationships in teaching or research. The two universities entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in May 2022 and started designing their joint Master's programme in "Organisational Transformations".

Funding in the context of the Twinning Initiative was granted to the programme in May 2023. Before the programme was finally launched, it successfully underwent the internal standard process of Abertay University for the validation and approval of study programmes. The study programme was approved by the Academic Council of KhNUE in May 2023 and by the Programme Approval Advisory Panel at Abertay University in July 2023.

Both partner universities were equally involved in the design of the study programme. In the process of development, formal and legal requirements on both sides were accounted for, as e.g. national educational standards or formal regulations regarding modularization.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Partners

The roles and responsibilities of the two universities within the framework of the study programme are described in the self-report and documented in the appended official agreements between the two universities. In addition, they were further clarified and explained to the experts in the context of the online accreditation talks on 2nd July 2024.

The Memorandum of Understanding, which has been signed by the partners in May 2022 for a duration

of three years, sets out the academic, regulatory and legal framework for the collaboration. Under the terms of the memorandum, KhNUE recruits the students subject to the commonly agreed admission criteria, teaches the agreed curriculum and delivers the modules in accordance with the Procedures Manual, supervises and marks students' project work, and monitors the programme. At present, Abertay faculty is involved in the teaching of the programme for one elective module under the sustainability track, and two elective modules under the cybersecurity track. A conversion scheme of KhNUE's grading scheme to Abertay University's grading scheme has been developed and has been approved by Abertay's Academic Standards and Quality Committee prior to the start of the first intake.

The Procedures Manual is an operational document that sets out the concrete responsibilities for the administration of the collaboration. For the general management of the programme, the partners have established a Partnership Operational Management Group, which consists of senior staff representatives from the departments/divisions responsible for the students plus the link tutors from both partners. The group meets at least twice per year to discuss general strategic, financial and operative matters.

Given the target audience of the programme, responsibility for advertising the programme, recruitment, admission, registration and induction of students lies with KhNUE. However, students must conform to both Abertay and KhNUE regulations. Staff from KhNUE teaching in the programme must be approved as Associate Lecturers by Abertay.

Abertay's Link Tutor is responsible for the input of student assessment data. These data are then formally considered and agreed at Abertay's Assessment Boards. Representatives of KhNUE must attend boards at which the results of students from the programme are being considered to confirm the accuracy of the data. Abertay's Programme Board takes decisions on students' eligibility to progress in their studies. The KhNUE programme leaders are members of the Programme Board.

Teaching and learning materials are provided through KhNUE's virtual learning environment, but a copy of all materials is also held at Abertay for the mitigation of any war-related incidents that may make KhNUE's material inaccessible. Students are subject to KhNUE's disciplinary code, but mitigating circumstances, suspensions and withdrawals are handled jointly by KhNUE and Abertay, with KhNUE acting as the point of first contact. Complaints procedures are processed by KhNUE, but may be transferred to Abertay in case the matter is not solved satisfactorily.

Annual reporting is conducted via the Partnership Annual Report. The annual report follows Abertay's template and timescale, and includes notification of any significant decision agreed through the Partnership Operational Management Group.

Student feedback on the quality of the programme experience at the Partner must be presented to both institutions. A student voice meeting (or Student Council Meeting at KhNUE) for each track of the programme takes place at KhNUE at least once per semester. The Abertay Academic Link Tutor is invited to attend online. Both the feedback itself and the resulting actions are part of the Annual Reporting process.

4. Assessment of the Study Programme

4.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the programme have been jointly developed by the two partners. A total of 14 ILOs have been formulated. They are meant to be achieved as a result of studying the curricular components of each track of the programme.

They are listed as follows:

- ILO1. Critically consider, choose and use the necessary scientific, methodical and analytical tools for management in unpredictable conditions;
- ILO2. Identify problems in the organization and justify the methods of solving them;
- ILO3. Design effective management systems of organizations;
- ILO4. Justify and manage projects, generate business ideas;
- ILO5. Plan the activities of the organization in strategic and tactical sections;
- ILO6. Have the skills to make, substantiate and ensure the implementation of management decisions in unpredictable conditions, taking into account the requirements of current legislation, ethical considerations and social responsibility;
- ILO7. Organize and carry out effective communications within the team, with representatives of various professional groups and in an international context;
- ILO8. Apply specialized software and information systems to solve organizational management problems;
- ILO9. Be able to communicate in professional and scientific circles in national and foreign languages;
- ILO10. Demonstrate leadership skills and ability to work in a team, interact with people, influence their behaviour to solve professional tasks;
- ILO11. To ensure personal professional development and planning of own time.
- ILO12. Be able to delegate authority and management of the organization (subdivision);
- ILO13. Be able to plan and carry out informational, methodical, material, financial and personnel support of the organization (unit);
- ILO14. Apply and create complex management technologies, methods and tools for effective and efficient business management in risk conditions.

Learning outcomes 6 and 11, in particular, are also meant to prepare students for active citizenship and support them in their personal development.

A correspondence matrix of defined learning outcomes, competencies and curriculum components is provided in the self-report (annex 8) and clearly lays out how general competencies and special (professional) competencies map onto each course module with respect to the ILOs.

As regards the issue of employability of the programme’s graduates, the self-report further states that the programme aims to develop the knowledge and competencies that will help graduates to be

competitive in the domestic and in international labour markets. Graduates should be able to work in enterprises, organizations, institutions of any economic sectors and organizational and legal forms, state administration bodies, higher education institutions, research organizations, or as self-employed entrepreneurs. The two tracks in sustainability and cybersecurity are seen as two particularly relevant sectors of employment in the re-building of a post-war economy and society in Ukraine in this context.

Experts' Appraisal

The experts conclude that the intended learning outcomes of the programme are clearly and comprehensively described and are made transparent to the students. The peers confirm that the descriptions of the ILOs are in line with the Master's level as stipulated in the Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area and with Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework. Knowledge acquisition, application of knowledge/transferrable skills, communicative skills and general personal development are all recognisable elements of the ILOs, just as the ability to take on leadership roles and to take decisions in complex, multidisciplinary contexts and situations.

From the experts' point of view, the intended learning outcomes and the general programme profile should be made more transparent to the general public (and especially to potential applicants). Hence, they recommend including the most central ILOs on a dedicated programme website, or at least publishing a more detailed description of the programme outcomes online, both in Ukrainian and English.

In this context, the programme should also be marketed as primarily aimed at providing students with a general knowledge base on organisational change in the context of contemporary challenges in the fields of cybersecurity and sustainability. At the same time, it should become as clear as possible from the programme description that this is a programme which seeks to educate future managers who also possess basic domain knowledge in their respective track fields of study (cybersecurity or sustainability), rather than educating future experts in either track.

4.2 Programme Concept and Curriculum

Student Admission: Process and Criteria

Admission to the programme is fully managed and organized by KhNUE. Applicants are thus required to submit their application to KhNUE, which authenticates each applicant's status and qualification certificates and ensures that the applicant is of the required standard for entry to the programme. KhNUE then issues the offer/rejection letters to applicants and provides Abertay University with a full list of all successful applicants, including details of their authenticated qualifications. Abertay University has the final say on student admissions to the programme.

Students register with the KhNUE in the first instance. The Abertay Partnership Coordinator liaises with the KhNUE Partnership Coordinator and supplies the details of admitted students to Abertay

University. Provisional data is provided by the end of August and confirmation of registration is sent to Abertay University a week prior to induction.

Criteria for student selection and entry have been agreed by both partners in their Memorandum of Understanding, and their Procedures Manual. Abertay University sets out the entry standards and any other admission criteria, while KhNUE may add extra entry standards and any other admission criteria. These additional criteria, however, are subject to prior approval by Abertay University.

Regarding language proficiency, applicants must provide certification of at least level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in each component (reading, writing, speaking and listening) or equivalent. Alternatively, if the applicant’s first degree had been taught in English, no further certification is required. During the online talks, it turned out that the admission process has been relaxed due to current difficulties for Ukrainian students in obtaining official certification of English language proficiency.

In addition to sufficient language skills, applicants must have at least a Bachelor degree at lower second (2:2) rank according to the UK level of grades or equivalent, or the educational and qualification level of a specialist in management. All applicants must have at least two years of work experience.

Curriculum

The programme is taught over 16 months if studied full-time. Owing to the current situation of war, classes take place only online via KhNUE’s virtual learning environment. Table 1 provides an overview of the curriculum.

Table 1. Overview of the curriculum

Educational Units and Courses	Term	Form of Examination/ Assessment	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits	Partner
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time		
Management of organizations	1	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE
Leadership in a changing environment	2	Grading	40	110	5	Abertay
Mag-minor 1	1-2	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE
Mag-minor 2	3-4	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE
Strategic management	1	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE
Budgeting and financial control	1	Grading, exam	40	110	5	Abertay
Business process management	2	Grading, exam	40	110	5	KhNUE
Business research methods	4	Grading	40	110	5	Abertay

Data analytics	4	Grading, exam	40	110	5	Abertay
MAJOR 1 (elective)	3	Grading, exam	40	110	5	KhNUE / Abertay
MAJOR 2 (elective)	3	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE / Abertay
MAJOR 3 (elective)	3	Grading	40	110	5	KhNUE / Abertay
Comprehensive training	5	Report	30	60	3	KhNUE
Pre-diploma internship	5	Report	-	360	12	KhNUE
Thesis preparation	5	Thesis	-	450	15	KhNUE / Abertay
Total			510	2190	90	

Mandatory courses in both tracks include “Management of organizations” (term 1), “Leadership in a changing environment” (term 2), “Strategic management” (term 1), “Budgeting and financial control” (term 1), “Business process management” (term 2), “Business research methods” (term 4), and “Data analytics” (term 4).

Electives can be mag-minors and majors, both of which are rated at 5 ECTS credits per course. Mag-minors are elective courses from the general list of KhNUE university-wide pool courses for master students. Taking mag-minors is obligatory and these courses are thus included in the total amount of ECTS credits for the programme. The idea behind these courses is that master students should have the possibility to freely choose courses that reflect their individual interests and plans for their future employment. Overall, students are expected to collect 10 ECTS credits through mag-minor courses and 15 ECTS credits through their majors. One mag-minor course is meant to be taken either in term 1 or 2 (semester 1), the other in term 3 or 4 (semester 2).

The curriculum includes three major elective courses. However, this only applies to the track in sustainability. Modules in this track are “Corporate Sustainability, Social Innovation and Ethics”, “Cultural sustainability management and organizational dynamics”, and “Sustainable business”. The track in cybersecurity has only two major elective courses, one of which yields 7 ECTS credits, the other 8 ECTS credits. Modules in this track are “Cybersecurity” and “Fundamentals of Computing”. Currently, within the cybersecurity track, both modules are delivered by Abertay University, whereas within the sustainability track, two modules are taught by staff from KhNUE and one module by staff from Abertay University (“Sustainable business”).

Owing to the traditional mode of completing business graduate studies in Ukraine at university level, the preparation of the MA thesis is usually coupled with a pre-diploma internship. The company at which students complete this internship then provides the business context in which the MA thesis is carried out.

Recognition and Student Mobility

KhNUE has adopted detailed regulations for the recognition of credits in the context of prior informal and non-formal learning. The total volume of educational components of the educational program that are credited based on the results of the recognition of non-formal and/or informal learning can be up to 25% of the corresponding educational program. However, the recognition of credits obtained through formal education is not foreseen as transfers of higher education students studying at master's level at KhNUE from one study program (specialty or institution) to another is not allowed. As an exception, credits that have been received at Abertay University are fully recognised by KhNUE and vice versa within the joint programme.

At present, the programme does not allow for exchanges of students or staff due to the ongoing war in Ukraine. Provided the situation improves, there are plans to increase the mobility options at programme level, which may also include regular guest lectures or summer schools.

Experts' Appraisal

The experts have no doubts that the programme coordinators have put together a promising study programme that is not only well-conceived from an interdisciplinary perspective but also well-balanced in terms of the individual educational components. The content of the curriculum stands in a reasonable relation with the intended learning outcomes and is appropriate for the Master's level of education according to the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. They see a high general demand for this type of qualification and expertise – not only at a national level, but also in other countries beyond Ukraine. From the documents provided and from the talks during the online site visit, the experts have got the impression that the partnership between Abertay University and KhNUE has worked very well so far, both on an organisational and on an educational level. They thus express their hope for a further intensification of this successful collaboration.

The double degree and the reputation of the partners could certainly help in attracting an increasing number of students to the programme. The close linking of cybersecurity topics, sustainability respectively, with an MBA programme that already has an in-built focus on organisational change is convincing and addresses some major challenges Ukraine will be facing in the future.

The programme could also contribute to building up larger scientific communities around these two topics. Even though the programme is clearly practically-oriented – as evidenced by the central role of the pre-diploma internship – and primarily aims at preparing students for a career in business or government rather than academia, students also receive a solid methodological foundation that could act as a basis for further academic qualifications. The strong research capabilities of Abertay University in cybersecurity could possibly add to this foundation.

The experts regard the admission criteria and the student selection process as adequate for the programme. Both, however, should be made more transparent on a dedicated programme website.

In the cycle of professional training of the curriculum, the elective educational component contains two modules for the track in cybersecurity, and three modules for the track in sustainability. However, since the modules' credits are required for obtaining 90 ECTS credits, these modules are not real electives, but, in fact, mandatory modules within each track of the programme. The only true electives are the mag-minors in the cycle of general training. The partners may want to consider whether the introduction of true electives at the stage of specialization would add to the attractiveness of the programme by increasing the number of modules students can choose from.

The experts understand why the partners chose to structure the programme along two tracks (cybersecurity and sustainability). However, they also see the inherent risk of weakening the programme profile and remaining too much at the surface in most of the topics covered, not least because organisational change would already be a focus in itself within the discipline of business administration and management. In particular, the cybersecurity track enables students to learn some basic programming and grasp simple IT security concepts, but the track does not have a technical focus. In consequence, the programme title could raise expectations among potential employers to the effect that graduates may be assumed to have solid programming, database or other IT skills.

The well-structured working plans for the modules have been singled out by the experts as particularly positive because they provide students with a clear and easy-to-plan module sequence. As the programme develops, however, it will also be vital to continuously revise and update the module descriptions and, accordingly, the working plans. The module handbook should always adequately reflect the current state of the curriculum to make it a stable reference document for the current and future cohorts of students.

4.3 Teaching Faculty

The academic CVs of all teaching staff involved in the programme were made available to the experts as part of the self-report and the online talks also involved interviews with the programme coordinators and faculty members. All faculty members are active researchers who are also subject to KhNUE's regulations and procedures for evaluating and improving the quality of teaching.

All staff delivering modules at KHNUE under the programme are employed by KhNUE but are also approved as Associate Lecturers of Abertay University. Before an academic year commences, the KhNUE Partnership Coordinator provides Abertay University with a list of staff who will be involved in delivering modules submits a nomination form and curriculum vitae for all new staff who will be involved.

In the first year of operation of the programme an online induction programme for staff of KHNUE has been arranged. Whenever there are significant staff changes or changes in regulations, policies or processes at Abertay University, these inductions are repeated to keep all personnel informed.

The status as an associate lecturer also entitles KhNUE staff to access a range of development opportunities provided by Abertay University, including workshops, quality enhancement events, and

the opportunity for staff to study for a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice. Associate lecturers are also able to access resources on Abertay’s side such as the online library.

Teaching loads are almost evenly spread across both universities, with each partner taking responsibility for five modules (without mag-minors). Apart from one part-time lecturer on Abertay’s side, all teaching staff are employed full time.

Experts’ Appraisal

The experts are convinced that KhNUE and Abertay University have appointed a sufficient number of qualified teaching faculty. All lecturers hold appropriate academic qualifications and the necessary level of English that is required for this programme. They consider it worth highlighting that the high number of permanent employees reduces the risk of fluctuations and thus contributes to a consistent quality of teaching. This, in turn, should generally be to the benefit of the programme’s students.

In the course of the online talks, the experts have also gained the impression that the programme profits from a highly motivated team in the administrative and organisational departments of the respective partner, thereby underpinning the smooth functioning of the programme.

4.4 Infrastructure, Resources and Student Support

Financial Resources and Funding

The programme is funded by a European Union Twinning project grant for the first cohort. This includes about 50,000 GBP for Abertay University and about 30,000 GBP for KhNUE. In addition, KhNUE receives support from the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine and from a Presidential Fund for Education, Science and Sport of Ukraine. The budget plan and the associated Memorandum of Understanding between KhNUE and Abertay University cover only the first pilot cohort of the programme. During the online talks, Abertay University emphasized that their portion of the grant does not cover their costs, but that they continue to support the programme from internal funds and that tuition fees for programme students are guaranteed to be covered for the duration of the programme. The tuition fees of some students are also paid for by their current Ukrainian employers.

The partners hope that additional funding will be forthcoming to support the continuation of the programme beyond the pilot cohort. Currently, however, the future budgetary situation remains unclear.

Learning Infrastructure and Resources on Campus

An on-site visit of the expert panel was not possible due to the current situation in Ukraine. However, from the self-report and the online talks, it became clear that the learning infrastructure and academic resources available to the students of the programme are sufficient to achieve the intended learning

outcomes and to enhance the students' learning experience under the given circumstances. For making resources available, KhNUE uses its personal learning system based on Moodle, in which Zoom is also integrated for classes and seminars. Abertay also draws on this system, and provides additional material on its own platform. All material is backed up by Abertay in case of inoperability of KhNUE's platform.

KhNUE has a library that operates both in-person and online. Remote users can order resources online, have access to the help service desk, can search in the electronic catalogue and have access to electronic scientific databases. Support for access to Abertay resources such as IT services and library services are provided by Abertay, but these usually need to be directed by the KhNUE Academic Link Tutor to the Abertay Academic Link Tutor.

Student Support Services and Equal Opportunities Policies

KhNUE has adopted a wide-ranging equal opportunities policy (Policy of Equal Opportunities), which aims to grant free access to high quality education and self-realization, and to create a university environment that prevents manifestations of racial or sexual discrimination, bullying, the emergence of barriers to obtain quality education for people with disabilities, special educational needs, gender inequality, discrimination based on sexual orientation, inequality of human rights and freedoms. As part of this policy, several provisions and measures have been implemented, among others: a gender equality plan and a code of professional ethics and organizational culture for employees and students.

Educational buildings and student dormitories have also been designed or re-fitted with a view to accessibility and unobstructed access for persons with disabilities.

For support in all academic matters, students can turn to their lecturers and the academic link tutor. The fully digitalized teaching and learning environment provides equal opportunities for access. Consultation regarding international mobility is offered through the international relations office of the university. In addition, the university has a psychological counsellor available for students and staff who seek psychological support.

Experts' Appraisal

The experts commend the two partners on their comprehensive student support services and efforts to create equal opportunities for students at all levels, including students with special educational needs. Academic support is also provided for the students of the programme at a fully satisfactory level. The provided virtual infrastructure seems fully sufficient for ensuring student learning success and progress.

The experts make also positive mention of the digitalization of the educational process. The powerful Personal Learning System with a user-friendly interface enhances the possibilities of distance learning, where all participants in the educational process can access up-to-date information.

At the same time, the experts take notice of the fact that the financial situation of the programme remains unclear beyond the pilot cohort, even though both partners are committed to keeping their cooperation intact. Considering the profile of the programme, it may seem reasonable to approach local or regional companies as a potential source of funding. Also, Abertay’s strong research focus in cybersecurity may generate third party resources that could contribute to sustaining the programme. The partners should stay in close contact and exchange ideas about this issue to find possible solutions in due time.

4.5 Methods of Teaching and Student Assessment

The details of student assessment have been stipulated in the partners’ Procedures Manual. Modules are assessed through coursework assignments, class tests, examinations, or a combination of these forms of assessment as detailed in the respective module descriptor (see also Table 1). All formal instruments of assessments are subject to approval by appointed internal moderators and external examiners.

Examinations at KhNUE are conducted and invigilated according to Abertay University’s regulations and procedures. Samples of students’ coursework submissions and examination scripts are assessed by the approved Associate Lecturers at KhNUE and moderated by Abertay staff. A conversion scheme of KhNUE’s grading scheme has been developed prior to the start of the first intake. This scheme has been approved by Abertay University’s Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

Assessment Boards consider student achievement in respect of their module grades. All Assessment Boards for Abertay awards will be held at Abertay. The Abertay Link Tutor presents the grades. A representative of KhNUE must be present to confirm the accuracy of the data. This affords opportunities to clarify anything relating to these grades. Abertay University’s Programme Board then takes decisions on students’ eligibility to progress in their studies and confirms students’ eligibility for an academic award.

Experts’ Appraisal

The experts conclude that the chosen forms of teaching and student assessment are well-aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the programme and the academic discipline as a whole. The utilization of diverse teaching methods contributes to the development of important competencies beyond the mere acquisition of academic knowledge.

At the same time, the experts see potential for improvement with respect to the methods of teaching used in the programme and the employment of new technology to improve students’ learning experience. In particular, simulations and guided self-learning elements could be drawn upon as a didactic tool and artificial intelligence may be used wherever appropriate to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and competencies.

4.6 Quality Assurance

As both universities act as degree-awarding partners, they take joint responsibility for the quality assurance and enhancement of the programme. They have agreed in their Procedures Manual that the programme will be subject to periodic review. To this end, the two partners conduct annual reporting via a Partnership Annual Report.

In addition, and once it is safe to do so, as part of ongoing quality assurance of the collaboration, a visit of Abertay staff to KhNUE will take place at least annually. Further visits will take place by agreement, for example to brief staff on changes in policy or regulations, or to share good practice.

The Procedures Manual also states that student feedback regarding the quality of the program experience at KhNUE must be presented to both institutions and that actions resulting from student feedback would be an essential element of the quality assurance and enhancement framework of the two institutions. To this end, a student voice meeting (called Student Council Meeting at KhNUE), in which Abertay’s Link Tutor is to also attend online, should take place at KhNUE at least once per semester. Both the feedback itself and possible resulting actions would form part of the Annual Reporting process. However, during the online talks it became apparent that no such meeting had yet been conducted among the students of the programme. Thus, the experts could not retrieve any evaluations or written student feedback.

Experts’ Appraisal

The experts have reached the conclusion that a quality assurance system has been set up for the programme which actively involves both degree-awarding partner institutions. The partners’ responsibilities as regards quality assurance and enhancement are clearly stipulated. As far as the experts can see, adequate measures are taken to monitor the quality of the modules and of the programme as a whole on a regular basis. The link tutors on both sides, as well as the joint management and examination boards further safeguard the continuous maintenance of quality standards in the programme. The experts also appreciate the partners’ intention to reach out to the wider public, business and government by introducing public international “master classes” on selected topic of interest to the programme and its students.

At the same time, they have emphasized that some parts of the quality assurance process, primarily those relating to student feedback, do not yet correspond to the self-defined standards of the cooperation as outlined in the Procedures Manual.

Furthermore, the experts recommend involving the business partners at which students are active during their studies wherever meaningful and reasonable so as to permit a continuous quality improvement process.

4.7 Transparency, Documentation and Public Information

Promotion of the Programme

All advertising activities for the programme and the recruitment of students must be agreed jointly by KhNUE and Abertay University, but responsibility for carrying out promotion work of the programme lies fully with KhNUE. The Memorandum of Understanding as well as the Procedures Manual specify the legal details of this criterion.

During the online site visit it became clear that a dedicated website for the programme does not yet exist and that information about the programme is only available in Ukrainian so far. However, a significant portion of promotion work for new study programmes is done on social media. KhNUE confirmed that a revision of the faculty’s website is in progress, part of which will also include a proper translation of the programme’s website into English.

Module Descriptions/Course Handbook

Both KhNUE and Abertay University have published detailed descriptions for each module of the programme, each partner for its taught modules. All descriptions are in English.

For all modules taught by KhNUE, there also exists a detailed working plan that lists the distribution of hours across different types of training, for example, and a syllabus with information on each session of the module. During the online talks, it became apparent that Ukrainian students are more used to this pre-structured way of teaching rather than the more flexible and self-reliant way teaching and studying is handled in modules for which Abertay University is responsible.

Each syllabus contains a detailed description of the teaching contents of the module, the learning outcomes, the applied forms of teaching and assessment, the scope of the student workload and the ECTS credits awarded. In addition, all syllabi contain basic information regarding regulations for class attendance and for ensuring academic integrity.

Formal Documents and Regulations for Student Assessment and Certification

Students are registered at both institutions (in the first instance at KhNUE). Thus, joint assessment regulations apply to them throughout the programme. As each partner teaches a certain curricular component, assessment is carried out according to the procedures and regulations adopted by that partner. At KhNUE, a cumulative grading system is used, whereas Abertay University applies a literal grading system. For final conversion, a conversion scheme of the partners’ individual grading schemes has been developed and approved. Students have access to information on grading and assessment schemes as well as all other formal regulations and guidelines applying to them, via the universities’ respective websites, course catalogues and module descriptions.

Upon completion of the programme, students receive a certificate and a diploma supplement (called higher education achievement report in the UK) from both institutions. Samples of these documents

have been submitted to the experts as part of the self-report by both institutions.

The sample diploma supplements submitted by KhNUE and Abertay provide all basic information as recommended for this document.

Experts' Appraisal:

Notwithstanding the institutions' already undertaken efforts, the experts have gained the overall impression that the programme could be promoted more widely and effectively: apart from general promotion on social media, a bilingual website in Ukrainian and English should be set up to attract potential applicants and inform the general public about this programme. The website could include detailed information on the programme's admission criteria, the joint curriculum and partnership with Abertay University, the intended learning outcomes, and the employment prospects for graduates.

The experts are convinced that the students have full access to all relevant information and regulations regarding their progression and assessment. The course syllabi contain all necessary details and are in line with the recommendations of the latest ECTS Users Guide.

Reference to the degree-awarding partner is made only in Abertay's diploma supplement, not in KhNUE's. In contrast, KhNUE's diploma supplements contains detailed information on learning outcomes, which is not included in Abertay's supplement.

Appendix

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

We have taken into account the recommendations and comments made by the expert commission during the site visit. Since the site visit, we have implemented some changes, which we would like to inform the experts about.

1. Response and comments to the Recommendations for Enhancement (part 2.2.1 page 5 of Accreditation report):

- The general programme profile should be described in more detail on a dedicated programme website and in other relevant sources of information in both Ukrainian and English.

Response:

Since the Study programme “Business Administration: Organisational Transformations” was developed as part of the Ukrainian-British Twinning initiative and is financed by Cormack Consultancy Group and Mosaik as part of a grant project to support Ukrainians, the target audience of the programme in 2023 (the year of the start of the programme implementation) was only Ukrainians, which caused the presentation of all information about the programme on the website and other sources in Ukrainian. Since the partners plan to expand the target audience and attract foreign students, a dedicated programme website was launched in both Ukrainian and English ([web-site](#) of the programme is available at: <https://mbaabertay.hneu.edu.ua/home-en/>)

- The profiles of the two tracks should adequately reflect whether graduates have acquired general management knowledge including basic knowledge on either track topic or whether graduates could also be considered specialists in their respective tracks.

Response:

The acquired knowledge of graduates is reflected in the intended learning outcomes. In the supplement to the KhNUE's diploma, the intended learning outcomes are given, which reveal the fully acquired knowledge in management and by studied pathway. Also, the specialization in respective track (Sustainability or Cybersecurity) is indicated in the Diploma supplement of Abertay University where is specified the Main field(s) of study for the qualification: Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Sustainability OR Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Cybersecurity.

- Regular student evaluations should be carried out in a more systematic manner as outlined in the Procedures Manual of the two partners.

Response:

The student evaluation is carried out by both Universities according to the procedures of each.

So, at S.Kuznets KhNUE a student evaluation was done according to the University annual survey plan (the procedure is explained in the self-assessment report on page 13). KhNUE’s students’ evaluation includes the following surveys

- 1) Satisfaction with the quality of the study programme,*
- 2) Academic discipline from students' perspective,*
- 3) Survey of University graduates.*

At the time of the site visit, surveys “Educational discipline through the eyes of higher education students” were conducted for each discipline (the results of the evaluation were provided together with the self-assessment report). The survey “Satisfaction with the quality of the study programme” was scheduled for October 2024 (when all modules have already been delivered to students). Currently, such a survey has already been conducted and we have the results, which are given in Annex A to this statement.

Also, all students and teachers, who are involved in the programme, took part at Student Voice Meeting (online) with participation of Teaching Quality and Learning Enhancement of Abertay University on May 7, 2024. At this meeting there was discussed the quality of teaching, study programme and challenges for students and teachers. Students gave their feedback and explain issues, that arose during the study.

Now we are planning to organize such Student Voice Meeting at least one time per semester.

The Survey of University graduates was not conducted yet, because the first cohort of students is not graduated.

- From a didactic perspective, alternative teaching methods such as simulations or guided self-learning elements and new technologies such as artificial intelligence may be considered so as to stay up-to-date and improve the students’ learning experience.

Response:

We are welcome expert’s comments concerning AI integration into the study process.

Abertay University actively engages with academics to inculcate AI in the teaching and learning processes via several organisational-wide strategies such as training programmes. Moreover, Abertay University has provided clear guidance to staff and students on using AI in their teaching and assessment activities. In future these best practices will be shared with our partner universities such as KhNUE so that we can ensure better delivery of our partnered programmes.

Artificial intelligence is, also, integrated by KhNUE into teaching the "Startup Projects Management" course across three key areas:

- 1. When student teams create surveys for potential customers, clear and concise questions are critically important. AI helps refine the final versions of these questions.*

2. To identify market trends, consumer behaviors, and industry dynamics, it is recommended that students use the specialized AI tool to search for relevant, up-to-date scientific publications.
3. Since students often overlook startup-related costs, AI assists in identifying cost items specific to each industry.

- Both partners should prepare a plan for the time when mutual physical exchange of students becomes possible again. In this case, the module leads in the curriculum may have to be reconsidered or the curriculum be restructured.

Response:

The curriculum of the study programme “Business Administration: Organisational Transformations” have updated for 2024-2025 study year. The structure of the curriculum for both pathways (Sustainability and Cybersecurity) were changed with the aim to create a “mobility window”. So, the educational components that are delivering by KhNUE were transferred to the 1st study semester, all educational components, that are delivering by Abertay University, were transferred to the 2nd study semester. Thus, a “mobility window” was created in the 2nd semester. For nowadays in wartime this will be online mobility window (because male students are restricted to move abroad) and for the time when mutual physical exchange of students becomes possible again it will be physical mobility of students to the Abertay University in Scotland.

- The diploma supplements should mention the degree-awarding partner and the dual nature of the programme. Ideally, they should also contain the intended learning outcomes.

Response:

Graduates of the program receive 2 diplomas:

- 1) *Diploma of S. Kuznets KhNUE in the specialty "Management" of the Study programme "Business Administration: Organizational Transformations". In the supplement to the KhNUE's diploma, the intended learning outcome are given, which reveal the fully acquired knowledge in management and by studied pathway. The template of the diploma and supplement was updated taking into account the specifics of the joint program (the updated template of the diploma of S. Kuznet KhNUE is given in Annex B to this statement)*
- 2) *MBA diploma of Abertay University in the chosen field of study – MBA in Organisational Transformations with Sustainability or MBA in Organisational Transformations with Cybersecurity. In the Diploma supplement there is specified the Main field(s) of study for the qualification: Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Sustainability OR Master of Business Administration in Organisational Transformations with Cybersecurity.*

2. Response and comments to the Experts’ Appraisal in the Accreditation report

2.1. Response to the Experts’ Appraisal to part 4.1 “Intended Learning Outcomes” (page 7 of Accreditation report)

The recommendations of the experts to include the most central ILOs on a dedicated programme website, or at least publishing a more detailed description of the programme outcomes online, both in Ukrainian and English, have been taken into account. So, the ILOs are posted on the dedicated programme website in Ukrainian and English (available at: <https://mbaabertay.hneu.edu.ua/home-en/>)

2.2. Response to the Experts’ Appraisal to part 4.2 “Programme Concept and Curriculum” (page 10 of Accreditation report)

We welcome experts’ comments on electives, and at this time S. Kuznets KhNUE and Abertay University are discussing how to take this forward and introduce more elective courses for choice in each specialisation for the next academic year. For example, we are discussing the possibility of giving a choice of 15 ECTS to students among the following elective courses:

1) for Sustainability pathway:

- Sustainable business (5 ECTS)*
- Cultural sustainability management and organizational dynamics (5 ECTS)*
- Corporate sustainability, social innovation and ethics (5 ECTS)*
- Sustainable development: Business fundamentals (5 ECTS)*
- Communications and social responsibility (5 ECTS)*
- Social entrepreneurship (5 ECTS)*

2) for Cybersecurity pathway:

- Fundamentals of computing (8 ECTS)*
- Cybersecurity (7 ECTS)*
- Business intelligence (5 ECTS)*
- Security engineering of information and communication systems (5 ECTS)*
- IT infrastructure (5 ECTS)*

Our decision must go through the formal approval procedure in Abertay University and S. Kuznets KhNUE.

We agree with the experts that the Cybersecurity track does not have a technical focus. Study programme “Business administration: Organisational Transformations with Cybersecurity” is not explicitly designed to produce cybersecurity experts, because this programme is in the field of Management. Instead, it aims to develop managers with a solid understanding of cybersecurity issues. Through specialized modules, students will gain insights into how to manage and mitigate the risks posed by cyber threats, enabling them to lead their organizations more effectively. The focus is on providing strategic leadership and decision-making skills that incorporate knowledge of cybersecurity, ensuring that managers can recognize and address potential vulnerabilities while fostering business transformation in a secure manner.

We welcome the experts' comments concerning importance to continuously revise and update the module descriptions and, accordingly, the working plans. We would like to note that according to the

procedure of the S. Kuznets KhNUE, the working plans and syllabuses are updated every year at the beginning of the academic year.

2.3. Response to the Experts’ Appraisal to part 4.5 “Methods of Teaching and Student Assessment”
(page 14 of Accreditation report)

We welcome the experts’ recommendation for improvement with respect to the methods of teaching used in the programme and the employment of new technology to improve students’ learning experience.

AI has proven to be a valuable tool in enhancing teaching, learning, and assessment by enabling personalized education, automating tasks, and supporting creativity. Abertay University actively engages with academics to inculcate AI in the teaching and learning processes via several organisational-wide strategies such as training programmes. Moreover, Abertay University has provided clear guidance to staff and students on using AI in their teaching and assessment activities. In future these best practices will be shared with our partner universities such as KhNUE so that we can ensure better delivery of our partnered programmes.

One best practice in teaching is to use AI platforms, like ChatGPT, to generate real-life scenarios for case studies. By providing theoretical points and practical examples, AI can create detailed cases for students to analyze; this practice is used by Academics at Abertay University and has received positive feedback from students. However, educators should carefully review AI-generated content to ensure relevance and accuracy. Further, AI-based assessments can involve students in creative tasks and improve their critical reflection skills by asking them to review the outputs generated by AI models. For example, in one of the HRM modules, students were asked to develop job descriptions by using AI models, followed by critical reflections and manual tasks like recruitment planning. This structured use of AI encourages students to engage with AI-generated content while developing independent thinking. Staff members at Abertay University have started using such approaches in their module assessment. The AI is also implemented as a teaching method into the “Startup Projects Management” course, that is delivered by KhNUE. For example, when student teams create surveys for potential customers, clear and concise questions are critically important. AI helps refine the final versions of these questions.

2.4. Response to the Experts’ Appraisal to part 4.6 “Transparency, Documentation and Public Information”
(page 17 of Accreditation report)

The partner universities aim to develop the partnership and to ensure the sustainability of the study programme with two pathways, as well as to expand the target audience due to the promotion of the programme. For this purpose, the previous recommendations of experts during the site visit were taken into account and the programme’s bilingual website was launched (website available at: <https://mbaabertay.hneu.edu.ua/home-en/>).

For welcoming experts’ comments to provide reference to the degree-awarding partner in diploma supplement, the S. Kuznets KhNUE updated the diploma supplement and added reference to the Abertay University as a partner of double-diplomas programme (Annex B).