



organe d'accréditation et d'assurance qualité  
des hautes écoles suisses

## **Accréditation du MAS en Interpreter Training**

**Centre de Formation continue, Université de Genève**

Rapport final de l'OAQ

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organ für akkreditierung und qualitätssicherung  
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## Contenu

1	Introduction .....	3
1.1	MAS en Interpreter Training .....	3
1.2	Contexte de la procédure .....	3
1.3	Objet de l'accréditation et ouverture de la procédure .....	3
2	Procédure et rapport d'auto-évaluation .....	3
2.1	Période d'auto-évaluation .....	3
2.2	Forme et contenu du rapport d'auto-évaluation .....	4
3	Évaluation externe .....	5
3.1	Groupe d'experts .....	5
3.2	Visite sur place .....	5
4	Rapport des experts et prise de position de l'institution .....	6
4.1	Rapport des experts .....	6
4.2	Prise de position de l'institution .....	6
5	Standards de qualité, filière d'études universitaire .....	6
5.1	Mise en œuvre et objectifs de formation .....	7
5.2	Organisation interne et gestion de la qualité .....	7
5.3	Cursus et méthodes didactiques .....	8
5.4	Corps enseignant .....	9
5.5	Etudiants .....	10
5.6	Dotation en équipements et en locaux .....	11
6	Résumé des forces et des faiblesses de la filière d'études .....	11
6.1	Points forts de la filière d'études .....	11
6.2	Faiblesses de la filière d'études et recommandations .....	12
7	Conclusions et recommandation d'accréditation de l'OAQ .....	13
7.1	Conclusions de l'OAQ .....	13
7.2	Recommandation d'accréditation .....	14

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 MAS en Interpreter Training**

Le Master of Advanced Studies en Interpreter Training (MAS-ITR) de l'Université de Genève (UniGE) est offert tous les deux ans depuis 1998. A trois reprises, le programme était essentiellement dispensé en présentiel. Lors des trois dernières éditions, 80% du programme étaient dispensés à distance et 20% en présentiel. Actuellement 24 participants sont inscrits.

Le MAS-ITR est un programme offert par l'Ecole de traduction et d'interprétation (ETI) qui est une des huit facultés de l'UniGE. Le programme a un format de formation à distance tout à fait original qui offre beaucoup de possibilités d'interaction. Il comporte une semaine de formation intensive en présentiel et un travail écrit final. Le MAS-ITR est soutenu au niveau administratif, pédagogique et comptable par le Service de formation continue de l'UniGE .

Il s'agit d'un programme de 60 crédits ECTS s'adressant à des interprètes de conférence expérimentés qui souhaitent enseigner cette profession. Le programme dure en règle générale 2 ans à temps partiel.

### **1.2 Contexte de la procédure**

Au printemps 2009, le Rectorat de l'UniGE a déposé une demande d'accréditation de plusieurs MAS, dont le MAS-ITR.

### **1.3 Objet de l'accréditation et ouverture de la procédure**

L'objet de l'accréditation est le MAS-ITR de l'UniGE.

La procédure d'accréditation fut ouverte officiellement le 24 septembre 2009 au cours d'une séance tenue à Genève. Cette séance réunissait le rectorat, le service de formation continue et des représentants du MAS avec la responsable de l'OAQ.

## **2 Procédure et rapport d'auto-évaluation**

### **2.1 Période d'auto-évaluation**

La période d'auto-évaluation a commencé en décembre 2009 avec la création du groupe de pilotage et s'est terminée fin mars 2010. La durée de la phase d'auto-évaluation a donc été de 4 mois, en conformité avec les usages de l'OAQ.

Le comité de pilotage se composait des membres suivants :

- Barbara Class, chargée d'enseignement ETI, présidente du comité de pilotage
- Prof. Barbara Moser-Mercier, ETI, directrice du MAS-ITR

- Mme Ahidoba de Franchi Mandscheff, collaboratrice scientifique du Service de formation continue de l'UniGE, expert en assurance qualité
- Mme Frances Steinig, chargée d'enseignement ETI, représentant du corps enseignant
- Mme Maria-Fernanda Strasser, chargée d'enseignement ETI, représentant des tuteurs
- Mme Marta Lumbreras, assistante ETI, représentant des étudiants
- Mme Véronique Sauron Dugué, chargée d'enseignement ETI, représentant de l'administration.
- Mr. Philippe Baudrion, support informatique ETI, expert IT

## 2.2 Forme et contenu du rapport d'auto-évaluation

Le rapport d'auto-évaluation a été remis à l'OAQ dans le respect de l'échéance, soit le 31 mars 2010. Il suit les exigences formelles de l'OAQ explicitées dans le Guide d'auto-évaluation, mis à disposition du comité de pilotage.

Le rapport a été rédigé par le groupe de pilotage, qui s'est basé sur des échanges avec toutes les parties prenantes au programme. Il présente - en trois parties - d'abord l'Université de Genève, ensuite le Service de formation continue avec ces tâches et produits, et finalement l'auto-évaluation des standards de qualité s'appliquant aux filières d'études selon l'art. 10 des Directives pour l'accréditation dans le domaine des hautes écoles universitaires en Suisse du 28 juin 2007<sup>1</sup>..

Les experts ont jugé le rapport de bonne qualité et très utile pour leur évaluation. Ils ont remarqué cependant qu'une présentation succincte du programme de formation MAS-ITR, avant la discussion des standards point par point, aurait amélioré la compréhension, notamment l'approche pédagogique originale de ce MAS. La présentation des standards d'évaluation de la qualité est très claire, mais les experts ont regretté un certain manque d'analyse critique. Ils auraient souhaité apprendre pourquoi certaines modifications du MAS ont eu lieu ou quels changements étaient en discussion sans finalement se réaliser.

Dans l'ensemble, les documents d'auto-évaluation ont offert aux experts une base solide d'appréciation. Les incertitudes ou les points qui n'étaient pas explicités de manière suffisante par écrit ont pu être éclaircis et approfondis lors de la visite sur place.

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<sup>1</sup> Ci-après nommées: Directives pour l'accréditation

## 3 Évaluation externe

### 3.1 Groupe d'experts

Le groupe d'experts a été sélectionné conformément à l'art. 20 des Directives pour l'accréditation. Pour tenir compte du fait que les standards sont plutôt axés sur l'accréditation des programmes Bachelor et Master, l'OAQ a sélectionné des experts qui connaissent les spécificités des programmes de formation continue. Le choix des experts fut approuvé par le conseil scientifique de l'OAQ ainsi que par les responsables du MAS-ITR.

Le groupe suivant a été formé:

#### **Chef expert:**

- Prof. Nicholas Harris, Expert Bologne et ancien Directeur QAA, UK

#### **Experts:**

- Dr Pat Davies, Projects Director EUCEN – the European Association for University Lifelong Learning, UK / France
- Prof Ingrid Kurz, Prof. en traduction et interprétation à l'Université de Vienne, Autriche

Le groupe d'experts a établi une bonne communication durant la visite sur place. Le panel a montré un grand respect envers tous les interlocuteurs présents lors des séances d'entretien.

### 3.2 Visite sur place

La visite du programme MAS-ITR s'est déroulée du mercredi 5 mai au jeudi 6 mai dans les locaux de l'ETI situés dans le bâtiment Uni Mail (à l'UniGE). Le débriefing a eu lieu le vendredi 7 mai 2010 au bâtiment Uni Dufour. Une collaboratrice scientifique de l'OAQ était chargée d'organiser la procédure et d'accompagner le groupe d'experts au cours des 2 jours de visite. Une séance d'information et de préparation organisée par l'OAQ à l'intention des experts a eu lieu la veille de la visite.

Pendant la visite, les experts ont pu s'entretenir avec toutes les parties prenantes invitées par le comité de pilotage selon le programme initialement établi par l'OAQ. Le programme comprenait les 8 séances d'entretiens suivantes:

1. Rectorat de l'Université
2. Service de formation continue de l'Université
3. Groupe de pilotage de l'auto-évaluation
4. Direction du ETI, Direction du MAS
5. Parties prenantes externes
6. Coordinateurs et secrétaire du MAS
7. Étudiants, Alumni
8. Professeurs

Pour approfondir les sujets abordés lors des sessions susmentionnées, les experts ont eu l'occasion de consulter des travaux d'étudiants et ont pu suivre une démonstration de l'environnement d'apprentissage à distance. Ils ont aussi eu la possibilité de tester la plateforme mise en place pour l'enseignement de ce MAS.

La visite sur place s'est terminée par un débriefing, au cours duquel le responsable du groupe des d'experts a présenté au Vice-recteur de l'UniGE, au groupe de pilotage et à d'autres participants aux entretiens les conclusions et les recommandations d'amélioration de la qualité préparées par le groupe d'experts.

L'atmosphère de la visite était agréable. Les personnes invitées ont répondu présentes et les experts ont eu la possibilité de recueillir tous les renseignements nécessaires, soit lors des entretiens, soit par la demande de documents supplémentaires.

## **4 Rapport des experts et prise de position de l'institution**

### **4.1 Rapport des experts**

Conformément au déroulement de la procédure mentionnée dans les Directives et selon le calendrier, une première version du rapport d'expertise a été envoyée aux responsables du programme le 9 juin 2010.

Le rapport des experts se présente sous une forme claire et concise. Il débute par une brève présentation du MAS-ITR, suivie de chapitres sur le rapport d'auto-évaluation et la visite sur place. Le rapport est ensuite structuré selon le set de standards de qualité et se termine par une recommandation d'accréditation du groupe des experts, précédée d'une analyse détaillée des forces et des faiblesses du programme.

### **4.2 Prise de position de l'institution**

Les responsables du programme ont pris connaissance du rapport. Ils ont notés quelques erreurs de rédaction sur le plan purement formel. Ces remarques ont été acceptées sans autre par les experts. Le Vice-Recteur de l'UniGE, Prof. Yves Flückiger, a commenté le rapport des experts dans sa lettre du 29 juin 2010 comme suit :

« (...) Nous n'avons aucune remarque de fond, le rapport étant tout à fait cohérent et en accord avec les discussions menées lors de la visite des experts. Nous acceptons l'ensemble des recommandations émises par les experts dans leur rapport et allons les mettre en œuvre dans les meilleurs délais. (...) »

## **5 Standards de qualité, filière d'études universitaire**

Les paragraphes suivants présentent très brièvement comment le MAS-ITR satisfait aux exigences de qualité. Les standards de qualité s'appliquant aux filières d'études énumérés à l'art. 10 des Directives pour l'accréditation créent la structure de ce chapitre. Ces

appréciations sont basées sur le rapport d'auto-évaluation du MAS-ITR et sur le rapport des experts.

### 5.1 Mise en œuvre et objectifs de formation

*L'offre d'études est régulièrement dispensée (Standard 1.01)*

Le MAS-ITR de l'UniGE est offert tous les deux ans depuis 1998. Actuellement 24 participants sont inscrits, en règle général des interprètes de conférence expérimentés qui souhaitent enseigner cette profession. Le programme répond à une demande constante des organisations internationales et d'autres employeurs d'interprètes et a donc lieu de manière régulière. Les responsables arrivent à équilibrer le nombre de participants afin de garantir une offre d'étude à un excellent niveau.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*Les filières d'études visent des objectifs de formation qui correspondent au schéma directeur et au plan stratégique de l'institution (Standard 1.02)*

Les experts citent la stratégie de l'UniGE appelée *Vision 2020* et constatent que le MAS-ITR répond directement à plusieurs objectifs stratégiques comme 'Renforcer notre dimension internationale' (#5), 'Intensifier notre présence régionale' (#4), ou 'Promouvoir l'égalité des chances' (#7).

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

### 5.2 Organisation interne et gestion de la qualité

*Les processus, les compétences et les responsabilités décisionnels sont bien établis et communiqués à toutes les personnes concernées (Standard 2.01)*

Les principes de gestion du programme sont connus par toutes les parties prenantes, à savoir les participants du MAS, la faculté ETI, le Service de formation continue de l'UniGE et les autres membres du personnel. La collaboration entre ces diverses entités est parfaitement organisée et fonctionne sans ambiguïté.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*La participation active aux processus décisionnels relatifs à l'enseignement et aux études est assurée pour le personnel scientifique et les étudiants (Standard 2.02)*

La participation active aux processus décisionnels est garantie pour tous les acteurs. Les experts remarquent que l'excellente marche du programme est le fruit du travail d'un nombre relativement restreint de personnes. Ils ont cherché à savoir comment la faculté arrive à gérer un éventuel départ d'un des enseignants clés, engagés sur une base non permanente, ou à maintenir le développement et le soutien de la plateforme informatique. Ils ont pu constater que l'engagement de l'UniGE permettait le maintien du programme en toute circonstance.

Les experts suggèrent aux responsables du MAS d'analyser le risque de recevoir un nombre de candidatures qualifiées qui dépasse largement la capacité d'accueil actuel et de

formaliser les moyens de gérer une telle situation, sans développer des lourdes procédures administratives.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*Les filières d'études font l'objet de mesures d'assurance qualité. L'institution en utilise les résultats lorsqu'elle adapte périodiquement l'offre d'études (Standard 2.03)*

Le programme dispose de mesures d'assurance qualité bien en place et judicieusement mises en œuvre. L'avis des étudiants et des alumnis est exploité de manière adéquate.

Les experts se sont occupés plus en détail de la 2<sup>e</sup> phrase du standard qui dit au sujet des mesures d'assurance qualité : « L'institution en utilise les résultats lorsqu'elle adapte périodiquement l'offre d'études ». Ils ont constaté qu'au sein de l'UniGE la nature des acquis de formation atteints à la sortie d'un MAS n'étaient pas identifiés par rapport à une référence reconnue, comme par exemple un cadre de qualification.

Les experts remarquent par ailleurs que cette lacune peut être comblée en établissant une base commune interne de critères d'évaluation des étudiants. Ces critères font déjà l'objet d'échanges informels parmi les enseignants, mais ne sont pas documentées sous une forme accessible à tous.

Sur la base de ces constats, les experts font les **deux recommandations** suivantes :

- Les responsables du MAS ouvrent une discussion, au sein de la faculté ETI, avec le Service de Formation Continue et l'UniGE, sur les critères à identifier, en termes d'acquis de formation, pour caractériser un MAS et pour le différencier d'un premier master ;
- les critères d'évaluation des étudiants sont rendus accessibles de manière plus généralisée.

Malgré les deux recommandations données, les experts considèrent le standard 2.03 comme rempli.

### 5.3 Coursus et méthodes didactiques

*Les filières d'études disposent d'un plan d'études structuré correspondant à une mise en œuvre coordonnée de la Déclaration de Bologne dans les hautes écoles universitaires suisses (Standard 3.01)*

Le plan d'études du MAS-ITR est structuré en modules, correspondant à la mise en œuvre coordonnée de la Déclaration de Bologne. Les experts remarquent cependant que beaucoup d'étudiants semblent investir plus de temps que ce qui est indiqué dans le plan d'études.

Les experts identifient deux sujets qui pourraient être clarifiés :

D'abord la répartition des heures de travail par module devrait être vérifiée et, si nécessaire, redéfinie en respectant le fait qu'il s'agit d'un programme suivi à temps partiel et que la charge globale ne doit pas dépasser 1800 heures pour les 60 crédits ECTS.



Ensuite, ils suggèrent à l'ETI, et à l'UniGE en général, d'intégrer dans leurs réflexions les différents cadres de qualification décrivant les acquis de formation au niveau suisse (nqf.ch-HS) et européen ('Bologna' Framework, EQF), ceci afin d'assurer que les exigences du MAS se placent bien au niveau d'un master.

Le panel d'experts répète à l'égard du standard 3.01 sa **recommandation** faite sous 2.03 qui dit:

- que les responsables du MAS ouvrent une discussion, au sein de la faculté ETI, avec le Service de Formation Continue et l'UniGE, sur les critères à identifier, en termes d'acquis de formation, pour caractériser un MAS et pour le différencier d'un premier master ;

et le panel ajoute cette autre **recommandation** :

- Les estimations de la charge de travail pour atteindre les objectifs du programme et des modules séparément doivent être vérifiées en tenant compte du fait que les participants gardent leur occupation professionnelle et suivent le programme à temps partiel.

Malgré les deux recommandations données, les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*L'offre d'études couvre les aspects principaux de la discipline. Elle permet l'acquisition de méthodes de travail scientifiques et garantit l'intégration de connaissances scientifiques. Les méthodes d'enseignement et d'évaluation sont définies en fonction des objectifs de formation (Standard 3.02)*

Dans le milieu de l'Interpreter Training, le MAS de l'ETI est considéré comme une référence. L'approche pédagogique unique permet d'intégrer les fondements théoriques dans un cours professionnel délivré à un niveau très exigeant. Le standard est donc rempli.

*Les conditions d'obtention des attestations et des diplômes académiques sont réglementées et publiées (Standard 3.03)*

Les participants ont accès et connaissance des conditions d'obtention des certificats d'études et du titre final, conditions fixées par l'UniGE.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

## 5.4 Corps enseignant

*L'enseignement est dispensé par un corps enseignant compétent du point de vue didactique et qualifié scientifiquement (Standard 4.01)*

Les enseignants ont d'excellentes compétences pour donner les cours du programme. Du fait qu'ils ont un mandat à durée déterminée, ils gardent leurs postes de chercheurs ou de cadre dans leur domaine et assurent donc l'intégration des aspects scientifiques et professionnels dans l'enseignement.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*La pondération des activités d'enseignement et de recherche du corps enseignant est définie (Standard 4.02)*

Pour évaluer ce standard, les experts proposent une définition plus large du terme « recherche ». Les experts partent de l'idée que le niveau de l'enseignement doit être assuré par des activités de recherche ou des occupations professionnelles équivalentes.

Ils constatent alors que le cahier des charges des enseignants est bien défini, et qu'ils dépassent de loin ce qui leur est demandé pour assurer le niveau de leur enseignement.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*La mobilité du corps enseignant est possible (Standard 4.03)*

La mobilité des enseignants est assurée du fait qu'ils gardent leur occupation professionnelle et qu'ils collaborent sur un plan global à travers la plate-forme informatique.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

## **5.5 Etudiants**

*Les conditions d'admission à l'université et dans les filières d'études sont communiquées publiquement (Standard 5.01)*

L'admission des participants est opérée selon les conditions publiées. Les candidats doivent faire preuve de qualifications académiques et professionnelles avancées prédéfinies.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*L'égalité des chances entre hommes et femmes est réalisée (Standard 5.02)*

Les règles législatives dans le domaine de l'égalité des chances entre hommes et femmes sont parfaitement respectées par l'ETI et l'UniGE.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*La mobilité des étudiants est possible et encouragée par la reconnaissance mutuelle interuniversitaire et interdisciplinaire des acquis (Standard 5.03)*

La mobilité des participants est assurée par le fait qu'ils collaborent en petits groupes variés, à distance ainsi qu'en présentiel, et qu'ils maintiennent leur poste de travail qui les amène à participer à des congrès ou autres manifestations internationales.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

*L'institution veille à offrir un encadrement adéquat aux étudiants (Standard 5.04)*

La plateforme informatique spécialement conçu pour ce MAS offre un excellent encadrement grâce à des interventions rapides de la part des enseignants sur le réseau, ainsi que par la collaboration dans les petits groupes de participants qui collaborent à travers cet environnement.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

## 5.6 Dotation en équipements et en locaux

*Les filières d'études disposent des ressources suffisantes pour réaliser leurs objectifs. Les ressources sont disponibles à long terme (Standard 6.01)*

L'ETI est bien doté financièrement et, grâce à des fonds cantonaux et fédéraux, un équipement de pointe a pu être mis à disposition pour l'enseignement en interprétation et traduction.

Une des conditions du financement est un nombre stable de participants. Selon les informations données par les parties prenantes, notamment les employeurs, les candidatures ne vont sûrement pas diminuer pour ce programme.

Les experts considèrent ce standard comme rempli.

## 6 Résumé des forces et des faiblesses de la filière d'études

### 6.1 Points forts de la filière d'études

Ci-dessous, un résumé des points forts du MAS-ITR décrits dans le rapport des experts:

#### Objectifs de formation

- Ce programme et ces objectifs de formation sont probablement uniques et sont une référence dans son domaine. L'approche pédagogique s'appuyant sur un environnement informatique spécialement conçu est considéré comme excellent par les participants.

#### Assurance qualité interne

- Les étudiants soulignent l'excellence de l'environnement d'apprentissage et ils confirment que leur avis est systématiquement pris en compte. Les responsables du programme assurent le niveau d'excellence d'une édition du MAS à l'autre.

#### Cursus et méthodes didactiques

- Le curriculum est bien équilibré entre aspects professionnels et académiques. Le modèle pédagogique est parfaitement adapté aux objectifs de formation.

#### Le corps enseignant

- Avec son enthousiasme et son attitude professionnelle, le corps enseignant arrive à contribuer de manière significative à la mise en œuvre de la Vision 2020 que l'UniGE s'est donnée (voir page 6).
- Les enseignants sont des experts dans leur domaine et arrivent à passionner les participants au MAS.

## **Etudiants**

- Les participants possèdent une solide expérience professionnelle et vont pouvoir avancer dans leur carrière grâce au MAS.
- Les possibilités d'embauche de ces futurs formateurs dans leur domaine restent excellentes.

## **Ressources**

- Le financement du MAS et de l'ETI sont assurés par l'UniGE, notamment les investissements dans la plateforme informatique.

## **6.2 Faiblesses de la filière d'études et recommandations**

Les points d'amélioration énoncés dans le rapport des experts sont résumés ci-dessous. Ces derniers n'atténuent en aucune manière l'excellent niveau du MAS-ITR enseigné selon une approche pédagogique parfaitement adaptée et à l'aide d'une plateforme informatique performante.

Les recommandations formulées par les experts visent les domaines Assurance qualité interne ainsi que Coursus et méthodes didactiques du programme.

### **Assurance qualité interne**

- Les méthodes d'évaluation ne permettent pas de qualifier les performances sur une base commune, partagée par tous les enseignants.

#### ***Recommandations***

- Les responsables du MAS ouvrent une discussion, au sein de la faculté ETI, avec le Service de Formation Continue et l'UniGE, sur les critères à identifier, en termes d'acquis de formation, pour caractériser un MAS et pour le différencier d'un premier master ;
- les critères d'évaluation des étudiants sont rendus accessibles de manière plus généralisée.

### **Coursus et méthodes didactiques**

- Il manque la référencement des acquis de formation visés du cursus par rapport à un cadre de qualifications
- La charge de travail des participants peut dépasser de loin la norme de 1800 heures pour 60 crédits ECTS.

## **Recommandations**

- Les responsables du MAS ouvrent une discussion, au sein de la faculté ETI, avec le Service de Formation Continue et l'UniGE, sur les critères à identifier, en termes d'acquis de formation, pour caractériser un MAS et pour le différencier d'un premier master ;
- les estimations de la charge de travail pour atteindre les objectifs du programme et des modules séparément doivent être vérifiées en tenant compte du fait que les participants gardent leur occupation professionnelle et suivent le programme à temps partiel.

## **Corps enseignant**

- Le groupe relativement restreint d'enseignants fait apparaître le risque lié à la perte d'un membre du corps enseignant, risque qui n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'une évaluation approfondie.

## **Étudiants**

- La charge de travail importante n'est pas explicitement communiquée dans le descriptif du MAS à l'intention des futurs candidats.

## **Ressources**

- Le financement du MAS ne permet actuellement à l'ETI de pourvoir qu'un poste de professeur. Il faut concrétiser le projet d'engager un second professeur dédié à ce domaine.

## **7 Conclusions et recommandation d'accréditation de l'OAQ**

### **7.1 Conclusions de l'OAQ**

Dans leur examen approfondi, les experts ont constaté que tous les standards étaient remplis. L'OAQ adhère entièrement à ce constat. L'OAQ est également en accord avec les recommandations formulées par les experts, sauf là où ils soulèvent la question d'une référence externe qui permettrait de s'assurer que le MAS se place bien au niveau d'un master. Selon l'OAQ, il s'agit ici d'une exigence d'ordre politique liée à la mise en œuvre de la déclaration de Bologne. En conséquence, l'OAQ a ôté cette exigence des recommandations.

La première recommandation concernant le domaine Assurance qualité interne, répété sous le domaine Cours et méthodes didactiques, devient alors

- Les responsables du MAS ouvrent une discussion, au sein de la faculté ETI, avec le Service de Formation Continue et l'UniGE, sur les critères à identifier pour évaluer les acquis de formation.



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des hautes écoles suisses

L'OAQ encourage les responsables du MAS-ITR à mettre en œuvre les recommandations ainsi reformulées.

## **7.2 Recommandation d'accréditation**

En se basant sur les standards de qualité décrits dans l'art. 10 des Directives pour l'accréditation, l'OAQ conclut que le MAS-ITR remplit entièrement les standards d'accréditation.

***Sur la base de l'Art. 25 al. 1 des Directives pour l'accréditation, l'OAQ soumet à la CUS la proposition d'accréditer sans condition le Master of Advanced Studies en Interpreter Training de l'Université de Genève pour une durée de validité de 7 ans.***

**Report of the visiting international expert panel  
on an application by the**

**University of Geneva**

**for accreditation of its programme**

**Master of Advanced Studies in  
Interpreter Training**

**June 2010**

**Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

Contents

	page
<b>Introduction to the programme seeking accreditation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Self Evaluation Report</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The on-site visit</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Assessment of the quality standards</b>	<b>8</b>
Area 1. Implementation and teaching objectives	8
Area 2. Internal organisation and quality assurance measures	9
Area 3. Curriculum and teaching methods	11
Area 4. Teaching staff	13
Area 5. Students	15
Area 6. Facilities and premises	16
<b>Overall impression of the quality of teaching and studies</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Profile of strengths and weaknesses</b> (including any special features)	<b>17</b>
<b>Recommendations for enhancing quality</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Recommendation on accreditation</b>	<b>20</b>



## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

### Introduction to the programme seeking accreditation

(taken largely from the Self Evaluation Report)

The University of Geneva (UniGe) Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in Interpreter Training was conceived within and is delivered through the Ecole de traduction et d'interprétation (ETI) with the support of the University's Continuing Education Centre. The programme is delivered in alternate years to part time students - referred to as 'participants' - who study through an IT based distance learning programme. This programme is not a 'norm' for distance learning; its emphasis is on a clear but less commonly used pedagogical model that is itself supported by an advanced but user friendly, IT learning platform. The education and professional training delivered through the platform clearly surpassed the students' highest expectations and impressed the evaluation panel.

The students, who are based around the world, are all very experienced and highly competent professional interpreters, some of whom have had some experience in the training of others in the professional practice of interpreting. It was immediately apparent to panel that the programme is extremely demanding on each student's total commitment (including time), a fact that is not as well signalled in the pre-course material as it should be. A few students complete the programme within a 12 month period but it is far more usual for the finalisation of the 'thesis' to result in the students working well into a second year (this substantial 18ECTS component is referred to in the programme as a 'seminar paper!').

In summary the programmes includes 9 modules:

- 1 Fundamentals of distance learning (5 ECTS)
- 2 the interpreting process (5 ECTS)
- 3 skill acquisition and expertise (5 ECTS)
- 4 design and implementation of research projects (5 ECTS)
- 5 teaching consecutive interpretation (5 ECTS)
- 6 teaching simultaneous interpretation (5 ECTS)
- 7 curriculum, syllabus design and lesson planning (5 ECTS)
- 8 evaluating classroom performance: providing feedback to students (5 ECTS)
- 9 the interpreter's voice (2 ECTS)

and

a 'seminar paper' (18 ECTS)

All higher education programmes will include theory and practice but with these in different proportions and with different emphases. This programme has a clear balance (seen superficially as 42:18 ECTS) between advanced professional training, which provides the knowledge and practical competences for experienced

## **Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

interpreters to training others (practice underpinned by theory) and an extended exercise of the 'seminar paper' (an academic/ scientific exploration of aspect(s) of advanced practice).

The interesting, and in this case very effective, pedagogical model was further elaborated during the site visit. It is one in which there is particular emphasis on collaborative learning by participants, learning not just in didactic and directed ways through the programme staff but in staff supported activities that are carried out in 'rotating' groups of participants. Assessment is based on outcomes of collaborative work and individual inputs to collaborative working as well as individual achievement. Within such a model there is of course the difficulty of dealing with 'free-loading'; the programme team are well aware of this potential problem and make considerable efforts to quickly identify and reduce any such elements. The programme has a pedagogical advisor to assist with the ongoing monitoring and evolution of the programme development and delivery.

The programme is supported by professorial and other teaching staff, tutors, a pedagogical advisor and IT technical and administrative staff. In common with all Continuing Education programmes at UniGe, the teaching staff are contracted to undertake the work as additional duties and not through their main UniGe contract. In addition to developing their academic interests and careers most of the staff continue to work as professional interpreters.

### **The Self Evaluation Report**

The Self Evaluation Report (SER) is structured in three main parts:

- The University of Geneva
- Continuing Education at the University of Geneva
- Response to OAQ standards.

The first two parts were generic and similar to those used in a parallel accreditation application for another MAS programme offered by the University. The SER for the MAS in Interpreter Training also included numerous appendices and links to relevant web sites.

A Steering Committee, chaired by the Director of the Interpreting Department, was responsible for the development and production of the SER which went through much discussion across the key people involved and many iterations before being completed.

The report provides a helpful summary of the University of Geneva and its commitment to Continuing Education, drawing on the impact of historical aspects on recent, current and future (Bologna influenced) provision. It also provides a helpful

## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

background to the relationship between the University Rectorate, the Continuing Education Centre (*Service formation continue, SFC*) and the Ecole de traduction et interprétation (ETI) through which the programme is delivered. ETI has, as an institute, undergone an earlier external evaluation. The Rectorate is also assisted with its commitment to continuing education by the *Commission de la formation continue (COFO)*, "*un organe de réflexion et de concentration sur les problèmes que pose la politique générale de la formation continue ...* ", which includes the vice rector and senior staff from each of the faculties and the head of SFC.

The main part of the report is however rightly concerned with addressing each of the accreditation standards that are set out in "Guidelines for academic accreditation in Switzerland". The OAQ standards are generic and intended to apply to ALL types of (predominantly academic /'scientific') programmes and it was perhaps just a little disappointing that there was not an initial summary to set out the particular (and special) features and pedagogical model upon which this (probably) unique programme had been conceived and built.

The report thus sequentially addresses each of the required areas:

- Area 1. Implementation and teaching objectives
- Area 2. Internal organisation and quality assurance measures
- Area 3. Curriculum and teaching methods
- Area 4. Teaching staff
- Area 5. Students
- Area 6. Facilities and premises

and the specific standards that apply to each. The SER specifically addressed the 'indicator' questions and was at times more focused on trying to fit aspects of the QA of this continuing education programme to a 'conventional reading' of the standard rather than seeking to address the standard through the particular managerial and pedagogical contexts that apply as a consequence of it being a continuing education programme for advanced level practitioners.

The panel considered that on several occasions it might have liked to see a little more *critical/self* evaluation within the SER. *Critical* in the sense that the SER might have usefully also provided some narrative *reflective* commentary into *why* certain changes have taken place through the various evolutions between the different 'editions' of the programme, and also what changes were considered but have not taken place. The absence of such reflective material within the SER was rendered more surprising when it became very apparent during the site visit that those involved in the design and implementation of the programme were constantly and closely in reflective dialogue about the programme, its components, its delivery, and the groups and even

## **Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

individual students - referred to within the context of MAS programmes as 'participants'. The panel was particularly impressed by the extent and depth of continuous monitoring and active response to the challenges inherent in running such a programme.

Considerable amounts of further detail were provided through a series of indexed and well organised appendices.

### **The on-site visit**

Following an OAQ briefing for the evaluation team on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, the on-site visit for the evaluation of the MAS in Interpreter Training took place over May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The visit was very well organised and all of the participants in the sessions, whether from UniGe or its key stakeholders, were 'open' and constructive in their co-operation with the panel. Much additional material was offered during the site visit and like the initial report was of a very high and professional standard. From the panel member's perspective the visit went completely smoothly and they were not aware of any problems during the site visit.

The team briefing, provided by an OAQ staff member, gave an excellent summary of the Swiss HE sector and relevant features of the UniGe within the national and cantonal contexts. This was followed by an initial discussion of each panel member's comments about the programme's Self Evaluation Report (SER) and the extent to which it addressed the accreditation standards. The panel initially had mixed views about the programme as set out in the SER and identified a series of questions and additional evidence they would like to see in order to test their sometimes uncertain / sometimes potentially critical views. The site visit addressed **all** of the concerns raised by the panel members and discussed at the briefing session.

The panel's initial meeting was with Vice-rector Professor Yves Fluckiger who is responsible for teaching and learning matters, and the UniGe *Secrétaire Général*. This meeting provided the panel with the evidence it required regarding the Institution's strategic plans and priorities, the inter-relationships between UniGe, ETI and the MAS programme, and the extent of the institution's commitment to the programme. The second meeting was with the head of the Continuing Education Service who had both coordinated the visit and provided administrative and other support to the programme.

The first meeting with those most directly involved in the planning, delivery and review/ revision of the programme was with the Steering Group who were responsible

## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

for the development of the Self Evaluation Report. It was immediately evident that this had been a collaborative exercise with wide consultation and contributions, and also provided the panel's first evidence of the effectiveness of the IT platform and its capabilities. The meeting merged into a wider discussion, involving all of the Steering Group, on the nature and direction of the programme. The meeting had originally been planned with just the Director but it had immediately become apparent that whilst professor Barbara Moser-Mercer had provided the innovation and dynamic impetus to lead the establishment of the programme it was truly a 'team effort', although still with clear academic, pedagogical and organisational leadership.

The meeting with the stakeholders provided the first real evidence that the programme delivered what it claimed - in abundance. The stakeholders represented key international and transnational organisations; their praise for the conceptual basis, the delivery of the programme and its graduates could not have been higher.

The following meeting with the administrative and technical support indicated clearly that there was very effective administration with a strong quality control, and strong type of technical support (essential for this programme and its pedagogical model).

The panel had an opportunity to see and experience the learning platform and examine a wide selection of student's and students' (for much work is collaborative) achievements. The students and alumni who attended the subsequent meeting all spoke very highly of their course, although all commented on the very high level of intellectual and time demands that the course had both required and engendered. The panel noted with interest a shared view that they had become 'addicted' to their learning and found it very hard to 'dissociate' at the end of the programme. Following the panel's detailed discussions, each of the standards was considered against the evidence provided both within the SER and throughout the meetings during the on-site visit.

The panel concluded the first day with a meeting with staff. It is always hard to determine from an SER the real level of commitment of those involved in its design and delivery. In this case the staff are providing the course through a variety of contracts, including some that are short term and part-time. It was thus critical for the panel to take a careful view on the quality and commitment, and recognition of responsibilities, of the assigned staff and how these aspects fed into the substance and sustainability of the programme. The panel was impressed by both the individuals and in particular the way they worked together. It was immediately clear that they shared a common commitment to the concept and delivery of the programme and, incidentally, worked far beyond their contracted responsibilities. Because of the

truly global dimension of the programme and its distance learning format, with a commitment to collaborative learning, it places substantial demands on the staff as they deliver their specific sections of the programme; they are to all intents and purposes 'on call 24/7' when leading / facilitating the delivery of their components. The level of commitment to, and speed of response to, their participants and their needs were truly impressive.

The panel had the opportunity to recall any individuals or groups for an additional meeting but did not feel the need. They did however spend some time further examining examples of students work and some additional material that had been provided before undertaking their discussions and coming to their conclusions.

## **Assessment of the quality standards**

### **Area 1 Implementation and teaching objectives**

#### **Standard 1.01 The programme is carried out regularly**

The programme has been running in various guises since 1998 and additionally provides a number of stand-alone modules and linked components that are taken by advanced practitioners who are not able or interested in committing to the whole (and very demanding) MAS course.

Being 'demand driven' (as are all UniGe CE programmes) it has no difficulty attracting sufficient highly qualified participants; its problems can arise from having too many applicants but it has to date generally managed to balance the scale of intake with the ability to deliver what they regard as a high quality programme (partly through the provision of some modules as free-standing courses).

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 1.01**

#### **Standard 1.02 The objectives of the programme correspond to the institution's mission and strategic plan**

UniGe is committed, through its strategic *Vision 2020* statement, to a number of objectives that are directly relevant to the programme being evaluated, including '*Renforcer notre dimension internationale*' (#5), '*Intensifier notre présence régionale*' (#4), '*Promouvoir l'égalité des chances*' (#7). *Vision 2020* also refers in a wider sense to UniGe's investment in and development of its Continuing Education programmes.

The vision also includes *'Proposer une formation attractive' (#2)* which has direct bearing on the quality and quality assurance of all UniGe programmes and awards, including those in continuing education.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 1.02**

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Area 1 concerning implementation and teaching objectives**

## **Area 2 Internal organisation and quality assurance measures**

**Standard 2.01 The decision making processes, competencies and responsibilities have been determined and communicated to all those involved**

The site visit clarified that all of those involved in the design, delivery, and quality assurance of the programme are aware of their duties and responsibilities and act accordingly. The relationships between the awarding institution (UniGe), the Ecole de traduction et interprétation (ETI, Faculty of UNIGE that delivers the MAS in Interpreter Training), the Centre for Continuing Education (that supports and integrates the institutions activities in this area), and the various staff who are involved could be a complex arrangement and allow either uncertainties about roles and responsibilities or 'gaps' to occur.

In this case the internal organisation is such that the roles and responsibilities are clear to all students and staff and there is some overlap (without duplication) to ensure full coverage.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 2.01**

**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.**

The panel found clear and impressive evidence that the staff play an active role in the continuing development of the programme as well as in assuring its quality. Similarly, students play very active and appropriate quality assurance roles in continuous monitoring and providing input to its further development.

## **Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

The panel notes that much of this excellent work is the result of the commitment of the relatively small group of highly motivated staff and students, and despite its numerous 'editions' it retains all of the characteristics of 'a fresh and vigorous organisation'. It was however a little concerning to note that whilst the current system works very well, and certainly to the students' satisfaction, there is less by way of formal procedures to cover any major loss. Such loss might be a key person from the very small number of dedicated but temporarily employed staff, and/or the dependence on the 'front of house and behind the scenes' high specification IT and its support. The panel was reassured to note that the institution is committed to supporting the maintenance of the IT base and the well equipped Interpretation / Translation Centre.

The Institute has attracted highly motivated and committed staff and students - but numbers in the form of an excess of suitably qualified applicants could pose a risk. The management is aware of this and the panel suggests that it may wish to consider a more formal analysis of the risks associated with changes from the current size, and how they may be moderated or accommodated. The panel would however not wish to see any loss of the current dynamism through the development of any excessive bureaucracy.

### **The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 2.02**

#### **Standard 2.03 Quality assurance measures exist for the programmes. The institution makes use of the results to periodically revise the programme.**

The SER and its appendices point to a series of quality assurance measures but it was only through the site visit that the extent and depth of these were really revealed to the panel members. Quality assurance is a central element in the management of this programme. Responsibilities for quality assurance are clearly indicated. Course (and course component) evaluations are used for close (individual) monitoring, for continuous improvement and for further development of the programme. The students recognise that their 'voice' is heard in such evaluations. Alumni also play an important part in quality assurance and quality improvement.

The panel noted however that whilst there was thorough evaluation at the 'micro level' (at the level of modules and even individual units / members of staff within modules in some cases) there was a need for a more synoptic (a 'helicopter') view across related clusters of modules, and importantly also between the various programmes within UniGe's suite of MAS awards.



The panel was surprised that there had been little discussion within the institution about the nature of 'masters' level within and between programmes. Whilst it recognises that 'masterliness' is difficult to describe, and should not be rigidly *defined*, it is important that those aspects that reflect the key required outcomes of MAS awards (as opposed to MAs) should be identified. A critical element here is how assessment methods are co-ordinated to the essential characteristics of the MAS awards, particularly in view of the impending implementation of the Swiss NQF. This aspect is covered in more detail below.

Linked to this, although not directly related to this standard, it became apparent that there was extensive 'informal' discussion about the nature of grading criteria. The participants could get sufficient information to support improvement in their learning from tutors etc, but this information was not always published or easily accessible in a more formal sense.

The panel therefore makes **two recommendations**:

- that the programme management, within the context of ETI, the Centre for Continuing Education, COFO and the University, start discussions on the types of criteria that could reliably and transparently be used to characterise MASs and discriminate between them and MAs
- that grading criteria are made more generally accessible.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 2.03**

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Area 2. Internal organisation and quality assurance measures,** although it has two recommendations in these aspects (see above).

### **Area 3. Curriculum and teaching methods**

**Standard 3.01 The programme has a structure which corresponds to the coordinated implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Swiss higher education.**

The programme structure fulfils the requirements set out in Swiss law. It was clear to the panel that most of the students seemed to have a workload in excess of the total indicated as expected within the course information.

Two areas would however benefit from greater clarity:

## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

- the allocation of ECTS (and indicated workload) to the various programme components
- the use of clearer assessment criteria related to the expected (learning / professional) outcomes of a MAS (mentioned above)

It is recommended that the programme leaders review the current description of typical course work loadings in light of the requirement that a 60 ECTS programme should equate to between 1500 and 1800 hours total workload. Particular attention should be paid to expectations in a 'part time' programme.

It is also suggested that ETI (and UniGe more widely) should be more aware of (and where possible engaged in) developments at national and European levels about the application of qualifications frameworks within programme design and quality assurance. There are three frameworks that should be considered: the (new) Swiss National Qualification Framework for higher education, the related Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the 'Bologna' framework), and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) that applies to vocational education and training, including advanced practitioner levels .

These frameworks note, for example, that masters awards typically include 90-120 ECTS but with a minimum of 60 ECTS **at the level of the award**. The MAS programme involves 60 ECTS so all credits should have been awarded following assessment of master's level attainments. From an examination of participant's / participants' work the panel was confident that the final award represented 'masters level attainments', but this might more clearly be set out, particularly within the context of UniGe expectations across all of its MAS programmes.

With regard to this Standard the panel therefore repeats its earlier **recommendation**:

- that the programme management, within the context of ETI, the Centre for Continuing Education, COFO and the University start discussions on the types of criteria that could reliably and transparently be used to discriminate between MAS and MA, and the different levels of student performance.

and adds a further **recommendation**:

- that the programme review the published expectations regarding participant workload (and the allocation of ECTS to particular modules and the programme as a whole), bearing in mind that participants are

generally also continuing their professional roles and are studying on a part time basis.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 3.01** although it has a number of recommendations in these aspects (see above).

**Standard 3.02 The programme covers the major aspects of the field in question. It allows students to acquire scientific working methods and ensures that the scientific findings are integrated. The teaching and evaluation methods are in line with the stated teaching goals and objectives.**

The MAS in Interpreter Training is (perhaps) unique in its field, and is certainly regarded (as evidenced by the 'stakeholder' interviews) as delivered by one of the leading 2 or 3 centres for this field - in the world. The prevailing views seem to be that the programme sets *'the major aspects of the field in question'*, well beyond merely covering them.

This MAS is innovative in its pedagogical model and has found a way to deliver high quality professional training for advanced practitioners along with providing the necessary underpinning theory. Additionally it introduces participants to the rigours of academic / 'scientific' approaches to further develop the theoretical underpinning of their field of advanced practice. Throughout the programme the participants are continuing with their (part-time) professional employment.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 3.02**

**Standard 3.03 The conditions for acquiring certificates of achievement and academic degrees are regulated and made public.**

The conditions for acquiring records of achievement and academic degrees (credit points, interim assessments etc) are subject to the regulations of the University of Geneva and are published, and the relevant information was both available to and known by the students on the programme.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 3.03**

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Area 3 Curriculum and teaching methods**

#### **Area 4 Teaching staff**

**Standard 4.01 Courses are taught by educationally competent and academically qualified faculty.**

The Programme is taught by staff who are highly competent, motivated and continue with their professional practice / research activities. They also provide the students with a wide range of support services. The senior staff are all very well qualified in academic and professional practice terms and are supported by a team of doctoral and other professional practitioners who contribute strongly in supporting the programme and its particular pedagogical model.

It should be noted that MAS programmes at the University of Geneva are 'demand driven' and the staff are appointed to deliver them through fixed term contracts separate from, and/or in addition to any other UniGe contract they may or may not have.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 4.01**

**Standard 4.02 The workload assigned to teaching and to research activities is defined**

All of the key staff involved in the development and delivery of this MAS are professional practitioners as well as having relevant academic qualifications. This standard is thus considered in light of the context of the programme and its requirements for quality assured success (rather than a narrower reading of the word 'research').

The staff workloads are set out but they cannot be regarded as serious descriptions of what the staff actually do - it was clear to the panel that the staff commitment in time and effort FAR EXCEEDS what is defined in the programme.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 4.02**

**Standard 4.03 The mobility of teaching staff is facilitated.**

Mobility is an integral characteristic of the professional roles of the staff associated with the MAS in Interpreter Training. This mobility is not merely geographical but encompasses subject / discipline content, social and various other dimensions. The programme itself is delivered through a distance learning

platform to participants based quite literally 'around the world'. In these contexts the mobility of staff is not merely 'facilitated' but is ubiquitous.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 4.03**

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Area 4 Teaching staff**

## **Area 5. Students**

**Standard 5.01 The conditions for admission to the institution and into the programme have been made public**

The criteria for admission to the MAS are published and clearly set out the expectations for entry onto the programme, that applicants must be advanced practitioners in the field of interpreting and hold appropriate academic and professional qualifications / certifications.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 5.01**

**Standard 5.02 Equality of men and women is assured.**

The Ecole de traduction et interpretation within the University of Geneva is regulated by and complies with Swiss law in this aspect. The broader profile within the profession tends to be reflected in the mix of applicants and participants (and staff) with an under-representation of men typical for the most part.

**The panel considers that the programme complies with the requirements of Standard 5.02**

**5.03 Student mobility is possible and is promoted by the mutual recognition of credits between universities and between disciplines**

The participants on this programme are extremely mobile in both physical and virtual senses. The cohorts all include participants from around the world who are not only studying but continuing with their professional practice as interpreters at multinational conferences and other, usually formal, events. The programme includes modules that are also offered as 'stand alone' or in clusters. A number of

students progress from these into the full programme, and can incorporate their credits gained.

**5.04 Measures are taken to ensure that students have access to adequate counselling**

The programme has a very efficient and extremely effective platform to ensure that the students are very well counselled. The pedagogical model of guided collaborative learning places high demands on the staff but, according to the students and alumni, they meet the demands quickly and very effectively. Similarly it was clear that there was a considerable amount of 'counselling' within the collaborative learning groups.

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Area 5 Students**

**Area 6 Facilities and premises**

**Standard 6.01 The programme has adequate resources available to attain its objectives. These resources are provided on a long term basis**

The University of Geneva has made substantial commitments in establishing and supporting its clearly defined and targeted MAS programmes. The MAS in Interpreter Training is delivered through the Ecole de traduction et interprétation (ETI) and supported by the Continuing Education Centre. Additionally, external funds were secured through federal / cantonal initiatives to provide staff with state of the art technical equipment to support the IT based distance learning platform and the equally impressive 'classroom' for interpreter training/practice. The programme is 'demand driven' but there is absolutely NO concern that this demand will diminish, rather the 'stakeholder group' informed the panel of a very real and current, significant increase in 'demand'.

**The panel considers that the programme meets the requirements of Standard 6.01 and thus of Area 6 Facilities and premises.**

**Overall impression of the quality of teaching and studies**

The panel was very impressed by the commitment and obvious enthusiasm of the highly motivated and qualified staff and the vision, drive and organisation of the senior management, and in particular by their development of a pedagogical model that is innovative and absolutely 'fit for purpose' for the programme. The vision is

## **Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

ambitious and the implementation focused and can be seen to have worked well over an extended timeframe. The panel congratulates the team and especially its leadership on their achievements; they are a significant and internationally recognised contribution to the University of Geneva's Vision for 2020.

The programme has attracted equally committed and ambitious advanced practitioner participants who are keen to further their knowledge and skills in ways that will allow them to develop new approaches to their profession and to training others in it.

The core team of staff delivering and monitoring / reviewing / revising the programme is relatively small and there is excellent communication within the group as a whole and with the programme participants. Such a size has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages, particularly where there is a clear commitment to a shared vision, are that communication lines are short (in either a physical or 'virtual' sense), and discussions and decisions can be undertaken quickly and in less formal ways than is possible with larger groups. There is also clear evidence of 'deliberative reflection' in the development of the programme through its 6 editions.

The small size does however have one potentially major disadvantage - the loss of a key member of the staff would have a major impact. Currently there is only one senior professor but this situation will be remedied later this year with the likely appointment of a second 'tenure track' professor. The panel understands that should anything untoward happen in the meantime the head of ETI would assume formal administrative roles but with complete confidence in the pedagogical team to be able to continue to support the delivery of the programme. It is important that this second professorial position is confirmed.

### **Profile of strengths and weaknesses**

(including any special features)

The report above identifies numerous strengths and some weaknesses, most of which are consequent on either (or both) the relatively small size of team delivering the MAS in Interpreter Training. The programme, like all of the UniGe continuing education programmes, is 'demand driven' and dependent on staff who also continue to be employed as specialist practitioners in their professional field.

In summary they are:

#### **Area 1. Implementation and teaching objectives**

The programme and its teaching objectives are probably unique and have introduced a new pedagogical paradigm in terms of the highly sophisticated but

user friendly IT platform that supports distance learning through a collaborative participant model. The participant students and alumni who the panel met were very impressive - as were the staff. The 'stakeholders' who were interviewed stressed that the institute through which the programme was delivered had to be regarded as one of the best in the world, and in an area where there will inevitably be an increasing demand for what it offers.

**Area 2. Internal organisation and quality assurance measures**

Quality assurance is very effective in so far as the 'student learning experience' is highly regarded by the students themselves and they are clearly of the view that their 'voice' is heard and that changes occur as a result.

QA measures are also seen to have a direct (and improving) impact on the internal organisation and delivery of the programme, both on an ongoing basis and between 'editions' of the programme.

**Area 3. Curriculum and teaching methods**

The curriculum is comprehensive and balances professional competences and the required underpinning academic basis. The programme may be regarded as *the* international benchmark in its field. The students regarded it as very well taught and with excellent resources. The integration of study with practice appears to work very well.

The panel had some concerns about the transparency, consistency and detail of workload (ECTS) allocations and also assessment practices, and has made some recommendations in this regard.

**Area 4. Teaching staff**

The teaching staff are outstanding - in terms of qualifications, experience and commitment. This 'expert enthusiasm' is clearly 'infectious' as far as the students are concerned.

An obvious 'risk' is that the programme is highly dependent upon a small core of staff and it is not immediately apparent how the programme would cope with the loss of one or two specific individuals or the loss of a cluster of others.

Some risk analysis and strategy has been undertaken and at the time of the site visit the process of making another substantive professorial appointment was underway.

**Area 5. Students**



## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

The students and alumni the panel met were without exception - outstanding. Highly motivated - even dedicated - they were keen to develop their personal and professional education and skills to levels that would allow them to improve as professional practitioners and pass on their expertise through their 'training as trainers'. The panel learnt from the stakeholders that employment prospects are likely to remain very good in this field.

The workload demands that the students commit to are very heavy - particularly bearing in mind that they have their 'day jobs' and many also have family or other outside commitments. **This should be made clearer in the introductory and other information for intending applicants.**

### **Area 6. Facilities and premises**

The delivery of the MAS in Interpreter Training is 'demand led', with its staff contracted on this basis. UniGe has committed resources directly to the programme through ETI and also through the supporting Continuing Education Centre, and the programme in return contributes to UniGe from its income. The panel understands that the University will strongly support external applications to ensure that the essential IT platform is maintained / replaced as required.

### **Recommendations for enhancing quality**

In summarising here the formal recommendations made in the sections above, the panel is keen to note that these recommendations *must* be read within the context of a report that is overwhelmingly positive about the way in which the programme team within ETI, and with the support of the Continuing Education Service, has developed an outstanding programme which is delivered through an innovative and very effective pedagogical model, supported by an 'user-friendly' (and rather sophisticated) IT platform.

#### **Standard 1.01 The programme is carried out regularly**

The panel considered the current programme to be very soundly based and with clear aims and objectives and a structure that meets the following recommendations:

#### **Standard 2.03 Quality assurance measures exist for the programmes. The institution makes use of the results to periodically revise the programme.**

The panel therefore makes *two recommendations*:

- that the programme management, within the context of ETI, the Centre for Continuing Education, COFO and the University, start discussions on

## Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva

- the types of criteria that could reliably and transparently be used to characterise MASs and discriminate between them and MAS
- that grading criteria are made more generally accessible.

**Standard 3.01** The programme has a structure which corresponds to the coordinated implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Swiss higher education.

With regard to this Standard the panel therefore repeats its earlier **recommendation**:

- that the programme management, within the context of ETI, the Centre for Continuing Education, COFO and the University, start discussions on the types of criteria that could reliably and transparently be used to discriminate between MAS and MA, and the different levels of student performance.
- and adds a further **recommendation**:
- that the programme review the published expectations regarding participant workload (and the allocation of ECTS to particular modules and the programme as a whole), bearing in mind that participants are generally also continuing their professional roles and are studying on a part time basis.

### Recommendation on accreditation

The panel unanimously recommends that :

**The programme Master Of Advanced Studies in Interpreter training at the University of Geneva is granted. unconditional accreditation**

The panel :

**Dr/Professor Nick Harris**

(HE consultant and former Director of the Quality Assurance Agency UK; chair - quality assurance expert)

**Dr Pat Davies**

(Projects Director EUCEN (the European University Continuing Education Network) - expert in continuing education)

**Professor Ingrid Kurz**

**Final Report: Accreditation of the Master of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training, University of Geneva**

University of Vienna; expert in interpretation and translation studies)