

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

College of International Management “Globus”

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

EXPERT TEAM

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1 Introduction

This report summarises the results of a peer-reviewing process of Globus College in May 2016. Globus College was established and licensed to teach in 2007. It admitted its first students in the Academic Year of 2007-2008 and the name of the institution was Pristina International University. The institution was accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) on 24.7.2009 and it changed its name to the College for International Management Studies (CIMS). From the Academic year 2011-2012, the College name is recorded as College of International Management Globus and shortly it is called Globus College.

In addition to the main Campus in Pristina, Globus College has a branch Campus in Podujeva. On its main campus in Pristina, the Globus College has in 2015/16 academic year delivered 3 undergraduate programs (BA in General International Management, BA in Finance and Banks, and BA in Accounting and Auditing) and 3 masters programs (MA in General International Management, MA in International Business and Marketing, MA in Management of Educational institutions). Until recently, it has also offered an MA in Finance and Banks and an MA in Accounting and Auditing. The expert evaluation team that has evaluated Globus College in 2015 has suggested in their recommendations that Globus introduces a single Business Administration program with majors in Banking and Finance, International Business Administration and Marketing, Accounting and Auditing. Based on the recommendations of the Expert Team, Globus College has decided on a reform of their study programs.

It is now applying for an accreditation of the following three programs:

1. BA in International Management, with a specialization in:
 - a. General International Management
 - b. Finance and Banks
 - c. Accounting and Auditing
2. 2-year MA in International Management (120 ECTS), with a specialization in:
 - a. General International Management
 - b. Finance, Banks and Accounting
 - c. Management of Educational Institutions
3. 1-year MA in International Management (60 ECTS), with a specialization in:
 - a. General International Management
 - b. Finance, Banks and Accounting
 - c. Management of Educational Institutions.

The purpose of this report is to enable the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the Ministerial and/or Political Authorities concerned to come to a decision regarding the accreditation of these programmes. This Evaluation Report is produced in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) for accreditation of Academic Programmes.

This report will conclude with a number of recommendations: they are the personal opinion of the authors and are formulated with their background experience in European higher educational systems and international accreditations in mind. In the current text, paragraphs with recommendations start with a subtitle “*Recommendation*”.

The recommendations expressed in this Report are addressed to the Dean and other members of the academic and support staff at Globus College and they endeavour to suggest challenges and opportunities for the future development of the programs. They reflect what the authors regard as good or standard practices in higher education systems, without wanting to prejudice the different conditions prevailing in Kosovo in any way. Therefore, the final decision on the Globus College’s application for accreditation will have to be made by the relevant authorities concerned.

2 Report Information Basis

The findings, suggestions and recommendations of the expert team are based on:

- the application of Globus College for an accreditation of the three programs in the form of Self-Evaluation Report, in the following denoted by SER, provided before the site visit,
- a list of the academic staff provided to the experts by the KAA before the site visit,
- a site visit, accompanied by Mr. Shkelzen Gërzhaliu, on May 20, 2016, and
- the comments of Globus College on the draft report of the Expert Team, provided to the experts on June 21, 2016.

The Expert Team greatly appreciates the hospitality provided by both KAA and the Globus College, and also for the cooperation, open and sincere answers given by the Globus College administrators during the interviews. We would like to acknowledge the work involved in the writing of Self-Evaluation Report and collecting all of the necessary information. It was very useful for the Expert Team.

3 Common Issues in Academic Programme Reviews

3.1 Staff

According to the management of the school, Globus College has been increasing the number of academic staff in recent years and was hiring new teaching assistants. They have also put a strong emphasis on supporting them in their doctoral studies and specializations.

According to a list of academic staff provided to the experts by the KAA before the site visit, Globus College employs 49 faculty members of which 28 are employed on a full-time basis. This conforms to one of the basic KAA standards that refers to the teaching staff and that

requires that at least 50% of entire teaching load of a programme needs to be covered by permanent staff who is qualified (with a PhD).

Looking at each program in turn, each program has 3 members of academic staff with PhDs assigned which is in accordance with the new KAA rules (the list was provided at the site visit). However, this list also includes academic staff whose background is not directly relevant to the programs that College Globus will offer (for example, they have a PhD in food technology, literature and microbiology). It is not clear how they will contribute to the development of programs that focus on management, finance and accounting, and management of educational institutions. For some of the people on the list the CVs are not available, so it is not possible to check whether they have published in the fields outside of their specialization and closer to the fields they will now cover, but it is doubtful that many such cases will be found.

Recommendation:

Build a team of faculty members with research and teaching experience that connects more strongly to the content of the programs they are involved in.

3.2 Research and International Co-operation at the Institution

The last year's ET report has pointed out that policy documentation does not offer concrete policies on how research is actually supported in College Globus. This year we have found no evidence that this has changed and no terms of reference seem to exist that would specify the resources available to support the academic staff's research and the conditions under which they can be used. The management of the school says that a budget is set aside for the purpose of visiting conferences and for publications, depending on financial planning, but the projections of the budget do not have such expenses included. Special emphasis was put on the support of research and publishing by the PhD candidates.

Collaboration agreements exist but it seems they are not used for active research collaboration.

Their research efforts include published contributions to the conferences they organize (some of them international) and the International Journal of Management and Business Economics they publish biannually. However, the CVs of academic staff reveal that, with a few exceptions, the research output in recent years was relatively small.

Recommendation

College Globus is recommended to develop a strategy on how to strengthen research activities, especially in research areas that are closely connected to the focus of their programs.

During the site visit the representatives of the College have mentioned that they engage the students in project proposals (applying to tenders). Evidence could not be found.

Globus Colleges puts a lot of emphasis on the international component of their programs. Based on our meeting with academic staff we can conclude that a large share of them has had an international exposure, even if only in the region of Western Balkans. However, it does not seem that any efforts are made to enable their students to gain international experience, even in the region.

Recommendation

Globus College should make an effort to allow their students to gain international experience. This could be achieved through a variety of means, such as excursions, joint seminars/conferences with partner colleges from abroad, guest lecturers etc., exploiting off-line and on-line opportunities.

3.3 Finances and infrastructure / Space and equipment

The SER includes a projection of the number of students by programme and location, for the period from 2016 to 2019. Compared to the latest enrolment figures for 2015/16 academic year, the projections use the assumption that the number of students will increase. The projections also include estimates of the costs in the same period and given the projected income a small loss is planned.

Globus College has the infrastructure necessary for offering the programmes. The lecture and computer facilities are adequate. The library is still a bit undernourished but the computer in the library allows the use of electronic databases (EBSCO, for example) so the students do have access to a range of journal publications.

The access for people with disabilities is still not possible since no lift exists. However, the school is running enquiries at the municipality concerning the permits needed to build a lift.

Recommendation

The efforts have to be increased to allow students with special needs to participate. The means could be preliminary in particular as the College intends to swap sites.

3.4 Quality assurance management

Progress has been made compared to the ET visit in 2015 when it was suggested that the responsibilities for the programs are unclear and are not supported by an administrative academic structure. College Globus has assigned a person acting as the Program Head to each of the programs, several of which were present at the ET visit.

College Globus has a unit for quality assurance that is being assigned an important role of monitoring, evaluations and suggestions for improvements. Yearly reports are to be made to the Teaching Scientific Council (which includes all academic staff, the representatives of the students as well as the management of the school). At the previous visit the ET has concluded that there is no evidence of gathering data systematically and using it to close the feedback loop. We therefore recommend that when it comes to the new programs, the College Globus tries from the beginning to set up a culture that takes the feedback as an opportunity to learn about what can be done in a better way and not only as a formal requirement that needs to be done with.

An issue, relevant to quality assurance, is not only how to assess the programs but also how to develop the learning outcomes of the programs that you then aim to achieve. Based on our conversation with academic staff, there doesn't seem to be a common understanding of how this is done and how to achieve the so-called *constructive alignment*, i.e. how to align to the learning outcomes, the methods of learning and teaching, the structure of the workload of the students and finally the methods of assessment. First of all, the process of determining the learning outcomes ideally includes the academic staff that will be involved in a program as well as other stakeholders. At College Globus the learning outcomes were discussed with the leaders of the programs and the staff and later on suggested to the Teaching Scientific Council who had a final say in it. This was a 6-month process that also included a benchmarking process with 2 universities, one in Germany and the other one in Switzerland. However, it seems that the actual input of academic staff into this process could be stronger. It should also be done in collaboration and out of 9 members of academic staff that carry the main burden of the 3 programs, 7 of them have a full-time contract with College Globus but will start there in the fall of 2016.

Also, the steps that have followed the process of determining the learning outcomes and that have resulted in the syllabi show that there was a misunderstanding amongst the academic staff on how to proceed. The templates were used to write up the syllabi and were reproduced, citing the same structure of teaching and learning methods and assessment methods, not taking into account that different courses need different approaches to achieve the objectives. However, when talking to the academic staff it has transpired that the syllabi are not followed and that different methods are actually used in the classroom.

Recommendations

As in many colleges it is apparently necessary to train academic staff about how to write learning outcomes and the constructive alignment related to them.

Also, the documents the College provides should better represent what is actually done in the educational components (course, modules, units...).

4 Academic Programme Reviews

4.1 BA in International Management

Academic Programs and Student Management

A clear statement of the mission of College Globus cannot be found in the SER so it is not possible to evaluate whether the academic program corresponds to the institution's mission statement. The program itself also does not have a clear mission statement since the SER has presented each specialization of the program in a separate section and with a separate description and has not taken into account that the specializations should be integrated into a common program (and this in spite of the KAA's specific instructions to adjust this part of the SER). When it comes to the specialization in General International Management, it is "designed to equip students with the necessary knowledge and analytical skills that will allow them to play key roles within international business contexts and environments" (SER, pp. 19). The specialization in Finance and Banks promises to ensure key knowledge of finance and banking system in national and international environment (SER, pp. 56), whereas the specialization in Accounting and Auditing builds the knowledge specific to this field, with a special emphasis on the needs of foreign companies who have their representatives in Kosovo and abroad (SER, pp. 93). What is common to all of the three specializations is their focus on the international component that is also emphasized in the name of the programme.

The curriculum seems appropriate for an international management program. The first two semesters are common to all three specializations whereas in the third semester they start to diverge and pursue a quite high level of specialization. It can be a question of a debate whether the undergraduate programs should be specialized to such a high degree. This is a decision best taken in consultation with the stakeholders, especially the employers. In the case of a re-evaluation of this issue, College Globus should analyze the curriculum and identify those common courses that would contribute to learning objectives of all three specializations; these would then represent the core of the program. As a second step, some of the courses that seem quite specialized for an undergraduate program can be substituted with the core courses (common to all specializations) but in which the elements of different specializations can still be introduced.

Course syllabi contain a list of objectives and expected outcomes. When it comes to the learning and teaching methods, an overarching didactic concept has been communicated to the teaching staff even too efficiently since all of the courses follow the same pattern, as discussed in the section on Quality Assurance Management. This should be replaced with a description of learning and teaching methods that reflects the actual intentions of the teaching staff to teach specific courses.

Judging by the structure of the curriculum, academic degree aspires to international standards.

Recommendations:

Formulate a mission statement, in the sense that it provides the framework within which the college's strategies are formulated and may guide its actions.

Start treating the three specializations of the program as belonging to the same program and try to find synergies between them.

Develop a description of learning and teaching methods for each course that reflect the actual specifics of the course.

Academic Staff

Given that 85 students will be enrolled in each specialization, the ratio of academic staff to students seems appropriate. However, some of the courses common to the first year of the program will have up to 255 students. In this case, such a course and the lectures, tutorials and assessment connected to it will present a large teaching burden for a person running the course. It is difficult to judge whether the teaching load for some of the staff will be excessive since no overview is made of the teaching load on person-by-person basis. It is also questionable which of the lecturing rooms could hold that many students, allowing for some space to take notes or to put their computers and being able to read the screens.

Recommendation:

Monitor the teaching load of academic staff and redistribute the work load when necessary.

Research

Research and internationalization is an issue discussed at the institutional level, in section 3.2.

Student Admission and Assistance

Students need to have a high school diploma and need to have completed the State Matura in order to be able to take an admission test. The test includes an examination in Mathematics and – in the case that the student does not supply a certificate in the knowledge of English provided by one of the widely recognized institutions (like TOEFL) – also a test of English language. Since this program puts a lot of emphasis on the international component a good knowledge of English is important. When this test of English language is held at College Globus (and, according to the representatives of the school, is also designed by College Globus) the objectivity of the test must be ensured.

Curriculum and Syllabus

In the first 5 semesters of the program the students take 3 compulsory courses and 1 elective each semester (where they can choose between 2 elective courses). In the last semester, students need to write a diploma, in addition to taking the 4 courses. The whole program is composed of 180 ECTS. There are a few issues worth considering. First, greater flexibility could be offered when it comes to elective courses. Now, the student is only able to choose amongst the two elective courses offered in a specific semester which limits the options greatly. Given the relatively strong focus of each specialization on the topics specific to the area of studies, more flexible selection between electives would be a great advantage to the students that want to widen their area of interest. Second, the last semester is problematic since it adds an additional burden of a diploma but does not diminish the number of courses the students take. It seems that the 6 ECTS that the diploma is assigned has been gained in the curriculum by simply decreasing the number of ECTS for the rest of the courses in this semester (from the usual 8 ECTS to 6 when it comes to compulsory courses, and from the usual 6 ECTS to 4 for electives). It is doubtful whether the smaller number of ECTS for the courses in the last semester will actually correspond to smaller work load.

Recommendation

Plan the last semester of the program in such a way that the workload of the students will reflect that of other semesters.

It is difficult to judge the manageability of students' workload without a detailed description of each course's approach. At the possible stage of reaccreditation the College should be able to document that the anticipated workload is adequate for the students.

When it comes to the sequence of the courses, it would be advisable to offer the course in Business Mathematics in the first semester (now it is planned in the second), so that the knowledge that the students gain there can be used for a better understanding of Microeconomics course (which is offered in the first semester). To achieve the synergies, some coordination between the two courses would be needed.

Student Assessment

Assessment methods are listed as the same for all of the courses, with participation having a 15% share in the final grade, two written tests 50%, final exam 25% and "other forms" 10% share. Again, the ET recommends Globus College to:

Recommendation

Develop assessment methods for each course that reflect the actual specificities of the course.

Overall Recommendation for the BA in International Management

The expert team proposes the accreditation of the programme, i.e. one Bachelor programme in International Management with three alternative specializations in:

- a. General International Management
- b. Finance and Banks
- c. Accounting and Auditing.

Every student has to select one of the three alternative specialisations in the second year, first semester, of the programme.

As regards the name of the programme it is highly recommended either to change the name to Business and Management, for example, or to increase significantly the internationalisation of the whole programme. At the time of reaccreditation a specific investigation should be made to this extent.

At that stage an expert team should also investigate whether and how recommendations made above were implemented or what reasons were given for not having implemented them, including the issue of students with special needs.

4.2 MA in International Management

The mission statement is not described in the SER but basically the programmes correspond to the one roughly outlined in the past: the college intends to deliver sound programmes in business studies to the Kosova society. The term “International” seems to be a Marketing tool but not a characteristic supported by staff, students, curriculum and syllabi.

The College stated that they have taken up the recommendations of the experts of last year’s evaluation and revised the Master programmes. However, this has not been done to the extent the ET has hoped for. It was recommended to develop one programme: “Have a single Business Administration Programme with majors in Banking and Finance, International Business Administration and Marketing, Accounting and Auditing”, based on the BA programmes submitted at that time. One reason for this proposal was the huge overlaps between all programmes. The way the two Master programmes are presented in the SER is very confusing. Each Master specialisation is being described as a programme on its own. However, this neither is in line with last year’s recommendation nor does it make sense.

Last year no Master programme was proposed to be accredited. The ET felt that there should be a sound Bachelor programme with specialisations as a sound basis for further development at Master level, not necessarily in form of a common basis and some specialisations as on Bachelor level. As Bachelor and Master programmes are not integrated programmes but independent of each other, the College had the opportunity to design a well-structured programme with curriculum and syllabus at Master level.

The quality of the SER has unfortunately not significantly improved. Many shortcomings identified by the ET last year can still be found (repetitions, inconsistent terminology e.g.). One major setback is the lack of transparency of the documentation. As there are three programmes proposed for accreditation, the ET expected a description of these three programmes. However, the SER that comprises 224 pages - without annexes – contains many overlaps and lacks a clear structure according to the purpose of the application for accreditation.

The College proposes to offer two types of full-time Master programmes, one lasting for one year, carrying 60 credits, and one for two years with 120 credits. Each of them is a Master programme in International Management within which the student can select one out of three specialisations: General International Management; Finance, Banks and Accounting; Management of Educational Institutions. Both programmes are said to be new and therefore the experts have to evaluate whether the programme can be accredited or not; it is not a reaccreditation procedure of past programmes.

In the SER the programmes are being described within 3.5 to 3.11 with the following headlines:

- Item 3.5. Basic data for the study-programme International Management with specialisation in International Management

- Item 3.6. Basic data for the study-programme International Management with specialisation in General International Management
- Item 3.7. Basic data for the study-programme
- Item 3.8. Basic data for the study-programme International Management with specialisation in Finance, Banks and Accounting
- Item 3.9. Basic data for the study-programme International Management with specialisation in Finance, Banks and Accounting
- Item 3.10. Study programme under evaluation: International Management with specialisation in Management of Educational Institutions
- Item 3.11. Study programme under evaluation: International Management with specialisation in Management of Educational Institutions

For the reader it is – with all due respect – not easy to realise that 3.8./3.9. and 3.10/3.11. refer to the one or respectively to the two year versions. As 3.5. is highlighted it might have been intended to be the headline for programmes submitted at Master level. In fact, it gives a tabular overview on the two-year programme and its three specialisations indicating that the first two semesters of all specifications are identical (common platform), only one out of two specialisations differs, and semester three demonstrates the essentials of each specialisation without any overlap (on paper). The fourth semester is reserved for the Master thesis.

It may be questioned whether a General International Management is an adequate denomination of a specialisation in the programme International Management. Also irritating is the wording of 3.10./3.11.: Study programme under evaluation. What are the others?

Because of this lack of clarity it is very difficult for external readers to understand the SER. An informative structure would be extremely helpful, e.g. using the following structure as headlines for the respective chapters after a part which covers what all programmes have in common:

- Two-year MA in International Management (120 ECTS), with a specialization in:
 - General International Management
 - Finance, Banks and Accounting
 - Management of Educational Institutions
- One-year MA in International Management (60 ECTS), with a specialization in:
 - General International Management
 - Finance, Banks and Accounting
 - Management of Educational Institutions

It is noticeable that the one-year programme does not have a common core. How can it then have three “specialisations”? The “specialisations” are presented as if they were separate Master programmes but this is not so according to the application. In fact, the curricula and syllabi of the 1-year Master first semester are identical to those of the specialisations of the second year, first semester, of the two-year Master programme, in each case followed by the Master thesis, semester 4 or 2 respectively.

There is no clear reasoning why these “specifications” were chosen and why, for example, these are not identical with those of the Bachelor programme. They don’t have to be, there could be good reasons, but these should have been revealed. Also, why is it necessary to have two types of Master programmes – 1 and 2 year versions with the same “specialisations”?

Recommendations

- Please consider the recommendations of the ET. If you follow them, outline why and how you do so. If not, again, give reasons.
- Improve the quality of the SER. Give a clear, understandable structure, avoid redundancies.
- If a programme is called “international” internationality should be identifiable within curricula, syllabi, staff and students.
- In the 1-year programme one specialisation out of three can be studied. What do these 3 specialisations have in common? What are the elements which identify them as one programme? Outline a programme in which there is a common core or design independent programmes with a clear focus.
- The different entry requirements for the 2- or the 1-year version should be stated clearly.

4.2.1 Academic Programmes and Student Management

4.2.1.1 Common to both Master programmes

The following analysis follows the structure of the SER so that the points raised can be easier traced back (from 3.6 – 3.11 of the SER). From a logical point of view the structure is inadequate as it gives the impression of several programmes whereas, in reality, the application is for two, each with three options as indicated above.

- All master programmes seemingly have problems with regard to identifying their target group. Although they stress their specialisation, both two- and one-year Master programmes with the specialisation in General International Management and in Finance, Banks and Accounting have an identical target group. It is also not clear whether the target group really refers to potential students or whether the target group refers to the fields the graduates of these programmes would find employment. In the two types with the specialisation in Management of Educational Institutions the target group is stipulated very ambiguously: All candidates who have an interest in education.
- All 2-year Master programmes have a common platform in the first year. Obviously by mistake the one-year Master with the specialisation in Management of Educational Institutions has an identical syllabus for the whole programme with the two-year Master (SER 199p, 221p). None of the 1-year Master “specialisations” has such a common core.
- All programmes identify their student-clientele as full-time students although it became apparent that some students only attend classes after having worked during the day in a

job (part- or full-time). This is an issue throughout all institutions in Kosovo, at least in the private institutions.

- The number of places available for studies mostly varies without any explanation per specialisation. It is not clear why there is a difference in number between the two-year programme in the specialisation General International Management and in the one-year version (75 versus 55) whereas in the Finance, Banks and Accounting specialisation 55 places for each are available. In the specialisation of Educational Institutions the capacity is defined as 80 places for each mode. Also, it is not clear whether the students of the short version join those of the longer version or whether the numbers given are aggregate figures, e.g. are the 55 students of the short version in the specialisation General International Management part of the 75 places listed in the long version? Do the 55 or 80 places indicated for the other specialisation mean that 110 students may start the specialisation in Finance, Banks and Accounting and 160 the Managing Educational Institutions concentration? In total the figures could mean that each semester 400 students studied at the same time at Master level. Looking at the table on page 238 of the SER – The number of current/foreseen students for the programme separately – this figure is even higher than the ones in bachelor programmes. Most likely, the information given is not quite correct or is presented in a misleading way. If they were correct the number of staff would not be able to cover the needs of the specialisations and also the present infrastructure may not be adequate either.
- If it were a normal structure of a programme, the whole programme would have a cap in terms of the number of student but then it would be an internal organisational process how students were guided to one or the other specialisation, leaving it as much as possible to them to choose (academic freedom). In the way the specialisations are documented, the impression is given as if they were still independent programmes.
- As regards the target labour market there is no distinction made between the concentrations General International Management and Finance, Banks and Accounting. This is amazing as one of the rationales of specialising at all is different areas of the labour market to be targeted, albeit of some communalities. In the specialisation Managing Educational Institutions the potential of opportunities in the labour market are identified.
- Whereas this latter specialisation identified the institutions which they benchmarked, in General International Management this is not the case and in Finance, Banks and Accounting a private university of applied sciences in Germany is mentioned which only partly could be used as benchmark, if so at all. This is the only institution listed although the text suggests that Globus College benchmarked with several well-known and distinguished institutions. In Managing Educational Institutions six institutions are mentioned and the question really is whether these were adequate benchmarks, what was found out and to which extent findings were used.
- It is not convincing that the relationship to the mission statement of the institution is – with the exception of Managing Educational Institutions - identically worded. To this extent the Managing Educational Institution has a more convincing line of thought, a relationship is identified. The mission statement as such, however, is not outlined.

- The aims and profiles of the study programmes are mainly teacher-centred. Student-centred learning outcomes are not defined and do not stipulate the profile of the specifications. Neither are they identified within the chapter “Expected learning outcomes” for General International Management and Managing Educational Institutions. They describe the expectations of the teachers but not the learning outcomes viewed upon from a student’s perspective. In fact, the listing of learning outcomes in Finance, Banks and Accounting could be seen as an example for the other specialisation to develop on similar lines.
- The relationship between the theoretical and practical part is copy and paste for the specialisations in General International Management and Finance, Banks and Accounting, not saying much, but even less is said in concrete terms in Managing Educational Institutions.
- The credit allocation follows the same principle throughout all courses and looks rather “stereotyped”. No explanations are given, just a “technical demonstration”.
- Under the heading of “practical work-internship” only companies are listed with which the institution has signed agreements. No details are mentioned. In Managing Educational Institutions it is just mentioned that students visit educational institutions.
- Again, as regards the research plan the description in Managing Educational Institution differs from the other two specialisations. Unfortunately, the level of information is very low.
- Disregarding the mistakes made by applying copy and paste when listing the “students registration and admission criteria”, e.g. the requirement to submit a CV is partly missing, there is also a difference noticeable as regards admission criteria in terms of the number of credits required to have been achieved at bachelor level. It is not explained why there is a difference between the one-year programmes in General International Management and Managing Educational Institutions (180-240 credits) and Finance, Banks and Accounting (240 credits).
- Overall these descriptions are more or less a copy of past reports and not very helpful. The recommendations of the ET have hardly been taken up. The SER does not really reflect on the two Master programmes but rather misleads the reader to think that 6 programmes – the specialisations – are offered. The difference of the one-year programmes is that they consist of the second year of the two-year version only.

Recommendations

State clearly that there are two types of Master programmes in International Management, a one year one and a two year version. For each of these two programmes there is one description. Identical parts should be indicated and not repeated. Their characteristics should be clearly highlighted and reasons given why they are offered in a shorter and longer version.

Explain how it is possible to have specialisations in a 1-year Master programme when there is no common core prior to the specialisations.

Reflect on the denomination of General International Management as a specialisation of International Management. It sounds contradictory.

The ET has seen the site in Pristina. Therefore the analysis and recommendations refer to the programme on this site only. It is stated that the programme is the same at all sites, however, the infrastructure – the resources – may differ. Therefore, the ET refers their analysis to the Prishtina site only.

4.2.1.2 Two-year MA in International Management (120 ECTS)

- Before a student can be registered several requirements have to be fulfilled. One is the completion of a Bachelor study of 180-240 credits (with one exception see above). All applicants who do not have a Bachelor degree in the study field have to sit for two entry examinations. Students who want to take a specialisation in General International Management have to sit for examinations in Management and “Behaviour Organizational” (?) (SER 156p); for “Finance, Banks and Accounting” in “Basic of Accounting” and “Basic of Finance”; for the third specialisation the type of examination is not specified. Why a student has to sit for different types of entry-examinations oriented towards specialisations in the second year is not explained. It is also said that details could be seen in “Regulations for student’s registration in Master”, but this document was not annexed. The SER also mentions that those students have to sit for additional exams who “...did not finish the Faculty of Economics” (e.g. SER 169p). Does this mean that all students who did not hold a Bachelor degree in the study field when applying at Globus have to sit for entry examinations? Does it also mean that those who were not awarded the Bachelor degree from Globus have to sit for an entry examination? In the discussion with staff this impression was augmented. The College stresses that the specialisations belong each to one common course. Why are there then different entry requirements?
- The two-year master programme has a common core of three identical course components in the first year, and a choice of one out of three specialisations in the third semester and the Master thesis in the final fourth semester. Students can select between one of two electives in each semester. In each specialisation the choice differs with the exception of Academic Writing which is also identical in all three. However, it should be noted that Academic Writing which used to be seen as very essential is an elective only. On the other hand one can argue that at Master level such a course is not necessary any more unless the students do not have a first degree – which normally is excluded. Also, is this not part of Research Methodology at this level?

In detail, the following elements of the 2-year curricula and syllabi have been identified:

Year 1, semester 1

The core subjects of the first semester consist of Research Methodology, Theory and Practice of Management and Human Resource Management. Realising that no students are admitted who are not “from the subject area”, it is questionable whether the second and third course unit are of adequate level. There is no obvious progression from a bachelor degree programme: “Theory and Practice encompasses all topics commonly taught on business courses at undergraduate and post-experience level....” This seems to be more like a bachelor unit or a bridging course. Also the Human Resource Management component may not allow the student to progress adequately to Master level: “The objective of Human Resources Management course is to equip students with ground knowledge....” (see also the remark within the analysis of the Bachelor programme).

In both modules also “skills” and “competencies” are being described. The difference between skills and competencies does not become clear which is not surprising as both mean the same. Instead of “competencies” the term “competence” (not the plural form) should be used according to the definition of the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework respectively, in the sense of authority and responsibility.

There is no evidence how these outcomes can be achieved. Neither the learning and teaching methods nor the assessment methods are linked; there is no obvious constructive alignment. The methods listed are more or less standardised across all course components as “stand-alone”.

The elective is supposed to complement the specialisations or leading into other areas. To have Managing of International Business as an elective in the specialisation General International Management is misleading. It should either be a core or has to be replaced by another elective. The module as such is interesting and also seems to match Master level.

Managing Change and Innovation, the alternative elective in the first semester, is much better suited, also for students who have no respective prior knowledge. This elective can also be chosen in the other specialisations.

As pointed out above, the core modules are the same, also one of the two electives, Managing of Change and Innovation. In the specialisation Finance, Banking and Accounting the second elective is Advanced Financial Corporation (probably Advanced Corporate Finance /Again, the terminology is not very clear; possibly a translation error, definitely an inconsistency within the text). The level of Advanced Corporate Finance appears to be significantly higher than the one in the other course units. The component is adequate for this specialisation, but is it really placed best as an elective when no solid foundation has been built? Later on it surely has its place.

In the specialisation Educational Institutions students can also select Contemporary Technologies in Education. This module goes into a different direction: not managing education but rather teaching and learning. This surely is an interesting area but whether it is placed best here could be argued as the students are not going to teach. If at a later stage this

elective could be chosen, after having learned more about digitalisation of and in educational institutions, such unit could be very interesting to make the students bridge the gap between their major future work perspective and that of teachers and learners.

Year 1, semester 2

In the first year, second semester, again platform modules are on offer across all master programmes, no differentiation yet as regards the core components. There are some differences as regards the electives on offer – with the exception of Academic Writing, having been referred to above.

In General International Management, International Communication and International Negotiating Skills is a possible choice. The design is adequate and literature quite up-to-date.

Tax Legislation is one of two electives in the specialisation Finance, Banks and Accounting. It seems to require prior knowledge in taxation. It is questionable whether the students have got this sound basis to reach the learning outcomes of the level specified:the student “will be competent to apply tax accounting in business...”It may be worthwhile considering whether this component should be placed here as –for example – financial accounting will be taught as compulsory element in semester III, and having covered this area before going into tax accounting might be reasonable to think about.

In Management of Educational Institutions Psychology and Pedagogy in Education is the elective (as often: the names in the description are not consistent with the text). Albeit the College stressed that this concentration did not focus on learning and teaching but on managing institution, this component has nothing to do with management. However, it could be regarded as an optional module to give management an idea of educational practice.

Year 2, semester 3

In the second year, third semester, all specialisations have different modules, forming their own profiles. This is the only semester in which the educational components are specifically designed for the respective specialisation only.

In General International Management the students are obliged to study Corporate Governance and Strategic Leadership, International Marketing Management, Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management, concluded by a Special Seminar in the field of Management. In all four modules the question is how the students have progressed within their prior studies to be able to cope with the expectations of the programme. There is no description of the Special Seminar mentioned.

As regards the electives it might be argued whether Intercultural and Business Ethics shouldn't be an option but obligatory, and Measuring and Managing Performance could have been dealt with on bachelor level (Balanced Score Card). The supplementary literature provided here may not be adequate as it is directed towards leading children, adults and families. Intercultural and Business Ethics is also very much focused on communication only.

The specialisation Finance, Banks and Accounting is focused on Finance and Accounting. Banks are only once referred to in the title but it seems to be there for “marketing reasons”. The description is very superficial, similar to the others in this specialisation. The areas to be learnt can give a limited scope into a wide area. The learning outcomes seem to be exaggerated as regards what students should have acquired after one semester of attending this specialisation.

As one elective, International Accounting Standards can be chosen. Here again is the question whether this module should not be obligatory, given the worldwide developments and the claim of “internationality”. The alternative module is Risk Management of Financial Institutions, and there, again it is noticeable that within one semester the real characteristics of the area, here Finance, Banks and Accounting, cannot be covered. It should be clearly stated that the students will get an introduction but cannot reach the level of expertise claimed to have achieved in the description of the modules by the end of the component.

The core modules of the specialisation Management of Educational Institutions in semester 3 are Quality Management in Education, Comparative Education Systems, Methods of Independent Learning and Economics of Education. The relationship between Methods of Independent Learning and the name of the concentration is not clear. The description clearly guides to learning and teaching but not to managing. To underline the intentions of the course component Economics of Education it might be wise to think about “New Public Management”, specifying on educational institutions – developing further the idea of the past proposal.

As electives students can either select Development of curriculum, Teaching & Multimedia Technologies of Adult education with special needs. Again the question can be raised to which extent these modules fall within the scope of the specialisation or whether they are more directed to future teachers.

Year 2, semester 4

In all programmes students have to submit a thesis at the end of this semester; this is the contents of the whole semester, i.e. a workload representing 30 credits are foreseen. This corresponds to international standard. Unfortunately, there is no description of the Master thesis according to the template used for the other educational components. In annex 4 a “Regulation for preparing diploma thesis Master” are submitted (again an irregularity as regards the title; in the annex the defence is integrated into this regulation). The regulation is very detailed (13 pages) and helpful but does not identify the learning outcomes at all, focusing more on the technical and organisational part of writing and submitting a Master thesis.

Recommendations

Explain why the entry requirements for this programme differ according to specialisations which the student should be able to select at the end of the first year at the

latest. Clarify also why students have to sit for different additional examinations when applying for one programme. They do not register at that time in a “specialisation programme”. The specialisation is not a programme but a part of the Master programme International Management.

The modules Theory and Practice of Management and Human Resource Management of the first semester don't appear to be of Master level. These modules have to be revised to arrive at the required level.

Follow the principle of constructive alignment and re-design the programme so that the interrelationship between learning outcomes, learning and teaching and assessment becomes obvious.

The purpose of electives is to offer the student an opportunity to deepen or widen the knowledge, skills and competence in his specialisation. “Widen” may include educational components which go beyond the chosen specialisation. Electives do not have the purpose to offer basics of the programme, those should be part of the obligatory core.

Describe in the same format as you did outline the other modules the Special Seminar and also the Master thesis. There should be no module without formal description.

The specialisation should either include stronger role of Banks or it should be renamed to Finance and Accounting.

The specialisation Management of Educational Institutions should clearly focus on Management issues and not on Teaching. Presently it lacks this clear profile.

4.2.1.3 One-year MA in International Management (60 credits)

The main issue that needs to be addressed in the case of this programme is whether this is a programme with different specializations (in General International Management; Finance, Banks and Accounting; and Management of Educational Institutions) or is this rather a case of three different programmes. Judging by the curriculum, there is no overlap between the three in the first semester (the second semester is the same for all three but it only includes Research Methodology and work on the thesis). During the site visit, the management has been able to list reasons why these specializations have their place on the market for higher education but were not able to answer the question of why they should be considered as part of the same programme.

It might be expected that students can enrol in this type of program only if they have finished a 4-year undergraduate program. This is not the case here – with the exception of Finance, Banks and Accounting. As this was not explained (see above) one may assume that it is probably financially viable to offer 1-year programs only if the courses are carried out for the students of both programmes simultaneously. In this case possible different levels and

background may have to be considered. However, nothing of this is described in the SER. The components and their respective contents are identical to those of the 2-year Master programmes, second year (including the 4th semester, reserved for the Master thesis). Therefore the evaluation of the second year of the 2-year Master is identical for the 1-year Master and does not have to be repeated here.

(Note: the evaluation of Staff, Research and International Cooperation, Finance and Infrastructure / Space and Equipment, Quality Assurance is outlined within the first part of this report, jointly for all programmes submitted for accreditation – see 3.1-3.4).

Recommendation

Drop the 1-year Master programme. There is not a clear profile of one programme; there appear to be three separate Master programmes which the College did not apply for and which – in this format – are not suitable, given the entry requirements and no distinctive specification of students.

4.2.2 Conclusions

Whereas the didactic concept of the 2-year programme is reasonable, a first year as a common platform and the second year made up by specialisations and the Master thesis, it is not the case for the 1-year programme. The specialisations here appear to be intended as stand-alone Master programmes. They consist of the educational components of year 2 of the 2-year Master programme. There is no explanation given for these variations. In the discussions with academic staff it became obvious that the didactic concept was communicated to them.

Because of the deficiencies outlined above, there are some doubts about the level of the Master degree programmes in terms of international standards, i.e. in comparison to the National and European Qualifications Frameworks. As regards the difference between the bachelor and master studies (in the level of knowledge and skills, requirements), management claims that the bachelor program gives to the students a more basic knowledge in a certain field whereas the master program goes deeper and puts more emphasis on scientific research. However, it is not clear whether this is actually the case when we look at the syllabi analysed above. For example, from the description of the course Management of Human Resources on the bachelor level (SER pp. 35) and the course Human Resource Management on the masters level (SER pp. 139) no difference can be identified.

Naming the programme “International” Management: is there an international component in all of the specializations (including Management of educational institutions)? The management is saying that there is and that graduates will be able to work in the countries of Western Balkan given the knowledge and skills they will develop in their studies. When asked where the international elements can be found, they pointed out that they are included in the curriculum (they are teaching students how to work in international environment).

However, International Management requires more than that – as outlined above. If not, any programme in Business Management would qualify as International, given the fact that international issues are in the whole environment of business activities.

Also, the educational components described in the programmes could be questioned. For example, do the students that specialize in management of educational institutions really need a course on International Financial Management that focuses on things such as exchange rate risks? Or, in the same specialisation, do they need to know how to teach? (Methods of Independent Learning)

Throughout the description a standardised approach is used to identify independent study time for students: In all 8-credit components 150 hours are stipulated, whereas in 6-credit modules 120 hours are foreseen. The difference to the whole workload of 240, respectively 180 hours (1 credit = 30 credits) is made up by lectures. Obviously teachers do not have freedom to exploit possible learning and teaching methods which may deviate from this fixed framework. Also, the term student-centred learning seems to be misunderstood as it is related to – what seems to be meant – independent work.

The time reserved for independent study might be sufficient but should always be related to the learning outcomes and their learning and teaching methods. Also, it is assumed that all students are full-time students (stipulated in the SER). However, many students are working, at least part-time. To which extent this has an impact on contact versus independent study time, is not indicated.

As in the Bachelor programme ECTS is applied in a stereotyped way, not picking up the philosophy behind. On the surface, credits are allocated. It is hoped that a regular evaluation of the workload was carried out if the programmes were accredited so that it should be revealed whether students can manage the programme in time or not.

Teaching methods are outlined as being standardised as “lectures and colloquia”, however, the discussions with teaching staff revealed that different approaches are being used to achieve the objectives. Whether this will actually be the case has to be analysed in re-accreditation processes in case of accreditation of the Master programmes.

Admission criteria and admission procedure measures are outlined at length. The issue is that there are no clear explanations given neither in the SER nor by academic staff about differences revealed above. Sometimes the ET has the feeling that staff is not aware of the differences or that these differences are caused by copy-and-paste or misinterpretation of translators.

As the student numbers are doubtful, it cannot be safely said that the ratio between academic staff and students is appropriate. If the figures given were interpreted correctly, there would not be enough staff for all the specifications in the two Master programmes. It is most likely that two-year and one-year Master programmes will be taught jointly.

Also for the Master level, the qualifications of staff appear to be adequate to the study-programmes, at least concerning the minima-criteria of KAA.

Overall Recommendation for the MA in International Management

The expert team **propose the 2-year Master programme in International Management** with the specialisation in General International Management and Finance, Banks and Accounting to be accredited.

The name of the programme should be changed in Business and Management with the specialisation in International Management and Finance and Accounting.

5 PROPOSAL FOR THE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION

The expert team comes to the conclusion, that at the given status **it proposes the accreditation of:**

- The 3-year Bachelor programme in International Management with three alternative specializations in:
 - General International Management
 - Finance and Banks
 - Accounting and Auditing

The name should be changed to Business and Management.

- The 2-year Master programme in International Management with the specialisation in General International Management and Finance, Banks and Accounting.

The name should be changed to Business and Management, in line with the name of the Bachelor programme.

The expert team **does not propose the accreditation of**

- The 1-year Master programme
- The specialisation in Management of Educational Institution being not focused on Managing Educational Institution.