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*Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and
Innovation in Romanian Universities Project*

University of Medicine and Pharmacy (UMP)

“Grigore T. Popa”, Iași

EVALUATION REPORT

November 2012

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1. Introduction

This report is the result of the evaluation of *the University of Medicine and Pharmacy (UPF) "Grigore T. Popa" in Iași*. The evaluation took place in 2012 in the framework of the project "Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and Innovation in Romanian Universities", which aims at strengthening core elements of Romanian universities, such as their autonomy and administrative competences, by improving their quality assurance and management proficiency.

The evaluations are taking place within the context of major reforms in the Romanian higher education system, and specifically in accordance with the provisions of the 2011 Law on Education and the various related normative acts.

Whilst the institutional evaluations are taking place in the context of an overall reform, each university is assessed by an independent IEP team, using the IEP methodology described below.

1.1. The Institutional Evaluation Programme

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA) that offers evaluations to support the participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic management and internal quality culture. The IEP is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

The distinctive features of the Institutional Evaluation Programme are:

- A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
- A European perspective
- A peer-review approach
- A support to improvement

The focus of the IEP is the institution as a whole and not the individual study programmes or units. It focuses upon:

- Decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management
- Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms.



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The evaluation is guided by four key questions, which are based on a 'fitness for (and of) purpose' approach:

- What is the institution trying to do?
- How is the institution trying to do it?
- How does it know it works?
- How does the institution change in order to improve?

1.2. University of Medicine and Pharmacy (UMP) "Grigore T. Popa", Iași and the national context

The first medical school in Romania was created in Iași, in 1879, within the first modern university in the country. The faculty of medicine became a jurisdictionally independent Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy. Since 1990, the institution operates as the University of Medicine and Pharmacy (UMF) and bears the name of one of its faculty members, Grigore T. Popa, a world renowned scientist.

Since 1965, UMF comprises the faculty of medicine, the faculty of dentistry, and the faculty of pharmacy whilst the faculty of bioengineering was founded in 1994. According to the Self Evaluation Report (SER), since its inception, UMF has held its position at the forefront of medical and health sciences education and research within the national realm. Although limited during the communist regime, UMF's international outreach in both research and education started to develop after 1990 and was a strategic focus ever since. Under the national education law of 2011, UMF was classified as a teaching and advanced research university.

UMF is a public institution with legal personality, governed by the Romanian Constitution, national education laws and the university charter. It is the only medical university in the northeast region of Romania, located in the city of Iași, one of the largest municipalities in Romania and the centre of the northeast region of Romania. UMF's main campus is located in the city centre whilst several other buildings for research and education, as well as student housing are located in the Iași urban area.

The northeast region is the largest and most populated region of Romania. However, the region's GDP is only 71.7% of the national level. Iași is the largest university centre in the region. Thirty-three percent of the region's contribution to the national GDP comes from the education and health sectors. At the national level, only 8% of the unemployed hold a university degree. Due to low costs and the highly qualified workforce, the northeast region of Romania is considered to be one of the most appealing areas for investment in Europe (as per the National Agency for Employment, National Statistics Institute). One of the 10 largest employers in the city of Iași, UMF is also a significant driving force in the region's economy and development.



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UMF's research activities take place within nationally accredited research structures comprising two research platforms, 10 research centres and laboratories. UMF has a total of 1446 academic staff, and 315 administrative staff. The number of students registered for undergraduate degrees, Masters, PhDs and residency studies is 11106.

1.3. The self-evaluation process

The self-evaluation report of UMF along with the appendices was sent to the evaluation team (hereafter team) at the end of May 2012. The documentation received was of a very good quality and provided a clear account and introduction to the university.

The self-evaluation group consisted of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Radu Iliescu (President), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lacramioara Serban (Academic Secretary), Prof. Dr. Irina Draga Caruntu, Prof. Dr. Carmen Hanganu, Prof. Dr. Carmen Vulpoi, Prof. Dr. Anca Galaction, Prof. Dr. Lenuta Profire, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laurentiu Sorodoc (members), Dana Zainescu (management representative), Alexandru Barbu (students' representative), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dragos Pieptu (Vice-Rector, contact person) and Mihaela Vacariu Sirota (International Relations Secretary).

The group directly collaborated with members of top-level management, members of the administration of each faculty, members of the academic (education and research staff) and students, via the students' representative.

The team is grateful for the significant effort of the self-evaluation group in developing the SER. The team agree with the self-evaluation group's observation that this process has been an important step for further developing UMF's self-evaluation culture and in building a quality culture within the institution.

The visits of the team took place from 24 to 26 June 2012 and from 28 to 31 October 2012. In between the visits UMF provided the team with additional documentation requested by the team.

1.4. The evaluation-team

The evaluation team consisted of:

- Professor Winfried Müller, former Rector, University of Klagenfurt, Austria, Team Chair
- Andy Gibbs, Edinburgh Napier University, UK, Team coordinator
- Professor Lucija Čok, former Minister, former Rector, University of Primorska, Slovenia
- Professor Sezer Şener Komsuoğlu, Rector, Kocaeli Üniversitesi, Turkey



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- Fernando Miguel Galan Palomares, Student, University of Cantabria, Spain.

The team thanks the Rector Prof. Vasile Astărăstoae from UMF for the warm welcome and the hospitality as well as for the useful and open discussions. Our special thanks go to Vice Rector Assoc. Prof. Dragoș Pieptu who was UMF's liaison person and who prepared and organised all our meetings during the visits. The team also thanks Mrs. Mihaela Vacariu Sirotta from UMF's international office and Mr. Octavian Popa from UEFISCDI for assisting the team with respect to many organisational details.



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2. Governance and institutional decision-making

UMF has a strong and committed leadership. This is evidenced not only by their effective planning and delivery of strategy over the last six years but also their ability to continue striving for their vision despite difficult operational circumstances. Expressions of support for the leadership of the university were present in all of the teams meetings.

UMF has a detailed strategic plan in place for the period 2012 – 2015 that relates strongly to its mission and vision. Many proposed actions have already been realised which reflects effective strategic performance. These include key actions in curricula and cross curricula design, scientific research and service to society.

The plan was developed in a collaborative way and involved and engaged staff across the whole university. The written plan would benefit from elaboration in some areas, specifically some areas of development such as specific strategy for development of teaching and learning and internationalisation. The inclusion of benchmarks, intermediate indicators and monitoring instruments would also assist in measuring movement towards strategic achievement. The team recommend that the university define performance indicators and clearly identify benchmarks drawn from comparable institutions against all goals and objectives in the strategic plan 2012 – 2015 and regularly monitor progress detailed in an action plan.

The university reports that the potential to realise the goals of the strategic plan is inhibited rather than facilitated by high levels of nationally coordinated, controlled and supervision from the state. This adversely impacts on the autonomy of the university. For example, the university has demonstrated positive financial management during the six-year period identified within the SER. This is particularly evidenced by the increase of income through non-state streams and the creation of a surplus each year. However the university is unable to direct this surplus towards meeting its strategic aims and lacks autonomy in the use of budget surplus and independently earned income to achieve strategic goals. The team recommends that the university continue to make efforts to persuade decision-makers to review institutional autonomy that combines accountability and responsibility with the independence to manage strategy, budget and procurement.

In terms of governance, the university has revised the structure and the role of the senate in line with the recent legislative changes. Whilst its terms of reference and *modus operandi* have been agreed and formalised within a contract, the role of senate in action according to the new law is not yet well defined. The team noted that the senate, according to the SER, generally approves strategic and operational management proposals and that this leaves scope for them to also disapprove of these actions. Whilst this situation has not yet arisen in practice the team believes it would be prudent to consider the implications of this in advance. This belief was reinforced by the team hearing representatives of the senate describing the senate's role as "controlling the rector". This appears to give priority to the senate acting as a supervisory body for the rector whereas taking a greater responsibility in leading and



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developing strategy may more effectively enable the university to realise its mission. The senate needs to be proactive whilst at the same time building a co-operative relationship with the rector focused on strategic planning for the institution

Having said this, the size of the senate may inhibit strategic decision-making as it may be too big with too many subcommittees. Some of these subcommittees can be merged, for example at the consultative level of postgraduate studies, taking into consideration that there is already a doctoral school operating. The effectiveness of the senate and speed of its decision-making processes should be kept under review, as the team consider that the senate is too big to fulfil its function.

The team also noted that restrictions on the appointment of staff had created shortfalls and imbalances across the university and had impeded strategic development. The university reported that this restriction had now been relaxed. The lifting of this restriction will enable the university to make key and critical appointments, which will, particularly in the area of research, help create focus and build critical mass.

The university has made great efforts in developing a management system, which is inclusive and avoids an overt top down approach. Whilst a decentralised managerial and decision-making structure can be very democratic and gives everybody the possibility to be involved in changes it may slow down decision-making and swift responses to changing circumstances. Additionally, pluri-layered sources of decision-making and sharing responsibilities are overlapping and not fully clear. The team and the team recommend that this is reviewed in order to ensure that decision-making takes place quickly and by those directly qualified to do so.

The quality of the administrative management, in spite of externally imposed budgetary restrictions, was noted as providing critical support in the effective management and despite the aforementioned observations, the team were impressed by the functioning of the leadership of the university, their collegiate approach and their strategic performance.



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3. Teaching and learning

The university strives to deliver excellence in both teaching and research. The team heard positive accounts of student education at the university from a variety of sources and concluded that students, graduates and stakeholders value the quality of education. The team praise the symbiosis of teaching and research, the focus on linkages between these and the engagement of students in learning about research at all levels.

The SER advises that teaching methods are based on modern learning principles and favour the students' progress, their ability to participate both in the medical research activity and their own development as future professionals during the years of study. The team found many examples of excellent teaching facilities and plans for further development. It was clear through discussions with a number of groups of students that learning was effective. It was also clear that what they valued were high levels of teacher input and availability, which are more commonly associated with traditional teaching methods. It was unclear to the team how the university defines "modern learning principles" and whether the teaching was based on the need to justify teacher contact time or the learning needs of the students. To this extent, and for reasons cited below, the team recommend that a teaching and learning strategy is developed to further the implementation of these principles.

The team noted that the curricula includes, for each subject of study, a number of hours for self-study, so that the students become aware of their own learning process and have the opportunity to prepare for their professional career and lifelong learning. The balance of this autonomous study time was low compared to teacher contact time and this is contrary to practice in many European universities and Bologna reform orientation. Notwithstanding the constraints imposed by Directive 2005/36/EC this impacts not only on the teaching and learning approaches but also on the development of an e-learning platform and the correct attribution ECTS and student workload.

In the past year an e-learning platform has been implemented university-wide. All students (graduate, master, PhD and residents) have access to a web portal containing both academic and research related information, pertinent to their specific activities and specialties. Direct access to course-related material, students' evaluations, efficient teacher-student communication and collaboration as well as the incentive to integrate new technologies in daily activities are some of the benefits obtained by implementation of this e-learning platform. In addition, a significant improvement in administrative flows and gradual red tape reduction are becoming visible since the implementation of the platform. The team viewed this as a positive and welcome development, which would significantly improve teaching and learning as well as improving communication and information flow. However, for it to be utilised effectively, time for students to access and benefit from the platform should be incorporated into the study programme, otherwise it becomes yet another activity for



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students to undertake in addition to their already high levels of contact time. The e-learning platform should complement and be integrated with existing learning methods rather than in addition to them.

The university has been implementing ECTS since 10 years for all disciplines and includes these in the final diploma supplement according to the *ECTS Users Guide*. However the team found inconsistencies and noted a low level of awareness of the credit system amongst students and staff generally. Having said that, the team also acknowledges current inconsistencies between ECTS and professions governed by Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC.

Overall the team concluded that some very positive steps have been taken to move from a teaching to learning approach. Learning outcomes are present within the curricula and this is highlighted within the SER, however terms such as objectives, competencies are also used both in documentation and in practice, which makes it problematic to see how these are related within an overarching teaching and learning philosophy. The SER advises that *"study programmes/ specializations offered by UMF are rigorously organized, with learning outcomes that are specific for each qualification. General and specific objectives are established for each individual study programme and educational plans are developed with a balanced distribution of study subjects as ECTS credits. All study programmes are student-centred and tailored to offer specific competencies evaluated by a clear set of examination procedures."* The team observed that there is rigorous examination of programmes but that this appeared to be related to fulfilment of a process rather than embedding these practices in the everyday thinking and actions of teaching staff. Further definition and elaboration of approaches contained within a specific strategy would help ensure effective operationalisation of modern learning methods in practice. The team recommend that the university create and elaborate a teaching, learning and assessment strategy based on student centred learning.

The team observed that although representing a substantial constituency of the student body in the university, nursing was not visible in any of the evaluation meetings and only peripherally mentioned in SER documentation. The university should ensure that the principles of excellence in teaching and research apply to all curricula (also nursing), disciplines and students within the university.

Plans to develop library provision were mentioned as a future development within the university and this is welcomed by the team. Students observed that there was shortage of literature, specifically international disciplinary-based literature. The team visited the library and was impressed by the staff and their enthusiasm for bibliographic heritage and books' appreciation but did not observe any substantial emphasis on accessing materials online. In



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the development of library services the university should ensure it is in line with the needs of students and researchers.

Despite the high value placed on the education at the university by students and stakeholders, students identify that the perceived reputation of Romanian medical education may negatively impact on their employment potential. Evidence suggests that Romanian medical graduates are actively recruited into European health systems and contribute well; however, a negative perception persists. The university may wish to address this concern and it is suggested that the university could use the experience of students and alumni to further enhance their reputation nationally and internationally making them ambassadors of excellence in knowledge and prestige of UMF.

Finally the team observed and heard of many good examples of practice by teachers. It heard that an element of salary can be awarded to recognise excellent performance and that the major part of this was related to research. To promote and incentivise excellent teaching the team recommends that a system of awards and rewards is developed both for individuals (teachers, researchers and students) and functional units that demonstrate excellence in teaching.



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4. Research

UMF sees itself as a major provider of health sciences education and research in Romania, according to the SER. The SER confirms the strategic goal to improve UMF's visibility and market presence both as a medical sciences education provider and a key player in international research. It also aims to increase non-state budget revenue by tapping into research funding available from both public and private agencies on national and European levels

The team found this strong research orientation evident in its discussions with staff and its visits to university facilities. Students are participating in research activities at all levels and this was clearly visible. Considerable investments have been made into research facilities and, equipment and technology enrichments are impressive.

Whilst external verification has confirmed UMF's position as a teaching and advanced research university at national level, it was less clear, beyond visibility and market presence, the measures and metrics by which it would achieve its goal to be a key player in international research. The team found the university approach towards setting research priorities to lack clarity and focus. The SER advised that "UMF emphasises those areas of research and education in health sciences that have the greatest potential to significantly and rapidly improve the health of the population" and also "Moreover, UMF promotes specifically those areas where the members of the academic community have accumulated documented expertise and benefit from an already existing adequate research infrastructure". This shows that within the present system, a higher degree of decentralisation and individual autonomy is envisaged in the field of research, which, although strategically coordinated at the top level, needs to provide better autonomy for individual research groups in terms of resource management. The team found that an outcome of this was that overall the research focus is very broad; as a consequence, some research groups find it difficult to meet critical mass and impact.

These are key factors in building reputation, attracting world class staff and research funding. Conversely the possibility that researchers who work as individuals or in small groups and show potential can be attractive targets of employment for other universities.

The university has identified that another resource available for the UMF is represented by intellectual property rights (IPR) generated by its research activities and that presently this resource is still inefficiently used and efforts must be directed towards development of UMF's IP policies. This is a situation that should be addressed as if the university has world-class research output, the IPR associated with that is considerable.

Overall, research output of UMF internationally is becoming more visible (EU funds, journal publications in English); however, these are spread across diverse fields and the team



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recommends that UMF should focus its excellence on priorities in research fields. Following this it should strengthen visibility of research by being more present in international research groups as this would contribute to further opening UMF to the international scientific community (including mobility programmes, language policy, collaborative research, conference attendance, staff recruitment).



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5. Service to society

Generating a sense of pride in its contribution to the modern society is a key component in university strategy and underpins much of what the university is trying to achieve. The influence of UMF on national health care is evident. There is an awareness of shared responsibilities and a good cooperation with hospitals. The university was able to evidence numerous examples of community engagement and spoke of these with great enthusiasm.

The team heard from a large number of stakeholders of the university's pivotal role in the community and describe a mutually beneficial relationship. Stakeholders support the new legislation and support the establishment of the centres of excellence.

The team praise the lifelong learning activities of UMF and encourage the continuation of existing activity and UMF's way of offering important services to society.



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6. Quality culture

Quality is a feature that is mentioned frequently in the SER and underpins the strategic objectives of the university. It is stated that "UMF will sustain these objectives by permanent review, adaptation and modernisation of its services and processes with a clear and unabated focus on quality and excellence". The strategic plan 2012 – 2015, quality manual and other documents present a good platform in continuing the move towards quality assurance.

In doing this a number of significant measures have been taken, most significantly the introduction of Quality Management System (QMS) at the university level. A system wide Quality Management System (QMS) has been designed, documented and implemented at the UMF, according to the SR EN ISO 9001:2008, and certified. The experience of the team is that whilst it has a number of benefits, ISO has a tendency to focus on processes rather than people, improvement and culture change.

Regarding existing programmes, the SER advises that there is a constant focus on quality enhancement of educational processes with the purpose of meeting European and international benchmarks. These benchmarks were neither explicit to the team nor evident in a number of meetings with staff. Whilst the European Standards and Guidelines were mentioned, awareness of these was inconsistent, even amongst groups tasked with monitoring quality. Benchmarks should be made explicit and communicated to all members of staff together with an exploration of their role in meeting them. Monitoring of the quality follow-up procedures has to be improved at all phases of the process.

The issue of quality is also related to the development of international programmes and curricula. The university sees a strategic advantage arising from increased global demand for education. There is an inference, within the SER, that their advantage is related to cost and quality, stating that higher education costs are more in developed countries as is the quality of provision. The task for UMF therefore is to achieve comparable levels of quality whilst maintaining lower and therefore competitive pricing. For this reason and the issue raised above regarding the perception of Romanian medical students, effective quality systems are imperative to safeguard and promote reputation.

UMF has introduced what it describes as important instruments for quality assurance procedures. In addition to the above, a new curriculum bureau has been founded with the purpose of quality enhancement in the educational processes. Its purpose is to coordinate curricular development in the context of transnational and multi-regional coherence by a permanent adaptation of the curricula to the requirements of the labour market, via quantifiable quality standards implemented according to the European and international education system.



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Further internal quality arrangements are in place via the Evaluation and Academic Quality Assurance Commission (EAQAC/CEEA), which elaborates the annual report of internal evaluation regarding the quality of education in UMF Iasi. The report is then analysed by the university senate and embodies the synthesis of the results from the internal self-evaluation regarding the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the quality of the educational process (structured by educational programmes, departments, colleges, research).

The external evaluation of the quality of education is made by the Romanian Agency of Quality Assurance for Higher Education (ARACIS), which in 2010 accredited UMF Iasi with the qualification "High Level of Confidence". According to the European Evaluation Guides for the quality of education in the medical field, there are three categories: basic medical education (for medical graduation programmes); post-graduate medical education (for residency and PhD studies) and continuous medical education.

The university has identified areas within its quality system which could be strengthened and these include complex activity (time, human resources, legislation); positive results require a systematic effort; difficulty understanding "quality management language" by employees; increased paper use; lack of motivation for staff involved in quality mechanisms systems (QMS) activities; lack of adequate IT infrastructure to support the QMS; lack of students' motivation to evaluate teachers; lack of workplace satisfaction surveys for academic and administrative staff; lack of employer satisfaction survey for university alumni.

The team acknowledge the reflection on quality issues and notes that much activity is directed towards meeting the goals of external quality systems and to this end the emphasis of the quality system is on systems and procedures rather than embedding the need for quality in the daily actions of staff. This approach detracts rather than enhances the quality culture of the university, in part, as it is often difficult for staff to perceive the relationship between the information gathered and quality improvement.

Related to this is the need to ensure that when data are gathered for purposes of quality, this should be purposeful and that respondents should receive information about what changes were made as a result of their input. For example, the team heard that although students gave feedback on a number of issues, they did not hear the outcomes of this. In this instance and in other circumstances the team recommend that the feedback loop should be complete in quality processes.

The team recognise that there is a strong desire for quality culture in the institution. To this extent the team also agree that UMF perceives the need and assumes the goal to develop further its internal quality management system, and to promote an academic culture of quality, which goes beyond that required by state legislation. In the meantime the team



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recommend that attention is paid to the personal contribution of staff attitudes and approaches in building a quality culture.

These comments should not detract from the excellent work of some groups. The administrative council has been involved in strategic planning and quality management. The IEP self-evaluation group demonstrated how the activity had raised their awareness of institutional quality issues. Furthermore the experience gained in the numerous evaluations that have taken place recently can be beneficial in contributing to the development of a quality culture. Based on these experiences, the quality culture can be improved and strengthened by developing common understandings and ownership/awareness.

The university has programmes, which are taught in English, French and Romanian. These are currently organised as three distinct entities. There are opportunities to improve both the quality of teaching and learning and the internationalisation of the student body through greater integration of these programmes. Additionally, as the majority of students within the French and English taught curricula will leave the country after graduation and function as “ambassadors” of the institution, sound quality processes especially within these programmes will help to build a quality culture and an international reputation.



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7. Internationalisation

The mission of the UMF is to be recognised as a great research university, a European leader in research and excellence in education, dedicated to the positive impact in the lives of its students, graduates and staff, as well as the local, national and international communities. The university reports in the SER that it has a long history of building international relations, which, although limited during the communist regime, UMF's international outreach in both research and education started to develop after 1990 and was a strategic focus ever since. The team found that there is generally a good international perspective and positive views are held by international students and those students who have experienced exchange programmes.

There is a focus on international activity across a range of university functions both in developing partnerships and relationships with overseas universities and as in utilising international benchmarks as a focus for benchmarking, comparison and strategic development. The issue of benchmarking is mentioned elsewhere in the report.

The team noted the level and extent of international activity and its contribution to university life. The overall impression of the team was that whilst there are commendable pockets of international activity, the university is not making the most of it to become internationalised or to become an international university. The developments and relationships often appear piecemeal and developing in a way that does not build capacity or critical mass. The team observed a lack of clear goals for internationalisation activities. The team recommend that an internationalisation strategy is developed which maximises existing opportunities through targeted actions with clear leadership.

The university has proved to be successful in attracting international students and has large cohorts of English and French speaking students. These students bring a rich vein of international experience to the university and this could be used to develop internationalisation within the home curriculum. Both home and international students report that they mix socially and at university organised functions but not for teaching and learning experiences. The team recommend that to optimise the international activity of all students, the university should maximise the potential of the international student body through shared curricula activity. It is suggested to use synergies between the programmes given in English and French with the corresponding Romanian programmes.

International students speak highly of their experiences and are extremely positive about their learning experiences. They report some good induction information and activities. They



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identify that their experience could be improved by further developing induction and support services to integrate them within the university and the city.

Incoming and outgoing students on exchange programmes also reported positively on their experiences and identified positive benefits to their student experience. The team visited the international office and was impressed by the volume and quality of work undertaken by the staff. Despite this, there were many students who seemed to be unaware that such exchange opportunities existed. The team conclude that there was a lack of information flow concerning international mobility programmes, grants and co-operations and not enough support (administrative, language, financial) for interested students. The team note that investment in more human resources in the international office would provide more information and opportunities for students. This would enable, *inter alia*, the utilisation of current positive student experiences to promote student exchange.

In terms of research, international collaboration is described, in the SER, as vast and expressed by the high number of formal collaboration agreements in place with research universities in Europe and the rest of the world. These agreements materialised in common research projects recently awarded by the EU. The team heard that strategic partnerships had been set up with French universities and suggest that this type of targeted activity should be part of an internationalisation strategy.

This would enable links with a key recruitment area to be developed and would also help build reputation linked to employability of students as evidence suggests a strong and effective presence in international labour markets. Coupled with this, the team recommend that as part of an internationalisation strategy the university should gather quantitative and qualitative evidence on employability and workforce impact to build reputation.

Students report a lack of current international literature in UMF libraries and the team encourage the university to rectify this as part of their library development. This is linked to the development of a language policy within the university. The team recommend that the university define and practice a clear language policy which would assist in recruitment, increase employability, increase potential for co-operation and publication in high impact journals.

The university has a number of staff who have worked overseas and staff development approaches have encouraged an outward looking international perspective. However the staff group is almost exclusively Romanian and whilst the team recognise external barriers to international recruitment they note that human resources is not internationalised within the university and that consideration should be given to how this may be achieved.



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8. Summary of recommendations

Governance and institutional decision-making

- The senate needs to be proactive whilst at the same time building a co-operative relationship with the rector focused on strategic planning for the institution
- Reconsider the size of the senate
- Define performance indicators against all goals and objectives in the strategic plan 2012 – 2015 and regularly monitor progress detailed in an action plan
- Pluri-layered sources of decision-making and sharing responsibilities have to be more transparent and effective
- Planned recruitment of a critical mass of new positions provides opportunity to realise potential
- Convince the government to enable institutional autonomy in the use of budget surplus and independently earned income to achieve strategic goals
- Clearly identify benchmarks and performance indicators drawn from comparable institutions

Teaching and learning

- Reward excellent teaching and research
- Develop library provision to ensure it is line with the needs of students and researchers
- Create and elaborate a teaching learning and assessment strategy based on student centred learning
- Balance autonomous study time/student workload with teachers' contact time in teaching and learning and e-learning approaches in the spirit of the new philosophy of sharing responsibilities in study achievements.
- Use the experience of students and alumni to further enhance reputation
- Ensure that the principles of excellence in teaching and research apply to all curricula, disciplines and students
- Promote UMF's leading role in education and research in the field of nursing

Research

- UMF should focus its excellence on priorities in research fields
- Strengthen visibility of research by being more present in international research groups



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- Further open UMF to the international scientific community (mobility programmes, language policy, collaborative research, conference attendance, staff recruitment etc.)

Service to society

- The team encourage UMF to continue its way of offering important services to society
- The team commend the lifelong learning activities of UMF and encourage the continuation of existing activity

Quality culture

- The administrative council has been involved in strategic planning and quality management but the quality culture has to be improved by developing common understandings and ownership/awareness
- Sound quality processes especially within the French and English streams will help build quality and reputation

Internationalisation

- Maximise the potential of the international student body through shared curricula activity
- Elaborate a specific strategy through targeted activities with clear leadership
- Invest more human resources in the international office
- Further develop induction and support services to integrate international students
- Utilise positive student experiences to promote student exchange
- Gather quantitative and qualitative evidence on employability and workforce impact to build reputation
- Define and practice a clear language policy
- Use synergies between the programmes given in English and French with the corresponding Romanian programme



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9. Conclusion

UMF is a well-established institution of high national and international reputation. It has highly motivated academic and administrative staff, committed student and supportive stakeholders. External reviews have confirmed its leading position in the region and the country.

UMF has the capabilities to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. The team has confidence that UMF will fulfil its mission adding value to the welfare of the Romanian society, strengthen its position as global player as a university of medicine and pharmacy and contribute to the international scientific progress in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and bioengineering.