



International evaluation and accreditation

EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

Bachelor of Law

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University
Al Khobar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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High Council for evaluation of research and higher education

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International evaluation and accreditation

EVALUATION REPORT

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Al Khobar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

OCTOBER 2019



The Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of its Bachelor of Law. The evaluation is based on the “External Evaluation Standards” of foreign study programs, adopted by the Hcéres Board on October 4th, 2016. These standards are available on the Hcéres website (hceres.fr).

For the Hcéres¹ :

Nelly Dupin,
Acting President

On behalf of the experts committee² :

Johanna Guillaumé, President of the
committee

In accordance with the decree n°2014-1365, November 14th, 2014,

¹ The president of Hcéres "contresigne les rapports d'évaluation établis par les comités d'experts et signés par leur président." (Article 8, alinéa 5) — "countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees and signed by their president" (article 8, alinea 5).

² The evaluation reports "sont signés par le président du comité". (Article 11, alinéa 2) — "are signed by the president of the committee" (article 11, alinea 2).

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I. STUDY PROGRAMME IDENTITY SHEET

University/institution:

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

Component, faculty or department concerned: College of Law

Program's title :

Bachelor of Law

Year of creation and context:

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) is a private University, in Al Khobar, in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It was founded in 2006 by Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd, former governor of the Eastern Province. The University opened in 2008 with bachelor's degrees in several academic programs. At this time, it was composed of three colleges: College of Engineering, College of Business Administration and College of Computer Engineering and Science. Subsequently, in 2012, another college was created: the College of Sciences and Human Studies.

The Bachelor of Law program was created in 2011-2012 when the Department of law was established as a part of the College of sciences and Human Studies. The Department of Law then had about 50 students.

In March 2019, with the number of law students amounting to 500, the Department of Law became the College of Law.

Site(s) where the program is taught (Town and campus):

The program is offered in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, more precisely in a developing area near the coast at Al-Khobar. The University is therefore located near Al-Khobar, Dammam and Dhahran, in an industrial region.

PMU offers programs for both male and female students on a single campus. On campus, in accordance with Saudi law, male and female students have their own separate building. The facilities are the same in each building: library, printing centre, cafeteria, classrooms equipped with blackboards, etc.

Since the buildings are located on a single campus, they are only a few metres apart, allowing male teachers to teach female students in the female students building. Thus, all courses are delivered in person.

The campus also has high-quality sports facilities: sports field, swimming pool, weight room, gymnasium. In order to ensure perfect equality between students, an alternation has been set up: sports facilities are reserved one day for students and the following day for female students.

Program director:

Surname, first name: Dr Mohammad Bashayreh

Profession and grade: Dean of PMU College of Law, Associate Professor

Main subject taught: Commercial Law

METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

Methodology and agency

This is the first time that the PMU Law Bachelor's degree is evaluated by HCERES.

A self-assessment report was sent by the College and was followed by an on-site visit by an expert committee.

HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAMME

Human resources

	Male	Female
Professors	0	0
Associate professors	2	0
Assistant professors	9	3
Lecturers and assistants	2	1
Administrative and Supportive Staff	1	1

Buildings and equipments.

The campus is located in a developing area, so many parking spaces are available for students.

The campus is divided in two, one part reserved for female students and the other part reserved for male students. The complex consists of several buildings, connected by footbridges and small squares. At the campus center, male and female students have access to food service at the university cafeteria and to Learning Resources Center. The entrances are separate and the places are separate in order to respect State rules. The fact that all students are gathered on one and the same campus ensures a certain equality between them.

The campus is very modern and offers students all the necessary facilities, whether for learning (library, computers, computer labs, smart boards, TV Streaming, Video Conferencing, Moot court, Legal Clinic) or to have a healthy life. Indeed, there is a medical centre on campus and the sports facilities are varied, numerous and impressive. It is also worth mentioning the presence of a nursery within the University. The campus offers a very pleasant environment for students.

The premises have been adapted to accommodate students and staffers with special needs.

Each classroom is fitted with a computer, a projector and a smart whiteboard. In addition to the classrooms, PMU has a Moot court room. PMU's main auditorium has a capacity of more than 1,450 seats. PMU also has two lecture halls: one in the male campus and the other one in female campus. Their capacity is 183 seats.

The libraries are spacious and pleasant. The book collection is in Arabic and also in English. Students have access to both national and international online resources.

STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

When the Law Bachelor's degree was opened in 2011-2012, about 50 students joined the program. Since then, the number of students involved in the program has remained more or less stable:

Cohort enrollment since 2013-2014 (Enrollment for the first time)	
Years	Cohort enrollment
2013-2014	55
2014-2015	48
2015-2016	60
2016-2017	61
2017-2018	60
2018-2019	52

From now on, from the preparatory year to the last year of the law program, 592 students are enrolled. They are distributed as follows:

Distribution of students in 2018/2019					
Student Year	Preparatory Year	Freshman Year	Sophomore Year	Junior Year	Senior Year
Male Students (Summer 2019)	17	74	32	38	48
Female Students (Summer 2019)	46	95	57	62	123
Total (Summer 2019)	63	169	89	100	171
Grand Total (Summer 2019)	592				

II. ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

Johanna GUILLAUMÉ, Professor at the University of Rouen Normandy, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Chairman of the committee

Philippe DIDIER, Professor at Paris Descartes University, Dean of the Faculty of Law

Fabien PATRIS, Member of the Prudential Supervision and Resolution Authority, Bank of France, and former Associate Professor at Le Mans University

Maxime TOUCHAIS, PhD student at Paris Descartes University

The Hcéres was represented by Martin LEBEAU, Principal Scientific Advisor.

ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

Date of the visit:

The visit took place from Friday October 18th to Tuesday October 22nd, 2019

Summary of the proceedings:

Before the visit took place, the self-assessment report had been received by the experts on October 7th, 2019. A proposed planning for the visit was given. It was discussed and approved by the panel.

On-site, the visit went ahead according to the planning: all the people planned could be met.

All meetings were held in the male campus. However, the Associate chair (for female student) was able to attend the meeting in the presence of the Chair of department of Law and the Dean of the College. In addition, the entire committee was able to visit the entire campus, including the law school building reserved for female students. On this occasion, it was possible to meet all the female teachers.

Organisation of the visit:

Sunday October 20th, 2019:

- Meeting: PMU presentation by the staff
- Meeting with Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs
- Meeting with Rector
- Review documentation provided by the Law program
- Meeting with administrators
- Tour of the Campus : College building for male students and for female students (including teaching rooms, libraryconference rooms, staff offices, Law clinic, Moot Court, etc.)

Monday October 21st:

- Meeting with faculty members from the College of Law
- Meeting with students and alumni (male and female students, male and female alumni)
- Meeting with employers
- Meeting with Dean of Quality and Accreditation
- Meeting with Dean, Chair of department of Law and Associate Chair (for female students)
- Exit meeting with Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean of the College of Law, Dean of the Quality and Chair.

Cooperation of study program and institution to be accredited:

The College of Law of PMU has been forthcoming during all the process. The self-assessment report was sent in advance, according to the agreed-on schedule.

During the visit, no request from the committee has been denied. The committee was denied access to no places, no documents or no persons.

Some follow-up questions and additional documents were asked during the visit and they received speedy answers.

The committee is confident that the conclusion it has reached is based on a fair and full disclosure of all relevant information.

People met:

From the College:

- Dr Issa Al Ansari, Rector
- Dr Faisal Yousif Al Anezi, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs
- Dr Mohammad Bashayreh, Dean of the College of Law
- Dr Muamar Hsan Salameh, Chair of Department of Law
- Dr Cecile Abi Tayeh, Associate Chair of Department of Law (for female students)
- Dr Malik Saleh, Dean of Quality and accreditation
- Faculty members
- Administrative staff
- Students

From outside the College:

- Alumni
- Employers.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1 – PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

PMU is a relatively new private university. The University is located in the Eastern Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a rapidly developing industrial region. The Bachelor of Law is particularly recent, since the first class of students enrolled in 2011-2012. In addition, the Department of Law did not become a College until 2019.

Leaving aside the Preparatory Year, the Bachelor of Laws is a four-year diploma that allows graduates to acquire the basic legal knowledge and skills required to enter the professional world. Indeed, in addition to theoretical knowledge, the program allows students to acquire real practical skills through, for example, the law clinic, trial simulation sessions or student participation in Saudi Arabian advocacy competitions but also abroad. All these activities take place under the supervision of a teacher.

The program allows graduates to know and apply Saudi law in order to find employment in the Kingdom. After graduating from the program, students are expected to be able to join the job market in the legal field. Subject to additional professional certification, they can be lawyers or work in a legal department of the Government or of a private firm.

But the program also allows students to acquire an excellent level of English, as many courses are taught in this language. In addition, the program allows students to study several subjects of international law and to learn about other legal systems, especially the Common Law system. Therefore, the program allows graduates to consider pursuing studies in the Kingdom or abroad, if they wish to complete their studies with a master's degree in law.

Subjects are taught through lectures, discussions and other interactive exercises. The program includes internships and training in real-life conditions.

The acquisition of knowledge and skills is monitored through a strict examination protocol.

The program is open to male and female students but is delivered on two separate locations, on the same campus.

2 - PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME'S SELF-EVALUATION APPROACH

The program has a strong commitment to quality assurance. The College has a Quality Bureau which monitors key indicators of performance.

The self-evaluation report which was sent to the expert committee describes the objectives of the program, its positioning, its structure, including its curriculum, and its management.

It is based on qualitative and quantitative elements which are documented either in the report itself or in its annexes. The main report is 70 pages long.

IV. EVALUATION REPORT

1- AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1-1: The study program has explicit objectives with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired

The bachelor of law program offered by PMU is a degree aimed at giving general legal education. More precisely, the program is about teaching Saudi Arabian Law which is based on Sharia and provides also an overview of foreign legal system. In this regard, the program covers both public (constitutional law, administrative law, public international law) and private law (criminal law, commercial law, general theory of obligation...), and give students a strong Islamic culture.

On-site interviews with professors and students revealed that the program aims at giving both theoretical knowledge about legal reasoning and professional skills in the field of law. As a matter of fact, specific courses are dedicated to learning legal knowledge, whereas other tools are designed to improve their practical ability (for instance, legal writing course or simulated jurisdiction).

Although PMU teaches mainly Saudi law, it intends to give its students sufficient background to understand international issues. In order to open up to the international arena, the bachelor of Arts in Law delivered by PMU is designed in bilingual mode as some courses are taught in arabic and others are taught in English. Furthermore, the law program provided by PMU devotes a significant portion of its courses to the study of foreign law (also known as comparative law).

In addition to that, PMU requires students to acquire, each semester, a core of extra-legal competence called Core Competencies. Those requirement are common to all the program in PMU. They include academic subjects in the areas of english communication, mathematics, laboratory science, behavioral science and social studies. In this context, PMU has fixed ambitious goal in terms of learning critical mindset. Critical thinking is part of Core Competencies university wants to promote for all its students. In that respect, a specific course is given in the law program.

Students and alumnis expressed great satisfaction with the courses given in foreign languages but regretted that there was no opportunity to learn other languages than English. As much as we know, there is only one elective course (in the law program) to introduce to the French language (Fren 1311) for instance. To meet the objectives set by PMU, it would be interesting to diversify the languages in which the courses are given.

However, it results that the objectives of the study program with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired are clearly defined.

Discussions with students also revealed that they were well informed of these objectives and that they made a knowingly choice. Their professional aspirations match with the studies they have chosen.

There are several reasons for this. To begin with, PMU provide an accessible website, entirely translated in english, relaying relevant information. Generally speaking, PMU enjoys a good reputation and a good visibility ensuring students awareness about the courses taught. Otherwise, the courses titles sufficiently illustrate the content of the program. The study plan clearly indicates the language used for each course.

At last, concerning the classes, a syllabus is sent at the beginning of the course summarizing the objectives in terms of knowledge and skills. The document is written by the professors who follow guidelines set by the law department.

It follows that the objectives are clearly communicated.

1-2: Outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies are explicitly stated

Once graduated from the bachelor's degree, graduates can follow two paths : pursue their studies at the master's level, or leave studies to enter professional life.

Those who would like to pursue their studies can't apply yet for a master in law at PMU as it does not exist yet. Therefore, graduates have to apply in another university in Saudi Arabia or abroad.

The degree aims at preparing student to hold any position in the legal sector (lawyer, judge, civil servant...), and, as a matter of fact, graduates find a job at the end of their studies. In the Saudi job market, not having a master is not an issue to get a job. In order to facilitate their professional integration, students must complete an internship at the end of the junior year. Moreover, in the Eastern province, some companies like Aramco or Sabic have an influential position in the labour market. They provide a significant amount of jobs that may be of interest to lawyers.

PMU is involved in the communication of useful information for the professional integration of students. The website provides a list of firms to contact in order to get an internship or a job. Meetings between students and professionals are set up within the university.

As a result, it appears that students and other stakeholders are aware of the outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies.

2 – POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

2-1: The study program states its position in the local, regional, national or international environment, as applicable.

In the Kingdom, 8 state-funded universities and 4 private institutions offer a Bachelor's degree program in law. But, while there are other bilingual undergraduate programs in Saudi Arabia, the one delivered by PMU is the first to be delivered in the Eastern Province.

Moreover, this geographical area is particularly conducive to the development of such a diploma, as it is close to the Kingdom of Bahrain and is home to international companies such as Aramco, likely to provide jobs or internships for students.

2-2: There is a clear link between the study program and research.

The curriculum includes legal research training activities in the broad sense (ability to reason, to write, to express oneself, to use the research tools) that are provided in the early years of the BA.

The Bachelor of Law program is meant primarily for providing students with knowledge and skills that accommodate the job market. However, it does contain subjects that relate to foundational issues of research. Modules such Legal Writing & Research (LAWB 2361) and Learning Outcome Assessment III (ASSE 4311) are designed to prepare and enhance students' research skills.

PMU also admits that, at present, the teaching staff, who have more teaching responsibilities than in public universities, is still insufficient to develop research according to the objectives chosen.

It should be noted, however, that an effort is being made in the field of research among students, especially those who are in their final year.

The latter are indeed encouraged to participate in research seminars and "moot court" competitions with the support of their professors (International Symposium on Dispute Resolution in March 2019, ADR Workshop at Pepperdine University).

Similarly, some optional courses (cf. Human rights) encourage the writing of memoirs.

Finally, PMU intends to open in spring 2020 a Postgraduate Master's Degree in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in English and Arabic.

2-3: The study program explicitly states its relationships with businesses, associations and other cultural or industrial partners, including international partners.

With the recognition of the BA in Law program in 2013 from the Ministry of Higher Education, the PMU program became a gateway for entrance to the legal profession in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Since then, links with the local legal community have been largely developed:

- members of the legal community are represented in the College Advisory Council;
- local businesses have accepted many students during the compulsory internship, imposed by the curriculum;
- PMU recently entered into two partnerships, one with the Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration (9 April 2019) and the other with the Saudi Bar Association (20 November 2019) which will allow students to strengthen their practical knowledge of the professional world but also to conduct research projects.

In this respect, the first employers the experts committee met appeared rather satisfied with the quality of the very first PMU graduates they recruited. In particular, they recognize that bilingualism and openness to international comparative law are real assets.

Similarly, the rate of integration into the job market is, on an admittedly modest cohort of students (12), close to 80%. This trend should be confirmed over time.

2-4: The study program explicitly states the added value of its partnerships with foreign higher education institutions.

The development of partnerships and exchanges with foreign universities has been identified by PMU as an important area for improvement.

For the moment, only one partnership has been concluded with the University of Pepperdine (USA), a renowned and well-ranked center in the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

This agreement provides for the organisation of joint seminars and colloquia, as well as the eventual creation of an ADR Center. Through this agreement, the College of Law and Pepperdine are committed to scholarship, partnership, leadership, innovation, outreach, responsiveness, and research oriented toward solutions.

3 – STUDY PROGRAMME TEACHING STRUCTURE

3-1: The structure of the study program is adapted to the different student academic pathways.

The BA in Law program is structured in four levels : the Freshman Year, the Sophomore Year, the Junior Year and the Senior Year.

Each year is divided into two semesters and each semester is divided in 6 or 7 courses. All courses are valued in credits. Normally, each credit represents 50 minutes of class instruction per week for the semester.

The first year (the Freshman Year) is common to all programs offered in the University. This curriculum acts as a refresher for basic knowledges and skills in mathematics, computing, oral and written communication, research and English language. However, some subjects are specific to students in law ; for example, "Introduction in Law » and « Sources of Obligation ». This first year is given 33 credit hours.

The following three years are specific to the BA in law program :

The Sophomore year is divided in two semesters : the first gives 16 credit hours, the second gives 17 credit hours. So the Sophomore year gives 33 credit hours.

The Junior Year is divided in two semesters and during the summer of this year, students are doing an internship : each of the semesters gives 17 credit hours and the internship gives 3 credit hours. So the Junior Year gives 37 credits hours.

The Senior Year is divided in two semesters : the first gives 17 credit hours, the second gives 18 credit hours. So the Sophomore year gives 33 credit hours.

As the result, to complete the program, the students must attend 138 credits hours over a four-year period.

Most subjects in Law have prerequisites: to be able to attend a subject, student must have passed a previous subject which is deemed necessary to understand the following one. This system provides for a gradual specialization of students, from the foundational subjects to the more technical ones.

This intention of progressive specialization is evident as soon as the student arrives at the University. Indeed, the BA in Law program is preceded by a Preparatory Program, conducted as a three-semester program : beginners, intermediate and advanced level. The preparatory Program is not part of the Law Program because it is common to the entire university. It ensures the transition from secondary school to university. It is a program for students who need additional preparation in the English language, mathematics and learning skills. The preparatory program itself is progressive since students must achieve the objectives of the lower classes in order to follow the teachings of the upper classes. This preparatory program does not include any academic credits. In addition, it is not mandatory since students can be exempted from it: students who have completed high school can access the undergraduate program directly, without completing the preparatory program. In this case, they must be admitted by the University in the first year. The decision on whether or not a student should complete the Preparatory Program depends on the results of the English Language proficiency test.

To complete the program and get the degree, students must pass all 138 credit hours. For a student to graduate, he/she must attain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) and major GPA of 2.00 or above. The grade point average (GPA) is computed on a four-point scale. The student's GPA is calculated in the following manner: « The numerical value of each letter grade earned is multiplied by the number of credit hours' course is worth. This yields a figure known as "quality points". The sum of the student's quality points is divided by the total number of credit hours. The final figure is the GPA ».

The structure of the program, the content of the program, the number of credits for the various courses are accessible in the Student Handbook, and also on University and College website. More generally, the Student Handbook serves as guidelines for students on various issues including students' rights and responsibilities, students' services (campus life, career services, healthcare and counseling), financial assistance and scholarship, code of student conduct, sport activities.

3-2: The content of the study program is consistent with the requirements of the socioeconomic world.

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) was conducted to establish a clear view of the current internal and international socioeconomic environment that surrounds PMU. The College of Law emphasizes practical knowledge and skills in order to promote the professional integration of its graduates.

The content of the program allows students to acquire the necessary knowledge to know the Saudi legal system. The current list of subjects covers the main fields of the Law, private and public, as well as some elements of Shariah. It gives a comprehensive education covering a wide spectrum of fields. As such the program is meant to produce "generalist" who will be able to answer the needs of Saudi economy (it must be kept in mind that, to a certain extent, law is a new field of activity in the Kingdom. Moreover, some lines of working are now open to women. This results in a high demand for lawyers). The job market does not seem to look for lawyers that would be highly specialized in one narrow field, but it seems rather to look for generalists who can apply their skills to different settings.

However, in relation to the region's geography and industrial activity, the College offers specific relevant courses as « Energy Law », « Oil and Gas Law » or « Maritime and Space Law ».

The program is also characterized by two strong elements that give it a certain identity. First, a desire to open the student to the international dimension. Secondly, the College wants to develop students' knowledge of alternative dispute resolution. In fact, in addition to legal knowledge and skills, the college allows students to acquire certain skills in English, given the number of subjects taught in English. This aspect is perfectly consistent with the international dimension of several courses. Similarly, the place given to alternative dispute resolution is consistent with the international dimension, since international disputes often give rise to arbitration or mediation in commercial or investment matters. The program is therefore coherent and focused on internal and international socio-economic realities.

Therefore, the knowledge acquired through the program allows the graduate to integrate into the local professional world, but also to consider further studies in Saudi Arabia or abroad. The many optional subjects offered to the student allow him/her to build a personalized program according to his/her individual objective.

In addition to knowledge, the law bachelor's program also promotes the employment of graduates through the practical skills it provides. In this perspective of acquiring practical skills, the College has created a legal Clinic. The College of Law launched the Legal Clinic in the spring semester of 2018/2019 in collaboration with the Saudi Bar Association. In this context, students solve real cases under the supervision of a teacher. The creation of a short moot also allows students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired by simulating trials.

The professionalization of students is also ensured by a mandatory internship.

The program has recently been reviewed to improve the quality of the program, based on the recommendations of external reviewers, including the opinions of the college's industrial partners. The review is the first ever made to the Program since its establishment in 2012. To assess the relevance and effectiveness of the new program, the law college used an external examiner.

The new BA in Law program plan has commenced since the Fall 2019-2020 cohort.

The frequent participation of students in national and international advocacy competitions summarizes the content of the programs: theory and practice, in an internal and international dimension, in Arabic and English.

3-3: Projects and internships are a key teaching tool, with specific support mechanisms.

The program provides for a mandatory 8-week internship (320 hours) conducted in the summer semester of Junior Year, which gives rise to credits.

The Department of Career Services helps students find an internship through a contact list. It also works with graduates who need assistance in job transitions.

The internship takes place under the supervision of a teacher, who visits the student's Firm once or twice during the internship.

The internship results in three credit hours assessed as follows: an assessment of industry supervisors (20%) and an assessment of faculty (80%). The 80% of the assessment of faculty includes: four learning logs (40%) and the final report including presentation (40%).

3-4: The study program allows students to acquire additional skills that are useful for employment or further study.

The program is mainly focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to the legal field.

Additional skills are garnered by Trial simulation sessions, the Law Clinic, the internship allow students, participation in international workshops or competitions. These activities allow students to acquire to acquire practical skills that effectively prepare them for professional life.

In addition, the program allows students to acquire a good command of the English language. The level of English is a prerequisite for the law program because many courses are taught in English. Thanks to library books and e-resources, students and teachers have access to many English-language sources (English language teaching materials, journals, scholarly monographs, higher education textbooks, and schoolbook).

Teaching in Arabic and English is consistent with the College's objectives, which is to ensure that graduates can express themselves in written and oral form in Arabic and English. Fluency in English is part of the College's international perspective, whether the graduate wishes to enter the professional world or continue his or her studies abroad.

3-5: The study program encourages the use of digital technologies and other innovative teaching methods.

In accordance with Saudi law, the buildings of male students and female students are separated. However, the two buildings are located on the same campus, close to each other. These buildings are duplicated in the same way: library, classrooms with smart boards with overhead projectors. The use of Blackboard® serves the learning management system, deployed throughout the campus. Wifi is available everywhere on both cam-

poses. The Moot Court and the Law Clinic are located in the male students building but female students can access them because the schedule is shared.

In accordance with Saudi law, female teachers are not allowed to teach male students. Female teachers therefore only teach female students. On the other hand, male teachers are allowed to teach female students. On this point, it should be noted that male teachers teach female students in the same classroom (and not remotely through an audio system or behind a window, as is usually done). The male teacher can access the female students building in « green zone ». All students therefore have direct access to their teacher.

The Learning Resource Centers and the Professional Development Center help teachers to use new technologies for the benefit of their pedagogy.

Classes are carried out as a mix of lectures and interactive discussions with students. Critical thinking and argumentative skills are considered by most instructors as a central piece of their teachings. Mock trials allow instructors to give students burn more hands-on approach to legal issues.

3-6: The study program offers specific tools for successful program completion.

PMU offers many mechanisms for individualised support for students in order to improve their academic progress.

Students can follow a preparatory year (which is optional and common to all programs).

Then, the first year of the program (Freshman Year) acts as a generalist year of study for students starting the program. They are given a general basis for higher studies which is not specific to the College of Law but which is widely shared by all Colleges of the University, even if some courses are specific to the legal field.

To obtain a law bachelor's degree, the student must acquire 138 credits hours. To ensure the student's success, the College implements a "student workload" and a time limit for the duration of the studies. Students can enroll in a program of a minimum of 12 hours credits and a maximum of 20 hours credits per semester. Students have a maximum of eight years to graduate.

Students are required to maintain an overall GPA of 2.0. If not, the student will be placed on academic probation 1 to improve their GPA. The student who is on probation is limited to 12 credit hours and he must maintain a minimum semester GPA of 2.00. If the student remains below than 2.00, he/she will be placed on academic probation 2. If the student still fails to achieve the above objective, the result will be in academic dismissal. Students on academic dismissal can apply for reinstatement after their dismissal period.

The college attaches great importance to academic orientation, particularly to helping students choose their program of study. To this end, counsellor-student conferences are organised at least once every semester. Indeed, each student is assigned an academic advisor.

During the Bachelor of Laws program, peer tutoring is provided.

3-7: The study program prepares students for the international environment.

The program is characterized by a strong desire to open the student to the international dimension. This objective is reflected in the presence of many international law courses and numerous courses taught in English, even when the course concerns a subject of Saudi law.

The internationalization of the program is also expressed through a collaboration with the University of Pepperdine, in the United States. The collaboration is both scientific and pedagogical.

Finally, student participation in law moot competitions abroad also promotes the international dimension of the program (2017: Washington DC; 2018: Kuwait, Washington DC; 2019: Kuwait, Washington DC, Vienna).

PMU wishes to develop international student mobility. For the time being, student mobility remains limited at the Bachelor of Law level. International mobility is mainly an individual choice, after the bachelor's degree, for students who want and can afford to pursue with a master's degree abroad, especially in the United States and England.

4 – PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

4-1: The study program is implemented by a formally identified teaching team

The Bachelor of Arts in Law (BA in Law) has been set up in 2011-2012. At the time, it was run by the Department of Law of the College of Sciences and Human Studies. On March 2019, the department has been recognized and elevated to a full College of Law.

The college is headed by a Dean, who is in charge of running the College both from an administrative and an academic point of view. He is in charge of the strategic development of the College in line with the University strategic planning. He implements the policies set by the University and the College.

He is responsible for the hiring of academics and support staff. He reports to the leadership of the University.

Two chairpersons report to him: one for the male campus and one for the female campus. They implement academic policies and coordinate the work of academics. The Dean and the two chairpersons are academic.

A College council decides on major issues of the academic life.

7 permanent committees are in place to handle specific issues:

- Quality Assurance and Accreditation committee
- Committee for Proposed New program
- Curriculum review committee
- Mooting competitions committee
- Legal clinic committee
- Committee for extra-curricular activities
- Publications committee

An Advisory Board is composed of representatives of employers, of professionals from higher educational institutions and of industrial partners as well. In the future, it will include recognized alumni members. The advisory board assists in program development and improvement. The program seeks the feedback of the advisory board in assessing the quality of the program and its graduates.

The Faculty is composed as follows:

- 2 Associate professors (both males)
- 14 assistant professors (10 males and 4 females)
- 2 lecturers (one male, one female).

Most academic staff have earned their PhDs from major European universities: some from English universities (Oxford, Edinburgh, Leeds, London), others from French (Rennes I, Paris I, Dijon), Italian (Rome, Pisa-Florence), or Greek institutions.

Other origins include USA (George Washington University), Bosnia (Zenica), Sudan and South Africa.

The Faculty is not very large, but it reveals a wide spectrum of origins which is consistent with the stated aim of delivering a global education. The main legal traditions of the modern world are represented and this multicultural approach allows students to be exposed to different ways of thinking and learning.

New instructors are mandated to follow a specific training in teaching methods, assessment methods and computer technology. As all instructors at PMU, they are expected to implement skill-based, student-centered, and interactive teachings. They can rely on the Learning Resource Center and the professional development Center to help them develop those professional skills.

The duties, responsibilities and tools available to Faculty are detailed in the Faculty handbook.

4-2: Knowledge is assessed according to specifically stated methods communicated to students

The evaluation of knowledge is carried out according to the Final and Common examinations policy which sets out precisely the rules to pass the degree and the rules applicable to students during exams.

The Grading policy is implemented in each class through the syllabus which must describe to students how they will be assessed.

An independent verification of assessment is in place in order to answer to possible claim of unfair assessment. It is implemented through the review of the assessment by another instructor and the validation by the Chair.

Examinations for female and male students do not always take place on the same day. Therefore, for the same subject, the subject matter may be different. In order to ensure equality of students in obtaining the diploma, it would be appropriate to set up a system that allows a single examination to be taken for a given subject or, at the very least, with the same level of requirement.

4-3: The study program works to monitor skills acquisition

In line with the University policy, the program seeks to develop six competencies which are shared by every effective professional: communication, technological competence, critical thinking and problem solving, professional competence teamwork and leadership.

To achieve that goal, each course has a course specification. It sets out the aims of the course, the skills and knowledge a graduate from that course will possess, and how it is taught and assessed.

The syllabus details the course learning outcomes and for each course learning outcome, it also defines an assessment method and a teaching method.

In principle, male and female students who have followed the same course take the same exam.

4-4: Students numbers and the different enrolment regimes for the study program are clearly identified

The Program is quite new, and the number of students is relatively small around 592, one third male, two third females.

All students in the BA Law are day students.

4-5: The study program has comprehensive information on graduate outcomes

The program is building a comprehensive and systematic system to track students and know their position after graduation. Alumni are very involved in the running of the program and the College. The College puts specific emphasis on tracking Alumni who holds high offices.

The program being quite new, not so many students have graduated and that limits the effectiveness of the cohort follow up.

4-6: The study program is based on a publicly available quality assurance and ethics policy

The College has a Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee as well as a Curriculum Review Committee.

The College of Law implements a policy of comprehensive evaluation. Several feedbacks are organized.

Student Course Evaluation: Conducted at the end of a course Period

Student Experience Evaluation: Conducted mid-way through a program graduation path

Student Program Evaluation: Conducted at time graduating seniors are about to complete their programs

Student Field Experience Evaluation: Conducted after graduation through reaching out to PMU Alumni or through surveying students' internship and co-op experience.

In line with the Saudi National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) reporting requirements:

- Each course has a Course Portfolio which includes the Course Report.
- Program Reports are prepared annually as a compilation of course reports.
- Field Experience Reports are prepared annually to document feedback from students during internship or co-op experience

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Furthermore, a review of the curriculum is done every five years. It is done through both self-assessment and external review.

The MA program in English literature relies on a team of professors of the English Department, through the Graduate Committee for English Literature. This committee gathers twelve professors in literature and is in charge of every aspect relating to the program and the students, such as programme modification, admission processes, making program guidelines for projects, monitoring students' evolution, providing orientations for new students, making teaching schedules, discussing students' projects proposals, and occasionally working on the committee website. The committee meets no less than six times during a semester, which proves its dedication to the programme. The teachers have to provide students with syllabuses with clear methods of assessment before the beginning of the courses. There are diverse assessment methods (one or several mid-term exams, around week 8, and a final exam, after week 14, which can take the form of projects, assignments, oral presentations, or examination questions), but every course requires at least one compulsory final paper. The number of students cannot, by decision of the team, exceed thirty (fifteen females, fifteen males). Due to the very selective nature of the training, it has never had more than twelve students per promotion (seven girls and five boys in 2017-2018), and there has even been one year with zero student (in 2014-2015). This low number of students is quite problematic and may, in the long run, even put into question the reason for being of the programme, especially on the male campus. The courses are evaluated every semester by the students attending it, and teachers have to take into account the students' views. No mention is made of foreign students, and students are not very much followed up after they graduate. However, an alumni committee in at the level of the department and currently is working on building a database with information about graduates and their working experience.

V. CONCLUSION

The PMU law bachelor's degree is recent since the first students enrolled in 2011-2012. As a result, there are few graduates and it is difficult to assess the statistics in terms of professional integration. On this point, it can simply be noted that the alumni interviewed are very satisfied with the training they have received. Some are continuing their studies, particularly in the United States or England. Others have integrated professional life, for example some alumni have joined the legal department of local companies. Still on this point, it can also be noted that the employers interviewed are quite satisfied with the level of graduates of the College of Law. Even if it is difficult to step back from a recent program, the impression is very positive for several reasons.

First, from the point of view of study conditions, the situation of students is very pleasant. The campus is modern and very well equipped. Learning is facilitated by the use of technology and a comprehensive library. The campus offers a real student life with clubs (including the law club), a nursery, sports facilities, a medical centre and cafeterias. All students, girls and boys, are gathered on the same campus and benefit from the same facilities.

Secondly, the program is coherent and well structured. The program is managed according to the latest international standards. It is strongly committed to a culture of quality assurance.

The program is a bachelor program. As such, it is not meant to be an advanced research program. However, the Bachelor of Law program of PMU offers a balanced content which includes foundational knowledge and skills as well as more advanced technical subjects. It offers both academic and professional-like training. Students who graduate from the program are well equipped to become effective professionals and either join the job market or enter into the field of research in a master's program.

Thirdly, the program has a true identity that can be expressed in two ways :

- the international dimension of the program. Many courses are taught in English, which allows students to acquire an excellent level of English. Students participate in pleading competitions abroad. PMU has an effective partnership with the University of Pepperdine in California. This partnership leads to joint activities and exchanges, which benefit teachers and students. The program offers many courses in international or foreign law, especially common law.
- The will to develop alternative dispute resolution methods. Courses are already offered in this subject and teachers are invited to do research related to this theme. It is certain that the theme is relevant since it is in line with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's recent desire to become a place of international commercial arbitration. The industrial dimension of the region in which PMU is located justifies the choice to develop this speciality.

To conclude, the bachelor of law degree in PMU can be summarized as follows :

- It enables students to acquire legal knowledge but also practical skills that will facilitate their integration into professional life.
- It takes into account the local context, i. e. Saudi law and the professional prospects of graduates in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while allowing them to open up to the world through the learning of English language and the teaching of foreign rights.

STRENGTHS

-Global vision of the student at local and international level: PMU has set objectives for the student in terms of acquiring knowledge and skills, but also more broadly as a citizen.

-Sound organizational structure.

-A unique campus for male and female students that offers the necessary facilities to all of them.

-A coherent law bachelor's degree program that allows students to acquire the basics of local law and to learn about other rights.

-Teachings in Arabic and English.

-Theoretical education supplemented by activities that allow for practical application and prepare for future professional life (Moot court, Legal Aid Clinic, eloquence contest).

-A real policy of internationalization of studies that is expressed in several ways.

WEAKNESSES

- As the law bachelor's degree is recent, there are still very few graduate promotions, a situation which limits the analysis of statistics.
- Given the international dimension of the program, the number of partnerships with foreign universities should be increased.
- PMU is committed to creating a master's degree in law. This will require the recruitment of new teachers because the current human resources seem insufficient if a master's degree were to be created.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given the international dimension of the program, PMU could increase partnerships with foreign universities.
- PMU's ambition is to create a master's degree in law. For this objective to be achievable, the College of Law must continue to recruit qualified teachers in order to have the necessary human resources.

VI. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION



جامعة الأمير محمد بن فهد
PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAHD UNIVERSITY

Mr. François Pernot

Head of the Europe and International Department (DEI)
High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCÉRES)
Paris, France

January 9th, 2020

Subject: PMU's Response to the Law Program Evaluation Outcome

Dear Mr. François Pernot,

Greetings from PMU!

On behalf of PMU, I would like to thank Hcéres and the appointed team of expert evaluators for their professional reviews of our undergraduate law program. We accept the report findings and appreciate the comprehensive assessment and feedback that the report points out. We take immense pride in your statements regarding the strengths of our law program and in highlighting its characteristics that set it apart from all other law programs.

PMU is committed to attain and maintain the highest national and international academic quality standards pertaining to offering legal educational degree programs. PMU recognizes the significance of practicing the continuous improvement process. The fact that your evaluation report cited weaknesses already identified in the Self Study Report submitted by the College of Law to Hcéres in July 2019 validates our total commitment to quality assurance through an objective self-evaluation process.

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Below we address the weaknesses cited in the review. We believe these weaknesses are and will be resolved to your satisfaction and as part of the due process.

- 1- *As the law bachelor's degree is recent, there are still very few graduate promotions, a situation which limits the analysis of statistics.*

Response:

PMU was established in 2006. The first class of students started their academic careers in 2008. The law degree program was a late academic degree addition that was first launched in the Academic Year 2011/2012. Since then, the law program attracted and retained healthy annual enrolments of young men and women students and graduated five cohorts. The university and its academic program graduates continue to be highly regarded by all national and international industry, business, government and institutions of higher education. The majority of them assumed entry level career jobs as law practitioners while a small number of them opted to pursue graduate law education abroad. PMU Alumni Association keeps records of law graduates and continually reaches out to them via electronic and social media communications as well as a multitude of events and functions that are held on campus and/or at various in- and out-of-kingdom locations. PMU Deanship of Quality and Accreditation in partnership with the Alumni Association sends out assessment instruments to all alumni and their employers to solicit and collect data and feedback that are used to improve on the academic program learning outcomes. Our law alumni are already making significant career advancements in their workplaces. We produced evidence during the on-site visit by the program evaluation team members by assembling a representative sample of our alumni. Our plans will continue to track our graduates and seek their valuable feedback through various ways and means including the College of Law Advisory Board with the goal of continually updating and upgrading the curriculum to stay current and o better serve our current and future graduates and their prospective employers. We are confident that with time many of our PMU law graduates will assume more, and more important leadership positions and will positively and significantly contribute to their communities.

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- 2- Given the international dimension of the program, the number of partnerships with foreign universities should be increased.

Response:

In hindsight, the Self Study Report should have had documented in more details the successes of PMU in developing and activating numerous agreements with international prestigious institutions of higher education. PMU continues to emphasize the internationalization of its academic programs, faculty and students and continues to commit resources to this strategic goal. This has been long funded and supported by PMU since its start in 2006. The PMU Directorate of Global Engagement is constantly pursuing international partnerships and agreements with universities and institutions throughout the world. The inventory of active memoranda of understanding includes a healthy number of MOUs and is planned to increase significantly by targeting select well-known institutions in the near future. A representative sample list of MOUs is in the attached Appendix. PMU empowers its faculty and students to take part of direct involvement with their counterparts at the foreign partner instructions. As an example, faculty and students visited many foreign campuses through exchange programs, student competitions and by attending and organizing conferences, workshops and symposia abroad and at PMU. Two partnerships that stand out and worth emphasizing are the thirty-two TIEC (Texas International Education Consortium) member Texas universities and Pepperdine University to name a couple of working partnerships that the College of Law is a main PMU beneficiary of these strategic partnerships. Plans are well developed to offer a collaborative Master of Laws LLM program with emphasis on Dispute Resolution with Pepperdine University. The inauguration of PMU's interdisciplinary Center for Futuristic Studies is the most recent international engagement accomplishment that PMU administers and operates.

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- 3- PMU is committed to creating a master's degree in law. This will require the recruitment of new teachers because the current human resources seem insufficient if a master's degree were to be created.

Response:

PMU Masters of Law Degree mentioned above is expected to be offered in the academic year 2020/2021. The PMU curriculum design is complete. The approval of the Ministry of Education is expected to be granted in less than a year time from now. PMU allocated six new law faculty positions in the current 2019/2020 academic year. Five new faculty members already joined as of the Fall 2019 semester. The sixth faculty member is due to join in the Spring 2020 semester. The collaborative masters degree program with Pepperdine University will involve several visiting professors from Pepperdine University and is already approved to recruit three to four associate and full professor positions at PMU's College of Law.

In conclusion, I hope this brief response serves to provide answers and clarifications to you and to your team of evaluators regarding the three cited weaknesses and recommendations. It is our hope that these weaknesses are addressed sufficiently to your satisfaction and are therefore resolved.

Regards,

Dr. Faisal Al Anezi

Vice Rector

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International evaluation and accreditation

ACCREDITATION DECISION

Bachelor of Law

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

APRIL 2020

SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCERES

HCERES has built its evaluation process based on a set of objectives that higher education institution study programmes must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into four fields among which are the accreditation criteria.

As for the “External Evaluation Standards”, the accreditation criteria have been specifically designed for foreign programmes. The accreditation criteria were adopted by the Board on June 2016 and are available on the HCERES website (hceres.fr).

The accreditation committee, meeting his accreditation decision, has wholly taken into account the final evaluation report of the study programme. This accreditation decision is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The accreditation decision issued by HCERES shall not grant any rights whatsoever, whether in France or abroad. The decision on training programme accreditation confers an accreditation label and does not infer recognition of the accredited qualifications. The HCERES accreditation process therefore has no impact on the qualifications recognition process in France.

FULFILLMENT OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

FIELD 1: AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Accreditation criterion

The objectives of the study programme with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired are clearly defined and communicated. Students and other stakeholders are aware of outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies.

Assessment of criterion

The objectives of the program are clearly defined. The program aims to provide general legal training that gives students the opportunity to enter the labour market or continue their studies as part of a master's program.

These objectives are made available to students in a clear and accessible manner.

The programme is consistent with its objectives: it aims to provide students with general legal training, both theoretical and practical. It also enables them to acquire an excellent level of English, which facilitates integration into local companies or further studies, particularly abroad.

FIELD 2: POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Accreditation criterion

The study program has set a comprehensive positioning suited to its objectives. It includes a clear link with research, scholarly partnerships and/or with the economic and social world, national and/or international partnerships.

Assessment of criterion

The partnership with research is not institutionalized, which does not pose any difficulties since the program offered by PMU is only a Bachelor of Laws.

Partnerships with the socio-economic world exist and allow students to do internships and be employed after graduation.

International partnerships take the form of participation in advocacy competitions. There is also an effective partnership with the University of Pepperdine in the United States. However, the number of partnerships with foreign universities should be increased, given the international dimension of the programme.

FIELD 3: STUDY PROGRAMME TEACHING STRUCTURE

Accreditation criterion

The study programme includes a set of teaching units that are coherent, gradual and adapted to all kind of students. The study programme allows students to acquire additional skills that are useful for employment or further study.

Internships and projects are included in the study programme curriculum. So are Information and Communication Technologies in Education (ICTE) and education innovations. The study programme prepares students for the international environment.

Assessment of criterion

The curriculum includes a set of coherent, progressive teaching units adapted to all types of students.

The program of study provides students with the necessary legal knowledge in Saudi law, as well as in international law or common law. In addition, the program provides students with additional skills that are useful for employment or further study: practical skills and an excellent command of the English language.

Internships and projects are included in the curriculum. The same applies to information and communication technologies in education (ICTs) and educational innovations. The curriculum prepares students for professional integration (internship, mock trials, Law Clinic) and the international environment.

FIELD 4: STUDY PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Accreditation criterion

The study programme is implemented by a formally identified and operational teaching team including stakeholder and student participation. It is carried out by an educational team which benefits from clear and up-to-date data. Methods for checking knowledge are explicitly stated and communicated to students. Teaching and practical professional units are expressed in terms of skills. Anti-fraud measures have been implemented.

Assessment of criterion

The management of the program follows the latest international standard. It is well structured with a strong commitment to quality assurance.

Processes are in place and are documented.

FINAL DECISION

Considering the accreditation criteria analysis detailed above, the accreditation committee issues the following decision:

“Five-year unreserved accreditation decision”

and draws attention to the following points:

- Given the international dimension of the program, PMU could increase partnerships with foreign universities.
- PMU's ambition is to create a master's degree in law. For this objective to be achievable, the College of Law must continue to recruit qualified teachers in order to have the necessary human resources.

SIGNATURE

For HCERES and on behalf of



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Nelly Dupin,

Acting President

Date: Paris, April 15th, 2020

The evaluation reports of Hceres are available online : www.hceres.com

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