

**External Examiners' Report  
Ternopil Academy of National Economy**

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1. On July 5-9, 2002 we visited the Ternopil Academy of National Economy (TANE). We talked with the outgoing and incoming Rectors, a Vice-Rector, the Dean of the Ukrainian-Dutch Faculty, several lecturers, and students. As a result, we are aware of the problems that teachers and students at TANE face. We read the internship reports of the 28 students who took the final exam for the bachelor's degree. The meetings have been very informative and all those involved were willing to share their views with us.
2. It is admirable that TANE has found internship opportunities for all bachelor students. Obviously, TANE is very committed to its students, while the students are well motivated to study. We understood that this was the first time that bachelor students were required to submit a paper based on their internship. This is a clear indication of the continuous progress that TANE makes in improving its curriculum and increasing the level of education.
3. Generally, both teachers and students have done good work. Nonetheless, some further improvements seem possible. We observe a great potential to realize this and we are very confident that the gradual process towards implementing western standards at TANE will continue.
4. The following points need to be addressed to continue the ongoing process of further improvements:
  - (a) Most of the internship reports lack a clear structure and do not always include a conclusion, while many of them include trivial and irrelevant details including names, street addresses, phone and fax numbers, and email addresses.
  - (b) If students present conclusions, they are often trivial, do not follow from the text, or are not justified as such. For example, a student concluded that the company where she did her internship is a successful business, because it makes profits, whereas other companies make losses or go bust. This implies too simplistic a criterion for a company to be successful.
  - (c) Students make statements but do not always underpin them with arguments. For example, a student presented certain marketing measures as very effective or hardly effective without any indication of the underlying criteria.

(d) Only few students identify corruption and bribes as impediments to a healthy business climate. Generally, the awareness of this major problem seems limited.

5. On the basis of our discussions with the staff we are convinced that TANE is able and willing to solve the problems observed above. The papers and our discussions with staff and students give rise to concrete recommendations that may assist TANE in its ongoing efforts to improve its educational level:

(a) The character of the dissertations is unclear. On the one hand they seem to be intended as research papers. On the other hand they seem to be a kind of internship reports. Therefore, the dissertations seem hybrid papers.

*Recommendation 1:*

*Make clear to students whether they are expected to write an internship report or a research paper.*

(b) We have understood that written guidelines are available for students writing a master's thesis. However, similar guidelines for students writing an internship report seem to be lacking. Moreover, students seem to get little guidance, if any, during their internship.

*Recommendation 2:*

*a. Provide the students with guidelines before they begin their work and offer them guidance where appropriate during their work.*

*b. Consider organizing a seminar for the staff about guidelines and guidance.*

(c) The papers did not contain declarations of mentors in the companies/organizations where the students did their internships.

*Recommendation 3:*

*a. The organizations where students fulfil their internships should assign a mentor to the interns whenever possible.*

*b. Mentors should provide the students' professors with a declaration about or an evaluation of the interns' activities.*

(d) The English of most of the students needs to be improved. In some cases it is unclear what the student is trying to say.

*Recommendation 4:*

*Improving the language of the dissertations could be made part of the English curriculum. This may be done by requiring the students to improve the language of their papers under the guidance of an English teacher and to resubmit the revised papers. However, the language used should not affect the evaluation or grading of the papers.*

On behalf of the External Examiners,

M. Peter van der Hoek

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