UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA
JOURNALISM
BACHELOR OF ARTS

RE/ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

3 May 2021, Zagreb

1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

The purpose of this report is to serve as a recommendation in the process of reaccreditation of Journalism BA program by University of Prishtina according to KAA standards. The aim of activities of the KAA in accreditation and reaccreditation processes are, among others, to open up the sector of higher education to new providers from Kosovo and abroad; to promote, improve and develop and ensure quality of the HE sectors; and to create transparency and comparability in the interest of providers, students and the labor market.

In preparing the report ET had taken into consideration the fact that KAA aims to encourage innovative forms and content in higher education and to ensure the comparability of degrees from Kosovo HEIs with those awarded by international programs.

Relevant for the context considered are also the challenges the higher education sector in Kosovo and globally are facing, as listed in KAA Accreditation manual: Diversity of higher education institutions, resulting primarily from the different types of education providers, growth of the private sector, changes in the traditional universities institutional profile, diversity of the study programs, existence of foreign organizations that manage study programs offered in different forms of transnational or cross-border education; The increasing complexity and size of higher education institutions in terms of the number of study programs and students, accompanied by certain difficulties, such as maintaining and even emphasizing performance in research, with increased demands on teaching and learning, difficulty in recruiting young researchers and teachers, the existence of wide disparities between the attractiveness of various study programs; the gap between the institutional and especially public requirements for institutional performance management and some inadequate management practices, having different sources: The harmonization of central and faculties/departments/unit leadership has difficulties in allocating resources and objectives achievement, negatively affecting the institutional quality framework; lack of institutional homogeneity has repercussions on the quality culture; Promoting of good practices from national and foreign education providers in order to increase academic performance; Participation in the European Higher Education Area and facing the globalization increases the competitive pressure on a more extensive higher education „market".

While this report is prepared to the best abilities of the expert in line with KAA principles and standards stipulated in the Accreditation Manual, the recommendations formulated in the report often aim beyond the scope of those standards and are therefore formulated as proposals for consideration by the management and faculty.

Date of site visit: 23 March, 2021

3

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3

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof.dr.sc. Andrew Goodspeed*
- *Prof.dr.sc. Majda Tafra-Vlahović*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA*
- *Shkeizen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*
- *Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*
- *Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*
- *Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

Sources of information for the Report:

KAA Accreditation Manual, July 2018
Self-evaluation report, Faculty of Philology,13 October 2020
Syllabi
MEST Administrative Instruction
Regulation on Academic Mobility
Regulation on the Establishment of Advisory Bodies
The decision to establish Radio UP
Memorandum of Cooperation with IMC
Staff CVs
List of published papers by academic staff
Scientific Project/Formal Co-operations/Signed Agreements at University Level
University of Prishtina web pages (uni-pr.edu)

Requested Documents

- Rule of Procedure for the relevant platform used by students (EMS or other)
- Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Prishtina
- Students' survey results for the program *Journalism* for the academic year 2019/20
- Regulation about the appeal of exam grades
- Quality management manual
- Academic Appeal Policy
- KPI for academic staff
- Last re-accreditation report by ET

4

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4

Received documents

- Code of Ethics Academic Staff – UOP
- External Evaluation Report for Department of German Language and Literature and Department of Journalism (2014)
- Guidelines for the Evaluation of Classes and the Use of their results
- KPI-UP, included Academic Staff
- Regulation for undergraduate studies . Bachelor
- Regulation for MS studies
- Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at UOP
- Regulation on Students Electronic Management System (SEMS)
- Results from graduated students' survey on Journalism Program
- Students Survey Results

Criteria used for program evaluation:

A. *The core principles of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area:*
1. *Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance;*
2. *Quality assurance responds to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programs and students;*
3. *Quality assurance supports the development of a quality culture;*
4. *Quality assurance takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society.*

B The following principles:

a. *Public accountability: Higher education institutions need to demonstrate the quality of the education to all stakeholders and public at large, through the following:*
- *Achieving quality levels that respond to the expectations of students and employers;*
- *Underlining higher education as a public good;*
- *Communicating consistent, clear and coherent information to the public at large about the real results obtained and the intentions of improvement.*
b. *European reference: the higher education system and institutions in*

5

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5

Kosovo belong to the European Higher Education Area and ensure quality levels in line with and competitive at the European and international level. For this purpose, both the recognized accreditation providers, as well as higher education institutions commit to benchmark their institutional processes against comparable institutions at international level;

c. *Institutional responsibility: the responsibility for and the management of quality lie with each higher education provider, in accordance to institutional autonomy;*

d. *Improving quality: quality is not an end in itself. Continuous improvement and institutional management of quality is the primary objective of the external evaluations;*

e. *Fitness for purpose: quality assurance process should be defined and designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them;*

f. *Institutional diversity: diversity of institutions, their mission and goals is respected and encouraged by external quality assurance;*

g. *Transparency: a key concept helping to build mutual trust and better recognition of qualifications, programs and other provision. At systemic level, transparency does not only increase the trust in the quality assurance structures operations, but also in the education itself. Institutionally, transparency encourages engagement of the entire academic community and development of quality culture.*

h. *Focus on results: learning outcomes and performance in research lie at the core of quality assurance. External quality assurance imply that higher education institutions demonstrate their results and performance in learning and in research as well as their correspondence with the actual reality of the institution, including verification of student activity in relation to the stated standards;*

i. *Stakeholder engagement: internal stakeholders should develop and implement quality assurance policies through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders;*

j. *Quality enhancement: continuous improvement of quality and institutional management is the primary objective of the external evaluation. Every self-evaluation document must present the particularities of quality culture across the higher education institution and ensure the continuous performance improvement.*

6

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6

1.2. Site visit schedule

23rd March

09.00 – 09.40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the program is integrated – Joint session
09.45 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff - Joint session
10:30 – 11:15	Lunch break
11:15 – 12.15	Meeting with the heads of the study program
12:20 – 13:00	Meeting with teaching staff
13:05 – 13:45	Meeting with students
13:50 – 14:30	Meeting with Graduates
14:35 – 15:15	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
15:20 – 15:30	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
15:30 – 15:40	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

No	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs		
1	Journalism, BA (Reaccreditation)	Prof. Dr. Majda Tafra-Vlahović	Muhamet Jahiri	Gëzim Qerimi	Remzije Shahini Hoxhaj

7

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7

1.3 A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

As a result of self-evaluation process for the purpose of reaccreditation of six BA programs and three MA programs in the academic year 2020/21 Faculty of Philology has prepared a detailed self-evaluation report (SER) which includes also self-evaluation report on here relevant program Journalism BA (180 ECTS). The documentation provided by the Faculty of Philology has been prepared in compliance with the KAA checklist, UP self-evaluation guidelines and other legal documents for the general study programs. Attached to SER were a syllabus model, CV, a questionnaire, a contract, an ECTS table, a diploma supplement, a table for international research projects as well as the table of the recommendations from the last reaccreditation procedure.

The Faculty of Philology has been established based on the Law for the establishment of the Faculty of Philology in Prishtina in 1988. The institution has a long tradition and experience since the sixties within the high education than based in the Faculty of Philosophy of Pristina. It is rightly considered to have given a meaning and significance to the high education history of Kosovo in Albanian language, to its very distinct segments. More detailed history is provided in the SER. What is especially relevant for this expert report is its prominent place within the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" (UP), the public university of high reputation and distinct role in the social fabric of the young Kosovo state.

The Faculty of Philology operates within the framework of the University of Prishtina as an academic unit which is focused on providing study programs in the field of philological sciences starting from the study of national sciences (Albanian language, literature and culture), teaching and studying foreign languages, literatures and cultures (English, German, French, Italian, Turkish, Arabic, Persian and Croatian) as well as studying journalism and communication sciences. The mission and objectives of the Faculty of Philology are in compliance with the ones determined by the UP and all the programs offered by the Faculty of Philology have been drafted based on UP leadership principles, important strategic documents and current regulations.

In the vision of University of Prishtina as an institution of higher education, known globally for its professionalism, integrity, quality teaching and research, in line with the needs of the economy and market, the commitment is stipulated to set and maintain quality standards, supporting mobility and academic career development for staff and students, increasing the number of partners and joining the European Higher Education Network. Both, the mission and the vision, focus on the quality and devotion to student development and organizational commitment to social responsibility of this central education institution in the Republic of Kosovo. As an evidence of a great pride of its faculty, staff, alumna and students of a substantial recognition of the university`s education and social role, both in national and international terms, they can now add the recent election of Dr. Vjosa Osmani, a teacher at the International Department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Prishtina, who has been elected President of the Republic of Kosovo.

8

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8

The management activity and strategic planning of the Faculty of Philology is in full accordance with the main issues defined by the Strategic Plan of the University of Prishtina. The basic principles of this institution are mainly supported in the development of young people in the field of human and philological sciences, as well as the development of professionals (lecturers of Albanian and foreign languages, translators / interpreters and philologists) in various scientific disciplines, journalism included, for the needs of society and its institutions.

Particularly relevant for this expert review on Journalism B.A. program is the fact that after initially suspending program Journalism and Public Relations, MA (120 ECTS) due to the lack of qualified faculty, in 2019 the Faculty of Philology has been accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) with four more MA degree programs: Journalism and Public Relations (120 ECTS), included. This is a strong evidence in favor of fast development of young academic staff and adequate institutional support in the relatively recently fully scientifically acknowledged areas of communication science: journalism and particularly public relations. (As a comparison these areas have only been relatively recently recognized as separate branches within the area of communication sciences in the Croatian high education and scientific research context.)

Consequently, it is important and in this context logically relevant, that both communication studies programs, at this stage, journalism and public relations, have been set up and developed within the Faculty of Philology, which has acquired a reputation of an intellectual center of the University of Prishtina as stipulated in SER, committed to Albanian studies and languages, literature and the most world-known cultures with a focus on disciplinary and interdisciplinary creative rigor, as well as ethical dedication to issues of social justice and global citizenship. The Faculty has been contributing substantially to the promotion of Albanian culture outside the Albanian hemisphere as well as in building cooperation and communication with the higher educational, scientific and cultural institutions in the region and the world which led to interest for studying in the faculty. The opening of Kosovo towards other countries and foreign investments in the country constitutes another reason for this increase of interest.

This is particularly relevant for communication studies which often reside in very different academic set ups as a strategic beginning on the road to self-sustainable academic, both educational and research units within central public university settings. This faculty with its strong national and global orientation can give the needed adequate support to the necessary development of communication and information studies in future, and that development, as world data indicate, is bound to happen in Kosovo, probably in a much faster manner, that in some neighboring countries.

9

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9

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

Regarding this area, SER offers short descriptions of standards and performance indicators according to applied general areas as stipulated in KAA Accreditation Manual adding the self-administered SWOT analysis which is a pattern used throughout the SER. This is helpful in further investigation by the ET, particularly during Panel discussion, but also tends to sometimes direct the analysis on issues the importance of which does not necessarily comply with the ET primary interests.

When considering the program curriculum it does display consistency with the mission. While the mission statement as indicated in the SER and confirmed by the management during the site visit fully complies with the mission of the University of Prishtina, publicly available, and also generic so as to cover the needs of this central public high education institution, rather specific, communication studies relevant DOJ mission, vision, values and related organizational culture strategic direction lacking currently, might be considered for future elaboration. As understood during the Panel discussion, the challenge of the program is to satisfy all the potential needs for media specialists, needs which, as it has been particularly pointed out, continue to grow. Since any mission is a general statement of purpose, this fact might be reflected in it.

Particularly relevant would be the process of the development of these within the education process itself, involving various stakeholder groups, particularly students, as it might prove instrumental in further awareness raising about the overall crucial importance of the communication expertise in the social sphere of the Kosovo society.

As it can be deducted from the syllabi presented, the Journalism programs aims at developing critical thinking and analytical skills as basic competences, focusing on practical implications for various professions in the media, journalists and beyond. Having set up similar BA programs on the high education institutions this expert is familiar with the quantity of efforts needed to set up such a program with high outcome ambitions and limited sources, human and beyond. Considering all that, and also the fact that the time since the first accreditation has also been a learning process for academic and administrative staff of DOJ, it can be concluded that their achievements so far are successful.

So as to the program complying with the National Qualifications Framework (and the ERASMUS Subject Area Code) and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, although this compliance is clearly indicated as an achievement in the SER and as the subject was on table during the Panel discussion, apart from reference to the level 6 which includes preparation of students in the field of media and communication, this might need further elaboration as the specialization in media and communication is a wide area that includes an array of different professions. Also, connecting program outcomes to the relevant descriptors should be considered.

10

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10

Regarding preparation for the further respective study and the didactic methods included in the program it is stated in SER as an achievement, not fully clarified how can be achieved. Theoretically, these students should be able to continue their studies on an MA level and later on PHD level and the BA level should be didactically and methodologically equipped to enable this. This expert is not fully convinced this is the case, but, again, based on a long and deep experience with the challenges involved in linking BA level in journalism and communication fields, it can be understood that this is a work in progress. Not only is the area of communication science on MA and PhD level so flexible concept that a mentor often ends up with lawyers, social pedagogues and preschool teachers as master and doctor candidates with no previous knowledge of communication whatsoever, but we have to come to terms with the fact that communication science is so vague a concept in pedagogical and methodological sense, a field some other professional feels can easily be mastered, that it is understandable how difficult it is to create this link to future academic needs even in a program on paper, let alone in practice.

It is difficult if not impossible to teach journalism to future journalists and media specialists unless one is a journalist him/herself. It is a very specific professional requirement and shared attitude with the teachers of the Department of Journalism (DJ) in the panel discussion. Journalists are practitioners, not academics. Not in many professions you can be both academic and practitioner at the same time. In journalism and communication sciences in a high education institution, it is a must. That is why it is worth considering how to improve the academic element if for no other reason, then to ensure further development of communication science in Kosovo academic environment. The expert was sharing these challenges as an author of newly accredited BA and MA programs in five programs of media/journalism/public relations/communication, and is aware of the magnitude of these challenges.

In addition, so as to methodological and didactic aspects area for improvement, it needs to be clarified how do the assessment methods and passing criteria take into consideration online learning which, as we have discussed during the visit has become the common alternative during the ongoing pandemic crisis. As it has been experienced by many institutions of high education worldwide, this limitation of face-to-face teaching process has also enabled development of various alternatives to classic teaching, an opportunity which needs to be recognized also on program and syllabi level.

The fact that regulations and other documents related to the mission, objectives and program administration are accessible where needed is not only recognized as one of the strengths of the program in SWOT analysis but has also been evidenced and illustrated in documentation and meetings held with teachers and students, as well as management. Therefore, program topics on administration, program quality assurance, and student-teacher two-way communication in the context of academic rights and duties, the promotion of the concept of justice for certain social rights groups, were evidenced. It has been notified, though,

11

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11

that currently there is no appointed ombudsperson among the faculty and no adjustment policy either in a form of policy or documented practice.

Related to the involvement of students in the research processes, linking teaching to research, and providing links to future academic development of students, clear evidence of a strategic concept of academic development would need to be considered in concrete terms beyond institutional generic strategic documents. The practice here is more elaborate than the strategic document which is often the case.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X	
Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

12

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12

1. *Consider preparing specific, communication studies relevant DJ mission, vision, values and related organizational culture strategic involving major stakeholder groups, particularly students.*
2. *Consider defining Journalism program/DJ mission at the descriptive levels of the European Framework of Qualification.*
3. *Consider acquiring a well-defined holistic consistent didactic and research concept on program and syllabi levels as well as initiating research on the role of communication expertise in the social sphere of the Kosovo society and teaching and research processes links realized and evidenced in policy and strategic documents.*
4. *Consider including in the relevant strategic documents and syllabi clarification how do the assessment methods and passing criteria take into consideration online learning and stipulate plans for its further development.*
5. *Consider setting up at the policy level the appointment of an ombudsperson among the faculty to deal with the rights of students, various social groups included, and pursue on a policy level the adjustment procedures for students in any temporary or constant need of adjustment. Consider on a policy level including Albanian sign language via hiring professional interpreters for students with hearing difficulties.*

2.2. Quality management

The quality evaluation oft the Journalism program is documented in SER to be based on a number of regulations at the UP level, the central one being the *Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation* which defines the role and responsibility of the academic and organizational units for the realization of the quality assurance and evaluation activities. It clearly stipulates in the article one that the mechanisms and processes defined in the Regulation align the University of Prishtinawith ENQA's standards for quality assurance and evaluation. This testifies in favor of UP general commitment to pursue European standards in quality management.

This document is a legal and coordination framework of various ongoing evaluation activities like assessment of the quality of teaching, evaluation of student services, evaluation of scientific activities, of learning resources, international cooperation and others. While it is not fully described how all these evaluations are actually implemented at the university level and whether an adequate integration into overall planning and management both on university and departmental level is efficient and realistic, taking into consideration quite a substantial number of evaluation activities, it, nevertheless, gives evidence of UP commitment to creating an evaluation based organizational culture. This is an achievement in itself considering the historical circumstances of high education and the relatively young age of Kosovo public

13

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13

sector, high education included. Taking the liberty of personal remarks based on the (journalist) experience and experience in education system, this expert highly appreciates these commitments. Higher transparency in publishing some of those and using as an engagement tool among stakeholders, students included, might add value to the whole process, particularly if the „stories" about improvements based on the evaluation results were published.

The Central Quality Assurance and Evaluation Commission at the UP level guides the assessment of the evaluation activities in which various status groups are taking part. Both Quality Assurance Central Committee and Assessment at Rectorate develop a five-year plan on which annual action plans are developed including evaluation activities of academic units/faculties/departments. The assessments are overviews of quality issues for specific programs and it is the obligation of the Dean of each department/academic unit, in this case, the Faculty of Philology, to ensure that the academic development coordinator performs in line with stipulated realization of the assessments at UP and Faculty level. The Dean should then, based on the results of these various evaluations, develop a plan that would address necessary improvements and include needed measures in planning and budgeting.

As stated in SER, electronic questionnaires for students are prepared for each academic year, through which the quality, complaints, suggestions or requests of students and the performance of the academic staff are measured. The UP management is in charge of the process and since two years ago the Office of Academic Development of the UP started to send the collected data to the relevant academic units and to the deans of the respective faculty. Respective data are then discussed with the academic staff according to the procedures and steps provided in the Rules of Procedure, Quality Assurance and Assessment at UP to be used for continuous development.

The tasks in the process and follow up actions are distributed and monitored. Moreover, the reports are sent to program administrators for each course delivery and to the teachers. It is then in their area of expertise to consider inputs and potential adjustments. Adequate adjustments, where feasible, are made in teaching operational plans and teachers consider the inputs at the end of each semester. As already noted, the transparency and publication of those relevant data as well as actions taken based on them, would improve the process.

That, of course, does not concern the student evaluation, where it is up to the teachers to launch a discussion with students and decide on the level of sincere and open exchange of arguments. One of the survey instruments used is the course evaluation, which students fill out and are made available to the teachers and responsible persons. There is a discussion of the evaluation results with the students as it was confirmed by the teachers and students in the panel. DOJ is educating future and current journalists, and they, by default, aim at transparency and open exchange. From SER, the available documents and particularly from the discussion with teachers and students, it is clear that the quality dialogue nurtured throughout the educational process and also present in evaluation results discussions is of the adequate level.

14

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14

These are journalists, and by definition, they are used not only to critical thinking but also to positive criticism and everything that leads to improvement. As a rule, journalists usually welcome the objections to their work as that leads to improvement and consequently, the impression is that this applies to journalism classroom too. The evidence is also the number of 71 percent of all JD graduates who participated in the research which is a very high participation. The teachers in general know all too well how it is difficult to get students involved in these evaluations since they do not see the direct benefit for themselves and it just might be that because of the specific culture of the professions this is among the highest scores at UP. As is employability of journalists in the public and private media in Kosovo for that matter. In addition to the high involvement in the media there is also an advantage of Media lab studio and UP radio which enable practical workshops for students for various journalistic practice.

As stated in SER for employment data, statistics are provided, while in terms of employment and professional rankings, graduate students have managed to move to different managerial levels (editor, editor-in-chief, publisher). Some of the graduates have achieved success in teaching (professors, assistants). Student success is best seen in the job market where e.g. with the establishment of an outlet T7, out of 30 accepted journalists, 27 are current students or graduates from the DJ from an exceeded number of 400 applicants. Graduates of the Department of Journalism are apparently highly valued in ever expanding media market of Kosovo.

SWOT analysis for quality management recognizes the strengths in this extended employability of graduates from the Department of Journalism. shown to be of high level quality. Also, a number of graduate students have won various scholarships to continue their studies at various universities in Europe and beyond. They are not only getting jobs in the media or marketing and advertising organizations but also in higher education institutions in private sector. In addition, one of the strengths that comes out in the quality contexts is that the DJ is one of the few at the level of UP that publishes a scientific /research journal, which is an achievement since journalism and related fields of public relations are relatively new in terms of academic and research context and not many reputable journals exist on universities educating journalists.

DJ, as shown by the analysis of the documents and in the discussions with teachers and stakeholders recognizes the opportunity in further expanding the cooperation ,not only with media market, but also the network of Universities of Communication Sciences and collaboration with journalist community organizations. Sky is the limit there, even despite threats related to Bologna charter, recognition of journals on international platforms, and other high education problems primarily related to the political context of affirmation of Republic of Kosovo in EU context. Considering these obstacles as a context, the quality management complies with the standards.

15

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15

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (e.g. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

16

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16

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Numerous evaluations performed on the UP level as well as the Faculty and departmental level might benefit from being publicized in the adequate forms that would contribute not only to the transparency of the process and thus to the overall organizational open culture, but also to their engagement quality.*

2. *Department of Journalism teachers might consider adding to regular surveys among students more substantial focus groups and other qualitative forms which might add value to the research capacities of both teachers and students. If that is not possible, then maybe use the results as a starting point for a qualitative assessment that might bring some fresh ideas about improving the effectiveness of the teaching process. This is actually already taking place in many courses.*

2.3. Academic staff

The SER the section on Academic staff starts with the table listing names, academic titles and years of title accreditations for all professors, with CVs as evidence attached separately. The academic staff are mainly assistant professors, teaching assistants and part-time assistants, majority of them holding PhD and four of them holding MA .(For further use the table would need some refinement as the columns are not titled and the reader needs to logically assume their functions),

By collaborations with guest lecturers and media industry experts from various media areas, in addition to the increased employment of regular teachers, the DJ has managed to have six PhD as full time employed which satisfies and exceeds the standards 3.4. and 3.5 for the ratio of fully employed for each student groups and every 60 ECTS. That ratio does not compromise the quality of student learning experience and contributes to dynamics and flexibility of the teaching process.

Staff are appointed and ranked following the regulated and determined education, scientific, research and service criteria. Their development aiming to strengthen their academic capacities, both full-time and part-time academics, is based on relevant training opportunities (two compulsory workshops as a minimum requirement) through Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) of UP, but also other means. These are young and dynamic teachers who have institutional support in their ongoing development and academic promotion within the possibilities at the disposal of UP. In addition, they have access to various opportunities within ERASMUS and other programs that enabled several of them to

17

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17

get extra training, in national and international institutions. While this might be the case also for other departments in the academic unit (Philological faculty), what seems to be the specific advantage of the DJ is the evident strong involvement with various stakeholders in the dynamic media market of Kosovo, which, as they metaphorically put it during the panel discussion, they seem to "own". This is the reference to high employability of their graduates and particularly to the membership in the advisory body where stakeholders from the media sector engage in consultations on potential improvements of the program of educating future journalists who will fit the needs of the market.

As mentioned before, being not only academics but also journalists themselves (only four of the teachers on the list are not journalists) the teachers engage in a dynamic adaptation of the teaching process more easily in this area than it might be in some other areas of teaching. This expert might have additional recommendations how this interaction with real life of the students might be improved, but it might just be the case that this is already being done as the impression is that there is a high level of flexibility regarding the student needs and much of it is within the range of authority of individual teachers who seem to share the enthusiasm of dedicated and committed staff to teaching without evidence of teacher fatigue..

In addition to regular evaluations and peer observations they also engage in anonymous surveys for all teachers on a voluntary basis, but it turns out in the discussion that they all engage in this additional evaluation to get extra inputs for necessary changes and some valuable inputs from students and peers.

The general observation based on the SER and formal staff profiles submitted prior to the review but even more on the panel discussion is that this academic staff delivers high level student learning experience through relevant programs and curricula expanding on the industry experience and collaboration with media experts which then enable students to meet the needs of the media market and Kosovo society as professional journalists and citizens.

In order to adapt the teaching content, particularly during the online teaching that has been going on now for the second academic year, the teachers of the DJ regularly meet on weekly bases to adjust the teaching and learning processes and avoid potential overlapping of various items and activities. The responsibilities range from regular teaching, material design and student weekly consultations as an obligation to various departmental and academic unit and university events.

Their research activities, as it is often the case, are directly related to opportunities to develop beyond already mentioned training and development opportunities in the sense of expansion to international conferences and reviews. The need for additional support probably, on the part of the UP, is recognized as a weakness in SER and that is often the case in public universities that depend on the state budget and where education budgets are not necessarily priorities, particularly in high education. Nevertheless, their main strengths, as stated in SER, are trained academic staff and their experience in the professional field and

18

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18

publication of scientific articles in various international journals indexed in SCOPUS, EBSCO, etc. They state as their priority the inclusion of professors who have completed doctoral studies at renowned universities worldwide. That is also the opportunity for further development of teachers whose main advantage for this very specific academic area remain their both academic and practical background and real-world engagement. That is the only way as this area is changing so rapidly and, in the pace, not foreseen or experienced, that only teachers willing to adapt, change and learn on a daily basis are able to take over the responsible duties of educating future media professionals.

Standard	Compliance	
	YES	*NO*
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	

19

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19

Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	n.a.	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *In line with the commitment for further improvement of relations of academic staff with professionals in media a project based student work implemented in media and graded by juries consisting of media professionals and academic staff is recommended.*

2. *Consider extending support to academic staff for scientific research, both financial and logistic in line with the intention to liaise with scientific circles in foreign countries particularly neighboring countries where public universities offer programs on journalism.*

3. *Consider developing relevant KPIs for teaching activities based on discussions with stakeholders and students which would further improve monitoring, evaluation and improvement of the teaching process.*

20

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20

2.4. Educational process content

Reviewing the program content on the basis of SER, syllabi presented and discussions with teachers and students, has been somewhat challenging. All the material shared with this expert, including the one additionally requested, the detailed and very precise description of compliance with each standard, all syllabi included and the SWOT analysis, which is present throughout SER, require a closer look that only presence in the classroom could satisfy. The main reason is that all those who face challenges of teaching on a daily basis know all too well that the proper reality check of any program, regardless how well it has been set up on the paper is in the class where, in addition, in a dynamic interaction with students, innovative ideas and new opportunities for an education process arise.

If for any area, this might be so in the case of educating future journalists, the strategic high education direction which seems to get a new initiative as the time goes by, despite all the foreseen dark perspectives that speak of the death of journalism and rise of PR. There is a new wave of interest of media consumers, new explosion of media, technology has enabled billions of people to practice journalism should they decide so, and publish immediately, all this is definitely threatening the profession but also giving rise to the new journalism. The program is to take into account the fact that journalism education is indeed on the increase, despite the challenges that it is facing.

It is not easy to predict what will happen with the media in Kosovo in ten years or so, but as things stand now, the statement in the SWOT analysis of a "unique program in Kosovo, attractive to young people, suitable for the needs of the market" apparently stands, as the majority of graduates immediately get a job during the graduation if not also during the studies and it seems that the market cannot get enough of graduated journalists from the University of Pristina that evidently carries the reputation of a journalist education leader in the country. After all, as they proudly point out, they have no competition in the public sector and apparently do not consider future programs in the private sector a competition, maybe also because their graduate seem run the show there too.

At a glance, it is a good program covering practically all aspects and most probably including the development of journalism related to the technology advancement – all version of what is known as digital journalism – in the overall studies. That, however, is an assumption, and it seems this might be a slightly more traditional approach because it is a university program, because it also must provide the mobility to further education (in this case probably the Public Relation Masters), because, rightly so, the journalism which will survive the crisis requires a foundation on which, according to syllabi, individual teachers built a structure of skills and competencies that are currently in need of skilled media experts. Since they do operate a number of years and already generations graduated and have been employed, this is apparently a realistic and practical approach.

21

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21

The program is also in line with the requirements and challenges posed to journalism education nowadays because they need to adapt to specialized knowledge and skills acquisition. We are actually speaking of a new media literacy not only on the level of university studies but also the practical one on the level of primary school, literacies that would reflect a fast-changing social, political, economic and technological changes. That brings new content on board for both working journalists and journalists to be – data manipulation, science communication, civic education, sustainability communication and the role of journalists in pursuing the sustainability agenda, political journalism particularly relevant in the context of Kosovo public sector, let alone sports journalism, affirmation of cultural heritage of the nation and orientation on European media scene. Such a role of journalism, incorporating different strands of knowledge, is clearly recognized globally, in EU, beyond the United States of America (USA) as it has been particularly pointed out in a model of journalist education program by UNESCO widely distributed to developing nation in the previous decade. As shown by the document which was a result of very wide consultations and expertise, genuine university training in journalism is not only a practice within the rubric of academic freedom, but it should also (and often does) operate to promote freedom of expression rights and access to journalistic skills and platforms to gain such rights. Plus, there is another freedom related to journalism education, the freedom to use the skill acquired not only in media practice but also transferred to other fields. This type of program indeed provides learning of high-level information to be used widely.

The program follows the model of qualification objectives including subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects and disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. Focus is also on the ability to obtain adequate employment, contributing to civil society not neglecting the development of student personality. Both theoretical and practical parts are represented in major subject areas usually found in foreign journalistic education programs., The idea is that students develop the necessary skills in two of the core competencies and develop the journalist personality which would enable them to get the employment in Kosovo media market and beyond. This program orientation is in line with another trend in journalist education, the one towards greater understanding of the conditions under which journalism education can be effective. Although majority of them currently found jobs in Kosovo media market, since it seems to be the main objective of this program, as we are facing the growth of global journalism education, it can be assumed that this program will also attract private sector which needs professionals of media and communication expertise to be engaged in wider area of stakeholder relationship building, public affairs and stakeholder engagement.

Media boom creates increase in private media demand for formal journalism education and it might just be that this is already happening in Kosovo, as all the students of journalism in UP get employment and the demand is still there. Teachers in the panel and

22

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22

students claim that here is no saturation of the market yet.

As they claim to be the only program in Kosovo, and apparently there will be others, that fact alone requires special attention on the quality and readiness to change, update, upgrade and adapt, even if the strict rules of accreditation and formal processes in public university do not necessarily encourage such flexibility. It should not be forgotten that there is a social value to this education, that the goals of the journalism education, no matter who provides it, public or private sector, is not only about empowering the students but extending the social responsibility of the education institution to deliver positive social impact on the society in general. Seems the fact that the quality of journalism education is supposed to have an impact on the quality of citizenship and society and that journalism education educates not only practitioners, but the public as well, is well recognized in Kosovo society. That also increases the responsibility of teachers who educate future journalist: not only to serve media but to extend their influence to serving the general public and easing general media literacy in the Kosovo society.

In that sense they seem to be on the track of globally proclaimed by exerts Principles of Journalism Education that claim journalism education provides the foundation as theory, research, and training for the effective and responsible practice of journalism. Journalism education is defined in different ways but at the foundation is the study of all types of journalism which should serve the public in many important ways. It can only do so if its practitioners have mastered an increasingly complex body of knowledge and specialized skills. Above all, to be a responsible journalist means practicing an informed ethical commitment to the public. This commitment must include an understanding and deep appreciation for the role that journalism plays in the formation, enhancement and perpetuation of an informed society. The Principles are unequivocal in stressing that 'at the heart of journalism education is a balance of conceptual, philosophical and skills-based content.''

While it is also interdisciplinary, journalism education is an academic field in its own right with a distinctive body of knowledge and theory. In addition the principles highlight that journalism educator should be a blend of academic and practitioner and that it is important that educators have experience working as a journalist. It is the impression of this ET that the team of teachers in DOJ is well aware of this extended risibility that moves far beyond practical competencies they need to build in their students.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No

23

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23

Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	n.a.	
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	X	
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	X	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	X	

24

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24

Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	X	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	X	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	X	
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Consider content on social media, investigative journalism and digital journalism*
2. *UP should consider extending support regarding classrooms and teaching equipment through projects and social impact investment initiatives*
3. *Since there is Public Relations MA continuation of this BA program it might be worth considering (in future) strengthening PR academic component with separate electives on organizational communication, crisis management and social responsibility*

2.5. Students

Regarding admission to the program, the procedures of UP are strictly applied in a consistent and fair manner to all students. There is a publicly announced competition for student admission opened by the UP and it relies on evaluating previous student admission processes and the graduation reports, after evaluating the demand for studying at the DJ and based on the quotas given by UP. Usually, it is the Rectorate that announces the competition and conditions for admission of prospective students. The appropriate admission criteria for applicants defined

25

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25

by UP are published and accessible publicly so that all students get a fair chance to apply. to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process. The transfer of students between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is regulated at the UP level and specific Regulation applied which is made publicly known on the website of the UP and Faculty of Philology.

So far, the DJ has decided on a yearly basis to inscribe 150 students maximum for Bachelor level studies. It is not clear whether following this re-accreditation the DJ might consider increasing this number so the same number will be recommended by ET, subject to change depending on the comments received on ET report by the DOJ staff and faculty.

Students are regularly evaluated through mechanisms based on Bologna charter and students know on time what to expect as the teachers distribute subject syllabi at the beginning of the semester with explanations of assessment forms. All rights and obligations of students are publicly available.

As principles of interactive and experiential learning are applied, and particularly because of the specific requirements of teaching topics and subjects in the journalism area, the constant evaluation throughout the schooling semester is taking place in order to receive finally 180 ECTS, based on distribution of working hours related to ECTS equivalent value for the courses in question. Many students with distinguished results get scholarships and other forms of recognition at the university level. The UP in such cases has relevant regulations, such as exemption regulations for various social categories, as well as ones through the Career Development Centre which operates at the level of the University.

Regarding evaluation, an Electronic Management System for Students (SEMS) has been established by UP and it enables supply of electronic documents, following up and monitoring grades and attendance. Plan was to use a corresponding system based on RFID ID cards where students and teachers would log in when entering the room, so that automatic recording of students' attendance would be made in the system, but in the current situation of mainly online learning environment, teachers needed to come up with other systems of notifying the attendance and relating it to the official system. Generally, the DJ being connected to digital technologies, it could be concluded that the university level applied, and developed IT based systems and it satisfies the needs for student evaluation and program application in general. As it is usually the case, there are three deadlines for exams as stipulated in the UP Statute, but the DOJ displays flexibility in meeting specific requirements of the students, or any other extra circumstances to assist them in catching up with their in-class obligations. To determine academic achievement, teachers use tests, exams, seminars, groups and individual projects and other flexible forms of assessment in the journalist education. The flexibility of the treatment of students is not only seen in extra assessment in an addition to examinations, but also in additional possibility of exam in front of a commission, if a student has had a complaint or was not able to pass in regular deadlines. In practice this happens rarely.

As it has been already pointed out in the area on quality of this report, the DJ monitors the average achievements of students in all three levels/ years and assess the quality debating

26

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26

on the indicators applied and possible actions for improvements. With the administration, the department monitors the passing and performance of student obligations by level.

So as to the fraud, plagiarism, and offenses, these are dealt with in the syllabi and generally debated particularly in relation to the content of ethics in journalism, but, on the level of UP there is still no adequate check for plagiarism in submitted student papers, diploma thesis at etc. It is highly recommended that such a system be introduced on a UP kevel so that teachers can use it when assessing student work and that it is widely known that it exists in order to discourage any attempts of plagiarism and fraudulent student behavior.

Statute, Regulations and Code of Ethics of UP also regulate the ethics related issues for the DJ and students are made aware of their rights and obligations, and, when needed, they can use legal opportunities for academic appeals, as, for example, already mentioned opportunity to pass a certain examination before the members of the special committee.

In journalism education, maybe more than in the other areas, the content is subject to constant changes, so the teachers update the materials and integrate them in ESMS, using extensively also social media to getting constant communication with the students. This communication is very dynamic, and frequent, not only based on the rules and regulations which means official consultation schedule, e-mails etc. that require minimum of those to be implemented on the UP, but also on the less formal and informal basis. These teachers are at the disposal of students even more than the standard requires, and this is particularly based on the discussions this expert had with the three students who gave a number of illustrations and enthusiastic appraisal to accessibility of the teachers and their readiness to support student development in all circumstances even the recent once that are very demanding for teachers too.

Regarding competencies and degrees/certificates received outside Kosovo, The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is to decide about recognition and classification of these while the academic competence is evaluated by the Senate of the UP based on the decision of the Faculty Councils which makes a decision assessing report by the DJ appointed commission. It is very good that this is strictly regulated as it might be expected with the increased mobility that the number of such cases will increase in future.

Course syllabi establish regular evaluations of student results and the DOJ has set up a standard that a large portion of the grade would be obtained through research and theoretical work which standard is applied and adapted to a specific syllabi depending on the content as some courses are more theoretic than the others.

In the SWOT analysis in SER one of the advantages in the area of student rights is student participation at the Faculty Council and in Students' Parliament which provides them with sufficient representation in university decision making. In addition, the UP has developed a special office for career development which helps the students orient themselves more easily in the labor market. This is, as students discussed with ET extensively, only one element in a number of initiatives by individual teachers who are also rooted in Kosovo media scene and use their networks to help students find jobs and progress on the media market.

27

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27

DJ seems to dominate with its graduates the ever expanding Kosovo media market and despite the fact that the competition in education of journalist area has been pointed out in the SWOT as a threat, in discussions such a threat has been rejected, mostly, because, as both students and teachers claim, of a high quality of this program that enables full employability of graduates without additional major on the job training.

One of the weaknesses selected was low level of English and apparently some measures have already been taken to improve that. Additional resources should be invested in that area as importance of English for study of mathematics or journalism is not the same. They can hardly study communication science and journalism without solid knowledge of English, so that would require some flexibility on the level of UP, if needed.

. Opportunities are recognized in further inclusion of students in the research activities and further education in the field. A commitment of the DJ exists as the extensive discussion with very enthusiastic students of journalism confirmed.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program posses a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	

Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		X
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The university is advised to establish a system to check corresponding examination papers and theses for plagiarism and take appropriate measures.*

2.6. Research

Research in journalism, a branch within communication sciences, is a very specific area of social sciences research that is interdisciplinary in its nature and objectives and often very closely related to the journalist practice. Theoretical models and adjustments of existing pieces of theory might be rear and therefore not often expected. Mostly, we speak of empirical research aiming to improve practice and support journalists, reporters and media professionals in their demanding tasks. The fact that we witness very fast rise of technological means to

29

practice journalism and research various cases, has only contributed to the complexities of the research in this area.

Researchers in media and communication studies collaborate with the colleagues from a variety of fields and utilize international networks in their research projects. The aim is not only to produce high-quality research, but also to engage with society and participate actively in public discussion.

Having all that in mind, the interdisciplinary quality of the research in communication sciences must be considered when assessing the appropriate value of the research done so far by the academic staff at DJ and those that are planned in future. To this we should add specific challenges related to the difficulties in publishing in reviews with high impact, in getting access to qualified reviewers and particularly in ensuring financial and other means for the researchers to perform and excel.

Researchers at the DJ who are also teachers and are facing the vicious circle all university teachers often face: the pressure to research and publish and be an excellent teachers always learning and implementing new techniques in teaching. It is worth reminding that teachers at universities in developed countries of EU, USA and beyond, have immensely different, meaning much better, conditions for the research and that teaching load is always considered when deciding to enable research. But it is, what it is, and the impression remains that within these circumstances the academic staff et DJ are performing to the best of their abilities as can be seen in the CVs with lists of publications.

Regarding the defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center or interdisciplinary program), which would also be reflected in the research development plan of the institution, SER claims the deficiency in terms of financial and logistical support which is always crucial. So, they deal with what they have, and, since there is the Institute of Media, which according to its regulation offers the opportunity to conduct research in this field for the staff and students of this department, it could be concluded that a focal point for the research exists. A great advantage is also the fact that once a year they publish the e research journal "Media" which is open to staff and students of DJ.

In addition, policies to promote scientific research within the university are also included within the Strategic plan of education in Kosovo, National Science Program in Republic of Kosovo, Strategy for scientific-artistic and developmental research activities, etc. No evidence is given of specific departmental research plan, and apparently, as stated in the SWOT analysis, Media Institute, being a great strength and the journal published, as well as research potential of staff and promising collaboration with various other institutions, speak in favor of substantial research potential of the DJ that, nevertheless, needs financial support and infrastructure needed to fulfil the potential.

Specific Regulation is in place on the UP and Ministry level for the involvement of teaching staff in research activities and their performance in relation to academic promotion

30

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30

and the recognition of international journals. The academic staff of the DJ has published research and other academic publications essential for the studies of this field in the Kosovo context and beyond as evidenced in lists of publications which are part of the submitted CVs of the academic staff. The discussion also showed that there is a commitment on the part of academic staff to publish in the recognized academic journals despite various difficulties that are known to many teachers who share the same commitment, so it is good to know, that, as also stated in the SER, the DJ supports teachers, even more so because these publications are also recommended by the UP Regulation and MEST.

It is crucial because it can be detrimental if teachers feels that they do not have institutional support and are left alone in that challenging process on which. not only their academic promotion but also the overall quality of teaching, depends. In that sense the support of UP is recognized by providing access to various scientific platforms that can serve to demand the latest knowledge and research in the relevant fields like ScienceDirect, Web of Science, etc. Apparently, UP has plans to further expand the research component and promote staff participation and has set up a separate office, the Sponsored Research and Project Office to extend support and enable collaboration needed for further research expansion.

Regarding intellectual property ownership, it is protected by the Law on Copyright and Related Rights adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo and intellectual property of UP staff and students are also included. This is important for student participation in research projects which is mainly in the fields of study that are also carried out through various research projects within the university and beyond. As expected, collaborative research executed by students and their mentors is encouraged and best among those get the opportunity to be in the journal, In this sense, Master students under the mentorship of professors have published papers in the "Media" journal which operates within the department.

When measuring success of faculty in line for academic election, collaboration and ability to attract funds needed for project and research are also considered, Department's staff members have also implemented joint research projects with professors in similar fields of study. In addition to this aspect, staff members attend scientific conferences organized in different EU countries.

DJ also organizes scientific symposia and conferences, national and international, and academic staff engage in interdepartmental and interdisciplinary areas of research promoting cooperation within Kosovo and beyond. New academic staff and undergraduates with potential and ambitions to develop their research competencies are offered support by their peers and senior teachers in an academic community that leaves the impression of high level of enthusiasm and teacher dedication. This is particularly relevant when support and collaboration result in concrete financial aid for projects which has happened several times and is an evidence of the synergy with a potential to develop further.

31

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31

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	**No**
Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.		X
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in specialty magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	X	

Standard 6.8. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	X	
Standard 6.9. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Consider ensuring necessary financial and logistical support for the research activities of academic staff and DJ in general.*

2. *Consider regular evaluation of teaching workload versus research activities in order to enable the development of full research potential of individual academic staff*

3. *Consider increasing systemic efforts to ensure long-term collaboration with institutions outside Kosovo and networking with HE institutions by joining various EU funded sponsored projects*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The claim that the premises of the DJ guarantee a solid development of the work of this program is in the SER. This somewhat contradicts the SWOT analysis of the content of educational process where under weaknesses we read "Inadequate classrooms and lack of teaching equipment".

Under standard requirement for a financial plan at the level of the study program which would enable sustainability for at least next three years, reference is taken to the fact that according to the Statute of the University of Prishtina (Art. 60 and Article 61), the Faculty of the Philology will get a certain percentage of the sources from the fees. These fees are presumably low and are not the main source of income of UP. This is a public university and therefore is funded by the state, namely, funds allocated by the Assembly of Kosovo as per Law On Budget as well as based on revenues that the institution generates. Regardless of the fact that these are public funds that depend on the overall sustainability of the national economy and state budget in general, it seems that DJ does not have its own budget or any legal authority

33

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33

to manage those incoming funds or that it has a separate financial plan guaranteeing the sustainability for the years to come.

Regarding suitable premises and adequate technical and library equipment, this being the part of the Faculty of Philology which is an academic unit within UP, there are solid conditions for the realization of the program. This includes laboratories and equipment, a media lab (television studio, funded through a grant from the United States Embassy in Kosovo), and a radio studio which was a donation by an international company, which means that the department is self sustainable in the area of radio and TV journalism within the department. DJ also owns adequate licensed software for the study disciplines included in the syllabi and a library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own storage facilities according to the disciplines. All the equipment and tools relate to the programs in syllabi of the Journalism program.

Regarding the space, DJ has five classrooms with an average of 100 seats per student, all equipped with internet access and projectors that can also be used for this program. So as to the library, which is managed by the Faculty of Philology, stocks of books from the literature of Albanian and foreign sources, sufficient to cover the disciplines within the curricula, of which at least 50% must represent books' titles or specialty courses of renowned publicists from the past 10 years. In addition, the basic literature of this study program can be found in the library of the Faculty, and students also use other credible sources through online access. The staff made it clear in discussion that students extensively use online sources and that Internet services are very well distributed and accessible in the country.

As stated in the SER, the infrastructure aspect for disabled students needs improvement for which the DJ depends on decision and investment on academic unit and UP level; however, this is a responsibility of the Faculty and the University level. The assurance is given that there are formal plans addressing needed improvements in infrastructure subject to the availability of funds.

SER points out as strengths already mentioned distributed Internet throughout the building and improved network, classrooms equipped with projectors and curtains to darken classrooms, improved central heating system with new pumps and several new radiators as a recent investment and already mentioned advantage of having a radio studio and media lab of their own. As potential improvement needed SER mentions recreational and eating places for students that are not present right now, and further technical improvements in software, computer updates and alike.

34

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34

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.		X
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	X	
Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	

Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	X	
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs		X

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

     ET recommendations:

1. *To consider developing a financial plan at the level of the study program that woulddemonstrate the sustainability of the study program for future.*
2. *To consider using and promoting strong stakeholder relations to ensure additional income for the DJ which could be used in improving necessary equipment that fits the development of the program. Consider tangible components(hardware, equipment, furniture) as parts of more complex mutual international project funded by EU or other donors, as well as private sector.*
3. *To consider initiating necessary technical improvements to accommodate students with special needs, and address nutritional and recreational needs of students.*

36

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

This evaluation process held in especially difficult circumstances for the institution evaluated and all its staff, has been, nevertheless, apparently meticulously planned and executed, for which they should be congratulated. Having in mind the specific nature of the area of communication sciences and difficulties to come up with an adequate model of educating journalists that majority of universities in various countries fight with, and taking into consideration that this team has reached its reaccreditation and has learned very much on the go as it has been pointed out in the SER, the team in the DJ, The Faculty, UP and the supporting team at Kosovo Accreditation Agency need to be fully recognized for this successful achievement. The results of evaluation are as follows.

Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Fully compliant
Quality management	Fully compliant
Academic Staff	Fully compliant
Educational Process Content	Fully compliant
Students	Substantially compliant
Research	Substantially compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant
Overall Compliance	**Fully compliant**

The overall compliance is assessed at the level of **Fully Compliant**.

Following recommendations are to be considered as potential areas for improvement.

37

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37

1. CREATING ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY REINFORCING CULTURE Journalism BA program now somehow aligned with accredited MA Public Relations program seems to be a starting point for setting up a separate academic unit sometime in the future. Hints on this did appear in the panel discussion too. Even though it will continue to be a unit within the Faculty of Philology University of Prishtina, it is recommended to initiate process of creation of a specific identity and a separate high education institution organizational culture and brand. This will be the focal point of the future development of communication science on the country level. No doubt that it will reside in the national university. It only makes sense to presently engage academic staff, students and particularly stakeholders in the process of formulating the vision, mission, and values of the DJ. These processes can be instrumental for raising awareness among academic staff and in the community of crucial importance of high education of communication professionals for the social life in the country.

2. INITIATING VERTICAL ACADEMIC PROMOTION MOBILITY in line with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The compliance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area is a work in progress that needs to get the support on the UP level with full understanding of the fact that communication science is a wide area that includes an array of different professions. Students who get BA and MA in communication sciences should be able to get their PhD if they choose an academic career in universities in other countries and in future, in Kosovo. The accredited studies on an MA level and later PhD level and the BA level should be didactically and methodologically equipped and related, and above all, have a distinct place in strategic planning on DJ, Faculty of Philology and UP levels. It is recommended that staff take initiatives and lead the process.

3. ONLINE LEARNING METHODOLOGICAL ELABORATION AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT. In program implementation and further elaboration within the limits of adaptation permitted by legal documents and national regulation, the crucial importance of online learning methods in corresponding areas of applied communication sciences needs to be elaborated not only through academic years affected by current pandemic but as the main strategic direction. On one hand, the technology progress drastically changes areas of journalism, public relations, and research in communication and on the other, MOOCs are obviously there to stay as equal partner to face to face and blended learning. It is recommended that

38

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38

academic staff of DOJ be the leaders in the process of strategic planning and methodological development of these trends in academic area of communication science of Kosovo and beyond and implement these in syllabi and classroom.

4. ENSURING TRANSPARENCY BY PUBLISHING IN ADEQUATE FORMS THE EVALUATION RESULTS AND FOLLOW UP. While it is evident that the DJ, the academic unit and UP in general, display a strong commitment to quality evaluation and improvement planning in line with the principles applied on the national and EU level, it is recommended to consider higher level of transparency in the whole process, not only because transparency is one the principles that need to be followed, but also because it is instrumental in overall stakeholder engagement. This department being the communication unit on the organizational level, it is only logical and actually in line with organizational communication principles, that academic staff of DJ should take the lead in this process. It is the recommended that they do.

5. INCLUDING COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS IN THE EDUCATION PROCESS AS MENTORS. This might be another push for further necessary collaboration with the stakeholders in field, particularly in the media and communication companies in the country and beyond, as these practitioners can serve as a valuable mentor of future practitioners, student interns, and future academics. While this might be taking place in dynamic collaboration with the media market and various sectors but on an individual and not systemic basis, the recommendation is that the options be explored to include relevant experts in the project based educational profession and promote this a as policy that is in line with the general orientation of university to collaborate with experts in the public, private and civil society sector. It is recommended that an official initiative be launched on the part of DJ towards university so that expert mentorship is considered as a valuable addition to other forms of including external experts in the education process.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Journalism offered by University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" Faculty of Philology is Fully Compliant with the standards included in the *KAA* Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to re-accredit the study program for a duration of 5 years with a number of 150 students to be enrolled in the program.

39

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39

Expert Team

Chair

	Majda Tafra-Vlahović	**10 May 2021**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

(Signature)	(Print Name)
(Date)	