

OAQ

**Organe d'Accréditation et d'Assurance Qualité
des Hautes Écoles Suisses**

***External evaluation of the 'Institut Universitaire
d'Études du Développement' (IUED) in Geneva***

Experts' Report

16 July 2003

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1 Introduction

The ‘Office fédéral de l’éducation et de la science’ (OFES) requested the OAQ to carry out an external evaluation of the ‘Institut universitaire d’études du développement’ (IUED) in Geneva. This procedure is situated in the context of granting IUED the right to Swiss federal subsidies.

The ‘Conseil scientifique’ of OAQ nominated the following persons as evaluation experts:

- Prof. Dirk VAN DAMME, Flemish Inter-University Council, Belgium (chair)
- Prof. Giovanni Andrea CORNIA, University of Firenze, Italy
- Mr. Damien DESJONQUERES, CARE, France
- Prof. Emanuel DE KADT, Utrecht University, the Netherlands

The team of experts was assisted by Ms. Annick Weizmann, scientific collaborator of OAQ.

We used the quality standards formulated by the OAQ and followed the evaluation protocol of the OAQ.¹ The IUED finalised its self-evaluation report in March 2003. This report and all necessary documents have been passed on to the experts in April 2003. The site visit took place on 12 and 13 May 2003. This report is the experts’ evaluation report and is based on the analysis of the institution’s self-evaluation report and all relevant documents and on the findings resulting from the site visit. According the OAQ evaluation protocol, the draft version of this report was sent to the IUED in order to give the institution the opportunity to state its opinion. The institution reacted on the report on 11 July 2003. The experts’ report was finalised on 16 July 2003.

This evaluation comes at a moment of huge changes for the institution and the evaluation will have important consequences for the positioning and funding of the institution. We fully acknowledge the importance of this transitional phase and hope that their evaluation helps the institution to find its way out of the many challenges it is facing. We realise that this evaluation not only comes not more than three years after the last one and at a moment in which not all recommendations have been implemented yet. Furthermore, this evaluation has been initiated by external exigency. Yet, the institution has taken this evaluation very seriously.

¹ OAQ, *Guide to external evaluation. Recommendations for experts*, 17 March 2003.

We wish to thank the OAQ for the trust put in them to carry out this important evaluation and hope that this report meets the expectations of OAQ, OFES, IUED and other relevant parties involved. We want to express also our gratitude for the much appreciated and highly professional assistance of Ms Weizmann in all stages of the evaluation process.

We also would like to show our appreciation for the seriousness and openness we encountered at IUED during this evaluation. We want to underline that we have conducted this evaluation from a supportive and constructive position towards the institution, endorsing the institution’s own mission and formulating a judgement on the quality of the institution’s performance in order to facilitate further improvement. We therefore hope that this evaluation report and its recommendations may support the institution in its further development and in improving its quality.

Given constraints of time and capacity, this evaluation report may contain statements that do not do full justice to the reality of the institution’s quality. We take full responsibility for this report and wish to apologise for any mistakes or misjudgements in this report.

The next section of this report reviews the self-evaluation report and site visit as the two crucial phases in the process of evaluation. From section three onwards we try to assess the quality of IUED using the quality standards, points of reference and questions produced by OAQ and on the basis of the self-evaluation report, the analysis of relevant documents and our findings during the site visit.

2 The evaluation process: self-evaluation report and site visit

2.1 The self-evaluation report

It is internationally recognised good practice in quality assurance in higher education that the self-evaluation of the programme or institution under review is a first crucial step in the evaluation process. Also in this evaluation, the self-evaluation report therefore is a very important document, presenting a critical view that the institution develops of its own quality and its perspectives for improvement.

In general terms, the self-evaluation report gives an accurate idea of how the institution perceives its own quality performance measured to the quality standards advanced by OAQ. The report had to be produced in a rather short time frame. Therefore, the opportunities to involve all internal parties and external stakeholders in the process of self-evaluation were limited. The self-evaluation was carried out by a working group at management level. The various categories of the institution's staff were involved through their representatives in this working group. Draft versions of the self-evaluation report were presented to the 'Collège des enseignants' and the students' association, that had the opportunity to formulate comments.

We acknowledge that the institution has made efforts to involve all relevant parties in the self-evaluation process and that the time frame limited the opportunities to do so effectively, but we also recommend that in future evaluations the guidelines of OAQ on this phase of the evaluation process should be followed more closely. The self-evaluation exercise should be an opportunity for an institution to investigate its performance in depth, for example by questionnaires to internal staff and students, alumni and external stakeholders, and to analyse the findings critically and to discuss the results of this process in an institution-wide and participative manner. The IUED self-evaluation report mainly reflects the opinion of the management level on the various quality standards in the OAQ report. Given the rather small scale of the institution, the participative and collegial culture at IUED and the manifold informal processes of feedback though, it is highly probable that this view is widely shared in the institution.

Probably because of the already mentioned time constraints and limited involvement of students, alumni and external stakeholders, but also because of the highly committed institutional culture and highly devoted and loyal personnel, the self-evaluation report in some instances voices a rather defensive tone and sometimes fails to take a sufficiently self-critical view from the distance. The high levels of commitment and motivation of management and staff towards the institution undoubtedly is one of the great strengths of the IUED, but may also carry the risk of collective blindness to areas of defective quality. We believe that the institution could benefit from periodic critical self-evaluation, even without external incentive, in which it involves external parties and stakeholders and in which it attempts to take a more distant view towards itself. In this, the institution could also

take advantage of established techniques such as systematic comparisons with similar institutions in the international domain and external benchmarking.

The expert team appreciates that the self-evaluation reports on the way in which the institution has reflected on the findings of the last evaluation² and has implemented some of its recommendations. The IUED manifestly has invested a lot of energy in improving its quality performance by critically implementing the recommendations of this evaluation it saw as useful and necessary.

2.2 The site visit

The site visit was well organised and prepared. It started with a briefing session of OAQ in the evening of 11 May and continued during 12 and 13 May in the institution itself. Sessions took place with the management staff, the board, delegates of the students, representatives from the teaching and research staff, the administrative staff and alumni. The sessions were conducted in French, the mother tongue of the institution and most of its personnel and students. During our visit, we had also the opportunity to visit the available facilities, the library and also the new building under construction. The site visit was concluded with a debriefing session and the presentation of the oral report in which we presented our preliminary findings.

We wish to express our gratitude towards the IUED for the warm welcome we received, for the efficient organisation of their visit and for the openness of the discussions we had. We encountered a very open and cooperative attitude among all participants towards the evaluation. We were able to obtain all information they asked for in written or oral form. We also appreciate that the institution organised a session with alumni at very short notice, at our request. We also want to include Ms Weizmann in their gratitude, who made notes of the sessions and made a very helpful written report of the discussions during the sessions.

A few minor weak points do not detract from this generally very positive impression we have of the site visit at IUED, but yet deserve to be mentioned. We regret that we were not able to speak to the president of the board of the institution face to face. The session with the board therefore lost some of its potentiality. We very much appreciate that on our request a telephone conversation could be organised with the president which was highly informative and to some extent compensated for this point. We nevertheless recommend to OAQ that the presence of the president of the board of an institution should be mandatory during a site visit.

Despite efforts of the institution to minimise the impact of ongoing construction works, the sessions sometimes were disturbed by excessive noise and visual distraction caused by construction workers.

² C3E, *Evaluation des prestations de l'Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Développement (IUED). Rapport final* (Lyon, janvier 2000).

In general, we think that two days of site visit is very little time to fully understand a complex institution and get a well-substantiated idea of its strengths and weaknesses. We understand the problems of engaging busy experts for longer periods of time and the budgetary consequences of this.

3 Strategy, organisation and quality management

3.1 Mission statement and strategic planning

Standard 1.01 *The academic institution has a mission statement available to the public which states its education and research objectives and which describes the position of the institution in its academic and social context. The institution has a strategic plan.*

Established in 1961 as ‘Institut Africain de Genève’, IUED has already a respectable history as an institution devoted to the promotion of education and research in the field of development studies. During the 42 years of its existence, this basic mission has remained basically the same, but the approaches of course have changed according to changing contexts and challenges. In the self-evaluation report IUED describes its current mission as follows:

“L’iuéd a pour mission d’organiser un enseignement postgrade et une formation continue de qualité, de mener à bien des recherches conceptuelles et appliqués, de fournir une expertise et de mettre en oeuvre des programmes d’action, d’informer et de sensibiliser les divers publics”.

Various other documents and resources can help to see how the institution further clarifies this mission and translates it into strategic planning. As is mentioned in the self-evaluation report, a working group prepared a document in 1998 on ‘*mission-objectifs stratégiques-prestations*’. Documents produced in the context of external evaluations also contributed to refine the institution’s mission and strategic objectives. Finally, the four-yearly strategic papers of the director contain many elements that expand the institution’s mission into strategic objectives, taking into account the actual changing context. The current paper for the period 2000-2004 reflects on the consequences of the changing environment, the upcoming challenges and translation of the recommendations of the 2000 evaluation into five strategic action lines.

An important element of the institution’s mission and identity is its specific orientation in the field of development studies. The institution promotes a perspective to development which stresses durable, equitable and multicultural development. The institution also endorses a committed and critical approach to development studies, which departs from the perceived mainstream view defended by the large multilateral organisations. By developing alternative approaches and solutions to development problems, IUED has the aspiration to influence the discourses and practices in the field and to alter public policies towards developing nations. One of the dimensions of this approach, is the preference for interdisciplinarity in studies and research.

Another important part of the institution’s mission, yet not explicitly formulated, is the orientation towards the francophone world. The historic and cultural location

and orientation of IUED clearly is towards the francophone world. As stated during the conversation with the board during the site visit, the institution even has the aspiration to become the leading development institute in the francophone world. This orientation goes beyond a purely linguistic dimension and expresses also a political statement in a globalising world dominated by Anglo-Saxon values and worldviews. Yet, the institution recognises that precisely in a context of internationalisation and globalisation of higher education, it also has to open itself to cultures and communities beyond the francophone world, for example in the student recruitment and in the choice of countries addressed in studies and research. Partly, the ambition to reach out to other language communities is already present, as can be seen in the presence of non-francophone students and the planning for the new DFD programme (see paragraph 4.1), which will be a multi-lingual programme.

We give IUED a positive assessment on the standard and points of reference related to mission statement and strategic planning, but with some remarks and recommendations. The institution evidently has a mission, which is shared and supported among its constituent parts, which is clearly enough defined and which is translated in strategic objectives and plans. The mission and strategic objectives reflect and direct the specific identity and organisational culture of the institution. The strategic planning evidences reflection on the institution's profile and place in the changing regional, national and international environment, as well as academically, politically and socially. A particular strong point of IUED is the networking, especially on the local and national level.

The first recommendation we want to make in this regard is on the level of explicitness of the mission statement and strategic planning. The institution would benefit from a more clear and explicit mission statement. Potentially relevant aspects are currently scattered throughout various documents and some relevant elements are even not made public. Although the institution already has a strong organisational identity and culture, IUED could benefit from a process of internal consultation and negotiation on its own mission and strategic plans leading to a shared vision and profile that is more explicit than the already quoted very brief statement.

Secondly, we see the mission and strategic objectives of IUED as very ambitious. Of course, this is not a bad thing, quite on the contrary, but the institution has to critically examine whether it really has the resources and the capacity to fulfil this ambitious mission at a high quality level and in a sustainable way. Clearly, the institution is making priorities in its strategic objectives, although the reasons for these decisions do not always seem to be very explicit and the choices seem not to be resulting from deliberate decision-making. Historically, the educational objectives are very important and the track record of IUED in this is very impressive, as will be underlined in the related section of this report. Yet, it also is evident, as will be demonstrated in this report as well, that the other parts of the mission such as research and the role of the institution as critical think-tank, need reinforcement in the coming years. Thus, we do not plea for reducing the scope and the level of ambition of the mission and the strategic objectives of the institution, but we do think that the balance between and the relative weights of the

different components need careful re-examination in the light of the challenges that lay ahead and taking into account the resources and capacities. A possible way out could be to strengthen the connections between various objectives, such as for example between education and research on the one hand and operational projects on the other. Participation in research projects and operational activities should be decided on the basis of strategic choices that makes such participation also beneficial for educational activities. Mutual benefits and complementarities between various strategic objectives thus could be reinforced, and this in turn could contribute to the sustainable realisation of the institution’s mission.

Conclusion: standard 1.01 is met.

3.2 Governance, decision-making processes and participation

Standard 1.02 Decision-making processes, competencies and responsibilities have been determined. The academic staff participates in decision-making processes affecting teaching and research. The students participate in decision-making processes affecting their education and are able to state their opinions.

The governing bodies at IUED are the ‘Conseil de Fondation’, the ‘Bureau’ of this council, the ‘Comité consultatif’ and the ‘Comité de Gestion’ supporting the Director of the institution. Besides, there are also other bodies such as the ‘Collège des Enseignants’, ‘l’Assemblée du personnel administratif’, ‘l’Association des étudiants’ and the ‘Commission tripartite’. These bodies and their respective responsibilities and competencies have been defined by relevant legislation, the statutes of the institution and internal regulations.

More important than the formal rules and regulations however are the realities of governance in the institution. A site visit of two days is too short to learn about the real state of governance in an institution; therefore the following observations and recommendations may rest on an imperfect knowledge of reality.

We would like to address the issue of the overall system of governance of the institution and, more particularly, the question whether the three main components of this system – i.e. the management including the Director, the ‘Conseil de Fondation’ and the ‘Comité consultatif’ – are well balanced. Obviously, the management is the strongest component in the institution and we would like to express our high regard for the professional management of the institution. Yet, the management seems to be insufficiently balanced by the two other components. Although we do not have a full insight into the real functions which the Conseil takes up currently, we have the impression that it defines itself mainly in its supportive function, thereby insufficiently taking up its role of board of the institution balancing the executive power at management level. There is nothing wrong with a board that wishes to be supportive of an institution, quite on the contrary. But in a well-balanced system of governance, the board should also be actively engaged in the more strategic and long-term policy-making processes, thereby assuring the

sustainability and stability of the institution. Anyway, we feel comfortable with the views of the President of the board expressed to us on this matter.

The composition of the ‘Conseil de Fondation’ mirrors much of the history of the institution. Given the current challenges of positioning the institution as an academic institution, as a federal institution and as an institution with international aspirations, we would like to recommend to use such opportunities as arise to revise the composition of the board by strengthening the external representatives, and more specifically the representation from and links to the Swiss political system and to the academic community.

It is clear that the Director has a strong position in the management of the institution and his leadership contributes heavily to the good fate of the institution. He has the political, intellectual and moral authority to administer and run effectively the institution. Given the intention of the director to finish his current mandate in 2004, procedures have been started for the appointment of a new director. Obviously, this will be a decision of utmost importance to the future of the institution.

The teaching and research staff is very much involved in the decision-making processes, from a more formal as well as from a more informal point of view. Formally, staff members are delegated to various decision-making and management bodies. Informally, there is a very strong participative culture within the institution. Facilitated by the small scale and the large autonomy of the institution, there is a strong sense of self-government and auto-regulation within the institution, which is perceived as one of its attractive points by many. Informal bonds and a strong feeling of belonging to a IUED ‘family’ not only create an attractive work environment, but also produce a collegial and participative culture.

Also for the participation of representatives of students in decision-making processes, there are effective internal regulations. Given the short time that students stay in the institution, the effective organisation of student participation is not always easy, but the students realise that strengthening their own organisation is the best way to improve their impact on the governance and management of the institution.

Conclusion: standard 1.02 is met.

3.3 Resources

Standard 1.03 *The institution has the human resources, structures and financial and material means enabling it to realise its stated goals and objectives according to its strategic plan.*

IUED has a well described organigram, allocating functions to the various constituting elements of the organisation.

The institution has sufficient human resources to carry out its mission effectively. As is described in the self-evaluation report, there are however some problems and constraints in the staffing of the institution, mainly due to budgetary difficulties in the nineties and some growth problems in the same period. Budgets and staff numbers have not been able to keep pace with the growth rates of programmes. During the site visit, this was voiced by some participants in the sense that IUED has become the victim of its own success. More specifically, as many other academic institutions IUED faces a problem of covering the overhead costs of projects that precisely have been attracted to complement shrinking structural subsidies. Recent changes in the position of the institution and, more precisely, the insecurity of the past years have not been very beneficial and supportive in developing a financial and staff policy. Recognition of the institution by OFES should create the conditions for a more stable and promising funding, to which the institution really is looking forward. It is preparing a financial plan for the period 2004-2007, safeguarding the longer term operation of the institution.

Given the insecurity and the scarcity of resources during the past years, it is very understandable that IUED was highly concerned with securing its resource basis. We don't have an in-depth knowledge of the financial situation of the institution and therefore refrain from making very critical remarks in this regard. However, we have the impression that the institution has been rather 'resource-driven' and that resources have not been primarily seen as instruments to realise the mission and objectives of the institution, but more as an end in itself.

Conclusion: standard 1.03 is met.

3.4 Transparency and autonomy

Standard 1.04 The sources of the financial means and all the conditions attached to the financing are stated transparently and do not restrict the autonomy of the institution to take decisions in teaching and research.

As a publicly funded institution, deriving resources both from the federal government and the cantonal government, the financial sources of the IUED are very transparent. These funds are explicitly oriented at realising the stated objectives of the institution. Financial control and audit systems are in operation.

Only some 15% of the resources of the institution comes from other origins and can be considered as funding realised by the institution itself. In view of the rising proportion of income that academic and research institutions worldwide realise on the market, this is a rather low percentage, even if compared to other Swiss institutions IUED already performs well on this matter. A practice worth mentioning in this regard is the well-established system of return of a substantial part of honorarium fees, which generates 200.000 Swiss francs a year for the institution's budget. Still, more creative development of means of income generation certainly raise the mentioned percentage of self-generated resources.

Funding rules and regulations have not hampered the institutional autonomy and decision-making capacities of the institution. However, as the institution itself describes in its self-evaluation report, the financial conditions and insecurity of the past years have jeopardised the developmental capacity of the institution. IUED feels that it was obstructed in its own development by these circumstances, but expects that the new conditions from 2004 onwards could provide a more promising prospect.

Conclusion: standard 1.04 is met.

3.5 Quality assurance

Standard 1.05 *The institution has a quality assurance system.*

At the moment, there is no specific quality assurance system in place at IUED. As indicated in the self-evaluation report, there are some procedures of evaluation of staff, teaching and research, but they are fragmented and not yet integrated into a real internal quality assurance policy framework at institutional level. Also in the context of the growing importance of quality assurance in the post-Bologna European higher education area, we think that establishing an internal quality assurance system really should receive the highest priority. All contemporary external quality assurance and accreditation systems stress the importance of the existence of reliable and robust internal quality assurance systems. Clearly, IUED has some work to do in this regard.

However, a start has been made by the institution towards such a system, by initiatives such as the nomination of a responsible vice-director and the establishment of a working group. The institution is fully aware of the fact that it has some work to do in this regard in the near future. Although it is not possible to assert that this standard is already met at this moment, the experts have confidence in the determination and ability of the institution to meet this standard in the near future.

Conclusion: standard 1.05 is not yet met.

3.6 Gender equality

Standard 1.06 *The institution has set up a committee dealing with questions relating to gender equality, or has arranged access to such a committee.*

The IUED is monitoring issues of gender equality with regard to staff recruitment and management, for example by the obligation that minimally two women have to be member of committees established for the nomination of new professors. The institution is striving to realise a gender balance in its staff. Strictly speaking, a specific committee has not yet been set up, but we have the strong impression that

the sensitivity in the institution for issues related to gender equality is fairly strong. Therefore, we express a positive opinion on this point. However, the establishment of a specific committee and the nomination of a responsible person at management level would contribute to develop this further.

Conclusion: standard 1.06 is met.

4 Programmes

4.1 Profiles, goals and objectives of study programmes

Standard 2.01 *The institution offers a range of programmes leading to academic or professional degrees with stated goals and objectives. They integrate with the existing range of programmes of higher education offered by the universities or complement them in a meaningful way.*

The IUED offers four main study programmes:

1. a doctoral programme on the basis of interdisciplinary research on a developmental problem, leading to a doctoral degree awarded by the University of Geneva;
2. a programme of ‘Diplôme d’études approfondies’ (DEA), a two-year/four semesters programme of interdisciplinary specialised study of development, accessible by holders of a university degree with some years of professional experience in the field, and leading to a postgraduate diploma equally awarded by the University of Geneva;
3. a programme of ‘Certificat en études du développement’ (CED), a 9 month training course for professionals in the field of development, open to a broad range of persons, even without a university degree, leading to a professional certificate;
4. a research programme, leading to a ‘Diplôme de recherche’, based on original research and a thesis, open to holders of specialised degrees of IUED or equivalent.

Furthermore, the institution collaborates with partner institutions in the provision of specialised programmes dealing with particular regions or themes. It also organises a range of continuing education activities.

The institution is in a process of renewal and revision of its study programmes. As is documented in the self-evaluation report, the doctoral programme has been revised in 2002, in close cooperation with the University of Geneva which awards the doctoral degree. Also the DEA has been reviewed. From next academic year onwards, the CED will be transformed in a ‘Diplôme de formation continue en études du développement’ (DFD) and organised on a decentralised basis in partnership with institutions in the South. In the years to come, the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in the Swiss higher education will confront the institution again with a fundamental process of revision and renewal of its study programmes. Preliminary discussions on this are taking place at the level of the University of Geneva and in the institution itself.

Education being one of the core activities of IUED since its birth, this is clearly a strong and well established field of activity. The range of programmes and educational activities for an institution of this size is impressive in quantity and quality. The concept and objectives of the various programmes are well thought-out and regularly updated. The knowledge and competencies that students may acquire in these programmes are very relevant and of the level that can be expected of each of the qualifications. The institution's programmes are well integrated in the Geneva university system, via the degree-awarding powers of the University of Geneva and by the fact that numerous students enrolled at the University take courses at the institution. Also the national and international networks in which the institution is engaged, show the strong integration of the institution in the academic world.

In its educational programmes the institution addresses a very broad and diversified range of target groups and needs. The institution is very successful in dealing with the diversity of the student population and is aware of the challenges in efficiency of teaching and learning processes that this diversity may imply.

The discussions with the students and the alumni of the institution during the site visit showed that the students in general are very satisfied with the quality of the teaching and learning experience. The study load of the programmes is rather high but within reasonable limits. The students appreciate highly that the study programmes open their eyes and minds and give them the possibility to acquire new competencies. They have raised some concern about the new organisational model of the CED, but we feel that the experiment has good foundations and deserves to be tried out.

In addition to – not in contrast with – this positive assessment of the educational programmes of the institution, we want to point to some areas of concern and potential further improvement. The main criticism voiced by the students has to do with the lack of coaching and guidance during the learning process. Especially since the programmes contain many optional components and since there is a vast choice of options offered, students find it difficult to find their way and to make the right choices without coaching or assistance. The institution has appointed some staff members who invest time in informing, guiding and coaching students. Specifically in the two main programmes, the DEA and the CED, a member of the teaching staff is responsible for assisting students in their educational trajectory, advising them in the choice of seminars and assignments. Given the fact that the students are grown-up adults with sufficient experience in the university system, the institution refrains from taking a 'paternalistic' stance towards this issue. We can support this position, which emphasises the responsibility and accountability of students themselves in constructing their own educational itinerary and learning experience. Yet, the voice of the students on this has to be taken seriously. Innovative and contemporary approaches to teaching and learning imply more emphasis on the role of the teacher as guide and facilitator. Advice and coaching then are not to be seen as supplementary activities organised besides the 'normal' educational job, but are an integrated part of the educational endeavour. Even when refraining from taking a patronizing attitude towards students, more emphasis could be given to the role of teachers as coach.

Another remark of the students is that the link with the professional world of development is not very well developed in the study programmes. Field placement activities do not always meet the expectations of students and do not always fulfil their potential role as training activity in the framework of the programme as a whole. It is a good start that a working group on professional insertion has been established. Students also suggest that more use could be made both of the professional experience of alumni and of the presence of so many international organisations in the city of Geneva. We wish to add to this that also the private sector, which is very rarely dealt with in the educational activities of the institution, offers many possibilities for field placement and other training activities.

This is closely linked to the existence of what we have perceived as the dominant policy paradigm in the institution on issues of development. It is undoubtedly one of the strengths of the IUED that it has a clear identity as a centre of critical and interdisciplinary study. Students and alumni recommend that the institution should keep this critical identity in thematic work and policy approaches. However, the institution should benefit from opening up to a more diverse range of approaches, and from bringing the debate on development issues which is going on in the international arena inside the institution. This could be promoted for example by more regularly inviting scholars and visiting professors adhering to paradigms of development other than those predominantly taught in IUED, or by opening up more actively to the private sector and organisations and enterprises (also outside the field of development) that are confronted with development issues such as international banks and multinational corporations.

The message that we want to bring thus is somewhat ambivalent: on the one hand the institution should maintain its own identity and profile also with regard to the policy debate on development issues and should become even more able to develop alternative concepts and theories challenging mainstream paradigms; on the other hand the institution should not close itself off from important approaches, even if they are regarded as 'mainstream', and also remain open to the broad variety of alternative positions. Not doing so could entail the risk that profiling its own policy identity would end up in sclerosis.

Coming back to the study programmes themselves, we like to recommend that more time and energy is spent on taking into account the demands of students as well as professional environments in which graduates become employed. A useful tool in this regard would be the database of alumni, which could be made of greater benefit to the institution and its study programmes. While keeping up academic standards and the profile of the institution, bringing the demand side more actively into the process of monitoring, planning and innovation of the study programmes could balance the heavily supply-side orientation of current planning and development processes.

Furthermore, we want to invite the institution to consider whether the very broad range of study programmes offered at the moment is actually excessive, exceeding the human and financial capacity of the institution. The integration of the institution in the Swiss university system and the introduction of the bachelor/master system should provide the opportunity to make some strategic choices regarding the range

of programmes offered by IUED. Strengthening the place of research in the strategic planning of the institution, which for the moment still seems to be considered as secondary to the educational field of activity, also could imply that priorities will have to be formulated regarding the range of educational programmes offered. The institution makes already a distinction between its educational programmes, by prioritising the DEA which will become a master, the doctoral programme and the CED being transformed into the DFD. Monitoring the educational load in relation to the capacity of the institution and the strategic policy choices that have to be made, will be a major job for the leadership of the institution in the current and future context of transition.

Finally and as already said, more systematic attention should go to the continuous internal monitoring and assurance of the quality of the study programmes. Evaluation of study programmes and teaching staff by students by means of questionnaires is a good practice that has already been introduced, but this is only one instrument of quality assurance. Students complain that they have insufficient feedback on what the results are of those questionnaires and in what ways the institution takes them into account in the monitoring of the study programmes and the evaluation of teaching staff. We have insufficient knowledge on how the quality assurance mechanisms of the University of Geneva, that awards the doctoral degrees and DEA diplomas, deal with the educational programmes delivered at IUED.

Conclusion: standard 2.01 is met.

4.2 Credit system and student exchange

Standard 2.02 The institution participates in a national and international exchange of students, teaching staff and scientific staff.

The institution has started to make its study programmes compatible with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), but some work still has to be done in this regard. The more general implementation of the Bologna Declaration and the transformation of some of its programmes into master’s degree programmes will provide the opportunity to make a full transition to ECTS.

Since the study programmes are conceived as postgraduate degrees, specialised degrees, doctoral programmes and continuing education, it is less obvious that customary student mobility programmes such as ERASMUS/SOCRATES should be integrated into the study programmes. Also the student population of IUED, with many students from developing countries themselves, limits the possibilities of mobility. However, the strong networking of the institution initiates various forms of student and teaching staff exchange and virtual mobility. The new decentralised concept of the CED involves a great deal of student mobility. In the context of the transformation to the master’s degree system, a European Master is planned within the EADI network, aiming for recognition within ERASMUS Mundus. Because of all

this, we assess this standard as being met, although further improvement in this regard is desirable.

Conclusion: standard 2.02 is met.

4.3 Monitoring achievement

Standard 2.03 The institution has specified the conditions for attaining records of achievement and academic degrees and monitors adherence to these conditions.

Objectives and standards of achievement are formulated for each of the study programmes and communicated to the students in the form of internal directives and programmes of courses. As far as we have been able to verify in the documentation, the assessment methods are well designed, combine various instruments and are tuned to the educational objectives of the study programmes. As is indicated in the self-evaluation report, the further introduction of ECTS in design of the study programmes will create more opportunities to improve the formulation of objectives and to fine-tune the methods of assessment of student achievement.

Conclusion: standard 2.03 is met.

4.4 Collecting information on graduates

Standard 2.04 The institution makes use of periodically collected information on its graduates.

IUED has developed the good practice of collecting data on its graduates and publishes this regularly updated databank on its website. A responsible person in the management of the institution has been nominated for this. However, as has been said already, better use could be made of this valuable source of information in the context of the study programmes, in activities of professional insertion of students and in adjusting educational objectives to the demands of the professional sectors which graduates are entering after their study programme at the institution. Regular surveys collecting more in-depth information on for example the professional profiles of alumni and their feedback on the learning experience at IUED should be developed.

Conclusion: standard 2.04 is met.

5 Research

5.1 *Research activities and standards*

Standard 3.01 *The institution’s current research activities are in keeping with its strategic plan and meets international standards.*

The self-evaluation report describes the varying importance of the research activity in the history of IUED. In recent years research has become an increasingly important field of activity of the institution, but its development was and is inhibited from time to time by personnel and budgetary restrictions. For the moment, several valuable research programmes and projects are in operation, funded by various sources, and several other are in the process of conception or application.

As a consequence of the previous evaluation of the institution in 2000, the institution has felt the need to make a prioritisation of the range of themes and subjects suitable for the interdisciplinary research at the institution. The result has been the ‘rosace’ of themes, which now figures prominently in the identity and profiling of the institution, both in the education and the research fields. We want to congratulate the institution with this.

With the ambition to support the institution in strengthening its research activity, we wish to voice some critical remarks and to make some recommendations. We have the impression that the institution, its leadership and its staff is well aware of the challenge laying ahead of further developing research as a core business of the institution, equal in importance to education. With the transfer to OFES, the federal office for education and science, and the need for a more academic profile of the institution, IUED only will be able to sustain its legitimacy in the long run as an academic institution, by meeting the standards of research that universities in Europe in general have to meet. We believe that the consequences of this transfer to the university field should be more fundamentally realised and translated in the institution’s processes of strategic planning of research.

It would certainly be desirable to have greater coordination and integration of the dispersed research activities in the institution. Various forms of research and expertise, including the sponsored consulting oriented work, should be more interconnected in a comprehensive research framework. Although individual scholarship still remains an important way of doing research in the social sciences, contemporary developments also necessitate large-scale international cooperation in thematic networks and centres of excellence. There are very valuable starting-points in international networking with similar institutions in the field of development studies, which yet need to be reinforced from a research perspective. It should be the ambition of the institution to become internationally recognised within the next ten years as a European centre of excellence in the domain of interdisciplinary research on development and to develop a record of research achievements and highly-ranked publications that meets international standards. In order to realise

this, some recommendations will be made regarding thematic concentration, research funding, research management and publication policies.

As has been said and applauded, the 'rosace' is a very valuable instrument of profiling and concentrating the thematic fields of activity of the institution in teaching and research. Yet, the 'rosace' is still very ambitious in scope. We believe – and several persons agreed to that during the discussions – that this 'rosace' is a good start, but needs further clarification and concentration. An institution of the scale of IUED is not in the position to develop excellence in interdisciplinary research in all fields of the 'rosace'. The ambition should be to become trend-setter in research and ideas on a more limited number of themes.

Finding the best ways of research funding is a particular challenge for any university institution today. Also in IUED it is perceived as a problematic issue. More specifically, the 'overhead' problem associated with project-oriented funding is rightly seen as eroding the general funding base of the institution and risks to inhibit the development of research at the institution. The institution should proactively investigate ways to get research more structurally funded, for example in the four-year contracts that will govern the funding of the institution from 2004 onwards. Also more active participation in the big research programmes of the Swiss research council and other funding agencies could be a valuable alternative, as well as active participation in European research programmes via international networks. In this perspective, the fact that IUED has obtained a large research project within the 'Pôle de recherche national Nord/Sud' on 'Partnerariat de recherche pour atténuer les syndromes du changement global', a project with a substantial long-term funding potential, is a very positive and promising result. Anyway, research as a core activity should not be dependent on short-term, fragmented project-funding, which effectively erodes the budgetary basis of the institution. The institution is particularly vulnerable to this 'overhead' problem by its small scale and its autonomous position. Stronger integration in the Swiss and Geneva university system for the research activity, of which RUIG already is a very good start, is necessary.

The institution does not have a clearly defined system of research management. We would like to suggest the installation of a real research committee within the institution. Following established good practice at many universities, this should actively monitor and manage the whole research activity at the institution. Such a committee could also take care of the internal quality control of research activities. Furthermore, it could develop systems of coaching of young researchers, for example in design of research proposals and publication behaviour. There is a growing body of knowledge and expertise on models of research management in universities of which the institution should avail itself, in order to make its own choices and develop its own policies in this regard.

The last item of strategic importance in the research field, is the development of a publication policy. As in many universities, publication is mainly left to the individual's choice and preference. The institution has a strong policy on publications, but this is limited exclusively to its own journals and publication channels. We would like to suggest that the institution develops a comprehensive

and coherent policy on publication of research results. More priority should be given in this to external publications, preferably in peer-reviewed international journals. Also the language issue should be addressed here, taking into account that languages other than French, such as English but also Spanish, are internationally important languages of scientific publication.

On the basis of the arguments in this section, we have some reservations on the question whether the research activities at IUED effectively meet international standards. We have doubts around the international quality of the research activities of IUED, also specifically regarding the issue of publication practices. But we take into account that IUED has only fairly recently moved from being an almost exclusively teaching institution to one where research takes up an important part of the work. Clearly, the outcomes of this recent move have not yet fully materialised. This is a point which needs critical follow-up by the institution and its board.

The actual formulation of the standard 3.01 is ambivalent, addressing two issues which may not be quite the same. Regarding IUED, we believe that on the first part of the standard – whether its “current research activities are in keeping with its strategic plan” – the conclusion is positive. On balance, we give a positive score on this standard, however with reservations regarding the second part of the standard, namely whether research at IUED already effectively meets international standards. The positive score is appropriate, since we have confidence that recent initiatives and currently implemented actions will result in perceptible improvement in the years to come.

Conclusion: standard 3.01 is met.

5.2 Integration of research in teaching

Standard 3.02 The institution ensures that current scientific findings are made use of in its teaching.

As an institution devoted to postgraduate and doctoral education, there are many opportunities in which new insights and research findings can be integrated in the educational programmes. Students in the DEA programme have to choose a theme for their thesis within the ‘rosace’ and insert themselves in this way in the preferential research themes of the institution. This is true for the doctoral students to an even higher degree. Seminars and workshops with students and researchers provide intensive opportunities for integration of research and teaching. The same is true for the integration of operational work and education. The fact that the IUED has a lot of practical experience and experiential knowledge in development operations of various kinds, provides an opportunity for cross-fertilisation as well. Thus, research, teaching and operations together form a pool of experience and knowledge, of which the synergies could be very valuable for the institution and its students.

Conclusion: standard 3.02 is met.

6 Academic staff

6.1 Staff recruitment

Standard 4.01 *The procedures for selecting, nominating and promoting academic staff are regulated and made public. For teaching staff, these procedures consider both teaching skills and scientific qualifications.*

The procedures for selecting, nominating and promoting academic staff members are well described in internal regulations, that are similar to those prevailing in universities.

Promotion of academic staff is rather limited due to budgetary restrictions. In the cases where promotion opportunities exist, both teaching and research merits are assessed and taken into account in the decision.

Conclusion: standard 4.01 is met.

6.2 Continuing education of academic staff

Standard 4.02 *The institution regulates the continuing education of its academic staff with respect to both teaching skills and research.*

As is stated in the self-evaluation report, IUED has no official policy nor a formal document on the continuing education and upgrading of its academic staff. Such activities do however exist, be it mainly on the initiative of individual staff members. There is a possibility of delegation or secondment of researchers and academic staff to partnering institutions for substantial periods of time, offering the opportunity to acquire new competences and experiences. Short operational missions also provide opportunities for on the field training. The staff evaluations occurring every four years on the occasion of contract renewal offer an opportunity to the institution to detect shortcomings and needs and to stimulate training and continuing education of academic personnel. We believe that even without the existence of formal policies in this regard, there is a supportive climate in the institution towards continuing education and training of academic personnel. However, this dispersed activities and initiatives should be integrated in comprehensive regulatory framework on continuing education of academic staff in order for the institution to be able to meet this standard. Confirmation has been given by the management that this will be done in the near future.

Although procedures of evaluation of academic staff by means of questionnaires filled in by students are not very transparent and, as has been said already, students would like to be more informed about the follow-up of these assessments, there are informal ways in which these assessments are being taken into account

in the allocation of teaching duties. This should be developed more systematically in the context of the establishment of an internal quality assurance system.

Conclusion: standard 4.02 is not yet met.

6.3 Upcoming staff development policies

Standard 4.03 *The institution pursues a long-range policy of promoting upcoming young academics.*

IUED is facing a period of high renewal of academic staff members. A number of initiatives have been already taken in this regard, such as the establishment of a working group dealing with staff recruitment.

The institution also invests a lot of energy in its young academic staff members. As far as possible within the budgetary and other constraints, young doctors get opportunities to move on to academic posts. Internal promotion is balanced with external recruitment of academic staff members.

Conclusion: standard 4.03 is met.

6.4 Career development

Standard 4.04 *The institution ensures that their academic staff has access to advice on career development.*

IUED follows closely the statutory regulations regarding academic personnel of the public sector. These regulations do not guarantee a career development plan, but the staff members are subject to four-yearly evaluations and contract renewal. In this context career development advice can be given to academic staff members where necessary.

Conclusion: standard 4.04 is met.

7 Administrative and technical staff

7.1 Staff recruitment

Standard 5.01 The procedures for selecting and promoting administrative and technical staff are regulated and made public.

As is evidenced in the self-evaluation report and the relevant documentation, IUED disposes of internal regulations dealing with selection and promotion of administrative and technical staff. Several initiatives have been taken in the course of past years to arrive at a classification of jobs in the institution. Administrative and technical staff members have the support of the educational activities of the institution as one of their core tasks.

From the discussion session with administrative and technical staff members, we have the impression that working conditions for these staff members are rather good and that they are satisfied with their working environment. Although increasing competition has introduced a more formal management system, a ‘convivial’ working climate still prevails.

Conclusion: standard 5.01 is met.

7.2 Continuing education

Standard 5.01 *The institution ensures that continuing education is available to administrative and technical staff.*

The institution has a budget and an internal regulation for the continuing education and training of its administrative and technical staff members. These opportunities are not yet fully utilised, mainly because of a lack of demand from individual staff members. There is room for promotion of this opportunity. Training activities that have been taking place mainly concern languages and information technologies.

Administrative and technical personnel are evaluated regularly. Career development advice mainly takes place within the context of these evaluations.

Conclusion: standard 5.02 is met.

8 Students

8.1 Admission

Standard 6.01 *The conditions and procedures for matriculation and admission to the institution’s range of programmes have been declared and justified.*

The criteria allowing candidate students to access the various programmes of IUED are well stated and published. Students do know the various entrance requirements. For example, the fact that the CED is open to students without a university degree, is well-known and much appreciated. There are no indications that specific entrance requirements, for example the fact that a number of years of professional experience is necessary for entering the DEA programme, pose problems.

Conclusion: standard 6.01 is met.

8.2 Gender equality

Standard 6.02 *Equality of men and women is assured.*

The IUED indeed has statistical records of its student population and is able to register and monitor the gender balance in the student intake. In general terms, there are some differences between programmes in gender balance, with women being in the minority, but there is no reason to assume that there should be a systematic gender imbalance due to factors within the reach of power of the institution. The only exception may be the doctoral programme, where the percentage of female students is very low. However, this is not an exceptional situation: in many European countries and universities the gender imbalance is marked in the doctoral phase. Yet, it can be recommended that the institution devotes more systematic attention to the gender inequality in the doctoral programme and develops policies to address this issue.

Conclusion: standard 6.02 is met.

8.3 Study achievement and success rates

Standard 6.03 *The institution observes the development of study achievements and the duration of study.*

The IUED is capable of recording and monitoring student achievement and success rates in its statistical database. The success rates are rather high, but one has to keep in mind that they refer to postgraduate programmes. Drop-out is rather

low. A more systematically conducted statistical analysis of progress and success rates of cohorts would be a very interesting tool to help the institution in monitoring more closely the efficiency of its educational programmes.

Conclusion: standard 6.03 is met.

8.4 Student/staff ratio

Standard 6.04 *The ratio of staff to students must be adequate to ensure that the educational goals and objectives of the institution and of its organisational units can be achieved.*

According to the explanation in the self-evaluation report and the relevant documentation, the staffing level for the various educational programmes seems to be sufficient. There are no problems in this regard reported by the institution, the teaching staff or the students. However, as already mentioned, we think that taking into account the constraints on staff recruitment and funding, the number of educational programmes offered today is very high. The institution is successful in managing the work load of the educational activities and the teaching staff assures that they have a high but manageable workload. Still, it would be advisable that the institution conducts an in-depth study of allocation of budgets and staff time to the various activities, to investigate whether there is not an imbalance between work load associated with the educational activities and work load in the research field. Strengthening the research activities of the institution will probably necessitate to re-evaluate the amount of staff time invested in educational programmes.

Density and quality of student guidance are not yet included in evaluations of the programmes by students. As already mentioned, students voiced some complaints on the level of student guidance, but it is uncertain whether this is due to insufficient student/staff ratios. Yet, it can be recommended that the institution includes these items in the student evaluation questionnaires.

Conclusion: standard 6.04 is met.

8.5 Student counselling and guidance

Standard 6.05 *The institution assures that potential and current students have access to counselling services and guidance to the studies. The institution implements measures which allow the students to assess their progression through the programme.*

There are some fragmented initiatives dealing occasionally with student counselling, advice, study finance and career opportunities at the IUED. It deserves recommendation that the institution organises these services on a more systematic and formal basis, indicating the opportunities and conditions for access of students to these services. As already mentioned, students did indicate a lack of

guidance and activities oriented to professional insertion in their educational programmes. The nomination of a member of the management of the institution for this aspect is an important first step towards improving this issue.

In reality, student counselling and guidance takes place mostly in the informal sphere of personal contact between students and teachers. Some students get more benefit from these informal opportunities than others. Being postgraduate students themselves, it can be expected that students are able to determine exactly what their own needs are and to actively find solutions for it, for example by seeking personal advice from teachers.

Still, the issue of guidance and coaching needs more attention at IUED, also looking at it from the perspective of the mission of the institution itself. A more active and conscious policy of coaching of students in their educational trajectory and, more specifically, the field work placement and professional insertion, could contribute significantly to the impact of the institution on the outside world. Student placement and coaching can become activities in which the networking of the institution materialises and by which IUED really influences policies and practices in the development field.

This issue is linked to the recommendation we made in another part of this report regarding a more active use of alumni. By actively coaching students in their professional development, opportunities are created to build a network of IUED-alumni, which could be very useful in other activities of the institution, for example projects and continuing education activities. Students and alumni are a valuable resource and knowledge base, an asset that the institution does not yet make use of to its full potential.

Conclusion: standard 6.05 is met.

9 Infrastructure

9.1 Adequate infrastructure

Standard 7.01 *The institution has an infrastructure adequate to fulfil its medium- and long-range objectives.*

As is illustrated in the self-evaluation report, IUED disposes of the necessary facilities to realise its educational and research objectives. We wish to highlight the library which is a model in several aspects.

The institution does face some temporary problems with regard to infrastructure. There is an acute need for office space and room for researchers employed on research projects. These temporary problems will be solved once the new building “le Tourelle” will be available later this year. We visited the new building under construction and we are convinced that it will be not merely a solution for the infrastructural needs of the institution, but will become a great asset for the institution.

Still, although the infrastructure needs are serious, we didn’t receive many specific complaints on particular problems or needs. The students expressed their desire to have a separate meeting room at their disposal, which will be available in the new building.

Conclusion: standard 7.01 is met.

10 Cooperation and positioning

10.1 National and international cooperation

Standard 8.01 *The institution has established successful relationships on a national and international level. It promotes cooperation with other academic institutions, the working environment and relevant stakeholders in the society.*

Networking and cooperation have already been mentioned as one of the strong points of IUED. IUED has strong local ties to the Geneva canton and community, has a well developed regional position and is developing its national profile. On the local/regional level the institution is well linked to the stimulating environment of Geneva, especially through the new instrument of RUIG which will become even more important in the future. In this regard, being in the fortunate position of being located physically near many international organisations and ngo’s in Geneva, IUED could benefit more from this environment, thus combining local with international functions.

The national level of networking and cooperation is already well developed, but deserves more specific attention in the near future, in the light of the federal position of the institution and the need of strengthening the links with the Swiss university system and the political structure in Berne in general. On the international level the range of contacts and cooperation with similar institutions in the field of development studies is impressive, but it is difficult to assess whether these refer to real cooperation activities in education and research or merely are cooperation on paper. The partnerships and cooperation with institutions in the South are particularly well developed.

Regarding the professional environment, the institution traditionally has well established relations with the official Swiss development cooperation agency and the other large ‘régisseurs’. Via various types of projects and forms of cooperation, IUED also has well developed links with other agencies in the development sector. There is sufficient evidence that the impact of the institution on development policies in various kinds of agencies and institutes is considerable, both through its projects and publications and through its expertise and networking. As already mentioned, the contacts with the private sector of banks, organisations and corporations that also are faced with developmental issues, are rather weak and need to be further developed. The institution seems to have a rather traditional view on the sector of development cooperation and refrains somehow from expanding its range of cooperation activities to other relevant sectors.

There is a need for increasing the visibility of the institution in various fields and sectors, such as the academic, the political and the economic sectors. The institution should take initiatives to have its voice heard outside the specific sector of development cooperation itself. Also students and alumni pleaded for a more active and conscious policy of marketing and profiling of the institution in various

social, political and economic fields where the institution potentially could have a huge impact on the development of viewpoints and policies.

Conclusion: standard 8.01 is met.

10.2 Positioning and profiling

We would like to take the opportunity to enlarge the point of cooperation and to discuss the broader issue of positioning and profiling the institution. With respect to this, we would like to attract the attention to three interrelated topics, which may deserve more critical examination by the institution. The first concerns the implications of the transfer of the institution from the federal ministry of development to the federal ministry of education and science. This transfer was not asked nor foreseen by the institution and came as a surprise, resulting from political choices of which the rationales still seem not to be very clear to the institution. Nevertheless, the impact of this on the positioning of IUED may be very big, transcending the purely budgetary aspects which seem to be dominant in the institution’s perception. IUED should reflect more in-depth on the significance and implications of this transfer for its own identity, its location in the institutional field of Switzerland, its position towards the federal centres of power and the balance with the Geneva location and roots.

Secondly and closely related to the first, is the topic of the profile of the IUED as a university institution. The management of the institution realises that its relocation has profound implications on its profile and mission. Entering the academic field more fully, will not only alter the funding mechanisms but will certainly more fundamentally change the identity and activities of the institution. This will produce new opportunities for the academic recognition of the institution’s educational programmes and research activities, but will confront the institution also with huge challenges and new demands. The opportunities of RUIG could contribute to the further development of the academic positioning of the institution, but seem not yet fully recognised as RUIG seems to be perceived mainly as a research funding mechanism. We have the impression that the strategic significance of this change in profile of IUED as a university institution has not yet been fully recognised by all involved and that the significance of this issue seems to be a bit underestimated. Some elements of the current shared identity of the institution as voiced during the site visit (e.g. the expression “IUED is not a faculty!”), may comprise in its positive significance a choice for interdisciplinarity, for policy- and practice-oriented research and for a commitment to a specific, ‘alternative’ approach to development, but may also point to a underlying widespread resistance against the academic culture prevailing at universities. So, IUED should define its own position in the academic field. This could imply in a stronger academic profile, but at the same time we feel that the institution should not necessarily try to conform to perceptions and expectations in its immediate academic environment, but has to engage with them in a constructive manner, in order to be able to maintain its special character. This might be the right way to define the institution as ‘*not being a faculty*’.

The third element to which we want to attract attention, is the socio-linguistic profile and positioning of IUED. Dealing with issues of globalisation itself, IUED should know that in the context of globalisation, language issues are not insignificant issues and transcend the borders of language itself. We have the impression that the institution has not yet fully come to terms with its socio-linguistic identity and the strategic issues related to that. Some see the institution's profile and aspirations clearly linked to its francophone roots and location and even attach a political significance to this in the context of globalisation. Others want to take benefit from increasing internationalisation and want to integrate IUED in an international field in which English is an important and, indeed, dominant language. Being a Swiss federal academic institution, depending from the political powers located in Berne, IUED also should question whether it should open itself more towards the German-speaking world. Generally, also this socio-linguistic issue needs to be more systematically addressed and strategic choices need to be made in this regard. Plans and activities of strategic significance, such as student recruitment, teaching staff selection, research planning, political networking, and choice of developing countries addressed in research and projects, are affected by options taken implicitly or explicitly by the institution in this strategic domain.