

Accreditation Report

Master's Programme
"Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction"

Kyiv School of Economics

Kyiv, Ukraine

Reference Number IP-1244-1



26th Meeting of the ZEvA Commission on 10 March 2026

Item 04.1

| Study Programme | Degree | Programme Duration | Type of Programme | ECTS Credits |
|---|--------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction | Master | 1 year, 10 months | Full-Time | 90 |

Accreditation contract signed on: 29 April 2025

Date of site visit: 30 September 2025

Contact person at the higher education institution: Viktoriia Rudyk, Study Program Accreditation Manager

ZEvA project manager: Anne-Katrin Reich

Expert Panel:

- **Prof. Dr. Dorothea Brantz**, Professor of New and Newest History, City History, Center for Metropolitan Studies, Technical University Berlin
- **Prof. Dr. Frank Eckardt**, Professor of Urban Sociology, University of Weimar/Germany
- **Ms. Karla Blauert**, City Planner at Jahn, Mack & Partner Architektur und Stadtplanung mbB, Berlin (professional expert)
- **Mr. Jakob Endemann**, Student of Bachelor of Science Landscape Architecture and Landscape Planning at the Technical University Munich (student expert)

Hanover, 10 March 2026

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

1. Decision of the ZEvA Commission (10 March 2026)

ZEKO 10.03.2026

TOP 4.01

The ZEvA Commission follows the experts' report and recommendations and acknowledges the university's response to the accreditation report of 22 January 2026.

The ZEvA Commission decides to accredit the following degree programme offered by Kyiv School of Economics without conditions for a period of six years:

- *Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction (Master)*

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. Central Findings and Final Vote of the Expert Panel

2.1 Central Findings of the Experts: Executive Summary

The experts have gained a positive overall impression of the Kyiv School of Economics (hereinafter called “KSE”). The Master’s programme Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction fits in well with the strategy of KSE to provide future skills that are required to meet the labour market needs. The expert panel finds that this study programme meets the criteria for an international accreditation very well.

The experts are positively impressed that this study programme after having been launched as late as 2023 has gained a positive reputation among students and external stakeholder already.

KSE has compared different nation and international programmes in order to find this programme’s specific learning goals in a deep understanding of the Ukrainian context, interdisciplinary approach, an English-speaking environment and a closeness to economic and management competencies that are the original strength of KSE. The experts encourage KSE to further develop this study programme and to shape learning outcomes and a graduate profile that suites best the needs of Ukraine. The experts are convinced that in future “the world” can learn from this programme and its graduates.

The Master’s programme shows a consistent and plausible curricular structure. The experts are convinced that it provides a qualification at the desired level.

The internal quality assurance system of the university is already well developed. The experts praise that KSE has immediately from the very beginning after starting this programme begun to examine the quality of the study conditions. The experts encourage KSE to continue with the evaluation process and to continue to let students and stakeholder know about the adjustments that are made.

Students are generally well-supported in all academic and non-academic matters and value the KSE campus as an inspiring space for studying, working and living.

The experts do not see the necessity for any conditions.

The experts recommend some points that KSE should consider within the following accreditation period. The experts find that KSE should start to develop a future vision for this study programme. The experts are convinced that KSE could benefit from increasing the visibility of this study programme (especially in international context). KSE could, for instance, support the students’ wish for publishing the results of their study projects. Also, building up an alumni network should be considered from the first cohort of graduates. Furthermore, KSE could benefit from expanding its national and international network of partners (e.g. with a focus on European partners like universities, NGO’s, cities).

With regard to the contents of the curriculum KSE should strengthen topics like critical sustainability, climate change and social needs in the course contents. Additionally, notions of heritage should be added to the curriculum as well as aspects of (national, local) history strengthened. The experts could learn from the talks with students and partners that there is more to be gained in this direction.

2.2 Final Vote of the Experts

2.2.1 Recommendations:

- The experts recommend KSE to start now in 2025/2026 to consider about the future of this study programme. The question is how KSE would like to continue with this programme. In collaboration with students and faculty members there should be formed a vision for how this programme could look like in times of peace.
- The experts appreciate that critical sustainability climate change and social needs are part of the course contents already. These topics should, in the eyes of the experts, be strengthened and even more visible. Additionally, notions of heritage should be added to the curriculum as well as history and its meaning for urban studies and reconstruction; especially with a focus on local or national (city and planning) history.
- As the experts have understood the curriculum, KSE's focus for reconstruction in this study programme seems to be on the reconstruction of cities. KSE should enlarge the scope of partnerships, not only city councils, but partners from civil society in general. According to the experts' view KSE could benefit even more from its partnerships. KSE should reflect how partners for this programme can be found. Also, KSE should look for programme partners in different places, for example also in (Eastern) Europe. There are probably more willing collaborators from universities with similar programmes than KSE has found, so far.
- Since the study programme has a good reputation already KSE would benefit from increasing the visibility of the programme. The experts encourage KSE to make the study programme more known. Therefore, a good presentation of the study program in English at the website could be a start (like the curriculum for more information about the programme contents).
- The students are proud of the results of their study projects and the experts support their wish for getting help from KSE to publish these results.
- The experts advise KSE to invite graduates to an alumni network. It is much easier to set up an alumni network from the beginning of a programme than later on.

2.2.2 Conditions:

none

2.2.3 Recommendation to the ZEvA Commission:

The expert group recommends the accreditation of the Master's programme in *Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction* for the duration of six years without any conditions.

II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

1. Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure

The Ukrainian Government shapes and implements higher education policy and development programs, issues regulatory legal acts on higher education, establishes admission rules for higher education seekers, and ensures compliance with higher education legislation.

The National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA) establishes criteria in Ukraine for evaluating the quality of educational activities and analyses the quality of educational activities of higher education institutions; conducts accreditation of study programmes and post-accreditation monitoring; inputs information into the Unified State Electronic Database on Education regarding certificates (official decisions) on the accreditation of study programs issued by foreign accreditation agencies.

In April 2025, KSE commissioned the Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency Hanover (ZEVA) with the external quality assessment and international accreditation of its in 2023 launched Master`s programme *Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction*. For this purpose, the agency assembled a panel of four experts from inside and outside academia, including a student expert.

The assessment was conducted according to the criteria laid out 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).

This report is based on the experts’ desktop validation of the university’s self-report and on the outcomes of the talks with faculty, staff and students of KSE on September 30th, 2025. Due to the current traveling restrictions, the talks had to be conducted online. In order to give the experts an impression of the general facilities on the KSE campus in Kiev, the university produced a 15-minute guided video tour as a supplement to the self-report.

The accreditation report serves as a basis for the ZEVA Commission to decide on the accreditation of the study programme, and as a source of information for the Ukrainian authorities and the general public as regards the quality and the accreditation status of the programme.

2. Profile and Mission of the University

KSE is a private institution that has its roots in the establishment of a Master's programme in Economics, taught in English, in 1996. This program was launched by the Economic Education and Research Consortium (EERC) and the Eurasia Foundation at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. EERC's mission was to enhance economic education and research capacity in post-socialist countries.

In 2006, the Master's program in Economics evolved further when EERC left Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and became an independent institution now known as the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE). Since then, KSE has expanded into a group of companies involved in educational, scientific, and analytical activities while actively contributing to Ukraine's higher education system and society.

Apart from the university, the Kyiv School of Economics now comprises the KSE Institute (a research institution and think tank), as well as the KSE Foundation which financially supports the university's educational endeavours by securing grants and donations which foster the development of the university's infrastructure and create new opportunities for students and faculty.

Initially positioned as a hub for economic education and research in Ukraine, the university's first programmes were focused on economics, specifically Economic Analysis and Business and Financial Economics. To complement these, a Master's program in "Public Policy and Governance" was also introduced. Since 2021, KSE has launched a wide range of new study programmes on undergraduate level, like for example programmes in Psychology, Law, Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Applied Mathematics and Software Engineering.

As a response to the challenges faced by Ukraine and in order to prepare a strong workforce for post-war reconstruction, new Master's programmes in Memory Studies and Public History, and Social Psychology were introduced and also the Master's programme *Urban Development and Post-War Reconstruction* that is to be accredited in this procedure. Additionally, in 2024, the University established an Engineering School and introduced two new Master's programmes in the field of technology and engineering. In 2024 the first Ph.D. programmes in Economics, History and Archaeology, Sociology, Political Science, Computer Science, Mathematics and Public Management and Administration at KSE were introduced.

All in all, KSE currently, as of August 2025, counts approximately 1000 undergraduate students and around 277 Master's students. KSE is expecting around 400 new students to the master's degree and about 200 PhD. All programmes show a strong international profile: all Bachelor's programmes are taught in English from the second year onwards, and some of the Master's programmes are taught in English only from the start. The university collaborates with various partner universities in Europe, Canada and the USA, particularly with the University of Houston.

KSE research activities focus strongly on the field of Economics, as well as Sociology and Political Science. Because of the war situation this new MA programme appears to be an organic step for KSE on the path of following its mission.

3. Assessment of the Study Programme

3.1 Brief Outline of the Study Programme

The study programme *Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction* is designed at master level of the National Qualifications Framework of Ukraine. Upon graduation, students receive a Master's degree.

The programme is directed at experienced graduates and professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds who would like to receive further university education in the speciality. Applicants for the Master's degree are typically pursuing their studies directly after completing their Bachelor's degree. However, KSE states that it is common for students who already have a Master's degree and professional experience to pursue a Master's degree in another field. Such practices are observed in the educational programmes at KSE, where working professionals seek new knowledge, additional skills, or retraining. KSE describes that the cohort of applicants to the USPR study programme was mainly applied for by people who already had master degree, and that they wish to improve their knowledge in special field for career growing.

The programme enrolled 34 students in 2023 (13 female students), 45 students in 2024 (22 female), 21 students in 2025 (17 female). There are 18 graduates from this programme in 2025. The drop-out rate was 6 students in 2024 and also 6 students in 2025.

3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the study programme (which KSE abbreviates with "PLO", i.e. programme's learning outcomes) are laid out in the introductory chapter to the course catalogue. It contains an outline of the central aims, goals and contents of the programme, as well as the most important methods of teaching and assessment applied.

In addition to that, the intended learning outcomes are listed in the Diploma Supplement that is issued upon graduation.

The KSE website does not describe the PLOs or the programme profile in detail, but provides a survey of the curriculum for more information about the programme contents which is given in Ukrainian only. KSE gives the programme's learning outcomes in detail in the self-report as follows (see pages 54 and 55):

- PLO 1. Critically evaluate, select, and apply appropriate scientific, methodological, and analytical tools for effective decision-making and management under uncertain and unpredictable conditions.*
- PLO 2. Identify and analyze organizational problems; justify and apply effective methods for their resolution.*
- PLO 3. Design and implement effective organizational management systems in accordance with modern managerial approaches.*
- PLO 4. Justify, initiate, and manage projects; generate and develop entrepreneurial ideas in the context of sustainable development.*

- PLO 5. Plan organizational activities from both strategic and tactical perspectives to ensure the achievement of institutional goals.*
- PLO 6. Demonstrate the ability to make, justify, and implement managerial decisions in complex and unpredictable environments, in compliance with current legislation, ethical norms, and principles of social responsibility.*
- PLO 7. Organize and maintain effective communication within organizational teams, across professional groups, and in multicultural and international contexts.*
- PLO 8. Effectively use specialized software and information systems for solving management-related tasks.*
- PLO 9. Communicate confidently in professional and academic contexts in national and foreign languages.*
- PLO 10. Demonstrate leadership and teamwork competencies; effectively interact with individuals and groups to influence behaviour to resolve professional tasks.*
- PLO 11. Manage personal professional development and demonstrate effective time management skills.*
- PLO 12. Delegate authority and competently lead an organization or its structural units.*
- PLO 13. Plan and manage organisational units' informational, methodological, material, financial, and human resources support.*

All these general learning outcomes, which are according to KSE's self-report defined by the standard for the study area and which the program must ensure in accordance with national legislation, are conditionally grouped into several comprehensive groups:

- The ability to design and manage effective organizational systems
- Strategic and tactical planning skills
- Project development and implementation
- Critical thinking and decision-making under uncertainty
- Leadership, teamwork, and communication in multidisciplinary and international settings
- Use of data, digital tools, and specialized software for decision-making
- Continuous professional and personal development

Distinctive programme-specific learning outcomes are designed to meet the needs of the urban recovery and regeneration in Ukraine as well as reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the programme, and include following PLOs:

- PLO 14. Develop models and strategies for post-war reconstruction of cities or settlements based on a comprehensive audit of local resources and expenditures.*
- PLO 15. Plan, organize, coordinate, and adjust Ukraine's urban and rural reconstruction programs at various territorial levels.*
- PLO 16. Build and coordinate interdisciplinary teams to implement post-war recovery projects.*
- PLO 17. Define strategic objectives and tactical tasks within the framework of urban settlement reconstruction.*
- PLO 18. Cooperate with domestic and international donors to support the sustainable development*

of Ukrainian urban areas.

PLO 19. Use digital platforms to identify and mobilise resources necessary for the recovery project implementation.

PLO 20. Commission and evaluate applied research relevant to the planning and implementing urban development initiatives

In addition to the list of learning outcomes, the programme's aims and profile are described in other words in the introductory chapter to the course catalogue (see Appendix 15 to KSE's self-report).

According to this synopsis, the program aims to *“To train skilled and proactive professionals who can plan, coordinate, implement, and monitor projects in urban settings, especially in the context of rebuilding Ukrainian cities while dealing with Russian aggression; To act as experts on Ukraine's recovery and urban development in international contexts; To conduct audits of resources in war-affected areas; To establish and effectively manage interdisciplinary teams for urban projects; To critically reflect on social reality; To analyze complex social problems and propose solutions based on the analysis of data, environments, and contexts; To operate in conditions of uncertainty; To establish communication with communities and implement recovery projects in the interests of local and urban populations.*

An important component of the programme is updating the skills of specialists in related fields (economics, history, spatial planning, management, urban anthropology) in line with the development challenges facing Ukrainian cities in the second half of the 21st century.”

3.2.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts consider that the intended learning outcomes and competences of the study programme Urban Studies and Post-war reconstruction are clearly and comprehensively described and are made transparent to the students. The rationale for launching the study programme and the general programme's profile become sufficiently clear in the description of the aims and intended learning outcomes.

The experts confirm that the descriptions of the PLOs are in line with the master level as stipulated in the Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area and with Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework. KSE has described these in detail in its self-report (see pages 56 and 57). Knowledge acquisition, application of knowledge/transferable skills, problem solving skills, communicative skills and general personal development are all recognisable elements of the PLOs, just as the ability to take on leadership roles and to take decisions in complex, multidisciplinary contexts and situations.

The fields of employment for graduates mentioned in the programme profile seem plausible to the experts and were supported in the talks with some external stakeholders of the study programme (partners/employers) during the site visit.

The experts recommend KSE to start now in 2025/2026 to consider about the future of this study programme. The question is how KSE would like to continue with this programme. In collaboration with students and faculty members there should be formed a vision for how this programme could

look like after in future times of peace, for instance whether the title of the programme probably should be adjusted then.

3.3 Concept and Structure of the Study Programme

3.3.1 Curricular Structure

The programme comprises 90 ECTS credits which are obtained within the period of one year and ten months. The study programme is divided into trimesters. The calculated student workload for each academic year is 60 ECTS credits, with one credit equalling an average of 30 academic hours (see self-report page 21).

The individual course units comprise between one and a maximum of seven ECTS credits each.

Credits are awarded based on students' successful completion of course objectives and learning outcomes (see self-report page 57).

The programme has according to KSE's self-report (see page 59) a logical sequence, starting from basic core courses to more specialized ones.

The mandatory part of the programme consists of courses in different areas of Economics, Heritage Studies and Sociology as well as courses from other educational disciplines. Part of the mandatory courses is an internship and a master's thesis.

The study programme is completed by elective classes which give students a choice between several options. Students can choose elective courses from the entire course pool of the university according to their individual interests. However, 17 out of 24 elective classes need to be related to the core discipline of the programme.

In order to be admitted to the programme, applicants need at least to have completed their Bachelor's degree. KSE informs that some of the students already have a Master's degree and wish to seek additionally a Master's degree in the field of Urban Studies, which is possible, too. Applicants need to write a motivation letter why they wish to study this programme. Further information about the admission rules is given by KSE on its website. An English language certificate is not required. However, KSE recommends at least a B2 level of English, since a lot of English-language literature is used and some courses are taught by foreign teachers in English (see KSE's website).

3.3.2 Course Catalogue

KSE has submitted a course catalogue for the study programme as an appendix to the self-report. The course catalogue includes syllabi for all course units, for the internship and the Master's thesis. The syllabi include all information as recommended in the ECTS Users' Guide, as, for instance, detailed descriptions of contents, aims and intended learning outcomes, the student workload and number of credits awarded, course prerequisites, the learning activities and methods of teaching and assessment as well as lists of recommended reading.

The syllabi for the internships outlines the basic requirements as regards, prerequisites, the contents,

course aim and learning outcomes, as well as the procedure of organizing an internship. The external practice can be hosted by

- state bodies and their structural subdivisions (including state-owned enterprises and directorates);
- public administration bodies;
- advisory bodies and supervisory boards under the bodies;
- state authorities;
- local self-government bodies;
- public organisations;
- international organisations;
- educational institutions
- healthcare institutions;
- reform offices.

Students can also participate in an internal practice within Kyiv School of Economics units.

The mandatory courses can be seen from the following table which is taken from the course catalogue as an appendix 15 to KSE’s self-report:

| <i>No</i> | <i>Mandatory course</i> | <i>Number of ECTS credits</i> |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|
| MC.01 | Introduction to Urban Studies | 1 |
| MC.02 | Social Life of Infrastructure | 4 |
| MC.03 | Microeconomics | 3 |
| MC.04 | Urban Economics | 5 |
| MC.05 | Land Resources&Participatory Management | 4 |
| MC.06 | Urban History | 3 |
| MC.07 | Urban Studies. Critical Theory | 5 |
| MC.08 | Project management for recovery | 4 |
| MC.09 | Qualitative research methods for Urban Planning | 3 |
| MC.10 | Urban Data Science and quantitative methods | 3 |
| MC.11 | Community-led Recovery | 3 |
| MC.12 | Urban Anthropology | 4 |
| MC.13 | Urban Planning Practice | 7 |
| | Internship | |
| INT 1 | Internship I | 5 |
| | Final assessment | |
| FA 1 | Master’s Thesis | 12 |
| | <i>The total amount of credits for the mandatory courses, ECTS</i> | 66 |

In addition to the mandatory courses students choose elective courses totalling 24 ECTS credits, including at least 17 ECTS credits from the elective courses of the study programme as follows (3 ECTS credits each):

EC 1 English

- EC 2 Urban Demography & Migrations
- EC 3 Labour Economics
- EC 4 Urban Finances
- EC 5 Transportation Policy and Logistics
- EC 6 Heritage Studies
- EC 7 Urban Security
- EC 8 Urban Utilities Management
- EC 9 Urban Ecology and Sustainable development
- EC 10 Legal Aspects of Urban Development
- EC 11 Introduction to GIS for Urban Studies
- EC 12 Anthropology of Development
- EC 13 R for Social&Human Sciences
- EC 14 Urban Marketing&Branding
- EC 15 Intermunicipal Cooperation
- EC 16 Urban Regeneration
- EC 17 Class for Dreams: Future Cities
- EC 18 Urban communities&engagement
- EC 19 Housing: Economic and Social Dimensions
- EC 20 The South in the History of Ukraine: Colonisation and Urban Settlements
- EC 21 3D Modeling and Graphics Software for Urban Design
- EC 22 The Canon and the Context: Interventions into the History of Architecture
- EC 23 Business Fundamentals
- EC 24 Entrepreneurship mindset
- EC 25 Urbanization and Public Health: Designing Cities for Well-being

3.3.3 Internationalisation, Recognition and Mobility

Internationalisation of Higher Education is supported by the law of Ukraine “On higher Education (see self-report page 22) and is a key priority at KSE (see self-report page 34).

Like all programmes of KSE, the programme in Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction shows a strong international profile, starting with the policy of teaching many courses in English. English is according to KSE’s Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure (see Appendix 4 to the self-report, 7.7.) regarded as the global language of science and education (lingua franca), “and therefore, KSE students and alumni must be proficient in English at a level sufficient for study and professional communication”.

Academic mobility is generally highly encouraged by the university, even though of course significantly impeded by the current conditions.

Internships may also be absolved at international companies or organizations, opening up another “mobility window” in the curriculum.

KSE offers various opportunities for student mobility by collaborating with companies and partner

universities in Ukraine and abroad and by participating in exchange programmes like Erasmus+. In Appendices 18 and 19 to its self-report KSE lists partner companies and universities with signed Cooperation Agreements. There are also listed KSE's joint international research projects.

KSE enables academic mobility by ensuring that credits earned can be transferred or recognized by other institutions within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). KSE has laid down its regulations for the recognition of learning outcomes in Part 4 of its general Educational Process Guidelines. KSE may recognize learning outcomes achieved in formal education or in non-formal settings. The Academic Process Guidelines (see Appendix 5 to the self-report, 4.2. General rules of recognition) explicitly stipulate that the recognition procedure is based on the principles set out in the Lisbon Recognition Convention.¹ If, during the review, the academic director finds that there are no learning outcomes that can be recognized, he/she draws up a reasoned conclusion on the refusal. In case an application for recognition is denied, the applicant has a right to appeal.

In principle, KSE provides a Diploma Supplement upon graduation which is based on the general standard template used in the European Higher Education Area. A Sample Diploma Supplements for the programme was disclosed to the experts as an appendix 17 to KSE's self-report.

3.3.4 Experts' Appraisal

The experts have come to the overall conclusion that the study programme shows a consistent and plausible curricular structure.

The course syllabi are regarded as fully satisfactory in their current form. The experts appreciate that critical sustainability, climate change and social needs are part of the course contents already. These topics could, in the eyes of the experts, even be strengthened and more visible. Additionally, notions of (national) heritage should be added to the curriculum as well as aspects of (local) history strengthened. The experts could learn from the talks with students and partners that there is more to be gained in this direction. The experts got the impression that some external partners would gladly add to the programme with some ideas.

All in all, the experts find that there is a good balance between theory and professional practice in this study programme.

Although the list of places that can host the students' external practice show differently, the experts got the impression, that KSE's focus for reconstruction seems to be so far mainly on the reconstruction of cities. KSE should encourage students to choose out of the scope of partnerships, not only city councils, but partners from civil society in general. KSE should enlarge the partnerships for this study programme. According to the experts view KSE could benefit even more from its partnerships. KSE should reflect how partners can be found. Also, KSE could look for programme partners in different places, for example also in Eastern Europe. The expert panel thinks that there are probably more

¹ That KSE is also bound to restrictive national recognition rules concerning documents from the Russian-occupied areas of the Ukraine goes without saying and is nothing that KSE can change.

willing collaborators from (European) universities with similar programmes than KSE has found, so far.

By interviewing the students of the programme in English, the experts could convince themselves of their very good command of the English language.

The experts find that the name of the study programme Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstructions fits to the programme today.

Because of the strong international orientation of the programme the students have sufficient opportunities for gaining international experience in the context of study periods or internships abroad. In proportion to the number of students the option of internship placements abroad does not seem to be taken by too many students, which may be due to the present situation in Ukraine.

KSE has had a strong international focus from the beginning, and internationalization is an important part of its current development strategy. A main element of this strategy is to ensure international standards by external quality assessment and international accreditation. The experts encourage KSE to enlarge the number of international partner universities for this programme and therefore not just focussing on cooperation to the United States but also find partners in Europe (e.g. universities, NGOs...).

The experts find that KSE's rules for recognition of learning outcomes and competences and for mobility are in line with the Lisbon Convention and the general European standards. Current territorial restrictions for the recognition of documents within the Ukraine are given from Ukrainian national legislation and these are beyond KSE's control.

3.4 Teaching Faculty

KSE has provided comprehensive information on the teaching faculty involved in the study programme, including the CVs of the core teaching staff (see Appendix 16 of KSE's self-report).

Additional information was given on KSE's policy for staff recruitment, staff development and growth plan (see self-report page 37, 79/80 and Appendix 6 "KSE Faculty Hiring Policy"). Faculty development policy at the Kyiv School of Economics is a comprehensive strategy aimed at continuous improvement of faculty qualifications and professional growth.

There can be seen 16 names on the list of teaching faculty and staff. There is one professor, nine associate professors, five lecturers/instructors and one visiting professor from Germany.

Also, the experts got the opportunity to talk to the Academic Director of the programme and many other members of faculty in the course of the online talks.

The university continuously encourages the teaching staff to engage in international exchange programmes, internships, and research projects. All university faculty members receive information about available professional development programs, research projects, internships, and academic exchanges they can participate in (see self-report page 38).

KSE organizes short-term training programs, public lectures, discussions, and workshops with invited lecturers. June-August 2025 the lecturers could take part in the Summer School for KSE teachers,

where they learned in more detail about teaching methods, maintaining regulatory documentation, and using the capabilities of artificial intelligence, which contributes to the educational process.

For the onboarding of new teaching faculty, the university has established an introductory course on the basics of teaching at KSE. During this course, lecturers understand the approaches to creating a course syllabus, get acquainted with different teaching methods, explore communication styles and interaction patterns with different departments, managers, coordinators, and students at KSE.

KSE's faculty hiring policy is grounded in principles of openness, transparency, equality and impartiality to attract the most qualified and motivated staff. The recruitment process also involves a trial lecture to get an impression of the applicants' teaching skills.

3.4.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts can see that the management team of KSE is agile, strong, and committed to the university and its programmes. They are convinced that KSE has appointed qualified teaching faculty for the programme Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction. All lecturers hold appropriate academic qualifications as well as the necessary level of English that is required for this programme. The experts commend the onboarding course for new lecturers as very good practice. They also praise the

KSE names as a weakness of the programme that "Teaching staff is still fluid, and administration faces serious difficulties finding faculty with proper academic and research background and proper qualifications, backed by practical experience." (see self-report page 75). The experts appreciate that KSE is aware of this risk. However, this problem of staff shortage seems to be a general problem for Ukrainian universities because of the country's present situation. During the online talks, this topic of any criticism by students or teaching staff. KSE seems to have the sufficient number of permanent employees for this study programme with maybe can reduce the risk of fluctuation and thus contribute to a consistent quality of teaching.

In the course of the online talks, the experts have also gained the impression that the programme benefits from a highly motivated team in the administration and organisation departments, thereby supporting the smooth functioning of the programme. The seemingly open communication between students and KSE staff adds to the positive overall impression of the experts.

3.5 Infrastructure, Resources and Student Support

3.5.1 General Infrastructure on Campus

KSE moved to a new campus in Kyiv in 2021 in order to create a modern learning environment for a growing number of students. The university has described the facilities on campus in its self-report (see page 38, 39) and has provided a guided video tour specifically for the expert panel.

The university campus features modern classrooms equipped with multimedia tools, laptops, and video cameras for various educational purposes. There are several study rooms for independent learning, including one with freely accessible computer equipment, all of which are available to students at any time. Additionally, each floor of the University is equipped with multifunctional devices

for educational use.

In order to provide maximum safety for students, several classrooms were set up in underground shelters. A modern event hall is available for students to organize initiatives and events. The campus also features recreational spaces for students on various floors for active relaxation, as well as meeting spaces for student clubs and self-government activities. For students and faculty with children KSE provides a Child-care Room.

To support the educational process and virtual communication with students, KSE has established a corporate messenger, the Moodle platform, KSE HUB, and personal student accounts. On the Moodle platform, students get access to information about each course, including syllabi, lecture notes, electronic learning materials, and video recordings of classes. These resources, created by faculty members, are available for independent study, evaluation, and feedback.

Students also have free access to two key electronic databases JSTOR and APA PsycNet.

3.5.2 Student Advice and Support Services

As mentioned above, each student has an electronic personal learning account, which serves as a gateway to information services that offer quick and convenient access to personalized information about their studies and electronic document management. The personal account includes services such as class schedules, study group details, academic records, individual learning paths, diploma supplements, and study contracts (see self-report page 40). Virtual communication resources include the SLACK, corporate email, which provide students with information about their studies, KSE's events, and other opportunities within the KSE community.

The KSE students are offered a wide spectrum of support and advisory services. In all non-academic matters, they may turn to the central Study Support Office (SSO). The SSO is responsible for coordinating core processes throughout the student life cycle (student enrolment, assessment, graduation and recognition). Also, the SSO takes care of central organizational processes like the scheduling of classes or the moderation of the Moodle learning platform.

In international affairs the Study Programme Coordinator provides consultative and coordinating support to students on matters of international academic mobility, formulates proposals for academic exchange programs and supports the selection process of candidates for participation in these programmes and the preparation of relevant documents (see self-report page 41).

The staff of the Student Development and Alumni Relations Office support students in matters of integration, social and psychological well-being and professional development. This includes assisting students in obtaining academic grants and in finding accommodation.

The Student Development and Alumni Relations office can monitor students' needs for professional development and organizes events to enhance their career opportunities. The first graduates are going to finish studies this programme this year (2025). In other study programmes the team from the Student Development and Alumni Relations office is responsible for maintaining constant contact with alumni, for monitoring their career development and involving them in various initiatives that

contribute to the university's further development. Therefore, it is to be expected that KSE will establish similar processes for this new study programme, too.

KSE offers confidential psychological counselling to all students free of charge. Counselling can be conducted both online and offline, depending on the preferences of the person asking for the service (see self-report page 42).

In all questions concerning their academic studies, students can turn to their lecturers or to the Academic Directors of their programmes. Academic Directors are directly responsible for coordinating the study program in which the student is enrolled. They ensure its high-quality implementation and facilitate communication between students and faculty members of the programme to address issues related to the educational process (see self-report page 41).

3.5.3 **Equal Opportunities**

As an equal opportunity KSE ensures that all staff engagement and promotion decisions are based solely on individual qualifications and merit, without regard to any protected characteristic (see self-report page 43). KSE has developed and published a *Gender Equality Plan* which was disclosed to the experts as part of the self-report (appendix 7). This strategic document covers a wide spectrum of thematic areas relevant for creating gender equality, as e.g. creating flexible working conditions for staff, incorporating gender perspectives into decision-making processes, staff recruitment and staff development, as well as accounting for aspects of gender in research and the design of curricula. Moreover, the plan includes all participants of the educational process. As part of the policy KSE also commits itself to collecting relevant data and to generating regular progress reports in order to monitor the university's progress in achieving its gender equality goals.

KSE is committed to providing equal learning and development opportunities for students with special needs by creating an inclusive environment and offering personalized study plans to support their specific requirements.

As formally stipulated in KSE's Academic Process Guidelines (see Appendix 5), students with special educational needs who require adjustments to the educational process can submit a request to the Study Support Office. The request is then decided upon by the First Vice-Rector, together with the dean of the faculty and the Academic Director.

The special Childcare room on the KSE campus was already mentioned. Students who are taking care of small children or other family members or are fulfilling duties for the Ukraine can be granted temporary academic leave.

3.5.4 **Experts' Appraisal**

Based on the video material and the additional information provided by KSE in its self-report as well as during the online talks the experts conclude that KSE provides very good conditions for studying, working and living on its modern campus. KSE works hard on giving students and staff a safe environment, both physically and mentally. The building has comfortable classrooms with shelters and generators, so regardless of circumstances, students will be able to continue learning. KSE employs

three psychologists. Students and staff get psychological support if they wish for it. This was also confirmed by the lecturers and students during the online talks.

KSE has begun to renovate the campus and moreover, also to build a new campus. Students of the study programme Urban Studies and Post-war Reconstruction were involved in planning the extended learning environment.

Students are generally enabled and supported very well by their lecturers and by the administrative staff of KSE. The experts noticed that lecturers, administration and students seem to be in close communication with each other.

The experts appreciate that KSE has committed itself to a policy of ensuring diversity and equal opportunities at all levels. This also includes tending to student's special needs during the teaching process.

Understandably, KSE wishes to increase the number of students in this programme that started in 2023. KSE should ensure that the benefit students gain from small learning groups and the possibility of individual support is maintained in spite of the higher number of students.

3.6 Student Learning and Assessment

The didactic approach taken by KSE is described in detail in the university's self-report (page 67 f.). The study courses are organized in a student-centred way that ensures a consistent competence-based approach from basic to more complex knowledge. The focus is on the formation and development of specific theoretical and practical competences and skills that are necessary for professional activities in the field of management in the context of urban developments. Therefore, KSE emphasises to *"foster deep and contextualised learning, practical competence, and professional autonomy as well as ability to work in interdisciplinary team."*

KSE takes care to apply active learning methods that are problem-based and case-driven learning. KSE gives in the self-report examples for courses like Urban Economics, Microeconomics, and Land Resources & Participatory Management.

KSE furthermore underlines project-based learning as a second dominant methodology and gives course examples like Urban Planning Practice, Community-Led Recovery, and Project Management.

The didactic concept is added by students work in interdisciplinary teams "to co-design interventions, conduct stakeholder interviews, and present findings to simulated or real decision-makers.

There are other courses like Urban Anthropology, Critical Theory for Urban Studies and The Social Life of Infrastructure, and Urban History, where students learn in discussion-led seminars, critical reading, and reflective writing.

KSE gives the students of this master programme the experience of promoting a strong sense of responsibility and autonomy learning by reflective methods in order to prepare them for leadership roles in civic and community-driven recovery efforts.

The assessments also add to the students' learning. In order to follow the students' educational

achievements, KSE combines ongoing with final summative evaluations, *ensuring that students are evaluated not only on end results but also on the process of learning and skill acquisition* (selfreport, page 69). By presenting their work in *oral presentations or jury-style critiques*, they simulate professional environments and strengthen their competences in *public speaking, negotiation and argumentation*. In qualitative research-focused courses assessment is taking place through *fieldwork-based reports, and interview-based research exercises*.

Internships are usually assessed by means of self-reports in which students reflect on their professional development and the knowledge and skills they acquired in the course of the internship. According to the syllabus for the internship students are given feedback from the organisational mentor for their individual task.

3.6.1 **Experts' Appraisal**

The experts commend KSE on the large variety of teaching and assessment methods and the didactic concept for a student-centred teaching and learning in this programme which they consider well in line with the intended learning outcomes.

Although the students were not complaining during the online site-visit the experts got the impression that the workload induced by the numerous and continuous assessment events appears to be hard to manage. The experts recommend KSE to check whether the workload could maybe be too high and whether that could be the reason for the high drop-out rate.

3.7 **Quality Assurance**

KSE has established an internal quality assurance system as a set of principles, cyclical and sequential procedures and measures which ensure the effectiveness of educational and administrative processes that directly affect the quality of study programmes and the achievement of student learning outcomes. KSE's quality assurance procedures are formally regulated in a policy which was included in the self-report, along with sample questionnaires for course evaluation and other regular surveys (see appendix 4).

KSE describes the quality system in detail in its self-report (see page 28, 29):

In the analysis/checking stage, the evaluation of results and process monitoring are conducted to determine the conformity of actual results to the established goals and expectations. At KSE, this includes:

- *Conducting regular student surveys;*
- *Analysing student success and achievement result (Average grade point average (GPA), % of unsatisfactory grades, dynamics of unsatisfactory grades in a particular course, number of students with GPA 91+, % of dropouts after a particular semester);*
- *Maintaining feedback from alumni, and other stakeholders regarding the content of education and University activities.*

For each study programme, KSE appoints an Academic Director who has the main responsibility for the quality assurance and enhancement of the programme. The outcomes of course evaluation and alumni surveys as well as indicators of student performance are made accessible to the Academic Directors, who analyse the data and decide upon measures for improvement if necessary. This may include updating the curriculum, adjusting the distribution of student workload or modifying teaching and assessment methods.

The Academic Directors are also responsible for ensuring the programme's staff resources, for evaluating the performance of the teaching staff and for generating the course syllabi. Furthermore, they exchange with students in the context of oral feedback sessions and focus group meetings.

In 6.5.2 of the Quality assurance policy and procedures (appendix 4) it says: *The Academic Director may provide recommendations for improving the work of the faculty member and offer appropriate tools. The faculty member takes into account the recommendations provided by the Academic Director, who then analyses the implementation of these recommendations.*

The outcomes of surveys that relate to university-wide issues beyond the programme level are analysed by the KSE leadership board and the heads of the relevant administrative departments.

Strict adherence to the principle of academic integrity is an important part of KSE's quality assurance policy, resulting in a number of measures as e.g. compulsory instruction of students on academic integrity issues or plagiarism checks. KSE has also set up a separate policy on Academic Integrity and includes explicit references to this topic in all course syllabi.

3.7.1 Experts' Appraisal

The expert find that KSE takes a professional and comprehensive approach to quality assurance, supported by state-of-the art monitoring tools which allow for in-depth analyses.

The regular satisfaction surveys conducted by the university address the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders and cover a wide spectrum of aspects impacting the quality of teaching and learning.

The quality system and loops seem to work well. The online talks with students and teaching staff confirmed that improvement measures are taken in response to stakeholder feedback or low student performance, leading to closed PDCA cycles.

3.8 Transparency and Public Information

KSE proposes an online student handbook for all its study programmes, each containing detailed course syllabi and an introductory summary of the programme profile and also to help students quickly familiarize themselves with the structure and key personnel of KSE (see self-report page 40). All course catalogues are available to the students via the Moodle platform.

The KSE website contains basic information in Ukrainian and (partly) in English on all Bachelor and Master programmes offered by the university. The profile and thematic focus of the programme is outlined in a few sentences, and a survey of the curriculum is available in Ukrainian for download.

Faculty and students can refer to the Academic Process Guidelines for all university-wide regulations regarding the educational process, student assessment, graduation and recognition issues.

3.8.1 **Experts' Appraisal**

From the talks with different groups at KSE the experts are convinced that the stakeholders that are involved in the teaching and learning processes at KSE are well informed and that communication in general works well.

Since the study programme has a good reputation already KSE would benefit from increasing the visibility of the programme. The experts recommend that KSE should try to enhance a wider public visibility of this programme, for example on its website by presenting the courses and their intended learning outcomes and the skill level in more detail. In the experts' opinion this would even help students for means of their mobility.

From the talks with the programmes students the experts got to know that the students are proud of the results of their study project. Students from this study programme would wish for support for publishing these project results, a wish that the experts recommend KSE to support.

The experts advise KSE to invite graduates to an alumni network. In their experience it is much easier to set up an alumni network from the beginning of a study programme than later on.

Appendix

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

ZEVA received the statement of KSE to the report on 22 January 2026

KSE Response to the Report of ZEVA the expert panel *Urban Studies Post-war Reconstruction*

On behalf of the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), we sincerely appreciate the thorough evaluation and constructive recommendations in the accreditation report. Below, we outline our response to the key recommendations and the steps we plan to take to address them shortly.

1. Early consideration of the future development of the study programme starting from the 2025/2026 academic year (Chapters 2.2.1 and 3.2.1)

KSE fully shares the experts' view that a long-term vision is needed to further develop the study programme. The programme is gradually shifting from a primary focus on post-war recovery to addressing a broader range of complex national development challenges, including climate adaptation, urban and spatial planning, and social and economic transformations. Its overall structure and content are designed to prepare graduates capable of engaging with multifaceted transformational challenges facing Ukraine in the medium- and long-term perspective.

2. Strengthening the focus on sustainability, climate change, and social needs within the study programme content (Chapters 2.2.1 and 3.3.4)

KSE appreciates this recommendation. Issues related to sustainable development, climate change, and social needs are already integrated into the programme curriculum; however, some courses have temporarily attracted lower interest due to the different nature of the immediate challenges currently faced by Ukraine.

At the same time, we fully agree that aspects of climate adaptation warrant increased attention, as they are critically important for the country's long-term development and resilience and therefore require further strengthening. It is envisaged to expand and deepen these dimensions within the programme content, in particular by integrating topics on the impact of war on climate and the environment, and by introducing interdisciplinary approaches to resilience analysis. We are confident that such an evolution of the curriculum will enable students to develop a comprehensive understanding of future challenges and will further enhance the programme's alignment with European standards for sustainable development.

3. Strengthening the study of cultural heritage and national history (Chapter 2.2.1 and 3.3.4)

We are grateful to the experts for this valuable recommendation. As part of further developing the study programme, it is planned to strengthen the component on cultural heritage and national history. In particular, the programme proposes introducing a Heritage Management specialisation (sequence of electives) to develop students' systemic understanding of cultural heritage management in the context of post-war recovery, societal transformation, and European integration.

For the design and implementation of this minor, the programme plans to engage external experts and institutional partners, including the National Art Museum of Ukraine and ICCROM (through one of the teaching faculty members). This cooperation will enable the integration of both national and international experience in heritage preservation and management, while ensuring the interdisciplinary and practice-oriented nature of this component of the study programme.

4. To expansion of partnerships (Chapters 1.2.2 and 3.3.4)

In line with the recommendation to further expand partnerships, the University plans to systematically strengthen international cooperation with higher education institutions, professional associations, and global academic networks relevant to the study programme. KSE plans to expand its cooperation with foreign universities. In particular, existing academic collaboration with Durham University (UK) will be further developed. Newcastle University (UK) has been identified as a potentially strategic partner, and exploratory discussions on potential areas of cooperation have already been initiated. These partnerships are expected to support joint academic activities, exchange of expertise, and the international visibility of the programme. Also, KSE plans to engage in a recognition procedure through the Association of European Planning Schools (AESOP). This initiative is designed as a long-term strategic step aimed at strengthening the programme's international standing and integration into the European academic community of planning schools. The recognition will provide access to a broad network of around 150 European planning schools, international peer expertise, and enhanced opportunities for academic cooperation and benchmarking.

Following participation in the World Urban Forum (WUF12), KSE has committed to bringing a full institutional delegation to WUF13 in Baku, as well as coordinating the participation of other Ukrainian universities offering relevant programmes. Subject to available funding, KSE is considering hosting a dedicated institutional booth at WUF13, which would significantly enhance international recognition of the programme and expand its professional and academic network. One of the most tangible outcomes of participation in WUF12 was the establishment of initial contacts with The Bartlett Planning School (UCL). Building on these connections, KSE is currently exploring concrete formats for future cooperation, including joint academic initiatives, knowledge exchange, and potential collaborative projects.

5. To the enhancement of the international visibility of the study programme (Chapters 2.2.1 and 3.8.1)

We acknowledge the experts' well-reasoned recommendation to enhance the study programme's international visibility, which is essential to its positioning in the international academic environment. In particular, the University views the redesign of its website as an important dimension of further institutional development, as it will enable a more comprehensive and structured presentation of study programmes, including in English, with a clear emphasis on programme objectives, learning outcomes, opportunities for academic mobility, international partnerships, and the involvement of international faculty and external experts.

6. To support the publication of student projects (Chapters 3.8.1 and 2.2.1)

We highly value the experts' thoughtful recommendations to support the publication of student projects, which is essential both for strengthening students' research capacities and for enhancing the academic and societal visibility of the study programme.

In response to this recommendation, the University is considering relaunching the professional journal *City* (mics.org.ua) and reorienting it toward a more international editorial board and a broader target audience. One of the envisaged directions for the journal's development is the introduction of an annual special student issue dedicated to publishing the outcomes of students' coursework and research projects. In parallel, the University is developing partnerships with analytical and expert organisations, including Cedos (the *MistoSite* platform), NeUrban, and the *Algorithm of Action* initiative (*Misto Dii*), which will create additional opportunities for the public dissemination of students' academic and research outputs, the promotion of knowledge, and the increased visibility of the study programme within a broader professional and international context.

7. To the development of the study programme alumni community (Chapters 2.2.1 and 3.8.1)

We highly appreciate the experts' well-founded and timely recommendations regarding the establishment of an alumni network for the study programme, which is of strategic importance for strengthening the programme community, enhancing links with the professional environment, and increasing its international and societal visibility.

In response to this recommendation, the University has already conducted a design workshop to develop a shared vision and explore potential models for the programme's alumni community. The creation and institutionalisation of the alumni network are underway and are being approached as a gradual process that combines formal and informal modes of engagement. In particular, informal meetings with graduates are being supported, as they help maintain professional connections, exchange experience, involve alumni in the educational process, and build a sustainable community around the programme's values and mission.

8. Further monitoring of students' academic workload and the maintenance of small-sized study groups (Chapters 3.5.4)

KSE appreciates the experts' recommendation to maintain small-sized study groups, as this is a key factor in ensuring the quality of the educational process, fostering an individualised approach to learning, and enabling effective interaction between students and teaching staff.

In response to this recommendation, the University recognises the importance of this aspect and supports organising study groups with a limited number of students as an integral element of the programme's educational model. In addition, during the current academic year, individual meetings between the Academic Director and students have been introduced. These meetings serve, inter alia, as a tool for monitoring academic workload, academic progress, and the overall learning experience of students.

Best regards,

Tymofii Brik, PhD

Rector of the Kyiv School of Economics