

Evaluation Committee Report

Sports Study Programme Group

University of Tartu (UT)

Sports and Personal Services Study Programme Group

Tallinn University (TLU)

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1. Introduction

The aim of the assessment panel was the evaluation of the following five study programmes, three at Tallinn University (TU) and two at the University of Tartu:

- BA in Physical Education at Tallinn University
- BA in Recreation Management at Tallinn University
- MA in Recreation Management at Tallinn University
- BA in Physical Education and Sport at University of Tartu
- MA Physical Education and Sport at University of Tartu

The evaluation looked at each of the study programmes separately, but also at their similarities and differences, their relationships and the overall approach of the physical education and sport education system in Estonia. The following persons formed the assessment panel:

- Dr. Karen Petry (Chair), German Sport University, GER
- Prof. Hans Hoppeler, University of Bern, CH
- Prof. Susan Capel, Brunel University London, UK
- Prof. Jan te Kloetze, Chairman of the Foundation WICE-DSL, NL
- Toomas Tönise, Estonian Olympic Committee, Estonia
- Alexandra Raijmakers, University of Amsterdam (ESU Nomination), NL

After the preparation phase, the work of the assessment panel in Estonia started on Monday 20th October 2014 with an introduction to the Higher Education System as well as the assessment procedure by EKKA, the Estonian Quality assurance organisation for higher education. The members of the panel agreed the overall questions and areas to discuss with each group at the two universities, which were part of the assessment process. The distribution of tasks between the members of the assessment panel was then organised and the concrete schedule of the site visits agreed.

During the following two days (Tuesday and Wednesday) meetings were held at the University of Tartu, followed by the site visit to Tallinn University on Thursday and Friday. In all cases, the schedule for discussion on site for each of the various study programmes only allowed for short time slots to be available for panel members to exchange information, discuss conclusions and implications for further questions.

In both universities the discussions with the responsible vice rectors, deans and other persons responsible for the study programmes, the staff, the students and the representatives from the employment market (employees, employers and alumni) were very open and interesting and allowed for an exchange of ideas.

On Saturday 25th October, the panel held an all-day meeting, during which both the structure of the final report was agreed and findings of panel meetings were compiled in a first draft of the assessment report. This work was executed in a cooperative way and the members of the panel intensively discussed their individual views on the relevant topics.

1.1. Tasks of the Assessment panel

The overall task of the assessment panel comprised the evaluation of two study programme groups, first at the University of Tartu and then at Tallinn University. Before the site visits, all members of the panel exchanged their initial impressions about the written material provided and sent a short initial feedback to EKKA in order for the preparation phase to be informed by some initial areas identified as strengths and areas of improvement. The most important reports used for the preparation of the evaluation were the self-evaluation reports from both universities.

The assessment of the individual study programmes as well as writing the report after the visits obviously represented the major part of the work. In addition to a detailed look at each curriculum, the assessment panel discussed and identified possible areas for curriculum adaptation and development in light of identified changing needs and expectations of Estonian society as well as within the broader international community.

1.2. Study Programmes Findings Summary

Whilst the Bachelors and Masters programmes in both universities are strong and have served the needs of students and of Estonia well until now, they will not continue to do so in future without further development and change, particularly in light of the challenge posed by the demographic situation in Estonia and increasing opportunities in the fields of exercise, health and sport. The changes will require new tracks through the Bachelors and Masters programmes (e.g. Health and Exercise, Coaching, Outdoor Education/Management (Environment) and Tourism), a review of the number, focus and orientation of the electives modules to meet the needs of students in a changing society, as well as with regard to the resources available, a review of staffing needs in light of the wider focus of programmes, the number of students and the need to maximise the number of staff

engaged in research in the field, as well as maximising synergies between full time studies, cycle studies and open university programme to provide a range of study options for potential students.

Increasing the number of collaborative, interdisciplinary research activities would be beneficial in integrating staff new to research and also in increasing the potential impact of the research. Consideration should also be given to the entrance criteria for students onto programmes with a wider focus – particularly the percentage of entrance criteria given to sport performance. In order for such developments to be sustainable it is essential to maximise the use of available resources for the benefit of both universities; hence cooperation between the University of Tartu and Tallinn University – particularly for Masters level programmes, is needed. Such developments should be built on further cooperation by both universities (through teaching and research) with the Estonian Olympic Committee as well as with national sports federations and sports clubs. Consideration should also be given to cooperation with other relevant agencies/institutes/partners (e.g. laboratories, those providing programmes for health, elderly, and prevention programmes in physical outdoor activity).

Consideration should also be given to the international context, either by increasing the participation of international teaching staff or by more staff having experience outside Estonia, as well as increasing opportunities for students – both for Estonian students to study overseas and for international students to study in Estonia. This will require consideration of which programmes/modules should be delivered in English so that the needs of both Estonian and international students are met.

Further, consideration should be given to development of the PhD programme on which numbers currently are small.

2. Assessment Reports

2.1. Assessment Report of Tallinn University

2.1.1. Some characteristics of Tallinn University

Tallinn University is a young university, formed as a result of reorganisation less than 10 years ago of the pedagogical university and related institutes. The university has a young and dynamic leadership which is very well aware of the problems that Tallinn University faces, in particular problems related to the demographics of the country with an expected decrease in the number of students of university age (and hence of university admissions) of the order of >30% in the coming 5 years. It is anticipated this will pose serious financial and resource problems for the university. The awareness of the potential decrease in resources is well developed at all hierarchical levels of the university. The head of the Institute, the study directors and all teaching staff plan programmes, modules and undertake curriculum development with these decreasing resources in mind.

Being a young university with a strong background in pedagogy, Tallinn University has a strong commitment to an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning. The focus areas of the university are: Educational Innovation; Health and Sustainable Lifestyle; Digital Media; Cultural Development and Open Governance. The first two of these focus areas fall immediately within the realm of the BA programme in Physical Education and BA/MA programmes in Recreation Management. The three degrees are administered by the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport. The Institute consists of three departments: the Department of Health Sciences, the Department of Sports Sciences and Coaching and the Department of Leisure Sciences.

The Vice-Rector confirmed that the study programmes evaluated in this assessment enjoy extensive support from the leadership of the university. The BA in Physical Education is well established. Physical education and sport sciences are not classical research disciplines, however the study programmes are intrinsically inter-, cross- and multidisciplinary and hence are in line with the general direction of the university. The thrust of the university, which aims towards a more interdisciplinary approach and away from classical research area based studies, is well reflected in the BA programme in Physical Education as well as in the recreation management programmes. As this is a focus area of Tallinn University the programmes will receive continued support from the university.

2.2. Study programmes findings BA in Physical Education

2.2.1. Study programmes and study programmes development

The focus of the BA in Physical Education is currently directed towards two major goals: physical education teachers and coaches. The study goal of coaching is essentially reached by completion of the Bachelor's programme. A completed BA degree in Physical Education from Tallinn University is recognised by the Estonian Olympic Committee and a person with this certificate is eligible to apply for qualification as a coach in his or her area of sport expertise and can be employed by sports associations, clubs or similar.

The BA in Physical Education grants admission to an MA in Physical Education which is necessary to qualify as a physical education teacher. **This MA programme was not the subject of this assessment as it belongs to the Teacher Training and Educational Sciences study programme group.** The BA in Physical Education also grants admission to the MA in Recreation Management. This MA is also administered by the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport. It was assessed as part of this visit and is reported on below.

Admission to the BA in Physical Education is consistent with the scope of the curriculum and different from the BA in Recreation Management. The BA in Physical Education is the pre-requisite for the Masters in Physical Education and the Masters in Recreation Management. Whereas entry to the BA in Physical Education includes a vocational aptitude examination containing major elements of the physical education programme in comprehensive schools (athletics, sports/games, swimming and gymnastics), this is not the case for the BA in Recreation Management. For the BA in Recreation Management the entrance exam contains a Cooper running test and a swimming test, such that the elementary skills are tested as a prerequisite for a successful completion of the BA programme.

Strengths and areas of Improvement

The structure of the BA programme in Physical Education is very flexible. The core curriculum fixes only approximately 50% of the credits, leaving ample choice for students to acquire credits from electives. Students can therefore construct a "tailor made" curriculum appropriate to their own study goals as well as their personal preferences. This flexibility of curriculum construction is made possible by both the large number and diversity of electives that can be chosen. As subject areas chosen from other faculties are admissible as electives, this allows students almost complete freedom to develop their "dream curriculum". There are certain drawbacks to this approach of liberal curriculum construction, one of which is that some electives will only be chosen by very few students. This scatters resources and may not be sustainable in view of the impending demographic

changes. However, as currently available, the BA in Physical Education answers the needs of the students to be able to construct a highly flexible study programme comprising elements necessary for future employment but also leaving enough room to study subjects more related to personal development. It also answers the needs of society as it provides enough students with the skills required to become physical education teachers, coaches or “recreation managers”.

The academic staff is well aware of the changes currently happening worldwide with regard to physical education programmes and the development of sport sciences. As a result of these changes, in future programmes will need additional focus on both exercise and health orientations as the needs of an ageing society are increasingly asking for competence in areas related to exercise and health and not only in sport-related areas. This health orientation could ultimately lead to a Masters in Exercise and Health. The current BA programme in Physical Education has the necessary ingredients but lacks a track with more focus of health related aspects of physical activity, in particular with regard to lifelong physical activity and activity for an ageing population. This track would be in perfect agreement with the focus areas of Health and Sustainable Lifestyle at Tallinn University.

Recommendations

It is recommended to review critically the number, focus and orientation of the electives modules with regard to the resources available and the development of the needs of society.

It is suggested that thought should be given to maximising synergies between full time studies, cycle studies and the open university programme.

It is suggested that the creation of an exercise and health oriented track should be envisaged for the BA in Physical Education.

2.2.2. Resources

Strengths and areas for improvement

The physical infrastructure in which the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport as currently housed is nearly optimal. The lecture rooms are friendly, open and well equipped with the technical infrastructure that is necessary for modern teaching (i.e. computers, beamers etc.). Likewise, the infrastructure for practical exercise is at a very good level and is more than sufficient for the intended purposes. Some of the distances between practical activity spaces and lecture rooms are relatively

lengthy so that students reported that it is not always possible to reach the next lecture in time. It is anticipated that this situation may change in the future as the university intends to re-house the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport. **Care must be taken that any future move does not result in a deterioration of the current excellent situation.**

Teaching aids, access to textbooks and study material is generally very good to excellent. As Estonian society at large has pervasive use of IT-infrastructure, in particular the internet, the BA in Physical Education makes use of this IT- infrastructure as most study resources students need is readily available on the internet.

There are modern laboratory facilities available which are used extensively both for teaching and research. These laboratory facilities allow for kinesiological measurements, metabolic measurements and more complex biomechanical analyses including electromyography. All equipment is state of the art and would be welcome in any top class international laboratory. It may be noted as a drawback that the laboratory equipment and the direction of research is purely functional and mostly descriptive. Whilst this is adequate for the purpose of a BA in Physical Education, what is lacking are tools that would allow for muscle structure oriented research and teaching. It is thus not possible to make or analyse muscle biopsies, make structural muscle tissue analyses, perform biochemical and molecular techniques on muscle tissue. In discussion with research staff it was mentioned that the lack of a structural research approach is mainly due to the costs involved in structural, biochemical and molecular research. In order to strengthen the structural, biochemical and molecular underpinning of modern exercise science this lack could be compensated for through collaboration with relevant research institutions in Estonia that have these facilities available. Likewise, an exchange of expertise with regard to the fundamental sciences as well as the health sciences on the level of the teaching staff could profit the curriculum.

Recommendations

It is strongly recommended that care is taken with the planned relocation of the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport to maintain the high quality of the teaching and research infrastructure. With the planned relocation of the Institute of Health Sciences and Sport, links providing synergies with the health sciences could be advantageous.

It is suggested that collaborations with institutions providing access to the structural, biochemical and molecular underpinning of exercise science should be sought.

2.2.3. Teaching and learning

Strengths and areas for improvement

Modern teaching methods with frequent student-staff interactions and small group learning are generally observed. The teaching methods (theory vs. practical teaching) are appropriate and flexible. Students have sufficient access to teaching aids. Learning outcomes are adequately assessed and students can get the necessary individual feedback on performance. The assessment panel noted an inadequacy in the implementation of the compulsory electronic feedback system which requires students to grade each teaching module before he/she can register for the next module. This system thus guarantees adequate feedback often not obtained by non-compulsory feedback systems. However, as feedback is given by the students within their personal login-area, it follows that feedback can be traced back to individual students. One student remarked that she therefore does not give truthful feedback as the system does not respect her anonymity. On further enquiry it was noted that neither students nor teaching staff knew exactly who could potentially have access to the non-anonymous feedback data.

Recommendations

It is strongly recommended that the electronic feedback system be changed in order to guarantee that student feedback remains anonymous. It is further suggested that this system is totally transparent so that information about anonymity, what information is available and how it is used is known by both students and teaching staff.

2.2.4. Teaching staff

Strengths and areas for improvement

We have seen highly motivated staff with an adequate professional background. A core value for the teaching staff is innovation. Overall, it is seen that the majority of the teaching staff are very young and may therefore lack some expertise which requires time to acquire. However, some more senior staff are available and can provide support to the less experienced staff. Generally the subjects taught seem to be well and competently presented. We observed an excellent relationship between students and teaching staff. The students' opinion is taken seriously and the students respect their teachers and think highly of the teaching staff.

There is a lack of international resident or visiting teaching staff. This appears to be due to financial constraints. The lack of international teaching staff is more important in the academic areas than in

the more practical fields of exercise science as the practical aspects of teaching are often taught by staff with some international background in their subject area (i.e. coaches who have had international exposure).

The teaching staff have adequate access to opportunities to develop their own teaching skills and professional competences, however they report that there is not enough time for research.

Recommendations

It is recommended that, where appropriate, the participation of international teaching staff is encouraged and supported by the university.

Furthermore, it is strongly recommended that the provision of adequate time and funds for the staff to engage in research is provided. This should be on a collaborative basis.

2.2.5. Students

Strengths and areas for improvement

The assessment panel was pleased to see highly motivated students who were confident in receiving an optimal preparation for their chosen study goal (coach, MA in Physical Education, MA in Recreation Management). The drop-out rate can be largely explained by the fact that most students undertake employment during their study and some may take permanent employment during their study time which may result in their discontinuing their course of study.

It is currently too early to note differences in length of study time or study success due to the newly introduced national funding system for students in higher education in which students have to pay for ECTS not completed in the minimal time required. This system needs to be monitored as it becomes established.

It is noted that only relatively few international students study in this study programme at Tallinn University and that students on this study programme at Tallinn University are reluctant to study abroad. Students know in principle about possibilities for study abroad (i.e. Erasmus programmes), however, they criticise lack of guidance and financial constraints.

The fact that the BA in Physical Education is very open with a large number of electives, leaves some of the students at a loss in making curriculum choices. A lack of structural guidance with regard to

curriculum planning is noted. However, it is also of note, that teaching staff are very accessible for counselling on an individual basis.

The discussion with alumni showed that they perceive their education to have been very effective in enabling them to achieve the professional skills they needed to be successful in the job market. Overall they felt the curriculum is well conceived and flexible enough to respond to individual desires as well as to employment opportunities.

Recommendations

It is suggested that institutional guidance for students is set up both for curriculum planning and for planning for study time abroad.

2.2.6. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the assessment panel obtained a very positive perspective of the BA in Physical Education. This programme fulfils its main objectives and is characterised by highly motivated students, competent staff and excellent facilities and infrastructure. The curriculum is planned with the sustainability of resources in mind. However, there are a number of suggestions and recommendations aimed at improving an already excellent curriculum in view of the demographic changes and the future needs of Estonian society.

General recommendation:

It is recommended that an exercise and health oriented track is established within the BA in Physical Education. This should eventually be followed by an exercise and health oriented Masters in Physical Education. The latter could be stand-alone or in collaboration with the University of Tartu which is in a similar situation.

Specific recommendations:

In view of the sustainability of the curriculum, its cost and load on teaching staff it is recommended that the overall number of electives is reduced and that synergies between full time studies, cycle studies and open university programme are developed.

It is recommended that serious thought is given to increasing opportunities for staff to do research and to increasing international participation in academic teaching.

In view of the flexible curriculum structure and the reluctance of students to study abroad it is suggested that an institutional counselling system is established for students.

The compulsory electronic feedback system should be modified such that it is transparent and anonymity is both guaranteed and understood by both students and staff.

2.3. Study Programme Findings BA/MA in Recreation Management

The study programme in Recreation Management comprises of both a BA and an MA programme. The programme was evaluated 9 years ago, in 2005.

2.3.1. Study programme and study programme development

Since 2011 changes have been made to the BA in Recreation Management including social sciences, entrepreneurship, options and restructuring of specialisation modules.

With regard to the MA in Recreation Management, in 2014 changes were made to the size of the thesis, in order to make the programme suitable for BA graduates from other programmes. Greater changes are planned for introduction in 2016 after institutional changes at university level.

Strengths and areas of Improvement

The BA and MA programmes in recreation management are unique in Estonia. Recreation management is a dynamic concept and some changes and adaptations to the programmes have already been undertaken (see above). The structure of both BA and MA study programmes is clear and forms a coherent approach. As already outlined for the BA in Physical Education, students have a wide range of possible choices of electives, both those offered within the Institute as well as those offered by different programmes within Tallinn University and those offered in other universities.

The BA in Physical Education programme and the BA in Recreation Management programme benefit from each other. Furthermore, positive collaborations with many (good) partners can be observed, including international cooperation and cooperation with other institutes (professional) and with entrepreneurs. There is good employment both from the BA and the MA programmes in recreation management.

Both the BA and MA in Recreation Management programmes are very broad. A clear focus of specialisation is missing. There is obviously a fragmentation in place due to different modes of study

which affects the work load of the teaching staff. Some staff mentioned the overwhelming number of lectures they have to give. Therefore, a fair distribution of the work load between staff members should be discussed to enable all staff to have adequate time for research.

Recommendations

It is suggested that synergies between full time studies, cycle studies and the open university programme are developed to reduce the amount of time staff spend teaching small groups on different programmes.

It is strongly recommended that ideas for the restructuring of the content and of modules in order to reduce the large number of electives and to avoid overlapping credits and modules between BA and MA are developed. In order to maintain a high quality in the MA programme, **no** modules from the Bachelor programmes should be accepted in the Masters programme (if they are assessed in the same way as in the BA).

For the future, a more structured study programme should be in place (which includes management, entrepreneurship, economic knowledge, and marketing theory).

The overall additional value of the Masters Programme is a very important aspect in order to integrate the needs of Estonian society such as focus on the elderly (and other target groups), health related programmes (health promotion and lifestyles; prevention programmes; physical activity/ outdoor activity), tourism.

It is suggested that further consideration be given to the development of the tourism part of the recreation management programmes (domestic and/or international focus group; domestic and/or international orientation; strong Estonian (tourist) selling points and products; entrepreneurship).

The attractiveness of the MA in Recreation Management should be increased in order to increase the number of domestic (and international) students. This could also be realised through (further) cooperation in recreation management related fields with other (Estonian) universities.

It is recommended to:

- work on the further internationalisation of the MA in Recreation Management and to include more international lecturers
- make steps towards an MA in Recreation Management taught in English in order to attract international students

- consider cooperation with other Estonian universities and foreign universities (e.g. the University of Jyväskylä) with regard to PhD development or a PhD programme (which makes the orientation more academic)
- establish a full professorship and/or leadership in research (PhD options) (See also below).

All in all, consider making a change in the attractiveness and focus either towards health and the changing demographics by making some adaptations in the content and name of the programmes (suggestion: MA in Recreation and Health) or towards tourism and outdoor activities (suggestion: MA Tourism and Outdoor Activities).

Furthermore, the academic versus professional orientation should be further discussed. Compared with some international programmes the orientation can be characterised as predominantly professional. An optimal balance between a need for a professional orientation and an ambition to create a programme recognised at an academic level which may compete internationally might be discussed in the near future.

2.3.2. Resources

Strengths and areas of improvement

The recreation management programmes offer excellent recourses in terms of the teaching and learning environment. The visit to the library showed that there is a sufficient supply of textbooks and excellent access to other teaching aids. New books are ordered when requested by teaching staff and staff and students have access to additional books and online papers related to the field.

Recommendations

If the institute chooses to change the focus or specialisations of the recreation management programmes in light of demographic changes and changes in society, consideration should be given to cooperation with relevant agencies/institutes/partners (e.g., those focused on health, elderly, prevention programmes, physical outdoor activity).

If any future move of the institute can be linked to providing synergies with other aspects of work in the healthy and sustainable lifestyles focus area (one of the focus area of the university), that would be an advantage.

When the institute moves to another building, the quality of infrastructure in all areas (for example teaching laboratories and learning environment) should be maintained.

2.3.3. Teaching and learning

Strengths and areas of improvement

There is a wide variety of diverse and modern methods of teaching in place. IT teaching tools are available and enthusiastically used by some of the teaching staff, but there is no overall e-learning strategy to support students (including cycle students) in their learning.

Teaching takes place in small groups, and offers the possibility for students to be engaged in different forms of learning and assessment. Sometimes, work experience of students is used as a valuable contribution within the class.

Teaching schedules offer students the possibility of choosing full time studies, cycle studies as well as the open university programme, which caters to diverse groups of students. As a result, staff offer the same modules several times in a year because of overlap between full time studies, cycle studies and the open university programme. This leads to fragmentation of the modules and an increase in the teaching hours for the staff members.

Both BA and MA in Recreation Management programmes offer limited options for internationalisation due to the study programmes being taught in the Estonian language. Especially within the Masters programme, there should be further possibilities for international exchange and input (e.g. English language instruction, student/teacher mobility).

Recommendations

There is a strong need to make use of synergies between full time studies, cycle studies and the open university programme in order to reduce the number of modules which the staff have to provide and therefore to decrease their teaching hours.

It is suggested that the possibility of further developing IT tools and e-learning, especially for cycle studies students, is explored.

If the institute would like to choose a more international orientation, they will need to look into the possibility of modules taught in English, increasing the international mobility of the staff through research projects and cooperation with other (inter)national recreation management programmes.

2.3.4. Teaching staff

Strengths and areas of improvement

It is obvious that the teaching staff for the recreation management programmes are highly motivated and enthusiastic as well as professionally oriented. Overall, student assessment of teaching staff is very positive and the feedback by students is appreciated by teaching staff.

In summer 2014 the staff of the institute organised the 7th International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitors in Recreational and Protected Areas (MMV). This is a very good starting point in order to integrate guest lecturers as well as international research co-operations.

Recommendations

The Institute could look into broadening international orientation in teaching activities (for example, employing a small number of international lecturers in recreation management, offering more lectures in English).

Priority should be given to the development of a focus and infrastructure (time and resources) for individual and collaborative research activities (staff in recreation management need research leadership and guidance). For example, the establishment of a full professorship and/or leadership in research (with PhD options for staff and students) would enable the institute to set up research focus groups in order to build up a focused research culture.

Concerning the evaluation of the teaching staff, more transparency for staff and students about the anonymity and functioning of the evaluation system is necessary.

2.3.5. Students

Strengths and areas for improvement

As already outlined for the BA in Physical Education, the students are highly motivated, very self-reflective and eloquent. The number of students in the recreation management programmes is quite small and the decrease in numbers of BA/MA students is a risk and of serious concern. The number

of students working during their study is quite high and therefore the high drop-out rates are understandable.

Students and alumni expressed a need for more management, entrepreneurship and marketing theory in the existing programmes and the alumni expressed that most jobs during (and after) their studies are attained by internships, which could be made into a more central part of the programmes.

In relation to international student mobility, the obstacles are mainly in relation to the overall financial situation of the students, most of who have to earn their living costs and are therefore not able to go abroad for one or two semesters.

Recommendations

The Institute could look into broadening the international orientation of the recreation management programmes (for example, employing a small number of international lecturers in the area, increasing the low number of international students on the programmes, and increasing the low mobility of students in the BA and MA programmes).

Furthermore, a priority for the next months should be the development of a more structured approach to including management, entrepreneurship, economic knowledge and marketing theory in the programmes.

It is recommended that a structured guidance system is set up for students. In addition, the possibility for an internship for students (obligatory in MA and/or a longer period of time in BA) should be outlined. The tracking of graduates should be improved and the monitoring of the dropout rates (before and after the changes in the national funding system for students in higher education) can give information about the situation in the job market.

2.3.6. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

The impression of the assessment panel is that the BA and MA in Recreation Management programmes have excellent teaching tools and resources. These study programmes cater to a diverse group of students because of the flexibility of both programmes. The teaching staff are professionally oriented, enthusiastic and overall assessed positively by students. Students on both study programmes are strongly motivated, eloquent and capable. Alumni and employers are content

overall with the study programmes. The assessment panel had the impression there is a dynamic and open work atmosphere among those involved with the institute.

There are, however, a few areas that could be improved. The most important areas that could be looked into are:

- 1) the future direction of the recreation management programmes and research;
- 2) Internationalisation; and
- 3) some changes in the service system to facilitate improvement in teaching and learning on the study programmes.

These are explained below.

1) Future direction of the recreation management programmes and research

Consider creating more focus in the recreation management study programmes by defining (a) clear field(s) of specialisation. Future demographic changes in Estonian society could be integrated in the content and/or modules of the recreation management programmes. For example:

- Focus on the Elderly (and other target groups)
- Health related programmes (health promotion and lifestyles; prevention programmes; physical activity/outdoor activity)
- Tourism.

In line with specialisations, the institute could further develop research possibilities by:

- Setting up research focus groups in order to build up a focused research culture;
- Look into developing a focus and infrastructure (time and resources) for individual and collaborative research activities (need of research leadership and guidance);
- Establishing a full professorship and/or leadership in research (with PhD options for staff and students);
- Working with other (inter)national related institutes and universities.

2) Internationalisation

In order to strengthen the Institute's position, cooperation with other Estonian universities and foreign universities should be considered. Especially in the MA, English language instruction and student/staff mobility in both directions (incoming and outgoing) should be in place. In a long term perspective, further steps should be taken towards the MA in Recreation Management being taught as a full English taught programme in order to attract international students and to play a key role in the international Sport Tourism Community.

This recommendation is in line with the proposal to consider further development of the tourism part of the recreation management programmes: domestic and/or international focus group; domestic and/or international orientation; strong Estonian (tourist) selling points and products (entrepreneurship).

3) Service system

It is obvious that a more structured approach should be adopted for delivery of the study programme in order to re-organise delivery and reduce the high number of modules that overlap (full time studies, cycle studies, open university programme). This would also lead to a reduction of the work load of the lecturers.

There has to be a clear set of content-related arguments about the added value of the Masters Programme (compared to the Bachelor) and the attractiveness of the Masters programme to students has to be increased (considering the future potential decline in student numbers). There should be a guidance system for students and a tracking system of graduates in order to learn more about the employment situation/market.

It seems from the actual feedback of the students that subjects related to management, entrepreneurship, economic knowledge and marketing theory are necessary. Possible options could be the creation of specialisation modules at Masters level in line with new research groups.

There should be more transparency for students and staff about the anonymity and functioning of the evaluation of the teaching.

3. Assessment Report of the University of Tartu

3.1. Some characteristics of the University of Tartu

The University of Tartu has a very long tradition and history in Estonia, extending back to the 17th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, the university was called “University of the Republic of Estonia” and from 1944 the Soviet era started. After the new independence of Estonia, the university was reorganised. It gained its current name “University of Tartu” and once again became the national University of the Republic of Estonia. The mission of the university is to act as the leading Higher Education Institution in Estonia in the areas of research and education in humanities, social, medical and natural sciences (cf. Assessment report, p.5). There is a strong belief and approach in creating the conditions for world-class research and to build up international cooperation with other top universities and researchers from all over the world. Furthermore, it is important to preserve the Estonian culture, society and language. The strategic aims of the university, as explained by the Vice-Rector during our site visit, are to ensure an international standard in teaching and research, to attract international students and staff, to further develop centres of excellence, to influence Estonian society, to promote lifelong learning and to maintain and work towards a modern infrastructure.

The Faculty of Exercise and Sport Sciences has a very long tradition in the university; it was founded within the Faculty of Medicine as the Institute of Physical Education. Currently the faculty consists of two Institutes: The Institute of Exercise Biology and Physiotherapy and the Institute of Sport Pedagogy and Coaching Science. The academic staff in the two institutes teach on five programmes: BA and MA in Physical Education and Sport, BA and MA in Physiotherapy and a PhD programme in Exercise and Sport Science (the only PhD programme in sport sciences in Estonia to date). There is a very strong research focus and research tradition within the faculty, mainly in the natural sciences.

The Vice-Rector of the University and the Dean of the Faculty are both aware of the coming challenges in relation to the demographic changes in Estonia. Between 2011 and 2013 the number of students in the sport-related programmes decreased by ca. 20%¹. There is a strong need for the 53 staff members² in the faculty to work towards a future strategy which takes into consideration the demographic situation in terms of future students from inside and outside the country as well as the needs of Estonian society.

¹ The admission regulations in the Higher Education System in Estonia have been changed and “free of charge education” at all levels is now offered. This might have an effect on the number of students in the near future.

² This figure includes the staff in the BA/MA Physiotherapy programme as well as non-academic staff.

3.2. Study Programme Group Findings BA/MA in Physical Education and Sport

3.2.1. Study programme and study programme development

The Bachelor's programme, BA in Physical Education and Sport at the University of Tartu, is one option of three possibilities (also BA in Physical Education and BA in Recreation Management at Tallinn University) for students to study sport, physical exercise and sport sciences in Estonia. The Faculty of Exercise and Sport Sciences at the University of Tartu has traditionally focused on coaching and sport sciences, with a strong focus on natural sciences. As evidenced through the documents, meetings with teaching staff and students there seems to have been less focus on social sciences and teaching skills at BA level.. The BA programmes (180 credits) is delivered by the two institutes in the faculty: the Institute of Sport Biology and Physiotherapy and the Institute of Sport Pedagogy and Coaching Science.

Strengths and areas of Improvement

The BA programme attracts many applicants, hence, competition for places is high (2.5–3.0 candidates for one student place). Despite competition, the number of students admitted to and studying on the BA programme is decreasing. The numbers of students over the previous three years were: admitted students: 2011 – 52; 2012 – 62; 2013 – 42; on programme: 2011 – 259; 2012 – 230; 2013 – 181.

Forty percent (40%) of the points for entry to the BA programmes are for physical abilities. Applicants with experience in sport and high level sport results have an advantage in relation to the entrance examination; they can enter the BA programme without other entrance criteria. Such conditions favour the selection of students who perform highly in or are more focused on sport and, as a result, many entrants are active athletes.

The content of the curriculum is divided between theoretical and practical studies, between face-to-face and individual studies over a period of three years. According to the results of interviews with the Dean, Vice Dean and the heads of the institutes, the content and the structure of the curricula of the study programme provides a coherent whole, is well balanced and harmonised with its objectives and learning outcomes, appropriate to the current foci of the programme and follow two main documents – Higher Education Standard and Vocational Standard for Coaches.

The BA programme contains modules (both lecture-based and practice learning) which provide the pre-requisites to qualify as a coach in certain sports and also to continue studies on the MA programme in order to graduate as a teacher of physical education. The programme contains many practical modules in different sports (especially in the first year of studies). Students evaluated positively the distribution of practical studies throughout the three years of the programme.

Students on the BA programme were also positive about gaining practical experience working at sport clubs training youth in different sports in parallel with their studies. They expressed their interest in entering the labour market as a coach and, taking into account demographic changes in society, as physical activity counsellors. Good cooperation with the Academic Sport Club must be mentioned. Possibilities for students to learn and practice sport through the sport club supports their specialisations and also attracts new student applicants.

The current study programme at Masters level, which is run in cooperation with the Faculty of Education, focuses on the teaching of physical education and coaching in basic and secondary schools. As such, it attracts a small number of students who want to become physical education teachers. This is a strength as it allows for focus on a specific professional outcome. However, it limits the potential number of applicants to the programme.

Physical education teacher training programmes can equally well be located in a physical education and sport faculty, with appropriate links to an education faculty, or in an education faculty with appropriate links to a physical education and sport faculty. However, whichever approach is adopted it is important that there is good communication between the two faculties – and that generic education work is translated for students into physical education specific work due to the different nature of different subjects and, in particular, the practical nature of physical education. There was some suggestion from the students that this link did not always work effectively and that the work they covered in education was not translated in all cases into what this might mean in physical education and for them as physical education teachers. It is important that this link works well. There was also some comment that mentoring in schools did not always work effectively, as some mentors were not clear about their role. It is important that mentors are clear about their role and responsibilities and that they receive ongoing training in such roles so that they can effectively support students in school. Finally, at present, as the assessment panel understand it, students time in schools in the first year of the MA programme is spent observing teachers teach. They only start to teach during the second year of their programme. However well this observation is organised there is

a danger that students' learning may be limited without being able to draw on their own experience of teaching themselves. Students may learn more by integrating observation with undertaking their own teaching. Thus, it would be valuable to consider the amount of observation students undertake in schools prior to having an opportunity to teach.

Within the current MA programme (and in the BA programme for those students who might want to continue to the MA programme to become physical education teachers) an area that appears to be missing is consideration of the overall concept of physical education. Such consideration is needed in order for physical education in schools to develop beyond a curriculum which develops skills in the performance of various sports.

The MA programme seems to be largely appropriate for those students who want to teach physical education – and should be retained for those students. However, its focus, whilst a strength for these students, provides a challenge to the faculty in providing an attractive Masters programme for those students who do not want to become physical education teachers.

The assessment panel had limited evidence of the development of either the BA or MA study programmes taking into account feedback from employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Recommendations

University plans are to align the Faculty of Exercise and Sport Sciences more closely with the Faculty of Medicine as part of structural reform in 2015 to enhance cooperation across faculties within the university. While this can only be of benefit in enhancing the already strong natural science focus of the work, it should not divert attention from other work which, in the view of the assessment panel, needs to be undertaken. University plans also focus on interdisciplinary work. At present collaborative working seems to be greater between staff in a specific area of the sport sciences and staff in the parent discipline than between staff within sport sciences. In view of developments in the field internationally, the BA programme and any development of the MA programme in physical education and sport sciences would benefit from greater interdisciplinary working within the faculty³. In order to be relevant for the future, particularly in relation to the wider range of job

³ Although physical education and coaching by their very nature are interdisciplinary, work in the faculty could benefit from staff in the various sub-disciplines working closely together in an interdisciplinary way.

opportunities in the field of physical education and sport, the BA programme and any development of the MA programme it would also be of benefit for consideration to be given to the balance of natural sciences and social sciences in the programmes to check that natural sciences is not prioritised above the social sciences.

There is a danger to the two institutes in the faculty in which the study programmes under review operate, if numbers on the BA programme continue to decline and the number of students on both the BA and MA programmes remains low. Hence, some rethinking is needed so that the curriculum is attractive to a wider range of students. With the small population of Estonia, current numbers of students graduating from the BA programme and the demographics of the population, with the decreasing number of young people – at least over the next 5-10 year period, it is important that consideration is given to what MA programmes are needed in physical education and sport sciences for Estonia overall and that the two universities offering programmes in this area do not replicate programmes or compete for students; rather, the two universities work together, and both work together with relevant outside agencies, to provide a package of programmes attractive to a wide range of students in a range of modes of delivery they are able to follow. To better use the existing teaching capacity in Estonia it would be wise to for the University of Tartu and Tallinn University to cooperate on BA and MA programmes in physical education and sport sciences. This may include, for example, starting (again) regular exchange of teaching staff between the two universities, considering how aspects of programmes in which one of the universities has particular strengths can be delivered to benefit students at both universities, considering a range of modes of delivery across the two universities to enable students with different circumstances to study the whole programme (or individual modules only delivered in one of the two universities) in one or other of the universities. Consideration also needs to be given to how to increase cooperation between the Estonian Olympic Committee, national sports federations, other relevant sport, health, physical activity/exercise agencies and bodies and sports clubs to enhance the programmes for the benefit of students and the future development of sport and sport-related jobs in Estonia in the future.

Areas for consideration for programmes to meet the needs of Estonian society in the future include modules/specialisation/degrees in Coaching, Health and Physical Activity/Exercise (including broadening the concept of physical education and coaching into a physical activity concept in society; exercise and movement counselling; and focus on the elderly) and Sport Management.

How future MA programme(s) in physical education and sport are organised alongside the MA in Physical Education (for teacher training) needs to be considered. It might be appropriate for there to be specialisations within one programme or it might be appropriate for there to be different programmes.

Also, how to meet the needs of Estonian students and a possible requirement to increase the number of high quality international students and hence to increase the number of modules in English also needs to be considered.

Further, within the MA in Physical Education it is recommended that consideration is given to the overall concept of physical education, whether the link between physical education and education is strong and each supports the work of the other, that mentoring in all schools by all teachers is equally as effective, whether the focus of observation in the first year of the programme is appropriate.

As the university considers the PhD part of the teaching programmes, a further area for consideration is whether to increase the number of PhD students in the Institutes. At present, the number of graduates in this area is low.

3.2.2. Resources

Strengths and areas for improvement

Overall, the resources (financial resource, teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises (with perhaps the exception of the gymnasium which was commented on by students, but which we did not see ourselves) seem to be appropriate and support the achievement of objectives and learning outcomes of the study programmes as currently delivered. However, from the evidence we saw, the available resources focus on the natural sciences and practical activities and the resources for the social sciences are more limited. It is important to check that resources for social sciences are equal to those of the natural sciences.

As numbers of students seem to be dropping on the BA programmes at present and are stable on the MA programme, and both are low, resource development is sustainable. However, if student numbers are to increase and/or developments are made to the programmes (as suggested above), adequacy of resources will need to be considered for the changing circumstances. For example, although there seems to be a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids available in the

library for delivery of the current programmes, further/different resources will have to be acquired, particularly in the social sciences and in sports management. Consideration should also be given to whether maximum use is being made of other resources, e.g. national Sports federations and sports clubs.

There is a very generous staff-student ratio in the faculty (compared to the staff-student ratio in our own universities). While this is a strength, how this can be maintained will be a challenge for the future.

Further, the physical resources are spread around the university, many located near to the parent discipline but at some distance from each other. This has advantages in encouraging staff and, where appropriate, students, to work with staff (and students) in the parent discipline. This adds to the strong natural science base of the programmes. However, it also has disadvantages in that it increases focus on working with parent disciplines, perhaps at the expense of interdisciplinary working within the institutes in which these programmes are situated. An interdisciplinary approach to physical education and sport sciences is increasingly recognised as an important area for further development worldwide and hence needs to be considered. The location of physical resources is also a disadvantage in that the location of the different resources requires travelling time for students. Care therefore needs to be taken in the scheduling of modules to ensure students have time to travel from one location to another for classes (e.g. anatomy).

Recommendations

As programmes develop so that they are relevant to meeting the needs of Estonian society in future and are attractive to a wider range of local and international students, consideration also needs to be given to how the resources are used for both teaching (beyond theses) and research and the resources needed for an increasing focus on social sciences within the programmes. Consideration needs to be given to how resources can be used to increase interdisciplinary work within physical education and sport sciences with the resources spread around different locations within the university.

It seems to be necessary to support teaching in small groups of students according to their specialisation on different sports. It would be beneficial to organise this with the national Olympic committee in order to: aid cooperation with the respective sports federations and sport clubs; involve more sports leaders from federations and the national umbrella sport organisation to

prepare students better for the labour market; and consider investment and construction work to create compact conditions for faculty students and teaching staff.

3.2.3. Teaching and learning

Strengths and areas for improvement

The teaching at present seems to be based on the strong natural science approach adopted across the programme. This is a strength in providing the students with a good natural science base. However, the evidence presented suggests that although there is some good teaching and learning, appropriate to the module (that takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the assessment/achievement of transparent learning outcomes), there has been some criticism of teaching on the programme, as evidenced through the feedback given by students on the teaching (although they only comment on a minimum of four modules per year). It is therefore important that the staff focus on the quality of teaching and learning from the perspective of students – a university priority⁴.

Further, teaching and learning approaches and assessment methods appear to be decided by individual members of staff independently; thus, whether the teaching methods are ‘modern’, whether there is any flexibility in the process of teaching and learning, etc. is due to each individual member of staff. Thus, students might experience very different teaching and learning approaches in different subject areas and different modules. Whilst different approaches might be appropriate in different subject areas and different modules, consideration should be given to discussion of teaching and learning approaches and assessment methods across subject areas and modules to understand the overall package across the programme as a whole from the student’s experience. This consideration is also needed if more social sciences are included in the programmes and a more interdisciplinary approach is adopted within the programmes.

The system of students only commenting on a minimum of four modules per semester is unusual as it might result in some staff receiving very little feedback on their teaching from students⁵. It is not clear what criteria students use to select the modules they will feedback on – but however they

⁴ The introduction of the peer review of teaching might be useful in this regard.

⁵ The reasons for changing to this system are recognised. Although students can comment on more modules each semester, we do not know whether or not they do so.

choose it is likely that not all examples of good or poor practice, or indeed, average teaching, will be identified. Hence, it would seem appropriate that consideration is given to how good feedback can be received on all modules each semester, then to what changes (if any are needed) are made to teaching as a result of this feedback and how students know what changes have been made.

There was less evidence as to recognition of prior learning and work experiences and whether the process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility – there seem to be no/very few students who enter either the BA or MA programme with recognition of prior learning or work experience and very few who take opportunities to spend time at other universities overseas.

Recommendations

Although those students we met seem to be clear about things such as how to access staff, how to get feedback on their work, how to seek supervision for theses, what electives they can select (and what might be appropriate for their career choices), how to discuss career opportunities, among other things, it is not clear if all students are as clear. Further, if student numbers increase, it is not clear whether such informal systems will continue to work. Hence, consideration needs to be given to whether development is needed to make such systems more transparent and/or more systematic so that all students benefit from them.

Consideration should be given as to whether the amount of interdisciplinary work (both within the natural sciences and with regard to the balance between natural and social sciences) is appropriate or how it can be increased.

Consideration should be given as to whether and where in the curriculum there should be a shift from a discipline specific approach to a more problem-based approach, as appropriate to the programme and specific modules, and appropriate to outcomes which prepare students for the world of work.

Consideration should also be given to integrating learning mobility and more flexibility in the way to provide study programmes (part-time study, distance learning etc.), particularly at Masters level.

3.2.4. Teaching staff

Strengths and areas for improvement

Overall, teaching staff have appropriate qualifications to achieve the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programmes and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning. Some staff are undertaking very high quality research. However, only 28 of the 42 staff have PhDs. Hence, it is not clear how many of the staff are producing high quality research and bringing in research grants. Consideration should be given to whether the research output across the institutes is high enough.

Mixed responses have been recorded by students concerning the assessment of the teaching skills of the teaching staff. It will be important for attention to be paid to the teaching skills of staff to enable these assessments to become more positive overall. However, it was unclear to the assessment panel how the teaching staff are engaged in the development of professional and teaching-skills – both individually and as a group to develop teaching and learning across the programme as a whole. This includes peer review of teaching which is currently being introduced across the university. It will be important for staff to engage positively with a range of staff development activities to improve teaching skills and to engage positively and productively with the peer review initiative to develop teaching and learning across the programmes as a whole.

Although well qualified and recognised practitioners seem to participate in teaching the BA programme, there is limited evidence of recognised members of the teaching staff (including international and visiting members) participating in teaching the BA study programme.

Recommendations

Although the strong research of the faculty and institutes is a strength and should be developed further, consideration of the focus of the research is needed, particularly in light of the increasing focus world-wide on increasing interdisciplinary research focused on physical education, sport and exercise and increasing the research in social sciences and humanities.

Attention should be paid to the teaching skills of staff to develop the range of teaching approaches required as the curriculum develops and broadens. This will require staff to engage positively with a range of staff development activities to improve teaching skills, including engaging positively and productively with the peer review initiative to develop teaching and learning across the programmes as a whole.

In line with the development of any future orientation which increases the focus on the social sciences and humanities within the programmes, the number of well qualified staff in social science and humanities and their contribution to the programmes needs to be strengthened and increased to reflect the changes and the consequences of the shift.

This requires staff planning and may require looking for appropriately qualified staff in these areas from other institutions or outside Estonia, as the focus of the programmes over a period of time might mean that qualified staff are not available locally. In the view of the assessment panel it would be desirable to include more international and visiting teaching staff with strong research backgrounds but who might also be able to stimulate discussion about different approaches to teaching and learning.

3.2.5. Students

Strengths and areas for improvement

On both the BA and MA programmes, student places are filled with motivated and capable students. This is to be expected due to the large number of applicants per place. However, student numbers overall are low and it would seem that there is room to increase the number of students.

Further, students are partly accepted onto the BA programme on their physical abilities, particularly participation in sports (40%). This focus in entry criteria might be precluding students with a physical education, physical activity or health focus from applying to/being accepted onto the BA programme. This may have a knock on effect to the MA programme on which students with a particular perspective on physical education (i.e. physical education as sport) become teachers of physical education. In turn, this might have a knock on effect to the teaching of physical education in schools. This perpetuates the cycle of students applying for/being accepted onto the BA programme. If the focus of the programmes is to develop and broaden so that they are appropriate for students to pursue a wider range of sport, health, exercise-related careers which is developing, consideration should be given to whether the entry criteria for the BA programme should be reconsidered to recruit a broader range of students.

As mentioned before, not all students on the BA programme are oriented to become teachers of physical education. Future professions as coach, administrator or manager were very often mentioned by students. Some students indicated an interest in health promotion and understood the

seriousness of the ageing of the Estonian population. Hence, such future aspirations and opportunities need to be considered in relation to future developments of the programme.

Although students are able to study at other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as part of their studies, the take-up rate for the first of these options is low and there is no take up for the second. Likewise, there are a low number of international students studying at the University of Tartu for the whole or part of their programme and there seem to be no students from other Estonian higher education institutions.

The employment rate of alumni seems to be high; although it is not clear whether all of the jobs which BA students are entering are graduate level jobs. However alumni and their employers are satisfied with their professional preparation and social competencies.

There is some concern about the dropout rates from the BA programme and the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study.

The students on the Masters for the Teacher of Physical Education – Coach in Basic and Secondary Schools, were very articulate. They had chosen the programme because they wanted to teach physical education. Whilst the programme is appropriate for students who want to teach physical education, its current focus means that there is not a suitable MA programme for students who do not want to become physical education teachers.

Recommendations

The BA and MA programmes attract strong students. However, the focus on the physical test, worth 40% of the entrance requirement, may be excluding some very good students from applying for, or being accepted onto, the BA programme⁶. Although this specifically excludes students from the BA programme this has a knock on effect on the MA programme as there is a smaller pool of students coming through the BA programme who are able to apply for the MA programme to qualify as physical education teachers. It also means that the group may potentially take a similar approach to sport, physical activity/exercise and, on the MA programme, to teaching physical education. This is a

⁶ While physical competence is recognised as important for people working in the physical education and sport field, it is the weighting given to the physical test and focus on high level performance that is being questioned.

disadvantage in excluding students who might have had a different range of experiences in physical education/activity and sport and hence who might encourage change and development. However, the entry criteria is an area for consideration as programmes develop and moves away from a limited focus on coaching sports to include a wider focus on health, exercise and physical activity for the population more generally. A wider range of students might also be more appropriate for the teaching of physical education, which goes beyond the teaching of specific sports activities. Thus, it is recommended that consideration be given to the entrance requirements for students, particularly at the BA level.

It is recommended that a system of tracking graduates is established in order to understand more about where graduates gain employment and the relevance of their degrees to this employment, Such a system would help to inform the teaching and learning on the programme and also inform future programme development.

At present it appears that undertaking physical education and sport-related work to support the BA is left to individual students. However, in order to increase student employability, a more coherent approach would be appropriate, providing all students with subject-specific work experience to enhance their opportunities in the job market; hence, it is recommended that consideration be given to adopting an internship at the BA level.

The drop-out rate from the BA programme appears to be relatively high and hence the number of students graduating in the minimum time appears to be low. Although the national funding system for students in higher education has changed and may have an impact on these figures, it is important that drop out and graduation rates are monitored carefully and appropriate action taken to address drop-out and reasons for students not graduating in the minimum time (e.g. opportunities for part time study etc.).

It is also recommended that consideration is given to how to support national and international mobility for students. This needs to include consideration for students who do not, or cannot, spend time overseas, e.g. due to sport, work or other commitments or for financial or other reasons.

3.2.6. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the Vocational Standard for Coaches, the faculty has all the necessary preconditions to be one of the key players in teaching and educating coaches in close cooperation with the Estonian Olympic Committee and national sports federations. It is the wish of the Estonian sports movement to restore coach preparation with a reasonable proportion gaining practical experience and specialisation.

It is recommended that consideration is given as to how and in what direction to develop the MA programme. Although a programme designed specifically for physical education teachers is necessary to supply the need for teachers in schools, it is only one possible job outcome from an MA programme. In a rapidly developing and changing societal context with a rapidly increasing service economy, a much wider range of job opportunities in both sport and health and physical activity/exercise are likely to develop; hence consideration should be given to the development of the MA programme in such areas which are likely to be attractive to students. In any such development it is important that the focus of the programme for physical education teachers is not lost or watered down and that the programme continues to meet the needs of teachers for Estonian schools. Hence, consideration needs to be given as to whether all options can be provided adequately in one programme or whether separate programmes are needed.

4. Final recommendations and strategic future orientation

In addition to the specific aspects which were raised in the reports about the study programmes in the two universities, which will not be repeated below, we want to summarise and conclude the most relevant results and to think about over-arching trends of a strategic nature.

Firstly, the demographic trends in Estonia will have a strong effect on the study programmes in the near future. Both universities have to face these societal challenges, especially when it comes to the overall design of the Bachelors and Masters programmes. Whilst the Bachelors and Masters programmes in both universities are strong and have served the needs of students and of Estonia well until now, they will not continue to do so in future without further development and change. It is recommended that both universities discuss together the future directions of the study programmes and agree a coherent approach for development across both universities. Besides a physical education track, it is recommended that consideration should be given to an exercise and health oriented track within the BA programmes, followed by an exercise and health oriented Masters programme. The latter could be stand-alone or in collaboration between Tallinn University and the University of Tartu. Furthermore, coaching and outdoor education/management (environment) and tourism are fields for further possible areas for the development of study programmes.

This leads to a second aspect: Because of the overall Estonian situation, both universities should cooperate in the physical education and sport area as much as possible and together think about a clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities, particularly at Masters level. Cooperation between the Estonian Olympic Committee and both universities (through teaching and research) should be improved, as should collaboration with national sports federations and sports clubs.

Thirdly, in order to strengthen the position of both universities, cooperation with foreign universities should be considered. English language instruction and student/staff mobility in both directions (incoming and outgoing) should be increased. In a long term perspective, further steps should be taken towards a Masters programme in English in order to attract international students and to play a key role in the international sport sciences community.

Fourthly, it is recommended that serious thought is given to increasing opportunities for staff to undertake research, including collaborative and interdisciplinary research and to increasing participation in the international scientific community. Especially at Tallinn University, research focus

groups should be developed in order to build up a focused cooperative research culture. Cooperation with colleagues from the University of Tartu who are already more focused on research activities should be set up. Increasing the number of collaborative, interdisciplinary research activities would be beneficial in integrating staff new to research and also in increasing the potential impact of the research. The establishment (Tallinn University) and increase (University of Tartu) of PhD options for staff and students as well as the collaboration with each other and (inter)national related institutes and universities would increase the quality and outcomes of both universities.

Cologne, 20th of December 2014

gez. Dr. Karen Petry