

**Akkreditierung im universitären Hochschulbereich**

**Interuniversitäres Weiterbildungsprogramm "Master of Public Health"  
der Universitäten Basel, Bern und Zürich**

**Schlussbericht OAQ**

29. Oktober 2012

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## **1 Einleitung**

### **1.1 Der Master of Public Health der Universitäten Basel, Bern und Zürich**

Der „Master of Public Health“ (MPH) wurde als interuniversitäres Weiterbildungsprogramm, getragen von den Instituten für Präventiv- und Sozialmedizin der Universitäten Basel, Bern und Zürich, bereits 1992 geschaffen. Die Universitäten verleihen gemeinsam den Titel „Master of Public Health“. Das postgraduale Weiterbildungsprogramm richtet sich an Akademikerinnen und Akademiker in Gesundheitsdiensten, Bundesbehörden, Non-Profit-Organisationen, Beratungsstellen oder Klinik- und Forschungsinstitutionen und bereitet auf Schlüsselpositionen im schweizerischen Gesundheitswesen vor. Die Programmleitung und Geschäftsstelle des Weiterbildungsprogramms ist physisch am Institut für Sozial- und Präventivmedizin (ISPMZ) der Universität Zürich verortet und wird durch Dr.med. Karin Faisst und Dr.sc.nat. Lara Modolo vertreten.

Auf nationaler Ebene fördert und koordiniert die Swiss School of Public Health plus (SSPH+) die universitäre Weiterbildung und die damit verbundene Forschung in allen Bereichen von Public Health und Gesundheitsökonomie. Die SSPH+ wurde 2005 durch eine Vereinbarung zwischen den Universitäten Basel, Bern, Genf, Lausanne, Zürich und der Università della Svizzera italiana gegründet und 2008 in eine Stiftung der Trägeruniversitäten umgewandelt. Der MPH Basel, Bern und Zürich ist eines der postgradualen Masterprogramme, die in diesem Kontext der SSPH+ angeboten werden.

## **2 Grundlagen, Gegenstand und Ablauf des Akkreditierungsverfahrens**

Die Voraussetzungen, das Verfahren der Akkreditierung sowie die Qualitätsstandards werden in den Akkreditierungsrichtlinien der Schweizerischen Universitätskonferenz<sup>1</sup> (nachfolgend: Akkreditierungsrichtlinien) geregelt: Gemäss Art.2, Abs. 3, Bst. c gilt ein Studiengang der universitären Weiterbildung als Gegenstand einer Akkreditierung. Die Voraussetzung für die Akkreditierung von Studiengängen der universitären Weiterbildung gemäss Art. 5 Abs. 2 der Akkreditierungsrichtlinien ist ein Umfang dieser Studiengänge von mindestens mit 60 ECTS-Kreditpunkten. Diese Voraussetzung ist im vorliegenden Fall des MPH erfüllt.

Akkreditierungsorgan ist das Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung (OAQ).

### **2.1 Antrag und Akkreditierungsgegenstand**

Mit Schreiben vom 14. Juli 2011 hat der Rektor der Universität Zürich, Prof. Dr. Andreas Fischer, zusammen mit dem Präsident der Studienleitung des MPH, Prof. Dr. Thomas Szucs, einen Antrag auf Akkreditierung des interuniversitären Weiterbildungsprogramms „Master of Public Health“ gestellt.

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<sup>1</sup> Richtlinien der Schweizerischen Universitätskonferenz für die Akkreditierung im universitären Hochschulbereich vom 28. Juni 2007 (SR 414.205.3)

Beantragt wird die Akkreditierung eines Studiengangs der universitären Weiterbildung gemäss Art. 2 Abs. 3 Bst. c der Akkreditierungsrichtlinien.

Der MPH Basel, Bern und Zürich wurde bereits 2005 durch die Schweizerische Universitätskonferenz akkreditiert. Diese Akkreditierung war bis zum 1. März 2012 gültig.

Die Leitung des MPH hat die Anregungen aus der letzten Akkreditierung sehr geschätzt und sieht Qualitätsmanagement als zentralen Bestandteil des Weiterbildungsprogramms, weshalb erneut freiwillig ein Antrag auf Akkreditierung gestellt wurde.

## **2.2 Ablauf des Verfahrens**

7.09.2011	Eröffnung des Verfahrens
20.02.2012	Eingang Selbstbeurteilungsbericht
21.-22.03.2012	Vor-Ort-Visite Koordinationsstelle Public Health (Uni Zürich)
25.04.2012	Vorläufiger Bericht der Expertengruppe
22.05.2012	Definitiver Bericht der Expertengruppe
12.09.2012	Entwurf des Schlussberichts OAQ
6.10.2012	Stellungnahme des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
29.10.2012	Schlussbericht und Antrag OAQ

Das Verfahren verlief ordnungsgemäss; Selbstbeurteilungsbericht, Expertenbericht sowie Stellungnahme des MPH sind fristgerecht eingetroffen.

## **2.3 Die Gruppe der Expertinnen und Experten**

- Prof. Dr. Franco Cavallo (Leiter der Expertengruppe), Universität Turin
- Prof. Dr. Oliver Razum, Universität Bielefeld
- Prof. Dr. Angela Brand, Universität Maastricht
- Eckhard Lotze, Universität Bielefeld

Prof. Cavallo, Leiter der Expertengruppe, war bereits Mitglied der Expertengruppe für die Akkreditierung des MPH 2005 und konnte mit dieser Erfahrung eine langfristige Entwicklungsperspektive auf das Programm einbringen.

## **2.4 Zugrundeliegende Dokumente**

- Selbstbeurteilungsbericht MPH vom 20. Februar 2012
- Expertenbericht vom 22. Mai 2012
- Stellungnahme der Koordinationsstelle MPH vom 16. Mai 2012
- Stellungnahme des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats vom 6. Oktober 2012

### **3 Externe Evaluation**

#### **3.1 Der Selbstbeurteilungsbericht**

Der Selbstbeurteilungsbericht des MPH entspricht in Form und Inhalt den Vorgaben des OAQ, er ist klar formuliert und von analytischer Tiefe.

Die Expertengruppe äussert sich positiv zum Selbstbeurteilungsbericht: Nicht nur geht er auf alle Standards ein und belegt Aussagen mit lückenloser Dokumentation, sondern zeugt zusätzlich vom grossen Aufwand vorangegangener Deliberation und der bestmöglichen Integration der Perspektiven aller Anspruchsgruppen. Der Bericht vermittelt der Expertin und den Experten eine klare Idee von Entwicklung, aktuellem Stand und gewünschter zukünftiger Entwicklung des MPH aus Sicht der Verantwortlichen.

#### **3.2 Die Vor-Ort-Visite**

Die Vor-Ort-Visite fand am 21. und 22. März 2012 in Räumlichkeiten des MPH am ISPMZ an der Universität Zürich statt. Den Auftakt bildete am Morgen des 21. März die Briefing-Sitzung für die Expertengruppe durch das OAQ. Dabei wurden die Expertin und die Experten über den Rahmen des Verfahrens sowie ihre spezifischen Aufgaben informiert. Das Briefing wurde von einer wissenschaftlichen Mitarbeiterin sowie dem Direktor des OAQ geleitet, erstere hat den gesamten Akkreditierungsprozess begleitet.

Die organisatorische Begleitung der Vor-Ort-Visite durch die Programmleitung des MPH war vorbildlich und verlief entsprechend ohne Probleme. Es standen kompetente Gesprächspartner aller Stakeholdergruppen bereit; die Expertengruppe führte Interviews mit der Programmleitung, der Studienleitung, den Studierenden und Alumni, den Lehrenden und den Fachbeauftragten, der Institutsadministration und den Partnern. Die Fragen der Expertengruppe wurden offen und differenziert beantwortet und zusätzliche, wertvolle Informationen zum Weiterbildungsprogramm konnten gesammelt werden.

Die Zusammenarbeit in der Expertengruppe war problemlos.

#### **3.3 Beurteilung der Erfüllung der Qualitätsstandards**

Für die Programmakkreditierung gemäss Akkreditierungsrichtlinien der SUK sind die Qualitätsstandards gemäss Art. 10 zu prüfen.

##### **3.3.1 Qualitätsstandards für Studiengänge (Art. 10)**

Die Expertengruppe kommt zum Schluss, dass alle Qualitätsstandards nach Art. 10 der Akkreditierungsrichtlinien erfüllt sind. Dementsprechend empfiehlt die Expertengruppe keine Auflagen.

Im Rahmen der Analyse zur Erfüllung der Standards formuliert die Expertengruppe jedoch Empfehlungen zur weiteren Qualitätsentwicklung.

### **3.3.2 Stärken und Schwächen, Risiken und Chancen des MPH Basel, Bern und Zürich aus Expertensicht**

Gestützt auf die Analyse der einzelnen Prüfbereiche erkennt die Expertengruppe folgende Stärken<sup>2</sup>:

- Das Programm fokussiert auf die Weiterbildung für den lokalen, also Schweizer Kontext und Markt, ist aber gleichzeitig durch die Integration internationaler Standards, Perspektiven, Fragestellungen und nicht zuletzt Lehrender supraregional ausgerichtet – eine wertvolle Mischung.
- Durch die hervorragende Komposition der Lehrenden mit einer grossen Diversität an fachlichen und professionellen Hintergründen haben die Weiterzubildenden die besten Chancen, sich mit der schweizerischen Public-Health-Community vertraut zu machen, respektiv sich effektiv zu vernetzen.
- Die bereits begonnene und weiter fortgeführte Reform des Programms hat zu einer begrüssenswerten Verbreiterung des vermittelten Public-Health-Wissens geführt.
- Das Programm hat eine klare Struktur und gute Organisation.
- Kurs- und Modulbeschreibungen sind informativ, klar und übersichtlich – insgesamt eine hervorragende und sehr benutzerfreundliche Dokumentation.
- Es besteht ein erstaunlich guter Mix an in den Kursen angewandten Lehrmethoden.
- Die Qualität der Lehrenden in fachlicher Kompetenz und Erfahrung ist herausragend und wird von den Weiterzubildenden ausnahmslos geschätzt. Greifende Evaluationsmechanismen stellen ausserdem sicher, dass im Versagensfall einzelne Lehrende oder ganze Module neu besetzt werden.
- Alumnis bestätigen dem Programm einen grossen Nutzen für die persönliche und professionelle Entwicklung.
- Die Lehre ist komplett kompetenz-orientiert ausgerichtet – im Gegensatz zu der immer noch verbreiteten reinen Orientierung auf Wissensvermittlung.
- Die internen Qualitätssicherungsmechanismen funktionieren offensichtlich exzellent.
- Für die weitere kontinuierliche Verbesserung des Lehrangebots wird regelmässig auf externe didaktische Expertise zurückgegriffen. Auch jede Lehrperson kann bzw. muss individuell eine diesbezügliche Beratung durch eine externe Didaktik-Expertin in Anspruch nehmen.

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<sup>2</sup> Expertenbericht, S. 20-21

- Das Programm bietet eine sehr gute Plattform für die noch bessere Koordination von Forschungs- und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten für den Public-Health-Bereich in der Schweiz.
- Die Rolle der Swiss School of Public Health+ (SSPH+) für die weitere Entwicklung der Weiterbildungen und Trainings in Public Health sollte gestärkt und weiter ausgebaut werden.

Die Experten identifizieren im Expertenbericht folgende Schwächen<sup>3</sup> und formuliert Empfehlungen zur Entwicklung<sup>4</sup>:

- Studierende wünschen sich noch mehr Flexibilität im Curriculum. Das Expertenteam ist der Auffassung, dass im neuen Curriculum bereits eine grosse Flexibilität möglich ist, diese vielleicht aber noch nicht effektiv und hinreichend genug den Studierenden kommuniziert wurde. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, die Attraktivität des Angebots besser zu vermarkten. Ausserdem empfehlen die Experten, einige Kurse zu öffnen und zu bewerben für ein life-long-learning-Publikum.
- Im Moment ist die Verwendung der deutschen Sprache in der Lehre vorherrschend. Dies ist die grösste Hürde der weiteren Internationalisierung des Programms. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, fortlaufend mehr englischsprachige Kurse ins Curriculum aufzunehmen.
- Das bestehende Mission-Statement ist nicht prononciert genug: Die Vision, das hier Führungspersonen für den Gesundheitsbereich ausgebildet werden, ist nicht explizit gemacht. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, das Mission Statement in diesem Sinne zu verbessern.
- Die Involvierung der Weiterzubildenden für die Weiterentwicklung des Programms ist zwar vorhanden, aber nicht strukturiert. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, Möglichkeiten der strukturierteren Einbindung von Weiterzubildenden auch in die strategische Planung des Programms zu erwägen.
- Die langfristige und nachhaltige Finanzierung des Programms scheint nicht auf vollkommen sicheren Füüssen zu stehen. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, weitere Finanzierungsquellen zu suchen.

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<sup>3</sup> Expertenbericht, S. 21-22

<sup>4</sup> Expertenbericht, S. 23

- Einige von der Gutachtergruppe als zentral eingestufte Kurse werden nur als Wahlfächer angeboten, so z.B. zu den Themen soziale Determinanten von Gesundheit und Krankheit, Mentale Gesundheit, Translationale Forschung in Public Health, die Rolle von ICT. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, weiter und fortlaufend kritisch zu beurteilen, welche neuen Kurse und Inhalte ins Curriculum aufgenommen werden sollten.
- Es gibt keine organisierte und formelle Alumni-Vereinigung. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, die bereits vorhandenen Anstrengungen in der Etablierung eines Alumni-Netzwerks weiterzuführen und ggf. zu formalisieren.
- Es liegt noch kein überzeugendes Gesamtkonzept für die Beurteilung von Querschnittskompetenzen, die die Weiterzubildenden ausbilden sollen, vor. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, hier weiter die bereits aufgenommene Konzept- und Entwicklungsarbeit zu verfolgen.
- Die Konkurrenz sollte im Auge behalten werden, sowohl was MBA-Programme mit Spezialisierung im Gesundheitsbereich im Inland als auch zu ähnlichen Formaten, die im benachbarten Ausland - namentlich in Deutschland - sehr viel günstiger angeboten werden, anbelangt. Die Expertengruppe empfiehlt, Marktanalysen vorzunehmen, um bestehende und potentielle Konkurrenten innerhalb und ausserhalb der Schweiz zu identifizieren und die Ergebnisse hinsichtlich eigener Visionen und Notwendigkeiten zu analysieren.
- Sollte in naher Zukunft das Budget für die Weiterbildung gekürzt werden, hätte das entweder empfindliche Konsequenzen für Qualität und Niveau des Programms oder man müsste die Studiengebühren, die bereits schon hoch sind, weiter massiv erhöhen.

Zusammenfassend kann festgehalten werden: Die Experten sehen alle Qualitätsstandards erfüllt und bewerten das Programm Master of Public Health insgesamt sehr positiv und die interne Qualitätskultur als bereits ausgeprägt vorhanden.

Die Expertengruppe hat Empfehlungen und Anregungen zur weiteren Qualitätsentwicklung formuliert; sie empfiehlt eine Akkreditierung ohne Auflage.

### **3.4 Stellungnahme der Koordinationsstelle MPH**

Mit einem Mail vom 16. Mai 2012 nahm die Programmleitung des MPH Stellung zum Entwurf des Expertenberichts: Inhaltlich gab es keinen Korrektur-Bedarf, die MPH-Programmleitung hat sich bedankt für die positiven als auch kritischen, aber immer konstruktiven Rückmeldungen.

Der Entwurf des Expertenberichts wurde dementsprechend nicht mehr verändert.



### **3.5 Stellungnahme wissenschaftlicher Beirat OAQ**

Das OAQ hat am 24. September 2012 den Selbstbeurteilungsbericht, den Expertenbericht und die Stellungnahme des MPH sowie den Schlussbericht des OAQ zur Stellungnahme an den wissenschaftlichen Beirat weitergeleitet. Der wissenschaftliche Beirat hat zu den Berichten Stellung genommen und unterstützt die Empfehlungen der Experten sowie die Akkreditierungsempfehlung.

## **4 Schlussfolgerungen und Antrag des OAQ**

### **4.1 Schlussfolgerungen**

Das Akkreditierungsverfahren verlief entsprechend den gesetzlichen Vorgaben. Die Expertengruppe verfasste einen Bericht, der in Form und Inhalt den Vorgaben des OAQ entspricht. Ferner gibt der Bericht zu allen Qualitätsstandards eine Beurteilung über die Erfüllung ab.

Das OAQ ist der Ansicht, dass die Beurteilungen und die Empfehlungen der Experten kohärent und nachvollziehbar sind. Das OAQ schliesst sich den Einschätzungen der Experten an und würdigt die Beurteilung durch die Experten als präzise, kritisch und konstruktiv.

### **4.2 Antrag auf Akkreditierung gemäss Art. 25 Akkreditierungsrichtlinien**

Gestützt auf den Selbstbeurteilungsbericht zum MPH und den Expertenbericht kommt das OAQ zum Schluss, dass

der „Master of Public Health“ der Universitäten Basel, Bern und Zürich die Qualitätsstandards gemäss Art. 10 der Akkreditierungsrichtlinien erfüllt.

Das OAQ beantragt daher bei der Schweizerischen Universitätskonferenz gemäss Art.2 Abs. 3 Bst. C der Akkreditierungsrichtlinien:

**die Akkreditierung des Studiengangs Master of Public Health der Universitäten Basel, Bern und Zürich**

für sieben Jahre ohne Auflage.

## **Abkürzungsverzeichnis**

ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISPMZ	Institut für Sozial- und Präventivmedizin an der Universität Zürich
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MPH	Master of Public Health
OAQ	Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der schweizerischen Hochschulen
SSPH+	Swiss School of Public Health +
SUK	Schweizerische Universitätskonferenz

**Academic accreditation in Switzerland  
Experts' report**

**Master of Public Health**

**Universities of Basel, Bern and Zurich**

**21-22 March 2012**

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## **1 Accreditation procedure**

### **1.1 Presentation of the unit**

The institutes of social and preventive medicine of the universities of Basel, Bern and Zurich decided to establish a joint training programme in public health in January 1992 and the programme has been carried out ever since, undergoing major reforms, especially following the 2005 accreditation by the Swiss University Conference and the institution of the SSPH+.

The Interuniversity Postgraduate Programme in Public Health offers the possibility for professionals to take individual courses to further develop their own continuing education or to enrol in a postgraduate programme offering a Certificate, a Diploma, or a Master degree. It is the largest post-graduate programme in Public Health running at present in Switzerland and it plays a leading role in the field of Public Health education. As the programme has proved to be very successful, the number of students has steadily increased over time. Currently, there are 84 students involved in the programme. In the past five years, the annual intake has slightly decreased, with an average intake of at about 19 students. The average age at entry is 39 years. Some 19 diplomas were issued each year between 2007 - 2011. As of December 2011, 443 students have joined the MPH programme, and 269 candidates have been awarded their MPH degree. The dropout rate in the past five years has been around 10%.

As the period of recognition of the programme ends on 1 March 2012 and those responsible for the programme are convinced of the added value of national accreditation, they requested accreditation by the Swiss Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ) in September 2011.

## **1.2 Self-evaluation report**

The self-evaluation report presented by the unit seeking accreditation is complete and well structured. A short history of the programme and the reason for undergoing accreditation are presented and well motivated; a detailed analysis of its development is carried out, allowing the reader to understand the motivation for the changes undertaken and the programme's perspectives for the future.

All relevant standards to be complied with, according to OAQ procedure, are presented and discussed, and relevant data to support the analysis are given.

It is evident that the report, even if the responsibility of the two programme managers, is the result of a large consultation carried out throughout the teaching, support and administrative staff, together with present and former students having attended the programme.

The report gives a clear idea of the present status of the situation and of the most significant steps of its development, in particular since the establishment of the SSPH+ and the further impulse given by this structure to the development of Public Health post-graduate training in Switzerland.

This report has been highly appreciated by the expert's team, which has used it as the basis for its analysis and recommendations.

### 1.3 Group of experts

Peer leader:

- Prof. *Franco Cavallo* – Department of Public Health and Microbiology, University of Torino, Italy

Experts:

- Prof. *Oliver Razum* - Dean, Bielefeld School of Public Health and Department of Epidemiology & International Public Health, Bielefeld University, Germany
- Prof. *Angela Brand* – Institute for Public Health Genomics, Faculty of Health, Medicine & Life Sciences, Maastricht University, The Netherlands
- *Eckhard Lotze* – Postgraduate Student in Master of Health Administration, Bielefeld University, Germany

#### **1.4 On-site visit**

The on-site visit has taken place on March 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012. It started with a presentation of the procedure from OAQ staff and followed with a first group discussion among the experts to summarise the first basic impressions gathered from reading the self assessment report and looking at the annexes to the report. On the basis of this first discussion, a number of issues to be discussed during the meetings with the different participants involved in the accreditation process was set out, as an indicative agenda for the two-days visit.

Six meetings followed, with different groups of stakeholders (see detailed programme); the whole procedure was completed with a general discussion among team members and a final de-briefing session with the president of the programme steering committee and the two programme managers, where the main conclusions from the expert team were presented.

The experts team general impression of the overall procedure was very positive, both with respect to the work done by the local team for setting up the preparatory documents and organising the report, and with respect to the organisational work carried out by the OAQ team for making the process smooth and effective.

Also the on-site support by the local team, as for the pleasant environment where the work has been carried out, the facilities provided and the support documents requested, has been very much appreciated by the experts team.

All interviewed persons were positive and collaborative and the time schedule fully respected. It is always difficult to assess to what extent the interviewed subjects are fully 'representative' of the underlying population and may therefore give a reliable description of the actual situation; however, the experts felt that the low level of contradictory information given by the different sources and the coherent image coming out from the discussions, can be taken as good indicators of the credibility of the overall analysis they were able to carry out.

Some specific issues, having to do in particular with the financial perspectives of the programme, its positioning within the Swiss context of Public health training and some aspects of the structure of the programme and of the didactic approaches used, which were not fully documented in the report, have been discussed in depth and clarified during the meetings. This has allowed the experts team to draw conclusions also on these items.

In conclusion, the experts think that the overall quality of the provided information was good and reliable enough to base their analysis upon.



## 2 Evaluation of the Quality Standards

### 2.1 Area 1: Implementation and teaching objectives

Overall Assessment – The programme has been carried out regularly since its implementation, with a constant increase in course offering; since 2005 it has become part of the SSPH+. Its mission statement is formulated but it remains at a very technical level and does not seem to correspond to what the school is really trying to achieve. A “vision” is not stated although the evaluators were under the impression that one exists implicitly. These facts could impair the understanding of its mission and lower its appeal in the market. A new and more precise formulation should be given.

#### Standard 1.01

The range of programs is carried out regularly

Background information – The programme is carried out regularly since its implementation and has risen from the original 7 modules to the more than 50 offered at present. All mandatory courses are offered once a year and around 14 electives offered every two years. On this basis the number of students has risen steadily; during the last years approximately 16 to 20 students have been enrolling annually.

Analysis - As a joint programme, and given its large annual modular course catalogue, the programme has developed into the largest public health postgraduate programme in Switzerland and plays a leading role in the field of public health education. The programme nowadays constitutes a cornerstone of the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+), contributing to the consolidation and further development of continuing education in the field of public health.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

#### Standard 1.02

The objectives of the program correspond to the institution's mission and strategic plan.

Background information – The mission and strategic plan have been formulated and developed following the accreditation procedure of 2005.

Analysis – It seems to the experts team that the way the mission statement has been formulated is not anymore coherent with the role the programme has been assuming during these last years, which, according to what has been said, especially during the meeting with the steering committee, has to do with providing participants with the capability to reach leadership in Public Health through expertise. This should be clearly formulated in order to

avoid misleading expectations with respect to improving job position or career perspectives as main outcome of the title.

The marketing strategy of the programme should also be reconsidered, in view of possible further developments and of existing competitors. For this reason, the programme managers should:

- pay much attention to following up alumni careers, and possibly favour the set up of an alumni association. In this view the possibility to extend the programme in the framework of a lifelong learning approach should be considered;
- be very careful in considering the market's dynamics in this field, with respect to potential competitors (or synergistic forces) in Switzerland and outside.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:**

- Try to have a better formulation of the mission statement coherent with the aim of training for leadership in Public Health through expertise.
- Continue following up alumni career development and consider supporting the setting up of a stable alumni association; continue your efforts in involving alumni in a consultancy role.
- Consider the possibility to extend marketing of the offered courses in the framework of a life-long learning approach.
- Make constantly a market analysis to identify potential competitors inside and outside Switzerland and have an up to date vision of market demands and needs

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

## 2.2 Area 2: Internal organization and quality assurance measures

Overall assessment – While the decision-making processes and quality assurance measures are very clear and well-developed, measures to ensure the active participation of the students in the decision-making processes should be better developed and implemented.

### Standard 2.01

The decision-making processes, competencies and responsibilities have been determined and communicated to all those involved.

Background information - Decision-making processes, competencies, and responsibilities are stipulated in the cooperation agreement and in the ordinance between the Universities of Basel, Bern, and Zurich. These were signed in 2011 after negotiations between the participating universities. Additional documents such as miscellaneous overview charts, flowcharts, lists of tasks, detailed guidelines, and responsibilities are available on the websites, orientation guides, and course catalogues.

Analysis - The essentials of all decision-making responsibilities, competencies, and processes are specified in various documents and are clearly communicated to all committees and students.

It appears clear that each university participates on equal footing to the programme and, as such, carries the same degree of responsibility for the programme's success or failure.

The central committee for strategic decisions is the steering committee, which, since April 2010, includes members of the SSPH+. The executive arm of the steering committee is the programme management.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### Standard 2.02

Measures are taken to ensure the active participation of the academic staff and of the students in decision-making processes affecting education and teaching.

Background information - The academic staff is directly involved in the decision-making processes via the steering committee. The active participation of the students in decision-making processes affecting education and teaching is ensured by various measures, having to do with courses evaluation and informal feed-back to the program managers, but not through structural embedding.

Analysis - The involvement of academic staff and students in the decision-making processes is a challenge for a study programme organised by three universities situated in different cities. In fact, faculty and students live and work in many

different places throughout Switzerland, with a majority residing in the German-speaking part of the country. Moreover, the workload for professionals at universities and in the private sector leaves very little free time to invest in school's management, as the work carried out in committees and panels constitutes additional work without compensation.

Against this backdrop, a strong programme management, with the support of the steering committee, has been crucial in coordinating a decentralized organisational structure and all persons involved in teaching, tutoring, and related administrative services. Leadership by programme management and active involvement of students constitute success factors in the curriculum reform process as well as for future programme development.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:**

- Consider giving a more structural role to students in the organisms dealing with strategic planning of the school

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### **Standard 2.03**

Quality assurance measures exist for the programs. The institution makes use of the results to periodically revise the range of programs
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Background information - Quality assurance is a central element of programme management. The findings from the various evaluations and surveys are used for ongoing improvement and future development at different levels of the programme. Quality assurance and ongoing development of a comprehensive quality management system fall under the auspices of the programme management and of the steering committee.

Analysis – The quality assurance of this programme is very well structured and organised. The results of each module are assessed and the periodic monitoring of all courses shows that the reform of the curriculum has been successfully implemented. Students' participation to course assessment is around 90 % and their voice is carefully taken into account for possible modifications or substitution of less successful modules. As this activity has been mainly supported by the contribution of SSPH+, the possible lack of financial support in the future through SSPH+ could seriously impair this process.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### **2.3 Area 3: Curriculum and teaching methods**

Overall Assessment – The programme has a well structured curriculum, which corresponds to the objectives of the Bologna declaration and takes international developments into account. The modules of the MPH programme are well coordinated with regard to their organisation and contents and they cover the major concepts and methods in the field of public health. Teaching methods are chosen among a good mix of different approaches, quite linked with the modules objectives in terms of knowledge and competencies to be achieved. However, some further efforts should be made in trying to improve the assessment strategy, with a major focus towards competence assessment. An increasing use of the English language would also improve its international standard.

#### **Standard 3.01**

The program has a structured curriculum which corresponds to the coordinated implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Swiss higher education.
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Background information - The programme has a modular structure that allows postgraduate students to earn a MPH degree part-time (within a maximum time limit of 5 years) while working as a professional in a related field.

All modules are self-contained, goal-oriented learning units which combine individual self study with on-campus face-to-face teaching or individual supervision of the final project assignment and the master thesis. All modules include some form of student assessment and are wrapped up with an evaluation by the students.

Analysis – The programme has a good modular structure, well articulated in core and elective part, with a strong component dedicated to thesis work. Much attention is given to necessary prerequisites for attending different courses in different areas. There are ample possibilities to transfer credits from other Universities or programmes. Probably this very articulated structure sometimes appears as having too much rigidity.

The programme has a wish to become more and more international, but the basic use of the German language is an obstacle to this perspective.

#### **Recommendations for quality improvement**

- Try to have a better presentation of the existing range of possibilities (recently implemented courses, existing electives) in order to avoid the feeling of an excess of rigidity in the curriculum.
- Try to increase the use of the English language in teaching and in the presentation of the student's guide in order to favour the internationalisation of the programme.

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### **Standard 3.02**

The range of programs covers the major aspects of the field in question. It allows students to acquire scientific working methods and ensures that scientific findings are integrated. The teaching and evaluation methods used are in line with the stated teaching goals and objectives

Background information - The Programme covers the major concepts and methods in the field of public health. The high quality of the teaching staff and its academic background (around 70% come from University) ensures that the most recent scientific findings are integrated in the teaching. Also the teaching and evaluation methods have been set to be coherent with the stated learning objectives

Analysis – The programme covers the major areas of Public Health (with sub-components of this areas which can be certified through separate Certificates in the different domains) in a quite comprehensive way and with a special attention to limiting overlap among different modules. However, some especially important subjects do not appear as being covered from the general programme (i.e. social determinants of health, role of ICT in services development, the importance of translational research as a main duty of the Public Health professional, Mental Health). For some of them, most likely, there is an implicit coverage within different courses or electives (eg. social determinants of health) while for others there should be a further development, in some cases already foreseen (Mental health).

Scientific findings and scientific working methods seem to be integrated in the programme, within the different modules and mainly in the thesis work, where a significant effort in a research work is requested.

The teaching and evaluation methods are in line with the stated learning objectives and a good mix of different learning methods is used. However, a greater effort should be put in trying to focus assessment on competencies, especially of cross-cutting competencies, which have been, according to what stated in the self-assessment report, the driving objectives for reviewing the curriculum.

### **Recommendations for quality improvement**

- Continue to critically assess the need to introduce new Public Health related subjects (social determinants of health, ICT tools, systems medicine, mental health).
- Consider finding ways for better assessing cross-cutting competences along and at the end of the programme (through some specific module, intermediate modules, thesis work)

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### **Standard 3.03**

The conditions for acquiring certificates of achievement and academic degrees are regulated and made public.

Background information - All conditions and processes that affect assessments, project proposals, project assignments, master thesis, final oral examination, and the degree are regulated and communicated transparently in various media – i.e., study regulations, course catalogue, websites, and student manual.

Analysis – All conditions and processes affecting assessment are regulated and made public.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** None

**Conclusion:** fulfilled



## 2.4 Area 4: Teaching staff

Overall Assessment – The overall quality of the teaching staff is high. Mobility and interchangeability among teachers coming also from abroad is favoured and the workload for each teacher is well précised. The considerable number of teachers involved for a limited time does not allow to have a stable Faculty, but the efficient central management and the activity of the Steering Committee makes up for this lack.

### Standard 4.01

Courses are taught by educationally competent and academically qualified faculty.

Background information - The teaching staff is composed of competent and academically qualified national and international experts in the field of public health who are constantly assessed as for the quality of their teaching.

Analysis – Courses are taught by competent teachers, recruited among the highest academic levels and also among top level managers of Public Health services. This favours a good integration between academic and territorial competencies, which is crucial for students training. As there is no stable Faculty, this could impair a good flow of communication and balance among modules responsible, but the presence of a strong coordinating structure overcomes this problem.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** None

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### Standard 4.02

The workload assigned to teaching and to research activities is defined.

Background information - Every year, the programme management signs contracts, including job description, with members of the faculty. It also signs contracts with people in charge of supervising master theses.

Analysis – Workload and teaching duties are clearly assigned.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### Standard 4.03

The mobility of the teaching staff is facilitated

Background information - The large number of national and international experts coming from a wide variety of academic disciplines is a guarantee for mobility and variety of course contents. This same fact is an incentive for mobility of students towards where the teachers come from.

Analysis – The teaching staff is recruited nationally and internationally, which guarantees mobility and an optimal mix of competencies; it also favours the increasing use of the English language in teaching, a crucial factor for favouring the process of internationalisation of the programme.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

## 2.5 Area 5: Students

Overall Assessment – Criteria concerning this area seem well taken care of and basically fulfilled.

### Standard 5.01

The conditions for admission to the institution and into the program have been made public.

Background information - The criteria for admission to the Programme are made public in writing in the course catalogue and on the MPH Programme website.

Analysis – All necessary material to publicise and clarify admission conditions is available and made public.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusions:** fulfilled

### Standard 5.02

Equality of men and women is assured.

Background information - The student population has changed slightly in terms of educational background, and the proportion of women has increased in recent years. Among the present student body 75% are women.

Analysis – Equality between men and women is assured with respect to equal chance of access to the programme. In fact, in this case, the worry could be the inverse, as recently 75% of enrolled students are women, which could underline some selection in the training market which should be clarified, if present.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:**

- Keep an eye on the increasing trend of female attendance to the course and try to analyse the reason for that.

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### Standard 5.03

The mobility of students is possible and is promoted by mutual recognition of credits between universities and between disciplines

Background information – The mobility of students is promoted in various ways; credits obtained in other faculties are easily recognised. Special occasions for attending teaching activities in other settings among other students are also favoured (Summer school organised by the SSPH+, modules offered in cooperation with other structures, possibility to make the thesis work in different universities or at least under the supervision of teachers from other universities).

Analysis – The modular structure of the programme favours mobility of the students and mutual recognition of courses among different programmes and institutions. Not only courses, but also thesis, may be worked upon and supervised in different universities, even foreign universities, and foreign experts are often involved in thesis development and supervision.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

#### **Standard 5.04**

Measures are taken to ensure adequate learning support and counselling to students
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Background information - Learning support and student counselling meet the basic needs of the students. The outcome of evaluations of the quality of learning support is taken into consideration when teaching activities are reviewed. There are several options for students to get personal and/or written advice during their studies

Analysis – Many different measures are taken to ensure adequate learning support and counselling to students, from individual counselling to written advice.

**Recommendations for quality improvement:** none

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

## 2.6 Area 6: Facilities and premises

Overall Assessment – The quality of premises and facilities available in each one of the three Universities the students can enrol in is absolutely adequate and capable of guaranteeing an optimal environment in which carrying out the studies. The problem stays in the future level of financing, which is linked to the future of the SSPH+ and of the decision made by the Federal Government with respect to further support of the SSPH+ and of the linked programmes. This is not assured right now but, as we have been told, this is the normal situation when the time comes for renewal decisions. It is true that the general financial difficulties felt around Europe have an influence also in Switzerland, but there seems to be a widespread confidence on the further confirmation of the financial support for the programme. In any case, the availability of a reserve fund, and the possibility to increase fees for financing the programme, should guarantee its continuity in the future.

### Standard 6.01

The program has adequate resources available to attain its objectives. These resources are provided on a long-term basis.

Background information - The current level of resources is sufficient to run, maintain, and develop the programme. Its sustainability will depend much on the future of SSPH+, as its financial situation will have an important impact also on the financial situation of the postgraduate training programme.

Analysis – The programme has at present enough resources to attain its objectives; the long-term basis of this support is linked to the decisions of the Federal Government with respect to the SSPH+; there is general confidence that this will be released for the next 4-years term. Notwithstanding this confidence, the experts team believes that other ways of financing should be looked for, not only for guaranteeing long-term support and financial independence, but also for a more widespread diffusion of the programme within different layers of the market.

### Recommendations for quality improvement:

- Explore possibilities for co-funding the programme with resources coming from private bodies/Institutions, while avoiding conflicts of interest and maintaining scientific independence.

**Conclusion:** fulfilled

### 3 Strengths and weaknesses, recommendations for quality enhancement

**STRENGTHS** – The main strengths the expert's team would like to underline are the following:

- Local and International focus of the programme – The programme is focussed on the Swiss situation, but it follows international standards, has an international teaching team, includes an international perspective on Public Health, and can therefore aspire to an international target audience to sustain its development.
- Networking possibility created by the ample variety of teaching staff – The fact of getting acquainted with the Public Health 'élite' of Switzerland, gives the students a vast possibility of future collaboration and networking, among the students themselves, and among the larger Public Health community of Switzerland.
- Broadening of the knowledge in Public Health due to the reform of the programme and to its continuous update – Thanks to the reform of the MPH curriculum, the programme has been widened and it now covers all the relevant areas of Public Health; it is easy to foresee that this same dynamics, including the reflexion brought over by this review, will push towards an increasing broadening of this knowledge, including areas which have so far been overlooked.
- The students appreciate the programme, as it has a clear structure and a good organisation – The programme is well organised, clearly structured and illustrated in its brochures and diffusion materials. It takes advantage of good facilities and premises, which allow the students to take advantage of all learning possibilities.
- Good material for course description – Each course has a specific syllabus, outlining objectives, methods, criteria for assessment and learning material to be used, which makes it easier for the student to follow the course and helps to increase his motivation to attend it.
- Good mix of teaching methods – Along the development of the programme and within each course, a great effort is made to adapt teaching and learning methods to the specific objectives of the module; more effort can be done to improve this component, but the result already attained have to be fully recognised.
- High level of teachers involved – The mix of teachers involved in the programme is probably the best one could have in Switzerland, as far as competence and experience in Public Health is concerned; this is highly appreciated by the students. On top of that, the quality assurance mechanisms guarantee that, in case of failure, the teacher, or the module, can be substituted.
- The alumni are satisfied with their personal outcome from attending the course – It has been clear to the expert's team that the expectations from the persons having attended the programme was not exclusively that of improving their career or getting a better job, but rather getting more interest in their job and acquiring higher competencies for carrying out their job.

- Teaching is competence-oriented – The managing team of the MPH programme has based the curriculum reform on a set of agreed upon competencies of the Public Health professional, rather than on a set of knowledge-based contents, as it is more usual in this kind of planning. Of course this new approach gives the planning staff a greater challenge for students' assessment, which has to be fully developed.
- Excellent quality assurance mechanisms – The quality assurance mechanisms put in place by the steering committee covers all relevant aspects of the programme and it seems to be working smoothly and efficiently.
- Possibility to take advantage of external didactic expertise in planning courses – A very strong point in the didactic renewal of the programme has been the possibility to take advantage of a person with specific expertise in this domain, all interested teachers can rely upon and ask for advice when planning their module.

**WEAKNESSES** – We would like also to underline a number of possible weaknesses to take care of, in order not to let the quality of the programme decrease, nor to impair its natural tendency to further developing, nationally and internationally:

- The flexibility/rigidity of the curriculum – Students have asked for more flexibility in the curriculum. We believe that the curriculum is well structured and with a range of choices wide enough, but probably this range of possibilities (i.e. new courses available) should be more clearly presented and marketed.
- The prevalent use of the German language – Knowing the German language is right now 'de facto' the only possibility for attending the course (also the advertising material is written only in German). This fact is a crucial barrier towards possible internationalisation of the programme. However, it needs to be appreciated that not all students are interested in English language modules.
- The vision/mission statement – The present form of the mission statement is not clear, in the sense that it basically describes what is done, more than giving a vision of what the programme aims to. It should be more clearly stated in terms of a mission/vision statement which specifies, as we understood from the visit, that it is aiming at training for expert leadership (leading through expertise).
- Students involvement – The students involvement in the decision processes should possibly be more structural, even if we recognise that they are actively involved already now in all phases of course quality assessment.
- Sustainability – The real long-term sustainability of the programme, as well as of the SSPH+, is not guaranteed, but this seems coherent with how the Swiss system works. However, the programme managers should try to look for possible external funding, in order to ensure long-term sustainability and full independence in their development.
- Some lacking contents - Some important courses are offered just as elective (i.e. that on social determinants of health) and some are missing (role of ICT, translational research in Public Health, mental health). This lack should be managed with the

implementation/rotation of elective courses and, in some cases (social determinants of health, mental health) with more structural interventions.

- There is no formal Alumni association – The constitution of a formal Alumni association should be fostered by the School, as it would be an invaluable source of information in choosing the programme's objectives and marketing approach.
- Better approach to assessment of cross cutting competences – Even if a great effort has been put in designing adequate assessment methods for the different modules and activities, there is no sound presence of methods dealing with real assessment of competencies, especially of cross-cutting competencies. The thesis work, as well as the possibility of setting up specific modules at the intermediate level, should fill this gap.

In order to complete our analysis, before listing all recommendations, we would like to underline also some threats and opportunities the School will be probably facing, or could be able to take advantage of, in the future.

*Threats:*

- Consider the competitors: MBAs, German MPH, ... (market analysis) – The managing group should have a constant feeling of the market's trends, with respect to the possibility to attend other MPH courses in the nearby German speaking countries, usually at much lower prices. It should also be aware of the possible competition coming from other MBA masters but, mainly, by the development of similar programmes in the existing University of Applied Sciences.
- Budget reduction and consequences on the quality of the programme and the necessary raise of fees – If ever a consistent budget reduction should come about, it will bring over a necessary increase of fees, which are already high; it is difficult to estimate what the consequence could be in terms of students' attendance to the programme.

*Opportunities:*

- The programme represents a natural platform for coordination among Universities: it could help building a stronger basis for Public Health in Switzerland, both for professional development and for research in Public Health.
- Use the role/existence of SSPH+ in Switzerland to improve and develop Public Health training and the Public Health role in the country – The existence of SSPH+ is a unique opportunity for strengthening Public Health in Switzerland and should be exploited as much as possible.



And finally, we would like to sum-up all the recommendations we have formulated, as a hint to the School to further improve its status within the Public Health arena in Switzerland and Europe.

### **Recommendations**

- Try to have a better formulation of the mission statement, coherent with the aim of training for leadership in Public Health through expertise.
- Continue following up alumni career development and consider supporting the setting up of a stable alumni association; continue your efforts in involving alumni in a consultancy role.
- Consider the possibility to extend marketing of the offered courses in the framework of a life-long learning approach.
- Make constantly a market analysis to identify potential competitors inside and outside Switzerland and have an up to date vision of market demands and needs.
- Consider giving a more structural role to students in the organisms dealing with strategic planning of the school.
- Try to have a better presentation of the existing range of possibilities (recently implemented courses, existing electives) in order to avoid the feeling of an excess of rigidity in the curriculum.
- Try to limit progressively the exclusive use of the German language in teaching and in the presentation of the student's guide, as it will impair the possible internationalisation of the programme.
- Continue to critically assess the need to introduce new Public Health related subjects (social determinants of health, ICT tools, systems medicine).
- Consider finding ways for a better assessment of cross-cutting competences, along and at the end of the programme (through some specific modules, intermediate modules, thesis work).
- Keep an eye on the increasing trend of female attendance to the course and try to analyse the reason for that.
- Explore possibilities for co-funding the programme with resources coming from private bodies/Institutions, without giving up scientific independence.

**4 Recommendation for accreditation: Yes**