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## **Standards for the Evaluation of Humanities and Social Sciences Programs**

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*Erasmus+ TLQAA+ WP8: Standards for Humanities and Social  
Sciences*

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## Introduction

The objective of workpackage 8 of the Erasmus+ project “Program Evaluation for Transparency and Recognition of Skills and Qualifications / TLQAA+” is to define a set of standards for the evaluation of Humanities and Social Sciences Programmes in the Lebanese Higher Education.

The standards for the evaluation of Humanities and Social Sciences Programmes are an expansion of the results of workpackage 5 where the Core Standards for the Evaluation of Programmes were defined.

The process of adaptation of the core standards to the domain of human and social sciences relies on:

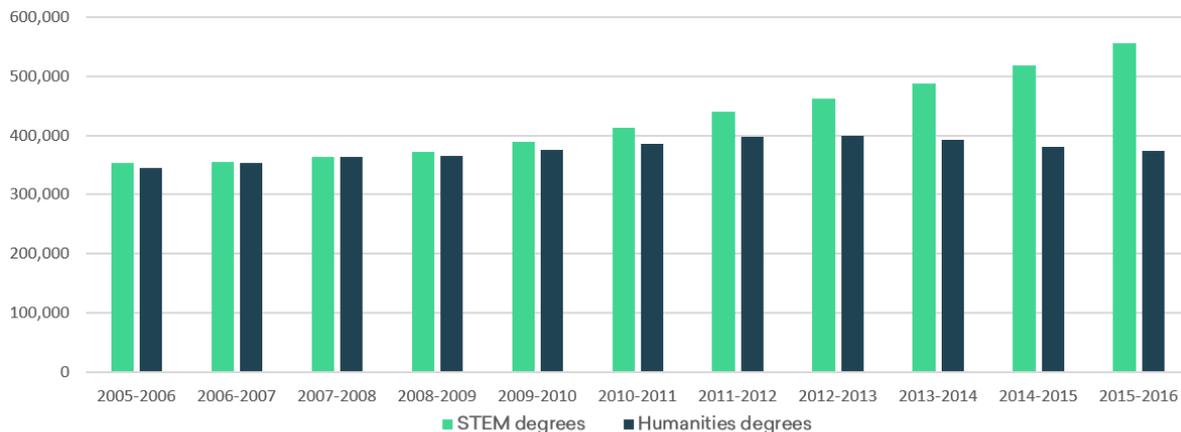
- A bibliographical review of worldwide existing standards relevant to the field,
- A practical experience of accreditation standards for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

## STEM vs. Humanities

STEM education (science, technology, engineering, math) have given rise to new concerns about the value of humanities education degrees, especially in the year 2018, where there are more technological advances every day. While STEM degrees seem to be more stimulating and qualifying the ease access to the labor market, many employers are still looking to bring a humanist’s grace to the rapidly evolving high-tech future.

In the United States, the amount of STEM majors boomed from 16% in 2010 to 43% in 2015, and that humanities majors declined -0.4% (Econ. Modeling). Valerie Strauss from The Washington Post defends the latter. She says that the “point” of a humanities education is that one is “exposed to various ways of thinking, analyzing, and questioning,” and that many employers are looking for those traits today.

### STEM Degrees vs. Humanities Degrees Bachelor's and Above



Source: Emsi via NCES (IPEDS); STEM and humanities definitions from NCES

According to the US National Center for Education Statistics, humanities programmes focus on combined studies and research in the humanities subjects as distinguished from the social and physical sciences, emphasizing languages, literatures, philosophy and religion. Whereas STEM programmes focus on science, mathematics, engineering, and technology. As for the major constituents of Arts, we note the performing arts (among them dance, music, and theatre), visual arts and architecture.

The most common humanities and social sciences programmes in Lebanon could be described as follows:

- History & Archeology
- Languages and Literature
- **Journalism**
- Translation and Interpretation
- Philosophy
- **Psychology**
- Political Studies & Public Administration
- International Relations
- Sociology / Anthropology
- **Social Work**
- Library Sciences
- Religious studies
- Theology
- *Education*

## II. Bibliographic Review of Existing Standards for Humanities and Social Sciences

Unlike STEM and other professional programmes, humanities and social sciences have very limited accreditation bodies to certify and maintain standards and quality. Comparing to engineering, technology and business fields that are associated with well-known specialized programmatic accreditation bodies it is quite difficult to quickly refer to accreditation bodies in the field of humanities and social sciences.

In the below bibliographic review, standards of few accreditation bodies are presented with a special consideration of Social Work, Psychology and Journalism.

## Selected Area 1. Social Work

### Overview

*Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.*

The above is the Global Definition of the Social Work Profession by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)<sup>1</sup>. This definition associated with Statement of Ethical Principles service constitute an overarching framework for social workers to work towards the highest possible standards of professional integrity.

IFSW has an interim Education Commission that creates a structure for the transfer of knowledge between social work education and practice where both are informed and learning from one another. The Commission supports social work programs and educators who experience pressures to make “concessions” on the quality of education to be able to meet the professions international standards.

IFSW–Europe covers all corners of Europe and represents IFSW at the EU, Council of Europe and at the UN centres in Geneva and Vienna. Also, the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) represents social work education at the European level at the European Commission, the Council of Europe. EASSW adheres to the United Nations’ Declarations and Conventions on Human Rights, recognizing that respect for the inalienable rights of the individual is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace.

Both IFSW–Europe and EASSW support social work education in Europe by promoting the development of social work education throughout Europe. They also promote the region efforts to work with people affected by individual and family challenges, conflict, mass migration of people moving north, seeking safety and refuge from war and climate change.

IFSW and EASSW do not provide accreditation services and there is no other specialized accreditation agency for the social work programmes in Europe. Accrediting agencies refer to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) to define special accreditation criteria for Humanities and Social Sciences programmes. Evalag<sup>2</sup>, for instance, granted International Programme Accreditation

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<sup>1</sup> The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) based in Switzerland is a global organization striving for social justice, human rights and social development through the promotion of social work, best practice models and the facilitation of international cooperation.

<sup>2</sup> The German institution, evalag EVALUATIONSAGENTUR BADEN – WÜRTTEMBERG. evalag is an active member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register), CEENQA (Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education), DeGEval (Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V., German Evaluation Society), and INQAAHE (International

for Eight Humanities and Social Sciences programmes at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik including Language and Literature, Journalism and Communication, Modern Languages and Translation, History, Education – Basic Education, Psychology, Philosophy, and Social Sciences.

In United States and Canada, the case is different with the presence of special Councils on Social Work Education that are the specialized accrediting agencies for social work education.

### **International Programme Accreditation by the German Accreditation Agency, EVALAG**

**Evalag** conforms to the principles of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and has been actively involved in national, European and international networks and projects for many years. EVALAG is known as a centre of competence for quality assurance and enhancement and a source of support for higher education institutions and other scientific institutions, with commitment for good quality in teaching and learning, research and other services. It participates in the continued development of quality assurance, quality enhancement, and quality management of higher education institutions and conducts international programme accreditation for various study programmes among which the Social Sciences.

The accreditation criteria used by the Evalag International Programme Accreditation have been put into effect by the Evalag Foundation Board. They refer to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Standard	Statements
<p><b>1. Programme Profile</b> Profile and objectives of the programme</p>	<p>1.1. whether the objectives of the programme are in line with the profile and the strategic goals of the institution</p> <p>1.2. whether the intended learning outcomes of the programme are well defined and publicly accessible</p> <p>1.3. whether the intended learning outcomes correspond to the type and level of qualification provided by the programme</p> <p><b>1.4. whether the intended learning outcomes are based on academic or professional requirements (standards), public needs and the demands of the labour market and contribute to the employability of the graduates</b></p> <p>1.5. whether the (academic) study programme is related to research (procurement of scientific methods in theory and practice, research based teaching)</p> <p><b>1.6. whether the profile and objectives of the programme</b></p>

	<p><b>comply with internationally accepted standards</b></p> <p><b>1.7. the international dimension of the programme</b></p> <p>1.8. whether the qualification of the academic staff is adequate with regard to profile and objectives of the programme.</p>
<p><b>2. Curriculum</b> Curriculum and teaching and learning methods</p>	<p>2.1. whether the curriculum of the programme is adequately structured to achieve the intended learning outcomes</p> <p>2.2. whether the curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and methodological expertise of the relevant discipline(s)</p> <p>2.3. whether the learning experience is organised in a way that takes the diversity of students and their needs into account, employs appropriate student-centred teaching and learning methods and encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process.</p>
<p><b>3. Student assessment</b> Organisation of student assessments</p>	<p>3.1. how the assessment of intended learning outcomes is organised</p> <p>3.2. whether the amount and requirements of assessments are adequate with regard to the intended learning outcomes</p> <p>3.3. whether the requirements of the thesis reflect the level of the degree</p> <p>3.4. whether the assessment criteria are transparent and used in an consistent way</p> <p>3.5. whether the staff undertaking assessments is adequately qualified</p> <p>3.6. whether examination regulations exist</p> <p>3.7. whether they provide clear and fair regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating conditions.</p>
<p><b>4. Organisation of the study programme</b> Implementation of the programme</p>	<p>4.1. the appropriateness of entry qualifications</p> <p>4.2. the regulations for the recognition of qualifications (i.e. Lisbon Convention)</p> <p>4.3. whether the organisation of the study process allows the programme to be carried out in such a way that the intended learning outcomes will be achieved and whether the organisation of the study process also takes the diversity of students and their needs into account</p> <p>4.4. how the implementation of the programme is</p>

	<p>managed (roles and responsibilities)</p> <p>4.5. whether the workload of the programme is adequate with respect to the necessity to reach the intended learning outcomes in the scheduled time frame</p> <p>4.6. how the student life cycle is organised (i. e. all (organisational) relationships between the student and the institution from enrolment to graduation)</p> <p>4.7. whether the care services and student advisory services are suitable</p> <p>4.8. in case of a cooperation with internal and external partners: how the cooperation is organised.</p>
<p><b>5. Resources</b> Deployment of resources (finances, personnel, facilities) to sustain HEI programmes</p>	<p>5.1. the sustainability of funding and financial management</p> <p>5.2. whether the number and qualification of academic staff (full-time and part-time) is adequate to ensure intended learning outcomes</p> <p>5.3. which strategies and processes for the staff recruiting and staff development are used</p> <p>5.4. whether amount and quality of facilities and equipment allow the provision of the programme (library, laboratories, teaching rooms, IT equipment)</p> <p>5.5. whether the amount and quality of the resources provided are adequate to reach the objectives of the programme.</p>
<p><b>6. Quality assurance</b> Internal and external quality assurance of the program</p>	<p>6.1. how study programmes are designed and implemented and how their improvement is organised</p> <p>6.2. whether a quality assurance concept of the programme is available and how it is connected to the quality assurance system of the institution</p> <p>6.3. what kind of quality assurance processes and instruments for programmes are implemented</p> <p>6.4. whether quality assurance is regularly, systematically and effectively used for quality enhancement</p> <p>6.5. whether quality feedback loops are closed</p> <p>6.6. how the persons responsible for the programme systematically collect, analyse and use relevant information</p> <p>6.7. whether relevant programme information for students and prospective students is provided</p> <p>6.8. how stakeholders (students, teachers, administration, employers) are involved in quality assurance</p>

## **Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in United States**

A social worker, practicing in the United States, usually requires a doctoral degree (Ph.D or DSW), master's degree (MSW) or a bachelor's degree (BSW or BASW) in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited programme to receive a license in most states. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, is the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States. Its members include over 750 accredited baccalaureate and master's degree social work programmes, as well as individual social work educators, practitioners, and agencies dedicated to advancing quality social work education. Through its many initiatives, activities, and centres, CSWE supports quality social work education and provides opportunities for leadership and professional development, so that social workers play a central role in achieving the profession's goals of social and economic justice.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's level social work programmes. The educational policy and the accreditation standards are conceptually linked to each other. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation standards are derived from the Educational policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work programme at the baccalaureate (B) or master's (M) level.

In 2008, as in related health and human service professions, the CSWE policy moved from a model of curriculum design focused on content (what students should be taught) and structure (the format and organization of educational components) to one focused on student learning outcomes. A competency-based approach refers to identifying and assessing what students demonstrate in practice. In social work this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy.

The nine Social Work Competencies are listed below while noting that programmes may add competencies that are consistent with their mission and goals and respond to their context. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviours that integrate these components.

**Competency 1:** Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

**Competency 2:** Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

**Competency 3:** Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

**Competency 4:** Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

**Competency 5:** Engage in Policy Practice

**Competency 6:** Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 7:** Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 8:** Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 9:** Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Therefore, EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparable outcomes across programmes with a level of flexibility that encourages programmes to differentiate. EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design:

- (1) Programme mission and goals:** The context encompasses the mission of the institution in which the programme is located and the needs and opportunities associated with the setting and programme options. Programmes are further influenced by their practice communities, which are informed by their historical, political, economic, environmental, social, cultural, demographic, local, regional, and global contexts and by the ways they elect to engage these factors. Additional factors include new knowledge, technology, and ideas that may have a bearing on contemporary and future social work education, practice, and research.
- (2) Explicit curriculum:** The explicit curriculum constitutes the programme's formal educational structure and includes the courses and field education used for each of its programme options. Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts, which provide the intellectual basis for the professional curriculum and inform its design. Using a competency-based education framework, the explicit curriculum prepares students for professional practice at the baccalaureate and master's levels. Baccalaureate programs prepare students for generalist practice. Master's programmes prepare students for generalist practice and specialized practice. The explicit curriculum, including field education, may include forms of technology as a component of the curriculum.
- (3) Implicit curriculum:** The implicit curriculum refers to the learning environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented. It is composed of the following elements:
  - a. the programme's commitment to diversity;
  - b. admissions policies and procedures;
  - c. advisement, retention, and termination policies;
  - d. student participation in governance;

- e. faculty;
- f. administrative structure;
- g. resources.

The implicit curriculum is manifested through policies that are fair and transparent in substance and implementation, the qualifications of the faculty, and the adequacy and fair distribution of resources. The culture of human interchange; the spirit of enquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting, inform the student's learning and development. The implicit curriculum is as important as the explicit curriculum in shaping the professional character and competence of the programme's graduates. Heightened awareness of the importance of the implicit curriculum promotes an educational culture that is congruent with the values of the profession and the mission, goals, and context of the program.

**(4) Assessment:** Programmes should engage in multidimensional assessment. Programmes are expected to assess competence by identifying the dimension(s) associated with the competency and measuring students' performance at that level. Each competency description contains information that corresponds to the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes necessary to demonstrate competence. Behaviours are also required in assessment but are used in real or simulated practice settings. At least two dimensions per competency must be assessed.

### **Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), Canada**

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education – “Association Canadienne pour la formation en travail social” (CASWE-ACFTS), through its Standards for Accreditation, accredits Baccalaureate and Master level social work programmes. These standards are normative in nature and support academic excellence for professional education, as well as the relevance of education programmes to professional practice. In linking social work theory, research, policy and practice, social work education is grounded by intended learning objectives for students. CASWE aims at strengthening both education and the profession, a much needed development in a time when social work identity and domain have been increasingly challenged. However, the policies and standards are not aimed at uniformity of social work education; instead, they are intended to promote the uniqueness and diversity of social work programmes across Canada and enable them to better respond to their respective contexts and partners.

CASWE defines principles guiding the accreditation of social work education programmes.

The accreditation standards are organized in four domains:

1. Programme mission and goals;
2. Programme governance, structure and resources;
3. Programme content: Curriculum and field education; and

#### 4. Programme evaluation/assessment.

Alike with CSWE, CASWE has defined a set of Principles Guiding Accreditation of Social Work Education Programmes.

### **Selected Area 2. Psychology**

#### **Overview**

*Psychology is the study of behavior and the mind. There are different types of psychology, such as cognitive, forensic, social, and developmental psychology. A person with a condition that affects their mental health may benefit from assessment and treatment with a psychologist.*

In Europe, the recognition of university education programmes in Psychology is intended to meet the requirements of the European Certificate in Psychology (henceforth EuroPsy) set by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA)<sup>3</sup>. This recognition is usually undertaken by a national accreditation authority and is applicable to countries having EFPA Member Associations and legal recognition of the title psychologist. This means that the legal authority (government Ministry or a professional organisation with legal powers and responsibilities) has defined requirements which entitle the person to use the title psychologist.

Universities located outside Europe who are aiming to get the European programmatic accreditation are referring to accrediting agencies who adopt special accreditation criteria for Humanities and Social Sciences programmes based on the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). For instance, Beirut Arab University's Psychology programme is accredited by the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) and USEK Psychology programme is accredited by Evalag.

In the United States, the American Psychological Association (APA) Commission on Accreditation is a specialized/professional accreditor. The APA accreditation only extends to specific doctoral graduate programmes, predoctoral internships and postdoctoral residencies in professional psychology. The Commission on Accreditation does not accredit master's level or undergraduate level programmes in psychology.

In Australia, the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council conducts accreditation activities that ensure graduates of accredited bachelor / master / doctoral programmes receive high quality education and are well equipped to employ their psychological knowledge and skills in the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Leading Federation of National Psychologists Associations in Europe

## **International Programme Accreditation by the German Accreditation Agency, AHPGS<sup>4</sup>**

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organisation which concentrates on the accreditation of Bachelor/Master programmes, as well as internal quality control and assurance systems, at universities and other institutions of higher education. The AHPGS works with special competence in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in other adjacent and related disciplines.

AHPGS standards which are adopted by the German Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences Programmes are taken here as an example for quality management of psychology programmes. By implementing accreditation and evaluation procedures, AHPGS aims to achieve increased transparency and equity among higher education institutions and their study programmes, at both national and international levels. The Agency specializes in the accreditation of study programmes and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in numerous educational fields, with a particular focus on health and social sciences. Its work focuses on guaranteeing uniform, internationally-competitive standards for a wide range of degrees by supporting quality assurance and development.

The following criteria of the AHPGS are implemented for the accreditation of study programmes at foreign higher education institutions. These criteria are based on the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

<b>1. Aims and Implementation</b>	<p><b>1.1 The study programme pursues specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and extraprofessional/interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.</b></p> <p>1.2 The learning outcomes of the programme are defined. They correspond to the standards of qualifications attributed to the pursued academic degree.</p> <p>1.3 The objectives of the study programme have been developed in accordance with the overall strategy of the University.</p> <p>1.4 The national legal requirements regulating the establishment of the study programme have been observed.</p> <p><b>1.5 The scope and the form of programme-related national and international cooperation's with various higher education institutions, companies and/or other organizations are described, and the significant agreements are recorded.</b></p>
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<sup>4</sup> <https://ahpgs.de/en/english/>

<p><b>2. Structure of the Study Programme</b></p>	<p>2.1 The study programme aims at providing students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences.</p> <p>2.2 The study programme has a modular structure that is closely linked to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)<sup>1</sup> and a module-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules contain all necessary information, as required in the ECTS User's Guide (particularly with regard to the details about learning content and outcomes, methods of learning, prerequisites for the allocation of ECTS credits, workload).</p> <p>2.3 The combination and the succession of the modules of the study programme are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier).</p> <p>2.4 It is a student-centered study programme, which encourages students' to take an active role in creating the education process. In the course of studies, students receive the support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general.</p> <p>2.5 The arrangement of internships in the study programme allows acquisition of ECTS credits. Provided that the programme offers exchange mobility gaps, they are integrated into students' curriculum.</p> <p>2.6 Study programmes with special profile requirements (for instance, dual, part-time, occupational or distance learning study programs) comply with particular aspects that are considered appropriate and proportionate. These particular aspects are continuously observed in the study programme.</p>
<p><b>3. Admission and Feasibility</b></p>	<p>3.1 The admission requirements and, if applied, student selection procedures are specified. They correspond to the standards of the study programme.</p> <p>3.2 Feasibility of the study programme is guaranteed. The amount of student workload is appropriate.</p> <p>3.3 Student support services, as well as specialized and general consultations, are provided by the University in a sufficient and appropriate manner.</p> <p>3.4 The University guarantees that students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses receive compensation with regard to the admission procedure, performance evaluation measures and the general requirements of the study process.</p> <p>3.5 As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study programme.</p>
<p><b>4. Examination</b></p>	<p>4.1 Examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged</p>

<p><b>System and Transparency</b></p>	<p>qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. The requirements for students' performance in examinations are regulated and published. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organization, is appropriate.</p> <p>4.2 The University has documented and published the regulations concerning the assessment, conversion and recognition of competences, credits and periods of study acquired and completed by students at other HEIs. Furthermore, the University applies a system of assessment, conversion and recognition of students' achievements acquired in a non-formal and self-study way.</p> <p>4.3 The University guarantees that students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses receive compensation with regard to scheduling and formal requirements of the final and course related performance evaluations. The respective regulations and documented and provided.</p> <p>4.4 The University documents and publishes information regarding the study programme (study plan, process of education, admission requirements, examination regulations, compensation measures for students with disabilities and other disadvantages) and its various activities in a clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and readily accessible way.</p>
<p><b>5. Teaching Staff and Material Equipment</b></p>	<p>5.1 Professionalism and the sufficient number of human resources assure the successful implementation of the study programme. Qualifications of the teaching personnel correspond to the requirements of the study programme. Recruitment and appointment on teaching positions are implemented in a fair and transparent manner. Interdisciplinary links to other study programmes are taken into consideration.</p> <p>5.2 Measures for the professional and personal development of the teaching personnel are provided in a fair and transparent manner.</p> <p>5.3 The HEI has appropriate funding to provide the necessary learning resources and material equipment required in the study programme.</p> <p>5.4 Qualitative and quantitative sufficiency of the equipment and space resources assures the successful implementation of the study programme.</p>
<p><b>6. Quality Assurance</b></p>	<p>6.1 The University has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in the education process as well as teaching and research, which is publicly available and which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study programme.</p>

	<p>6.2 The University carries out internal and external quality assurance procedures on a cyclical basis.</p> <p>6.3 Quality assurance is implemented by internal stakeholders, while involving also external stakeholders.</p> <p>6.4 The University collects, analyses and applies the information regarding the key performance indicators, the profile of the student population, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student' satisfaction with the study program, learning resources and students support mechanisms, career paths of graduates as well as other relevant feedback from different stakeholders.</p> <p>6.5 This information is used for the effective management, on-going monitoring and review of the study programme, as well as for the continuous development of both the study programme and the University in general.</p> <p>6.6 Quality evaluation results and development plans are communicated to all stakeholders involved. Revised programme specifications are published.</p>
<p><b>7. Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities</b></p>	<p>7.1 The University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.</p>

### **The American Psychological Association (APA) Commission on Accreditation in United States**

The APA Commission on Accreditation is a specialized/professional accreditor. This means that APA accreditation only extends to specific doctoral graduate programs, predoctoral internships and postdoctoral residencies in professional psychology. The Commission on Accreditation does not accredit master's level or undergraduate level programs in psychology.

The following programs are subject to accreditation by APA:

- Doctoral graduate programmes in: Clinical psychology, Counselling psychology, School psychology.
- Combinations of two or three of those areas: Predoctoral internships in the above areas may be accredited, Postdoctoral residencies in traditional (clinical, counselling, school) or specialty areas of professional psychology are also accredited.

### **The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, Australia**

APAC's mission is to protect the public by conducting accreditation activities that ensure graduates of accredited programs receive high quality education and are well equipped to employ their psychological knowledge and skills in the community. This includes, in

particular, being sufficiently qualified and competent to meet the registration requirements of the Psychology Board of Australia under the Health Practitioner Regulation Law.

### Standard Statement Criteria

Domain	Set of statements to ensure that:
1. Domain: Public Safety	Public safety is assured
2. Domain: Academic Governance and Quality Assurance	Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective
3. Domain: Programme of Study	Programme of study design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required graduate competencies
4. Domain: the Student Experience	Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support
5. Domain: Assessment	Assessment is fair, reliable and valid

### Selected Area 3. Journalism

This third area Journalism is selected to provide an additional source of information on the accreditation standards of Humanities and Social Sciences Programmes. It mainly refers to the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) is the agency responsible for the evaluation of professional journalism and mass communications programmes in colleges and universities.

#### Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) in United States

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) is the agency responsible for the evaluation of professional journalism and mass communications programmes in colleges and universities. ACEJMC does not define specific curricula, courses or methods of instruction. It recognizes that each institution has its unique situation, cultural, social or religious context, mission and resources, and this uniqueness is an asset to be safeguarded. The Council judges programmes against the objectives that units and institutions set for themselves and against the standards that the Council sets forth for preparing students for professional careers in journalism and mass communications in the United States and in other nations. ACEJMC applies its standards and indicators in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and, where appropriate, with religious or cultural prescriptions and practices:

Standard	Statement of the basic principle of the standard*
<b>Mission, Governance and Administration</b>	The policies and practices of the unit ensure that it has an effectively and fairly administered working and learning

	environment.
<b>Curriculum and Instruction</b>	<b>The unit provides a curriculum and instruction, whether on-site or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse global and domestic society.</b>
<b>Diversity and Inclusiveness</b>	<b>The unit has an inclusive programme that values domestic and global diversity, and serves and reflects society.</b>
<b>Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty</b>	The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission.
<b>Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity</b>	With unit support, faculty members contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that contributes to their development.
<b>Student Services</b>	The unit provides students with the support and services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their programme of study.
<b>Resources, Facilities and Equipment</b>	The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.
<b>Professional and Public Service</b>	The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions, fulfilling obligations to its community, alumni and the greater public.
<b>Assessment of Learning Outcomes</b>	The unit regularly assesses student learning and applies results to improve curriculum and instruction.

\*For each standard, there are predefined indicators and evidence that support to document how the institution will meet the expectations.

ACEJMC requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;

- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

## Concluding remarks - All areas in Humanities and Social Sciences

Based on the bibliographic review, below are some concluding remarks:

- It is essential to preserve the Humanities and Social Sciences programmes and provide equal importance to the evaluation and enhancement of these programmes especially that this field helps us to reserve the great accomplishments of the past, helps us to understand the world we live in, and give us tools to imagine the future.
- There is a need to nationally define or adopt a set of competencies / principles guiding the accreditation of specific programmes in Humanities and Social Sciences
- It is important to review the entry of graduates to related professions such as Social Work, Psychology, and Journalism. This shall be achieved with the collaboration of related authorities and associations.
- The Core Standards for the Evaluation of Programs (Ref. WP5) are considered to be a robust foundation for elaborating this field's standards with few additional considerations, mainly:
  - The compliance with nationally and/or internationally accepted principles or standards highly reflecting the human and social aspects of the programme.
  - The professional and extraprofessional / interdisciplinary aspects as they will be the basis to attract more students to the field.

## Standards for Evaluation of Humanities and Social Sciences Programmes

This document proposes adopting the below standards for the Humanities and Social Sciences programmes. These standards consist of the core standards for the evaluation of programmes adopted in TLQAA+ WP5 and additional highlighted standards specific to the field.

Programmes must show documented evidence of compliance with each of the standards:

### **Standard 1. Mission, Goals, and Governance**

### **Standard 2. Curriculum**

### **Standard 3. Student Services**

### **Standard 4. Assessment and Student Success**

### **Standard 5. Faculty**

### **Standard 6. Budget, Resources, and Facilities**

### **Standard 7. Continuous Improvement**

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### **Standard 1. Mission, Goals, and Governance**

- 1.1 The program has clearly defined, comprehensive mission that includes measurable programme goals.
- 1.2 The programme's mission and goals are consistent with mission of the school and the University including, where applicable, contribution to strategic initiatives.
- 1.3 The programme has an organizational structure that supports the achievement of its mission, and the success of its students, faculty and staff.
- 1.4 The programme reveals an international dimension and is compliant with nationally and/or internationally accepted principles or standards highly reflecting the human and social aspects of this field.
- 1.5 The programme is related to research (procurement of scientific methods in theory and practice, research based teaching).
- 1.6 The programme shall prepare the students to adapt to changes taking place in their fields of study including the introduction of computer-aided systems and the multicultural dimension.

### **Standard 2. Curriculum**

- 2.1 Program provides broad, well-integrated knowledge of the discipline, is responsive to changes in the field, and exhibits a curricular design that ensures graduates demonstrate disciplinary knowledge appropriate to their degree.
- 2.2 The academic program has specific learning outcomes that are designed to meet the

program's intended purpose.

- Learning outcomes of the program are well defined and publicly accessible.
- Learning outcomes are appropriate for the degree designation (i.e., associate degree vs. bachelor's degree vs. master's degree vs. doctoral degree or the level in the LQF when applicable).
- Course requirements and delivery mechanisms provide sufficient opportunities for students to meet learning outcomes.
- The programme learning outcomes address the major issues and concerns in the discipline or professional area.
- The programme learning outcomes cover professional and extraprofessional / interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences necessary for qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

2.3 The learning outcomes defined for the courses build together the programme learning outcomes.

2.4 The learning experience in the Humanities and Social Sciences programmes is organised in a way that takes the diversity of students and their needs into account, employs appropriate student-centred teaching and learning methods and encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process.

2.5 The workload of the programme is adequate with respect to the necessity to reach the intended learning outcomes in the scheduled time frame.

2.6 The programme curriculum shall be aligned with the Lebanese Qualifications Framework when applicable.

2.7 The curriculum shall allocate spaces to cover the broader possible schools of thought as well as to acquire digital, linguistic and multicultural competences.

### **Standard 3. Student Services**

1.1 The institution provides student administrative services according to established and publicly declared policies in the following areas: Recruitment, Admission, Financial aid, Scholarship applications, Transfer credit and prior learning evaluation, and Student records management.

1.2 The process for the evaluation and recognition of prior learning shall be documented and public.

1.3 The institution provides student support services adequate to the suitable organisation of the student life cycle from enrolment till graduation, including:

- Advising and assessment as needed
- Advising and assessment for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning
- Academic support for students with disabilities and other learning needs
- Physical or mental health counselling
- Orientation services
- Career services

- 1.4 The programme has in place remedies, where necessary, to ensure student progression and completion.
- 1.5 The programme routinely evaluates the effectiveness of its support services including advising.
- 1.6 Based on the evaluation results, the Programme makes appropriate adjustments necessary to support student achievement.

#### **Standard 4. Assessment and Student Success**

- 4.1 The programme has an appropriate number of students to ensure viability
- 4.2 The retention rate is sufficiently high rate to ensure viable completion numbers
- 4.3 The programme assesses and evaluates student achievement of the Program learning outcomes rigorously through direct and indirect methods.
- 4.4 Formative and summative assessments inform faculty members and students of student progress in the programme. Assessment results are communicated in ways that enable improvements.
- 4.5 The examination regulations exist and provide clear and fair regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating conditions.

#### **Standard 5. Faculty**

- 5.1 The number, qualifications, and credentials of faculty members are adequate.
- 5.2 Faculty resources are sufficient to meet the teaching, scholarship, service, and advising needs of the program.
- 5.3 The strategies and processes for the faculty recruitment are well defined.
- 5.4 Faculty development is assured as appropriate to the teaching in the discipline and advancing disciplinary knowledge.
- 5.5 The program regularly evaluates the effectiveness of faculty with respect to departmental, college, and institutional criteria. The evaluation includes teaching effectiveness, evidence of research, and service to the institution. The evaluation also includes scholarly activity, grants and awards.

#### **Standard 6. Budget, Resources, and Facilities**

- 6.1 The program's allocated resources are sufficient to support its goals and objectives.  
The resources include:
  - Financial resources
  - Human resources
  - Physical facilities (e.g., classrooms, laboratories) under the disposal of the student population and the programs offered.
  - Library resources and services support
  - Technology resources (e.g., hardware, software and professional development) to advance teaching and learning

- Other resources specific to the program

6.2 Policies are in place to ensure the safety and security of students, faculty and staff.

## **Standard 7. Continuous Improvement**

7.1 The program engages in periodic self-review, has established evaluation procedures, and shows evidence of improvements based on these processes.

7.2 Multiple direct and indirect assessments are used to inform continuous program improvement.

- Assessments are linked to the program's mission and goals
- Assessments include student performance in courses, labs and clinical experiences, and alumni performance in the workforce
- Faculty members are involved in defining the expected outcomes and in determining whether these outcomes are achieved
- Assessments provide faculty with the opportunity to examine student performance in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

7.3 The program engages in periodic self-evaluation, has established evaluation procedures, and shows evidence of improvements based on these processes.

7.4 Faculty and administrators regularly review the effectiveness of the assessment system.

7.5 Assessment results are available to stakeholders, including faculty members and students.

#### IV. Sectoral Qualifications Framework

In workpackage 1 of the project, the LQF developed within the ETF project has been evaluated and adopted after minor changes. In this section, the descriptors of levels 6 and 7 are shaped to the **Psychology** field. The following table provides these descriptors for knowledge, know-how and social skills.

	Knowledge	Know-how	Social skills
	Has in-depth knowledge in a sphere of work or study requiring a critical understanding of theories and principles applicable to a range of professional situations and diverse studies.	Can devise technical, methodological and conceptual solutions and demonstrate expertise and innovative ability to resolve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialist sphere of work or study, using advanced skills.	Can implement unpredictable complex technical or professional activities or projects, including responsibilities in terms of taking decisions in professional or study contexts requiring one to adapt/adaptation to new technologies and methods and to new forms of organisation. Can take on responsibilities in connection with individual and collective professional development.
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Define key concepts of the different domains of psychology.</li> <li>-Distinguish the different theoretical perspectives of social psychology, develop conceptual skills of communication and put into practice group functioning.</li> <li>-Recognize the foundations of the psychology of child, adolescent and adult development, and highlight the relative characteristics of each stage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Rigorously adopt a methodological and statistical analysis of the scientific approach in psychology, which combines the epistemological, ethical, technological and static principles.</li> <li>-Validate the clinical approach, maintenance procedures and clinical examination and the method of testing at the level of the child, adolescent and adult.</li> <li>-Adopt the models and methods of consulting advice and guidance toward education, training and careers.</li> <li>-Analyze through cognition, biology and neurobiology, the psyche and human behaviour, normal and pathological in its environment.</li> <li>-Put into practice the acquired knowledge and evaluate training.</li> <li>-Put into practice the fundamental concepts of ergonomics while placing them as priority work health and worktime relations and analyzing sociologically the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop psychological management of management issues, developments of labor and their consequences.</li> <li>-Correlate the basic notions of psychoanalysis and target the relationship between theory and analytical practice in clinical settings.</li> <li>-Examine the personality across the different theoretical and psychometric perspectives of psychology.</li> <li>-Delineate psychopathology existent from early childhood to adulthood.</li> </ul>

		institutional environment.	
level 7	Has highly specialised knowledge, some of which are in the vanguard of knowledge in a sphere of work or study, based on original ideas and/or research. Has critical awareness of knowledge in a certain field and at the interface of several fields.	Can solve problems relating to research and innovation, to develop new knowledge and new procedures by mobilising highly specialised skills. Can integrate knowledge from different areas and communicate the knowledge and the results of activities with specialists and non-specialists.	Can act on complex, unpredictable professional or study contexts that require new strategic approaches. Can make judgements and exercise responsibilities, considering the social and ethical aspects associated with the decisions. Can take on responsibilities to contribute to knowledge and professional practices and/or to revise the strategic performance of team.
	-Recognize the key concepts, methods and models of psychology in the clinical, professional and familial practice. -Examine and define mental and addictive disorders through various psychopathological perspectives.	-Adopt an appropriate a methodological and statistical analysis of the scientific approach in psychology, which combines the epistemological, ethical, technological and static principles. -Put into practice the acquired learning and evaluate the training. -Analyze, starting from cognition and neuropsychology, the psyche and the behavior of the human, normal and pathological, in their stressful and traumatic environment.	-Put into practice the psychological assessments in a school setting. -Examine workplace productivity and management and employee working styles. -Solve problems in the workplace in order to improve the quality of life.

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