



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

PrBHE “Heimerer College”

Psychology of Assessment and Intervention, Master programme

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Zagreb, May 31, 2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | 2 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 3 |
| 1.1. Context..... | 3 |
| 1.2. Site visit schedule | 4 |
| 1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation..... | 4 |
| 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION | 5 |
| 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration..... | 5 |
| 2.2. Quality management | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| 2.3. Academic staff | 7 |
| 2.4. Educational process content..... | 8 |
| 2.5. Students..... | 9 |
| 2.6. Research..... | 10 |
| 2.7. Infrastructure and resources | 10 |
| 3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET..... | 11 |
| 4. APPENDICES (<i>if available</i>) | Error! Bookmark not defined. |



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: April 30, 2019

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Melita Kovačević, University of Zagreb, Croatia
- Prof. Dr. Danica Železnik, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia
- Prof. Dr. Helvi Kyngäs, University of Oulu, Finland

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Avni Gashi, Acting Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-evaluation report
- Meeting with the Management of College and extensive discussion between the responsibility persons of program and the expert team, and representatives of KAA
- The Code of good practice and guidelines for site-visit, provided by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency
- Site-visit of the facilities and equipment
- On-site visit 30 of April 2019 and discussion and observations during that visit



Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *ESG*
- *Legislation on HE*
- *KAA manual*

1.2. Site visit schedule

2. Site visit was scheduled as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 3. 08.40 | Meeting at the reception of the hotel |
| 4. 09.00 – 10.30 | Meeting with the management of the institution |
| 5. 10.40 – 11.30 | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative services |
| 6. 11.40 – 13.00 | Lunch break |
| 7. 13.00 – 13.40 | Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure |
| 8. 13.40 – 14.40 | Meeting with the heads of study programs |
| 9. 14.50 – 15.40 | Meeting with teaching staff |
| 10. 15.50 – 16.40 | Meeting with students |
| 11. 16.50 – 17.40 | Meeting with graduates |
| 12. 17.50 – 18.40 | Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders |
| 13. 18.45 – 19.00 | Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA |
| 14. 19.00 – 19.15 | Closing meeting with the management of the institution |

1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

During the visit the experts discussed their impressions of the self-evaluation report. It was allocated of responsibilities within the expert team in a following way: Prof. dr. Melita

4



Kovačević was responsibility of Institution evaluation and program of Psychology. Professor dr. Danica Železnik was responsibility of Management of Health Institutions and Services (MSC) and professor dr. Helvi Kyngäs was responsibility of Nursing Program (Bsc). However, professor Železnik and professor Kyngäs both met and discussed with heads of study programs (Management of Health Institutions and Services and Nursing) and their teaching staff. Expert team was involved in discussion with the management group of the institutions, quality assurance representatives and administrative, students, graduates, employers of graduates and other stakeholder. Prof. dr. Melita Kovačević was chair of expert team. All members of the expert team agreed to conduct their work during the on-site visit together divided those responsibilities according to KAA's invitation. All work was done in close co-operation.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission of the newly proposed programme in psychology, Psychology of Assessment and Intervention is to implement curriculum with qualified staff and using contemporary methodologies that will enable good quality professional education in psychology and psychology services. According to the SER, the objective is to provide education and learning environment which will prepare students to serve the society in an adequate way. In presentation of the programme, a valuable arguments are provided to ensure quality of teaching and learning.

Regarding the administration of the programme, it has been confirmed that there is a capacity and well prepared administrative support of qualified administrative staff. Besides having in place internal documents and regulations and being familiar with European standards, there are also well developed and elaborated procedures in order to assure efficient management.

One might notice, that there is a bit of overambitious plan and that it might happened that once the programme is put in place, there would be a need to adjust some procedures as well as revisit commitments.



Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Try to be a bit more realistic and better fitted to the real framework of functioning*

2.2. Quality management

In principal, all the criteria for quality management defined by the KAA manual have been met. All the staff participated in the self-evaluation process, they took very active part in the site visit and they were cooperative when discussing options and activities for improvement. Quality assurance covers the whole process of teaching and learning, all the stakeholders and management level as well.

QA system has developed adequate procedures that are planned to be followed regularly. However, it seems that those procedure and expectations on reporting are overdone and in real time, a question of cost-benefit analysis might be an important issue to deal with.

According to the information gathered during the site visit and talking to different stakeholders potential students and employers, it seems that there is a need for such a programme, different options for employability and confidence of the potential quality of a new progamme.

When applying SWOT analyses, it seems that a reality check could help the system to identify weak spots, regardless the fact that the programme has not been applied yet. This would also helped them to avoid some potential mistakes.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. It is necessary to be more efficient and to lower the number and frequency of meetings and regularly implemented procedures; the system has a tendency to become too bureaucratic*



2.3. Academic staff

Information and way they were presented in the SER were mainly meeting all the criteria specified in the KAA Accreditation manual. Some relevant additional information were also provided after the site visit. Still, there is a need to work on unified way of presenting the Cvs and published work, as well as to provide reliable and constant distinction between the relevant and non relevant information as well as to follow European, international standards when presenting the academic staff. Although the requirements in terms of PhD for professional programmes are less demanding and the proposed programme is meeting the minimum prescribed criteria, psychology is a field that requires higher level of academic degrees, both in education process and in practice. Many European countries have limited scope of work with lower degrees than a doctoral level, in some countries they cannot be even called psychologists if they did not reach certain level of education. Bearing this in mind, it should be stressed that the Programme, if aiming for a good quality, it should be focused on having more staff with doctoral education (PhD).

Another issue is full time employment. According to the law, for staff being employed in clinics/health institutions, it is allowed to have the second full time employment at the educational institutions. If correctly understood, this is not in accordance with European practice and definitely means that someone has two full time jobs. This position with no doubts questions the capacity of a person to perform both jobs with quality.

For the programme that has an ambitious to cover two areas, assessment and intervention, actually to be of a quite broad scope, and to enable future graduates to work both in clinical and non-clinical settings, it would be desirable to have more staff to be more profoundly trained in those areas and with more personal experience as well, while insisting on a professional nature of the programme.

In terms of number of staff, it could be taken as a sufficient number of academic staff, however they were very much dispersed in terms of their expertise and their educational background.

Compliance level: Partially compliant



ET recommendations:

- 1. It should be assured to have more permanent staff, FT positions and with PhD degree*
- 2. The core group of staff responsible for the programme should be full time employed at the College, with no other full time positions; starting a new programme is very demanding job and requires focused, concentrated and devoted time*
- 3. The programme offers and expectations should be aligned with the expertise academic staff has; short term trainings, participation in one day seminars and or participation in conferences could not be considered as professional training for the purpose of providing specific courses and trainings for students*

2.4. Educational process content

The study programme in general follows the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education. The curriculums fulfil main standards presented in KAA accreditation manual. The program has analytical syllabuses according to standards, has all the required components and it follows general national and international standards. The programme has 4 semesters, and two years, and a proper distribution of the ECTS – 30 per semester.

However, again, the programme is a bit over ambitious considering the novelty, experience of some staff and their expertise, and emphasising the professional side of the programme, it is not easily visible through the curriculum.

It seems that there are still too many teaching hours (some adjustments have been made as a result of discussions during the site visit and this is appreciated), and relatively too little practice. Also, it is not clear, why the thesis would have, still, 20 hours of teaching. What is the rationale for that? It is also hard to justify that there is no such a big difference in self-study between, for example, Professional ethics course and Advanced methodology in scientific research (90 vs. 120). At the same time, it is hard to understand why professional Ethics is an elective, in particular working in a such sensitive area of psychology as it is intervention and/or assessment. Even if students had this course on the BA level, they can have it again, on master level, but of course, in that case it will need to be prepared as an advance course. Also, being elective, it means all the students can decide on taking it or not. It should be must for those students who did not have it earlier, and those who are coming from different fields as it is planned. Or, why to still have lecture part in Practice? In some section where is the Practice, it



is also written Internship. Are these two different categories of practice? If not, than it needs to be corrected. If it is just another course, than it is vaguely explained. If yes, requires additional explanation. Practice/Internship is not given/explained in the programme.

Considering the load of learning hours for students and teaching load for teachers, there should be more refined analysis of real needs and capacity, and to implement some adjustments.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. There should be additional analysis and implementation of distribution of hours and ECTS*
- 2. It is necessary to revisit logic behind obligatory and elective courses and to make adjustments*
- 3. Better alignment of practice vs. theoretical part is required*
- 4. To leave more time and space for the thesis and not to have an overload of teaching in the last semester*

2.5.Students

The programme is not started yet, but all the information provided related to students are in accordance of the standards of the KAA Accreditation manual. The requirements for admission are also following the prescribed standards as well as the admission procedure itself is well defined.

It could be an issue how will the students from medical field follow a psychology programme. This is not usually accepted at other international institutions. If they are accepted for the programme, there should be a clear plan how those students will follow the programme and-or what kind of remedial courses will be offered to them.

The Heimerer College is assuring all the standard procedures for quality and provides adequate services for its students, so one expect that the same standards will be applied on this programme as well.

Compliance level: Fully compliant



ET recommendations:

1. *A further clarification for admitting the students from medical field needs to be provided; there should be a clear plan for them how to bridge their education and a background in psychology.*

2.6. Research

The College is putting additional efforts in strengthening research and considering the fact that there is a staff with international affiliations and established collaborations with other institutions, research is quite strongly put in a focus. Of course, this is still not enough to say that there are sufficient research outcomes.

On the other side, since the whole institutions is putting more emphasis on professional aspect of education, it should be appreciated that there is a wish and support to implement more research. Readiness to put additional funds and to support academic staff to perform more research has been observed.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *There should be well developed action plan and fitted to the capacity of staff and institution how to proceed with research; it should not be left solely to individual efforts that might end up with visible outcomes.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The infrastructure for teaching (classrooms) are in place and in good conditions. There is also proper financial plan to maintain high quality education and resources. Students and classrooms are also well equipped with IT technology, both in terms of hardware and software. Although library offers a data basis and access to journals, it is still noticed very modest number of the recent titles.



However, although there are places to perform practical work and trainings for specific needs of assessment psychology and psychological interventions, it still needs to be further improved and enriched.

ET recommendations:

- 1. To enrich library with new titles and try to avoid that academic staff are the main suppliers of reading literature for the students*
- 2. Spaces dedicated for practice in psychology programme, needs to be further enriched, to organise the space according to the professional standards, and at the same time to make space adequate for both, learning and practice*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study programme professional master in Psychology of Assessment and Intervention proposed by Heimerer College is *Substantially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study programme for a duration of *3 year* preferably with a number of students not to be higher than 40 students annually enrolled in the programme.

Expert Team

Chair

Melita Kovačević

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



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