

# **ACCREDITATION DECISION**

As a result of the external institutional evaluation conducted by the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCÉRES) in July 2018, and according to the accreditation criteria adopted by the HCÉRES College on 4 October 2016

## **LEBANESE UNIVERSITY BEIRUT-LEBANON**

is accredited under conditions with report and follow-up visit in October 2021.

Paris, 29 October 2018  
Michel Cosnard, HCÉRES President

## **International Evaluation and Accreditation**

**Accreditation decision**  
**LEBANESE UNIVERSITY**  
**BEIRUT - LEBANON**

**OCTOBER 2018**

## **SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION PROPOSAL ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE**

HCÉRES has built its evaluation process based on a set of objectives that Higher Education Institutions must pursue to ensure the recognized quality in France and Europe. These objectives are divided into six common areas in the evaluation framework and accreditation criteria.

The expert committee issues a simple opinion on the institution accreditation: it is the accreditation committee that takes the decision based on the final evaluation report of the institution. This decision is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The accreditation decision taken by HCÉRES is not a rights-creating decision, whether in France, or abroad. The decision to accredit an institution confers an accreditation label and does not imply recognition in France of the institution concerned by the accreditation. Therefore, the HCÉRES accreditation process has no impact on the process adopted by France to recognize the institution or its programs.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA**

### **AREA 1: STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE**

#### **Accreditation criterion**

The institution governance is based on a strategy adapted to its environment and identity. The internal organization is clearly defined and allows the institution to fulfill its missions.

The institution stakeholders participate in its governance.

#### **Criterion assessment**

the institution fulfills its mission of public service and democratization of teaching through a strategy providing a large scale teaching covering the whole country with moderate registration fees. The institution governance is based on a large representation of its components. Although, this system takes into account the necessary political, religious and territorial balance within the public services, nevertheless, it is not very conducive to lead collective projects and those leading to change.

The internal organization is multi-layered but well defined up to its finest levels (sections, branches, faculties and university). Public teaching missions are secured, but same as research missions, they are left to the initiative of the different components or even individuals.

Regarding the university organization, the stakeholders (the components each represented by a dean and a professor representative) participate in, or even provide governance. Although, the student participation in governance is planned, it is not activated (see area 3).

### **AREA 2: RESEARCH AND TEACHING**

#### **Accreditation criterion**

The institution develops a research and training policies adapted to its strategy and the socio-economic and cultural environment needs.

Teaching areas are coordinated with the institution research activities.

The teaching areas are clear. Student admission, graduation, and progression in his career are defined and implemented.

#### **Criterion assessment**

The teaching policy is adapted to the desire to provide higher education to everyone throughout the country. It also takes into account the needs of the Lebanese society even if the socio-economic backgrounds are not associated with the development of the majors offered. However, the teaching and research policy is left to the components or even the individuals. The institution does not have adequate bodies that can guide and experiment an institutional research strategy. The response to the needs of the socio-economic environment is thus, heterogeneous and there is no clearly stated strategy at the institutional level.

The link between majors and research is organized by research masters at the faculty level and a doctoral study at the doctoral school level, often available within the framework of an international partnership.

The majors offered are plethoric which can affect their visibility, namely when the relevant information is left to the different components. Student-related procedures are also left to the component initiative and are therefore heterogeneous.

### **AREA 3: STUDENT ACADEMIC CAREER**

#### **Accreditation criterion**

The institution takes into consideration the learning resources and the student quality of life.

It also ensures the student reception and accuracy of information provided to them throughout their academic career.

Student participation in governance structures is planned.

#### **Criterion assessment**

The learning resources and student quality of life are left to the initiative of the components. Thus, their activation is heterogeneous. However, the institution conducts a campus structuring plan that takes into account these parameters and that is either carried out (Hadath campus), under construction (Tripoli, Mount Lebanon), or waiting to be financed.

The student reception throughout their career is not organized at the institutional level but is, in most of the faculties, supported by the teacher-coordinators within an "open door" policy.

Student participation in governance structure is well planned but not active. Students are informally associated with faculty councils.

### **AREA 4: EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

#### **Accreditation criterion**

The partnership policy is defined and designed as an added value to the institution which has structured its international relations and developed internationalization mechanisms adapted to its strategy.

#### **Criterion Assessment**

Relations with socio-economic backgrounds are not formalized at the institution level but exist and are well functioning at the level of some faculties.

Nevertheless, the institution has structured its management of international relations at the highest level and built up important networks of international partnerships at the service of teaching and research to meet the desire to internationalize it and provide it with a higher added value.

### **AREA 5: GUIDANCE**

#### **Accreditation criterion**

The guidance and organization of the human and financial resources are defined and under control. They are adapted to the strategy defined by the institution and include a multi-year planning.

The institution has an information system adapted to its strategy and objectives. The status of the institution properties is known and under control.

#### **Criterion assessment**

The allocation of human and financial resources and their possible redeployment are not used as guidance tools. The role of governance is limited to the approval of what is requested by the components and the decision to execute the same. There is no multi-year planning.

Coordination of the different information systems would enable to obtain an integrated guidance tool and take decisions at the institution level.

The institution benefits from a real estate plan that combines territorial coverage and infrastructure rationalization. The various planned campuses are either realized and exploited, in good progress of execution, or projects awaiting funding.

### **AREA 6: QUALITY AND ETHICS**

#### **Accreditation assessment**

The institution has defined a quality policy that covers all its missions and guides a continuous improvement process.

It supports ethical and deontological values that materialize in its regular operation.

### **Criterion assessment**

The development of quality assurance is one of the institution objectives and a committee is in place at the institutional level. Some faculties have willingly participated in this process and obtained certifications of their procedures. The continuous improvement approach is far from being generalized.

The institution has included in its missions the promotion of ethical values in education (transparency, honesty, impartiality, equality, absence of social, ethnic or religious discrimination). Some components, by their very nature, have ethical committees.

Different appeal procedures are provided to students. The University Council is the disciplinary body for teachers and students. However, there is no ethical and/or deontological charter for teachers, researchers and students.

### **FINAL DECISION**

The Lebanese University, the only public institution, provides access to higher education to all social classes throughout the country and in all areas of knowledge by many qualified teachers. Moreover, its image reflects the multicultural wealth of Lebanon. The institution fulfills the accreditation criteria and has a good standard of quality.

In view of the analysis of the accreditation criteria above, the accreditation committee takes the following decision:

"Accreditation decision under conditions: report and follow-up visit after three years of operation (October 2021) to verify the implementation of the prescriptive recommendations mentioned in the evaluation report and in accreditation criteria assessments, in particular those focused on the seven following points:

- The committee recommends the University to set up central councils to define teaching and research strategies.
- The committee recommends the University to establish a plan to direct information systems aiming at their integration at the institutional level to provide guidance tools and support decision-making.
- The committee recommends the University to extend the quality assurance process to all faculties and administrative services.
- The committee recommends the University to quickly implement the main proposals issued from the former 2012 "Central Committee for Scientific Research Management": institutional council for research, central research office, structuring considerable research teams, recognition of research activities in working areas and career progression, to achieve a better intra and interfaculty coordination.
- The committee recommends the University to formalize, coordinate and implement the common procedures related to student support across the whole institution, namely student reception, provision of information, orientation, professional insertion and campus life.
- The committee recommends the University to reinforce the academic criteria requirements during the recruitment process by introducing external experts in the application evaluation committee.
- The committee recommends the University to complete the structuring plan of the various campuses.

Following the study of the follow-up report and visit, the accreditation committee will issue a reasoned decision on the possible extension of the accreditation for a further two years".

HCÉRES

Michel Cosnard, President

Date: Paris, 29 October 2018