

EVALUATION REPORT

Faculty of Philosophy University of Pristina

Site visit 25-26 June 2015

PROGRAMME RE-ACCREDITATION

Sociology (BA)

Philosophy (BA)

History (BA)

History (MA)

History (PhD).

(Draft Report: 14 July 2015)

1. Expert Team (ET)

Prof Reinhold Sackmann, PhD, Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg (DE)

Prof Pavo Barišić, PhD, University of Split (HR)

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2. Coordinators of KAA

Prof Ferdije Zushi-Etemi, PhD, State Council of Quality (KAA)

Ms Furtuna Mehmeti, Expert for Evaluation and Accreditation (KAA)

Mr Fisnik Gashi, Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring (KAA)

3. Programme re-accreditation

The panel was assembled to undertake the programme re-accreditation of:

- Sociology (BA)
- Philosophy (BA)
- History (BA)
- History (MA)
- History (PhD).

This report is based on the re-accreditation site visit that took place on 25-26 June 2015 and has subsequently been informed following the receipt of the additional documents that were requested. The discussions during the site visit to the Faculty of Philosophy University of Pristina included: a meeting with the management of the institution, a meeting with those responsible for the study programmes in question, a visit to the library, informatics room and psychological laboratories, a meeting with academic staff, a meeting with students, and a closing meeting with the management of the Faculty.

4. Documents and material received prior to the site visit

- Faculty of Philosophy Self-Evaluation Report (SER) dated September 2014 (314 pages),
- Previous Faculty evaluation reports dated 19 June 2012 (Report I) and 3 July 2012 (Report II),
- The External Experts' Report dated 14-15 May 2013,
- The External Experts' Report dated 24-25 May 2014,
- KAA sets of guidelines,
- Site visit agenda,
- Staff CVs (electronic version).

5. Additional documents requested

The following additional documents were received via the KAA on 3 July 2015:

- University strategic document “Strategjia për veprimtari kërkimore shkencore/artistike dhe zhillivimore 2013 – 2016” (45 pages),
- The strategic document of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo “Plani strategjik i arsimit në Kosovë 2011 – 2016”,
- Lists of publications of teaching staff,
- CVs of teaching staff.

Faculty strategic planning documents were also requested but no material was received.

6. General observations drawn from the meeting with the management of the Faculty of Philosophy

A plenary meeting was held with the following members of the Faculty management: Prof Ass Dr Dashmir Bexulli, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs of Faculty of Philosophy, Prof Assoc. Dr Agim Zogaj, Vice Dean of Finance of Faculty of Philosophy, Prof Ass Dr Muhamet Qerimi, Vice Dean for Science of Faculty of Philosophy, MA Ass Liridona Jemini-Gashi, Coordinator of Academic Development, MA Lecturer Meliha Brestovci, Translator/interpreter, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy.

The Dean of the Faculty Prof Dr Bujar Dugolli welcomed the panel at the closing meeting with the management. He summarised the fundamental achievements of the Faculty in the last period.

The Vice Dean of Academic Affairs Prof Ass Dr Dashmir Bexulli presented five programmes that were under consideration for reaccreditation. He briefly explained the history, developmental strategy and the current staff/student numbers in the Faculty. The panel then discussed issues regarding resource planning and allocation associated with the existing programmes, progress made in the quality assurance of the Faculty and overall student numbers. The advancement of interdisciplinary research conducted by the Faculty, as well as the improvement in Faculty and student scientific publications was recognised. The Vice Dean informed the evaluation team that the quotas of the enrolled students show a downward trend of 15-20 %. The accommodation capacities, research conditions and library facilities of the Faculty are improving. Further building works and imminent departmental moves were to take place. The visiting team was also informed that staffing was planned to increase in the future.

The number of teaching hours of professors and assistants was discussed. It was reported that assistants teach 10 hours per week and usually in different courses. The objection was that assistants do not have enough free time for their research and writing of their academic works. The payed free semester for research or sabbatical was also a matter of discussion. In addition to this, the mobility of academic staff and student exchange was discussed. It was stated that there is diversified international cooperation with universities and high schools abroad. However, there did not appear to be a specific Faculty plan associated with internationalisation that would have an impact on the curricula, staffing, staff and student exchange, research, etc. The evaluation panel was especially interested in the details of the Faculty strategy on research and teaching. These initial discussions were constructive and informative. They led to the request for additional documents listed in the section 5 above.

6. Meeting with students

The meeting with students included approximately 15 students who were studying: sociology, philosophy and history. There was a lively and open discussion that covered many aspects of the student experience. The discussions were held in English and moderated by the panel member from the European Students Union Ms Simona Dimovska.

Across the various disciplines that were represented in this session a good proportion of all students taking courses spoke and read English very well in addition to other languages. Students are really a credit to the Faculty. They are very active, well prepared, interested in modernisation and external opinion etc. With this profile of students, the Faculty will have bright future. The panel concluded that this is not the general profile for all students, but it is necessary to recognise that this group of students was very generous. Passion for their fields of study are most likely the cause of their commitment and willingness for further improvement. Although for many of the students their current field of study was not their first choice. Some of them began their studies at other faculties and universities.

The students also indicated that many of their fellow students had a reasonable grasp of one or more foreign languages, though the number of multi- or bi-lingual students varies to some degree (between 50-80 percent) given their respective fields of study . The students indicated that they would appreciate more structured module teaching

and content in English (or another appropriate language). If some final units were to be delivered in another language, this would have employment benefits. Several professors already deliver some parts of their modules in English and other languages. Via exchanges of memory sticks and copied articles, the students and staff have created an informal sharing system; in effect facilitating an emerging 'virtual library' to aid studies. The Faculty library has limited workplaces; inadequate range and number of texts, very few journals and much outdated material. Access to home computers and the Internet was widespread amongst students but limited at the Faculty.

There was strong support amongst students for the need to introduce more postgraduate programmes as the bachelor degree was generally regarded as of limited use in gaining employment. The students attending this session clearly enjoyed their programmes of study.

Concerning the methods that their teachers employ during lectures, it is evident that professors are trying to incorporate interactive teaching techniques as is feasible. Depending on the number of students per group, the teachers are trying to modernise approaches and techniques. Students have increased opportunities for debate, preparation of a presentation on a certain topic, group work etc. Students seem to be satisfied with their communication with the teachers and the presentation of the necessary materials.

Another positive thing in the teacher - student relationship is the question of feedback from students. A substantial percentage of teachers are interested in students' opinions and their feedback concerning content, methods, and the approaches used for a certain subject. This occurs despite the fact that there is a lack of formal evaluation at the Faculty as well as at the University level. Also, sometimes students have the chance to work on the Faculty newsletter, to organise events, and to participate in different projects.

However, the Faculty also has some weaknesses concerning students' issues. Firstly, student mobility is one of the largest weaknesses. Students rarely have the opportunity to participate in shorter or longer exchange programmes during their studies. From their perspective, there are several main reasons as to why this is happening. The two main reasons identified are the domestic political situation, which is not directly connected with the Faculty, and knowledge of foreign languages.

Students are not motivated to learn foreign languages. Students usually do not learn more than one language, although they have the opportunity to do so. Additionally, they asked for scientific clubs for students, as well as other advantages available to students, at least for best students. Generally, some of the issues raised may be improved by the Faculty management, however some must be addressed at the University level. This due to the fact that the University is highly centralised and many processes have to be approved by the University management.

8. Visit to Library, Informatics Room, and Laboratory of Psychology

The Faculty library is new and well equipped, but it is limited in a number of respects. It contains few student workplaces, a limited number of rather outdated texts, few physical journals, and limited access to electronic journals. Currently, stock is not electronically classified. In a number of disciplines, the existing level stock is inappropriate to support postgraduate level study. There are also weaknesses in the library stock that supports bachelor level studies.

The panel also visited the informatics room and the new established laboratory of psychology with new computers and modern devices for research. It is a specific improvement in the scientific and teaching infrastructure of the Faculty.

9. Meeting with academic staff

The meeting with Faculty teaching staff encompassed representatives of programmes under re-accreditation. The discussions were honest, constructive, and very open. The talks revealed the high quality, care, and enthusiasm of the staff. Approximately fifteen staff members attended the meeting from a range of disciplines including Sociology, Philosophy and History. It was clear that staff at the meeting were highly dedicated and enjoyed their teaching and interactions with their students. Staff indicated they had a high level of freedom to change and deliver their individual syllabi. Like most academic staff across Europe, they were subject to a number of pressures as student number rise and resources stay severely constrained. In Kosovo, these tensions are particularly pronounced.

After three professors presented their programmes to be re-accredited in the areas of Philosophy, Sociology and History, a set of issues were raised during the meeting, including:

- The number of teaching hours for assistants per week (10) is remarkably higher than the teaching norm of professors (6). These norms can be increased to five or even eight additional teaching hours per week. This ratio of teaching hours is considerably high and it does not leave enough free time for assistants to do their scientific research, write their doctoral thesis, and publish their works in international scientific publications.
- The issue of gender equalisation at the Faculty was also raised. Women as professors and assistants were very well represented at the meeting. However, it was said that the gender equalisation is not adequately implemented on all levels at the University. Despite appropriate legislation, there exists a lack of women at decision making positions in society generally. In that respect, the Faculty is a notable place where courses and lectures on gender equalisation are taught and promoted. The departments of Sociology and Philosophy have an important role in this. The Faculty has developed a significant collaboration with civil society organisations on issues of gender policy.
- The strategy of the Faculty was also a topic of discussion. It was a very explicit recommendation of KAA experts' team. In the Self-Evaluation report, it is written that the Faculty "has developed its strategic plan. The Faculty's strategic plan is developed in consultation with academic staff individually, departments, and also faculty governing bodies: the Council and the Dean". However, the staff could not prove that there is such a document like the purported strategic plan of the institution. The panel requested therefore that the strategic document of the Faculty to be sent additionally. However, the expert team received only the strategic documents of the University of Pristina and the Government of Kosovo.
- The issue of the assessment of academic, teaching, and learning staff as well as student assessment regarding courses and teaching remains a particular problem. Staff indicated that they generally did not receive any feedback on the results of student questionnaires and feedback systems. Samples of the University and Faculty range of model questionnaires can be found in

section 3, pages 286-306 of the SER document. Assessments are not conducted regularly at the Faculty level.

- Regarding student numbers and the staff-student ratio, it was said that there is a declining trend of enrolled students at approximately 15-20%. SER calculates that the ratio of Full Time academic staff (57) per 4594 students on three levels is 0.02. If accurate, this is high and has implications for the quality of teaching.
- It was recognised that the library represents difficult challenges for both students and teachers. Online access to journals is limited. There is no institutional online access for staff or students for such systems as JSTOR.
- The Institute of Social and Humanistic Research has proven an important development that aids research. The journal NJOHJA publishes specific thematic blocs whereas the Bulletin of the Faculty publishes interdisciplinary articles from all academic staff. There is a need for a Faculty structured research policy, although it was clearly recognised that resources are very limited and this situation could not easily be rectified. Requests by staff for research support from the Rectorate were also felt to be unlikely to succeed.
- A matter of dispute was the issue of a free research semester or academic year. Some academic staff members stated that the opportunity for sabbaticals is only open to full professors, whereas the other asserted that assistants have right free research semester. However, it is obviously not often the case and few of them had used the sabbatical. Academic staff considered research as important for their teaching but this element is not recognised in their contracts. For all teaching staff research is an important element, and particularly, those designated to supervise doctoral studies.

10. Meeting with responsible persons for each study programmes

The visiting party disbursed in order to have separate meetings with the various teaching staff discipline teams leading and responsible for the five programmes for re-accreditation. The following sub-sections details the findings and recommendations

resulting from these sets of discussions plus the analysis of the additional documents requested and received following the site visit.

10.1 Sociology (BA) - Analysis and recommendation

Existing programme re-accreditation – Prof Reinhold Sackmann, PhD

The on-site visit concerning the Department of Sociology started with a meeting with two members of the staff: Prof Dr Agim Hyseni and Ass Ardian Gola as representatives of the department. The meeting took place in a collegial, friendly and open-minded atmosphere. During the day, there were also meetings with the staff, including three assistants of the sociology department, and a meeting with students, including three sociology students.

10.1.1 Introduction

Going into its second re-accreditation the BA Sociology at the University of Pristina is a well-established study programme with an experienced staff delivering it. As the study programme follows European standards both in words and practice, it seems appropriate to change the rhythm of accreditation processes in so far as rather dense controls every three years should be shifted towards rhythms of five to six years.

Whereas teaching and study programmes do not appear to be of urgent concern, the infrastructure for teaching and opportunities for research are still highly problematic. In a modern understanding (that is since the 19th century), teaching at the university level requires staff and institutions that allow for independent innovative research. Addressing the deficiencies in this regard should be of highest priority in the new nation state of Kosovo, and they should also be of highest priority to the University of Pristina, which remains the most important university in the country. As issues in regards to infrastructure and research were already mentioned in the general section of this report, some specific opportunities and risks for the discipline Sociology will be discussed in this part of the report.

10.1.2 Academic Programme and Student Management

The BA Sociology programme at the University of Pristina is well-established. Its module structure corresponds to European standards. It must be noted that “European standards” is mentioned here not as a formal requirement, but rather as the way in which international standards for the discipline of sociology developed, allowing for the existence of a general structure that is also able to be adapted to the specific circumstances at the place where it is taught.

At the University of Pristina, sociology at the BA level is taught in a well-balanced system of sound theory knowledge, broad practical research methods, and a wide variety of special sociologies. One of the strengths of the current study programme is that the important subjects are obligatory, thereby guaranteeing a common standard for the discipline. Of equal importance is that there is a high number of courses, between which students can choose. This applies mainly to special sociologies. Thus students and staff can specialise, which is helpful for motivation, research and professional work after leaving university.

Highly laudable is that in a number of courses, such as urban sociology (Self-evaluation report: 41) or collective memory (ibid: 45), contact with practical research is made possible. Project type modules like the so-called “Practicum of Sociology” (ibid: 35) give the opportunity for students to become intrigued by the empirical application of sociological thinking and methods in a very specific field. For future development of the study programme, one could think to strengthen this part of didactic even more and thereby cultivate a specific profile of sociology at the University of Pristina.

Project type elements are related to the self-declared research orientation of the study programme in the fields of transformation of Kosovar society and to collective memory (ibid: 22). Both fields of research appear in a number of courses. They illustrate how active the sociology department is in analysing current tendencies, problems and potentials of the current Kosovar society. “Public sociology” therefore is not just a title of one course, but the whole department seems to be involved in trying to do its best in supporting the new nation state in its efforts to come to terms with a highly dynamic society.

Two points are suggested for the future development of the study programme: a) At present the module “Diploma Thesis” is awarded 8 ECTS (ibid: 26), which corresponds with the upper limit set by the University of Pristina (ibid: 14). One major goal of studying at the university level is to develop individual thinking, research, practice and habitus. One major instrument to achieve this is an individual diploma thesis.

Therefore, it is suggested that the diploma thesis be accompanied by colloquia in a separate module, which should be awarded additional 5 ECTS, thereby giving the diploma thesis a higher weight in the study programme. b) A further suggestion is the introduction of a module “Internship”, also to be awarded 5 ECTS. The study program mentions the possibility of internships outside the university (ibid: 22), but gives them no credits in the study programme, which is unusual with regard to European standards. The rationale for strengthening an internship is that students of sociology usually enter numerous, heterogeneous fields of employment after leaving university, as many studies show. To get an idea of what kind of work is available, and what interest future employees have, short work experiences of internships are highly useful in processes of individual orientation, especially if they are reflected in obligatory essays. Internships should be made possible in the broad perspective of employment of sociologists, which empirically is far more extensive than “social researchers” (ibid: 20).

10.1.3 Staff

Most of the staff of the sociology department are internationally educated (e.g. Strasbourg, Zagreb) and all are experienced in teaching and scientific writing. Differing from other disciplines at UoP, there is a balance of some full professors and junior staff. Most of the staff publishes regularly. The books of some of them are kept in the Library of the Congress (Islami, Berishaj, Berisha), while other works are recorded as having been cited in google scholar (Islami, Berishaj, Krasniqi, Berisha). In addition, some staff members have experience in empirical research.

Critical is the concept of staff development: Despite having an accredited PhD programme in Sociology at UoP the programme has yet to start due to delays originating outside of the department. As the teaching load of assistants is very high compared to European standards, young academics are rarely successful in finishing their PhD thesis or in writing post-doctoral papers. A leading university in a nation state allowing a structure where young academics are not supported in developing independent research skill that will allow them to enter later as fully experienced academics professorship, will degrade their universities to high schools just teaching knowledge produced by others and outside of the institution. The current short-sightedness with regard to junior staff has to be changed to a systematic concept of development paths for junior staff. The two most important steps are the start of a PhD programme in sociology and a lowering of teaching obligations for assistants.

10.1.4 Research and international cooperation

One of the major hindrances of a functioning scientific system in Kosovo at present is that there exists neither sufficient national research programmes, nor funds at a university or faculty level to finance research. A university without research is just a school, which purports to be a university having wrongly acquired a different name.

Therefore, it is remarkable that some members of the sociology department's staff were able to attract international and private funding for a number of research projects conducted during the last decade. However, there is still no infrastructure for enduring social research needed in such a rapidly changing society experiencing numerous cleavages.

A number of departmental staff members developed working relations with different countries such as Croatia, USA, France, Macedonia, Albania, Austria and Italy. The international conferences are just one fruit of these ties.

There is still a large gap between the enthusiasm of the staff, the culture of individual and collective initiative in doing research and practicing international cooperation on the one hand, and the lack of infrastructure and historical deficiencies on the other hand. Why a shortage of autochthonic scientific journals are of critical importance in this situation, has to be explained in more detail as there is a linkage between the history of the discipline Sociology in Albania, Serbian language policy, language education in Kosovo and research opportunities in Kosovo. In communist Albania sociology as a discipline was banned until 1986. Therefore, most sociological works that constitute the core of the literature in the discipline are still not translated into Albanian. Due to the Serbian language policy there was also hardly any sociological texts published in Albanian. Therefore, we have the very problematic situation of a dramatic lack of native language material in sociology, which is a very rare phenomena in our current world. On top of this, foreign language education in Kosovo is still not so advanced as to produce a reasonable number of starting BA students that are able to read foreign language texts in Sociology. In addition, there still exists no state funding of research comparable to the National Science Foundation in Kosovo. In an ideal world one would be able to change this miserable situation of a lack of readable material and insufficient readers at once by either translating all important sociological literature into Albanian or enabling all BA students of Sociology to read fluently scientific texts in one foreign language or to produce at present so many excellent new texts out of current research by Kosovar sociologists. But in reality we can only proceed by improving the situation

with a step by step approach in order to attempt to better the situation in a combined effort. Currently, and mainly through the work of Albanian publishers, the number of sociology books translated into Albanian is increasing. Any support of this effort would be helpful as this development is still far too slow. Also, foreign language teaching quality is increasing in Kosovo. Two English language modules in the study programme BA Sociology are helpful, but at the current speed of change, high numbers of foreign language speaking BA students seems only likely to be achieved in two decades time. It will be essential to restrict university entrance for students of sociology at the MA and PhD-level to the group of students that can fluently read foreign languages. In this situation, publications of current research in Albanian also seems to be an important step needed to increase the number of texts that could be used by students.

Therefore there is a great deal of rationale for the efforts of part of the sociology department to launch a scientific journal called “Njohja”, which is currently published yearly in three volumes, both in English and Albanian. As I am only able to read English I can only judge that all English articles fulfil current scientific standards and are also important contributions to the research and reflection of the current situation of Kosovo society (in the context of developments in international constellations). As there are currently just three other scientific social science journals written in Albanian (and edited in Albania), it seems to be worthwhile to cultivate the publication of a social science journal at the leading Kosovar university. To strengthen its potential as a peer-reviewed journal in Albanian or English it should be opened to social scientists world-wide, with clear published criteria regarding how articles should be submitted, and how they are reviewed. As these are strategic measurements to place the Kosovar university system on a research path, support by the university seems to be advisable.

10.1.5 Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

One of the dismal sites at UoP are the libraries mentioned in all evaluation reports (e.g. ER_UoP_Soc_2012: 8; ER_UoP_FacPhil_2013: 22). The situation has not yet changed. In sociology, there are approximately 1000 books, of which a few English introductory books like Giddens and Ritzer are lined up in dozens. The rest of the books in French, Albanian and Serbian or Croatian are neither catalogued nor systematised. The situation in the university library next door is no different - a library with few books. Journals are almost completely missing, access journals by computers is also not available at the faculty library, and is nearly non-existent at the university library. It is important to remember that at the centre of modern science is the autonomous reading of written scientific communication. Therefore, it is strongly recommended

that the university *establish one workable library* as soon as possible. This would include buying books regularly, cataloguing them and providing access to journal licensed computers in the library.

A pleasant experience during the site visit of 2015 was the archive of MA, diploma and PhD theses of the faculty of philosophy. Especially for the discipline of sociology with its lack of books in Albanian and its lack of books on the current Kosovar society, this small archive is useful as there are a growing number of books in the form of theses. Therefore, it would be helpful to ease access to these theses. Currently, there is no list of the theses, located in the archive that is accessible to the students (despite the fact that a list does exist). It would also be helpful to place the theses in the public part of the library (at least in the case of any theses of which there is a known second exemplar of the thesis, which is regularly the case as supervisors do also get a copy).

10.1.6 Quality Management

Quality management of the study programme BA Sociology seems to be sufficient.

Final Recommendation:

The study programme BA Sociology should be re-accredited for five years.

10.2 Philosophy (BA) - Analysis and recommendation

Existing programme re-accreditation - Prof Pavo Barišić, PhD

The sub-panel external Prof Pavo Barišić PhD met and had a lively and instructive discussion with the head of the Department of Philosophy Prof Ass Dr Hasnije Ilazi and Ass MA Kristë Shtufi. Later on, the meeting joined panel member Ms Simona Dimovska.

10.2.1 General Findings

During the on-site visit the expert team gained the conviction that the establishment and accreditation of the Philosophy study programme on the BA level was justified and necessary. The Department of Philosophy has a 43 year tradition in teaching Philosophy since its establishment in 1972. It has educated many generations of professors of Philosophy and therefore it is fully legitimate that this Department offers programmes both at the BA and at the MA level. Furthermore, the expert team recommends that the Department of Philosophy completes the offer of study programmes in Philosophy at all three levels: apart from BA and MA programmes, it should introduce in the near future also Doctoral study in Philosophy.

The open discussions at meetings with responsible persons for the study programme of Philosophy and students have clearly proved that the relationship between teaching staff and students at the Department of Philosophy works well in both directions. Some advanced students work together with professors on their research studies and cooperate in supplying relevant books and international scientific literature for teaching courses. Students are satisfied with courses they are offered in the context of the study programme and with the way they are presented by their academic teachers. At the meeting with students from different departments of the Faculty, the students of Philosophy were active and critical in the discussion. They praised the positive aspects and pointed out also the insufficiencies and inadequacies of the study programmes and teaching process.

The conversation at the meetings with the teaching staff revealed some critical points, which need to be reconsidered and eventually corrected:

- insufficient working out of strategic plan,
- lack of teaching staff in general,

- too many teaching hours, particularly for assistants (10 + 5-8 per week),
- lack of optional courses at other faculties and studies,
- insufficient financial support for the research,
- inappropriate support of professors and especially assistants for free semester or year for research and studying abroad.

The discussion at the meeting with students indicated three main insufficiencies:

- mobility of students is not well organised, some courses from Erasmus and other exchange programmes are not adequately recognised,
- quality assessment of teachers through student surveys and other quality assurance means is not sufficiently conducted,
- due to a lack of academic staff, teaching groups are sometimes too big.

10.2.2 Findings concerning strategy and mission of the institution

The SER states that the Faculty has developed its strategic plan. However, the panel got the impression during the meeting with responsible teaching staff that this strategy is not appropriately developed at the department level nor at the level of the Faculty as a whole. The strategic plan should encompass in detail all relevant issues, including number of academic staff and its perspective at least five years in advance, teaching materials, literature, students etc. The strategic document should be applied as a scale for measuring the performance of research and teaching at all levels in order to improve quality assurance.

Recommendation

In order to fulfil its academic mission, the Faculty of Philosophy should elaborate a strategic plan as a united document for all its departments and studies. The strategy for a longer period should be worked out in yearly operative programmes.

10.2.3 Findings concerning research issues

In accordance with its mission and the recommendation of the KAA accreditation experts, the Faculty of Philosophy founded in 2011 the *Institute for Social and Humanistic Studies*. The Institute designed and implemented its first research projects

and published three volumes of the journal NJOHJA with articles in Albanian and English. The collaborators in the journal are, apart from professors and assistants from the Faculty, visiting professors and scientists from abroad – UK, France, Albania, Croatia, etc. This is considered to be an appropriate opportunity for the promotion of Faculty members and especially young scholars, who can benefit from publication of various scientific works.

However, a serious problem is that scientific articles published in the NJOHJA journal as well as in domestic journals in general are underestimated. Criteria for the scientific promotion of academic staff prefer publications in foreign journals and works written in English. Such a scientific policy could lead to discrimination of scientists who publish in domestic journals. It could also have a negative impact on the development of domestic scientific production and on the development of the Albanian language.

Recommendation

The Faculty of Philosophy should initiate changes in scientific policy and demand a better estimation of domestic scientific production. It should also try to enhance its own scientific research strategy. The University of Pristina and the Government of Kosovo should establish regular support for scientific research. It will be crucial for the future development of the Department of Philosophy to use and concentrate scientific resources in order to acquire the necessary financial means to pay its regular and external academic staff in a sustainable manner. Faculty members who are receiving research funds have to be financially and institutionally rewarded for their success. The expert team strongly supports the intention of the Department to improve research in cooperation advanced students.

10.2.4 Findings concerning international cooperation

The Department of Philosophy has already established quite strong international research contacts with scientific communities abroad. Members of the Department have developed individual research projects, but the expert team noticed a deficiency of systematic financial support for research projects. Neither the University, the Faculty, nor the Government has developed a strategy for regular institutional funding of scientific research. The representatives of the Department of Philosophy declared to be interested in research on Philosophy and its socio-cultural implications, but this seems to be more their enthusiastic individual activity than the regularly planned

strategy of the Faculty. The expert team considers that at the University of Pristina and the Faculty of Philosophy, there is not yet any consolidated form of research lines based on the academic tradition of established research universities. This could be seen as a result of financial and capacity limitation, small number of professors, lack of strategy for research projects and policy, etc.

Recommendation

Due to the fact that it possesses some internationally well-educated researchers and external collaborators with a publication list that meets high international expectations, the Department of Philosophy should be granted the possibility to acquire third-party funds at a national and international level for their projects and publications. Researchers should also be granted the possibility to take sabbaticals and to devote themselves to their research.

10.2.5 Findings concerning the teaching staff

One of the disputed issues at the Faculty of Philosophy is a lack of teaching staff and the problem of too many teaching hours, particularly for assistants. They have a norm of 10 hours per week. An extra problem is that one assistant or professor needs to deliver many different courses at varied departments and have more than the average number of teaching hours. Thus, the ground norm could be extended to 5 or even 8 additional hours. Despite the fact that the Faculty in general increased the number of teaching staff in recent years, it remains insufficient for the enlarged number of enrolled students.

During the site visit, the expert team noticed, for example, that one professor at the Department of Philosophy was retired and no one assistant or professor has been selected as his replacement. It is a good academic tradition that after retirement of a professor his chair should be replaced by hiring another professor or two assistants. The Department helped itself by engaging three assistants among advanced students. It is a useful provisional remedy for dealing with a lack of teaching staff, but it is not a permanent solution to the problem. This issue is also connected with the problem of too many teaching hours for assistants who need more free time for research, their further education, and international cooperation. The only real solution is the employment of an educated teaching staff.

The panel also became acquainted with the problem of uneven distribution of the mentoring of BA and MA theses. There are no quotas and some professors or assistants supervise too many students, whereas other professors and assistants have too few. This fact could have an impact on the quality of mentoring. It is advisable therefore to prescribe mentoring quotas at the Faculty level or to introduce some other standards for mentoring.

Recommendation

For the number of enrolled students at the BA as well as at the MA level it is necessary to adequately increase the teaching capacities. It is of course recommended that the Faculty develop and enforce a clear career plan for employees in which their academic qualifications, publication list, teaching practice, research activities, and language skills will be adequately rewarded by the salary they are actually paid. Teaching staff should not teach too many different courses, nor too many hours in order to have enough time for their research and international co-operation. The Faculty should obviously increase the number of teaching staff in an appropriate relation to the number of students. The panel also recommends regulation of mentoring quotas.

10.2.6 Findings concerning study programme and optional courses

The evaluation panel believes that the Bachelor programme of Philosophy has been very well established. The structure of the programme corresponds to international standards and gives sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection, and analysis. It is based on the overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and accepted by the teaching staff. The criteria of the Bologna process have been implemented and the students expressed wide approval of the BA programme. It is worth noting the positive practice concerning multidisciplinary cooperation between departments. Some lecturers are engaged in different studies – Philosophy, Sociology, Political Science, etc. The Faculty is a multidisciplinary institution and it is important that students, aside from courses in Philosophy, can take also other courses and become acquainted with related teaching methods and scientific techniques. During discussions with the members of the academic staff the evaluation team concluded that the optional courses at other higher education institutions had not been appropriately developed and applied. Various administrative obstacles were highlighted as the main reason for this.

Recommendation

The evaluation team considers that the institution of optional courses was a very positive practice worth preserving. Therefore, it would be very important for the students and the quality of studies to try to solve administrative obstacles and to make it possible for students to attend optional courses at other faculties of the University of Pristina.

10.2.7 Findings concerning books and teaching publications

During the site visit members of the panel reviewed the contingent of book donations acquired by the students for the Department of Philosophy. It is certainly a praiseworthy initiative to supply the Department by the needed literature. The panel members welcomed this action and recommended other avenues by which they could receive book donations. Inspection of library premises convinced the evaluation team that only a few classical books in Philosophy have been translated into the Albanian language. Major classical philosophical works are not part of the public Albanian culture and students cannot study them if they are unable to read foreign languages. Since the Department of Philosophy wants to focus its research on the history of philosophy, practical and cultural philosophy, it is a task not only to interpret and analyse these works in original, but also to translate classical philosophical works into the Albanian language and to communicate them by way of organising public events to discuss their content. The duty of the Department is also to share its knowledge and competence within the community of the University as well as in the public space of Albanian culture. In this regard, it should be praised that the Faculty of Philosophy publishes its own scientific journals and textbooks.

Recommendation

The panel would recommend that the Faculty of Philosophy provide funded projects for the publication of textbooks. It is also recommended that a systematic programme for the supply of foreign literature as well as translation of major works in teaching areas into the Albanian language, not only by professional translators but also by academic experts specialised in these scientific branches, be instituted. Therefore, a

considerable part of the budget available at the Faculty or Department of Philosophy should be used for organising public events to stimulate public debates on philosophical issues.

Final Recommendation

The BA Programme in Philosophy and the given infrastructure as seen during the on-site visit and in the examination of the documents fully justifies the positive assessment of the Department of Philosophy.

The BA programme in Philosophy is recommended for continued approval of five years.

10.3 History (BA) Analysis and recommendation

Existing programme re-accreditation – Konrad Clewing, PhD

The sub-panel external Dr Clewing met and had a lively and instructive discussion with the heads of the three study programmes under evaluation, Dr sc. Selim Bezeraj (BA), Prof Dr Ibrahim Gashi (MA), and Prof Ass Dr Muhamet Mala (PhD). In the beginning, the meeting was joined by panel member Ms Simona Dimovska. This remark applies to all three study programmes, since they were discussed together, which did not leave much time for each individual programme.

10.3.1 General Findings (regarding all three programmes in history)

Arranging and teaching history programmes in a surrounding such as post-conflict and newly independent Kosovo remains a delicate and difficult task. Given the impressions from the meetings with the heads of the programmes, the teaching staff and the students, the Department of History is handling those difficult tasks well. Yet there obviously remain things which require further improvement: international cooperation outside Albania and Macedonia seems to be practically non-existent, the language skills of staff and students should be supported by a deliberate strategy as part of the overall strategy of the Department/the Faculty (to encourage language acquisition within the country and/or during summer schools). This could serve to facilitate an approach to foreign language research literature (and sources) and to international conferences and closer research and teaching cooperation. In the future, the strategy should also strive to demand such skills when new staff members are being hired (for instance, Byzantine related courses would be taught by historians with necessary reading skills in Byzantine and New Greek). Such qualifications would serve to further improve teaching and research, and would make the Department more competitive to foreign institutions. Professors and other staff should be invited to refer given opportunities to acquire language competences to their students, such as summer courses in Germany offered via the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) office at the University of Prishtina, or other opportunities that probably exist for other languages important for historians, too (such as French, Italian and [Ottoman] Turkish). For those languages, which are strongly needed in order to read important sources and research on Albanian history, opportunities for cost-free or nearly cost-free courses (and thereby also to acquire some familiarity with academic institutions abroad which is difficult for students to acquire otherwise) will probably be even more accessible than courses in the other relevant languages, such as English. In most cases the study of these languages demand additional financial resources.

Within all of the three study programmes, suggested course readings have been significantly improved in comparison to earlier applications of accreditation. Some of the current course descriptions do not really fit their titles, though, and some rearrangements will be suggested in this report.

The written material supplied for the accreditation process had serious, and quite unnecessary flaws that should be avoided when preparing future accreditation processes. One of them is quite easy to solve: the overviews of the three programmes appropriately indicate the courses of each semester (and the teaching persons for each course), while the course descriptions are not organized according to the same principles, with different counting in the case of the BA, and with no indication of the

semester, of the instructor, or whether the course is mandatory or an elective subject for all of the programmes. On future occasions, the counting and content of the programme overview should lead the structure of the programme and course descriptions. The other two problems are not as easy, but should also be addressed in future processes of accreditation: the translations of course description are mostly bad and sometimes even close to unintelligibility (and sections of internal advice, such as how to understand “Learning outcomes” etc., are repeatedly given in translation, too!); and the English CVs supplied end, for the most part, with 2008. They should be updated, or, even better, brought into accordance with the Albanian CVs available on the website of the Faculty of Philosophy, which add not only information on younger staff (of whom there CVs were lacking in the English accreditation material), but they also offer important additional information such as language competences etc. Some of those Albanian CVs were taken into account when writing this report.

In general, and taking into account the conversations which took place at the meetings with the teaching staff, the expert wishes to repeat some of the statements given, as they revealed some critical points, which need to be reconsidered and eventually corrected:

- insufficient development of a strategic plan on the part of the Department and of the Faculty,
- too many teaching hours for assistants (10 + sometimes 5-8 per week),
- lack of optional courses at other faculties and other study programmes,
- insufficient financial support for the research,
- inappropriate support of professors and especially assistants for free semester or year for research or studying abroad.

The discussion at the meeting with students indicated as the main insufficiency:

- quality assessment of teachers through student surveys and other quality assurance means is not sufficiently conducted,

10.3.2 General Findings (BA History)

Within the “Basic information”, there is inconsistency with regard to the aims of qualification: in some instances, it reads that the BA would provide the opportunity to work in scientific institutions, which is quite unrealistic (cf. above, section 6 on

students, with respect to what they see as a “need to introduce more postgraduate programmes as the bachelor degree was generally regarded as of limited use in gaining employment”), and in other instances within this section of the application, aims are described more appropriately (as having the BA to provide “basic qualification for further theoretical studies and specialist scientific studies – Mater etc.”, p. 133 of the application). This should be made consistent and, most of all, the (limited) aims of the BA should be consistently communicated to all students, even ahead of beginning their studies. It was interesting to learn during the on-site-visit that BA programmes such as the BA history will be the first step within the education of (secondary) school teachers who will afterwards continue with a MA at the new Faculty of Education. The BA in history will indeed continue to address future school teachers, too, which was somewhat generally pointed at within the application. At any rate, the programme serves to fill important needs for Kosovar society and represents the first step in the education of future researchers in our field.

10.3.3 Findings concerning strategy and mission of the institution (applying to all three programmes in history)

The SER states that the Faculty has developed its strategic plan. However, the panel got the impression during the meeting with responsible teaching staff that this strategy is not appropriately developed at the department level nor at the level of the Faculty as a whole. The strategic plan should encompass in detail all relevant issues, including number of academic staff and its perspective at least five years in advance, teaching materials, literature, students etc. The strategic document should be applied as a scale for measuring the performance of research and teaching at all levels in order to improve quality assurance. On the level of the department, the previously mentioned aspect of enhancing the linguistic competencies of staff and students should be explicitly addressed, since the need to be partially multilingual is particularly valid for historians, if compared to other fields offered by the Faculty.

Recommendation

In order to fulfil its academic mission, the Faculty of Philosophy should elaborate a strategic plan as a united document for all of its departments and studies. The Department should also, within the framework set by the Faculty, develop its own strategic planning initiative. The long-term strategy should be coordinated in yearly operative programmes.

10.3.4 Findings concerning research issues (applying to all three programmes in history)

In accordance with its mission and the recommendation of the KAA accreditation experts, the Faculty of Philosophy was founded in 2011 as the *Institute for Social and Humanistic Studies*. The Institute designed and implemented its first research projects and published three volumes of the journal NJOHJA with articles in Albanian and English. From the Department of history, though, contributions to “internal” journals are mostly submitted to the previously established Faculty journal, “Bulletin i Fakultetit filozofik”. In contrast to “Njohja”, most (but not all) contributions there derive from staff of the Faculty, in the most part from historians, with the language of publication being Albanian. It is probably hard for the Faculty (and for the staff involved) to provide funds and labour hours to two journals, but it may well make sense in many respects. Having Albanian as the major (or exclusive) language of (internal) publications also seems to be appropriate for the field of history, be it for pragmatic reasons (language skills, complexity of historical text writing, the need to continuously develop Albanian as a language of science and to spread the results of research done at the Department into Kosovar society). Yet within the strategic planning of the Faculty and of the Department, the probably complementary profile of the existing journals should be further developed. External publications should more systematically target volumes and journals from outside the Albanian speaking area. Within the career planning of staff, monographs (scientific books) should be given the most important weight.

Findings with regard to the BA programme

It remained unclear to what extent the research-related activities within the programme (SER, p. 134) are part of the teaching strategy or depend upon individual initiative by students.

Recommendation

The Faculty of Philosophy should initiate changes in its scientific policy and demand a better estimation of domestic scientific production. It should also try to enhance its own scientific research strategy. The University of Pristina and the Government of Kosovo should establish regular support for scientific research. The relation between the two existing journals should be made more explicit.

10.3.5 Findings concerning international cooperation (BA History and MA History)

The Department of History does not seem to have established international research or teaching contacts with scientific communities abroad, beyond possible individual or spontaneous interactions that will probably in most cases apply to colleagues and institutions in Albania and Macedonia.

Recommendation

Cooperation could be institutionalised. Within teaching, the Department of History could consider introducing space for additional elective subjects that would possibly overarch semesters (students from different semesters) with no prior fixation of title (and content) that could be taught by Albanian speaking colleagues from abroad or also from non-Albanians (then probably for the most part with teaching in English). The department should offer the opportunity for such courses to be held as intensive courses (many teaching hours concentrated during a few days of the semester). This would probably not even demand much funding on the part of the Faculty or University (mostly likely only travel expenses), but such limited funding should then be provided from those levels. The more experienced senior teaching staff at the Department could also use its existing language skills to intensify cooperation with non-Albanian colleagues from countries such as Montenegro, Croatia, or Slovenia in order to better prepare the Department for prospective European project applications which always demand cooperation from different countries (and often do require EU-membership of the countries of most of the institutions involved).

10.3.6 Findings concerning the teaching staff (applying to all three programmes in history)

One of the disputed issues at the Faculty of Philosophy is a lack of teaching staff and problem of too many teaching hours, particularly for assistants. They have a norm of 10 hours per week. An extra problem is that one assistant or professor needs to deliver many different courses at varied departments and have more than the regular number of teaching hours. Thus the ground norm can be extended to 5 or even 8 additional hours. Despite the fact that the Faculty in general increased the number of teaching staff in recent years, it remains insufficient for the enlarged number of enrolled students.

Language skills remain a topic of concern (cf. above).

Recommendation

For the number of enrolled students at the BA as well as at the MA level it is necessary to adequately increase the teaching capacities of the programmes. It is of course recommended that the Faculty develop and enforce a clear career plan for employees in which their academic qualifications, publication list, teaching practice, research activities, and language skills will be adequately rewarded by the salary they are actually paid. Teaching staff should not teach too many different courses, nor too many hours in order to have enough time for their research and international co-operation. The Faculty should obviously increase the number of teaching staff in an appropriate relation to the number of students. Language skills should be made part of any future strategic planning.

10.3.7 Findings concerning study programme and optional courses, including ECTS allocation (BA History)

In total, the study programme complies with the needs of a regionally adapted BA in (mostly Albanian) history in a university situated in the capital of independent Kosova, and it has been sufficiently established. As in earlier programmes, it is the experts' suggestion to address non-Albanian and non-Kosovar history courses in somewhat other terms than at present (which does not draw into question the appropriateness of continuing with a focus on Albanian history, which serves demands from Kosovar society and offers a unique feature vis-a-vis programmes offered further abroad). European history should not continuously be primarily addressed as "World History", as long as it is only referring to European history. And to some extent, the non-Albanian aspects should be taken into stronger consideration, be it within separate courses (Course 2 of Semester IV for example is entitled "History of Byzantium", but, according to the course description, offers content only on the specified aspect of Arber history during the time of the existence of Byzantium, instead of making students first acquainted with the basic features of Byzantium itself). It was also striking from both the BA and the MA programme and the discussions that only Ottoman history is adequately covered (which is to be strongly welcomed), but that the given set of courses does not offer the opportunity to develop knowledge about the later multi-layered state framework Kosova belonged to, Yugoslavia. This is by no means meant as suggestion to idealize Kosova's Yugoslav history, but rather to allow Kosovar historiography to become more internationally competitive (in comparison to

a non-benevolent neighbour such as today's Serbia) while at the same time allowing students to learn more about that state and society.

In structural terms, the programme in its preciseness of prescribing the set of courses overly limits the freedom of choosing among topics offered. First, the Faculty of Philosophy is a multidisciplinary institution and it is important that students, aside from courses in History, can also take other courses and become acquainted with related teaching methods and scientific techniques. And second, the extent of elective modules should be increased within History, be it in order to increase the potential for international cooperation, or to allow for greater specialisation by the students within the BA and MA programme in History. One other possible step in that direction, as discussed during the meeting, was to allow for students to attend the given elective courses across semesters.

ECTS allocation seems adequate, but the allocation of more ECTS (10 ECTS) to the BA thesis should, as discussed during the meeting, again be reconsidered, e.g. by allowing for one less course during Semester VI, which would provide students more time to prepare for the thesis and to re-allocate 3 further ECTS to the thesis.

Minor remarks: Suggested readings for course 13 (p. 155) and 20 (p. 165 SER) are identical; this should be corrected when practicing the courses.

Accessibility of information of the existing courses via internet at the website of the Faculty are particularly scarce with regard to the programmes in History. This should be resolved.

Recommendation

The institution of optional courses should be further developed and strengthened in the study programme(s) to come. It is also important for the students and the quality of studies to try to solve administrative obstacles and to make it possible for students to attend relevant optional courses at other faculties of the University of Pristina. The ECTS-allocation in Semester VI should be redirected in order to allow for more weight of the (probably) first independent writing in the studies of BA students, the BA thesis.

10.3.8 Findings concerning books and teaching publications (all three programmes in History)

During the site visit members of the panel noticed that the contingent of history books and textbooks offered by the Faculty library continues to be very limited. Funding of the library obviously still needs to be increased. Access to bibliographical data of the various stocks should be given. Interesting book stocks – such as the collection of Ph.D. and Magister dissertations should be considered for digitization. The increased accessibility of computers with internet access for students was very visible and is warmly welcomed.

Recommendation

The panel recommends to the Faculty of Philosophy to provide funded projects for the publication of textbooks. The funds devoted to the library obviously still need a considerable increase.

Final Recommendation:

The BA Programme in History and the given infrastructure as seen during the on-site visit and in the examination of the documents justifies the positive assessment of the programme. The proposed recommendations of the external expert team should be used to improve some aspects of the programme. The BA programme in History is recommended for continued approval for three years.

10.4 History (MA) Analysis and recommendation

Existing programme re-accreditation – Konrad Clewing, PhD

Cf. sections 10.3.1, 10.3.3, 10.3.4, 10.3.6, and 10.3.8 that apply to all three study programmes in History, and 10.3.5 (applying to the BA and MA).

10.4.1 General Findings (MA History)

Within the SER, the rationale etc. of the Programme has well been made clear. Open to question seems to be the statement of the importance of educating students in order to be able to teach in primary and secondary schools ('SER, p. 199), which does not seem to still be valid (cf. above, section 10.3.2). As in the description of the objective of the BA, in the respective description of the MA there still is the disputative characterization of "no priorities" being set within the programme. This is puzzling and seems to be in contradiction with the programmes under review, which do set a priority (reasonable in itself) with Albanian and Kosovo history.

10.4.2 Findings concerning study programme and optional courses, including ECTS allocation

ECTS allocation in the MA programme seems to be fully in accordance with international practice and is to be welcomed.

Similar as with regard to the BA level, MA programmes within the whole Faculty should become more open to each other for the students in question.

Minor remarks: Suggested readings for course 3 on Albanian Historiography (p. 205) should if possible include the title "Oliver Jens Schmitt, Eva Anne Frantz (ed.) Historia e Shqiptarëve . Gjendja dhe perspektivat e studimeve. Tiranë 2012 (f. 339, ISBN 978-99943-0-254-3) – not necessarily to agree with all of the content, but as systematic, representation of Albanian historiography and as an opportunity to learn about the international perspectives on Albanian historiography.

The course in Ottoman language (Year I, Semester II, Course nr. 4) deserves to be particularly welcomed as step towards raising the students' interest in language acquisition and as first step to an important, yet difficult language that might be followed up through specialization abroad.

Recommendation

No major specific recommendation necessary.

Final Recommendation:

The MA Programme in History and the given infrastructure as seen during the on-site visit and in the examination of the documents fully justifies the positive assessment of the programme. The proposed recommendations of the external expert team should be used to improve some aspects of the programme. The MA programme in History is recommended for continued approval for five years.

10.5 History (PhD) Analysis and recommendation

Existing programme re-accreditation – Konrad Clewing, PhD

Cf. sections 10.3.1, 10.3.3, 10.3.4, 10.3.6, and 10.3.8 that apply to all three study programmes in History.

10.5.1 General findings

The Programme is necessary to provide Kosovo students of history with the opportunity to finish their studies and scientific preparation with a PhD; its rationale is beyond doubt. Yet it is not easy to judge the quality of this Programme which started three years ago, since there are not yet any successful students that have actually completed those studies. In theory, there should be some, since the Programme is arranged as a three year programme. On the other hand, it is quite understandable that no student has been able to finish his dissertation, since – even though the development and writing of the thesis is given the focus of the four last semesters of the programme, two years may well be not enough to really see one of the students finishing the entire process.

Recommendation

In the next circle of accreditation, the expert team should be given the occasion to specifically talk to current and/or past students of the programme since the opportunity to speak to other students is not a sufficient way in which to gain insight into the functioning of the quite specific PhD Programme. Some dissertations should then also be provided.

10.5.2 Findings concerning international cooperation

The findings are the same as with regard to the other two Programmes.

Recommendation

In addition to the recommendation given above, those responsible for the PhD programme should strive to provide their students with a more regular forum to present their research to their fellow students (there seems to be none, yet) and to look for possibilities to present their projects in discussions (specific seminars/colloquia) abroad.

10.5.3 Findings concerning study programme and optional courses, including ECTS allocation

ECTS allocation in the PhD programme seems to be fully in accordance with international practice and is to be welcomed.

Some of the Profile programmes in Semester 2 do not fit well into the usual scheme of epochs that are seemingly applied to define the given specializations. Most specifically, the profile “History of Ancient Times” only really covers one third (nr. 1) of the ancient period of European history. While it may be well in place to draw the distinctiveness of epochal characterizations into question, the weight of Ancient history in the more narrow sense should be increased within the profile, or else the profile should probably be re-named. To a lesser, but still important extent, there is an analogy with regard to the second profile “History of Medieval Times”, since only one course covers what is generally considered to be the Middle Ages in the rest of Europe (course 3 on Byzantium), whereas the other two courses deal with the 16th-18th and the 16th-17th centuries. The reasons for classification should be made explicit, or again the title should probably be changed/broadened in perspective.

Final Recommendation:

The PhD programme in History as discussed during the meetings and in the examination of the documents still justifies the positive assessment of the programme. The proposed

recommendations of the external expert team should be used to improve the programme. The PhD programme in History is recommended for continued approval for three years.

11. General conclusions and recommendations for the Faculty of Philosophy University of Pristina

The recommendations and points below should be considered in conjunction with the specific discipline-related analysis and recommendations in section 10 above.

The externals all agreed that the site visit was a positive and constructive event. Discussions with senior management, staff and students were open and friendly. There was some time pressure during the visit with the examination of so many different disciplines. All meetings were well prepared and instructive. However, the panel would like to emphasise above all its excellent impressions obtained by the sincere and constructive debates with students.

The desire by the Faculty to reaccredit five programmes is logical and appropriate. The Faculty has good academic conditions which offer students opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge, and abilities important for them, and for the future development and wellbeing of Kosovar economy and society. However, the Faculty of Philosophy and the University of Prishtina is faced with some difficult decisions. The successful ongoing development and external evaluation has a number of significant implications for the areas of: human resource management (staff appointment policy + staffing profile); staff development; staff workloads; the ratio between full Professors and part-time staff; staff student ratios (ssr); research output and support; library resources; the supportable range of bachelor and master programmes, etc. The '*Management Action Plan - research and artistic development 2013-2016*¹' is welcomed. However, the Faculty also needs to work out its own strategic document and operational plan.

¹ **Plani i veprimtari i menaxhmentit të Universitetit të Prishtinës "Hasan Prishtina" për vitin 2013** (në harmoni me: "Strategjinë për veprimtari kërkimore – shkencore/artistike dhe zhvillimore 2013-2016", "Strategjinë për cilësi 2013-2015" dhe "Planin strategjik të Universitetit të Prishtinës 2013-2015" - draft i përgatitur nga Këshilli Drejtues, i cili është në pritje të aprovimit nga MASHT-i, si dhe nga planifikimi i buxhetit për vitin 2013).

It is recognised that there are clearly no simple solutions, as financial constraints and economic realities make this a difficult time to reform and develop the Faculty and University. Hard choices need to be made to fit Faculty and University priorities. One key problematic area is that further expansion of studies will require significant improvements to the library, the overall staffing profile (including more specialists), ssr, staff development support and research support. All of the individual discipline experts have independently identified and remarked in some way on this similar set of linked issues. The sets of recommendations they have made reflect these concerns (see section 10 above). The Faculty needs to consider these linked issues and produce appropriate resource-based strategies (staffing, staff development, research, etc.) to support its aspirations. Without such strategies and policies the ongoing success of existing postgraduate and the future development of new postgraduate programmes remain problematic. The visiting team is acutely aware of the enormous pressures facing the University, the Faculty of Philosophy, and its staff. The Faculty needs to explore new ways to overcome the problems it faces as well as make difficult decisions about its priorities. The following are the common issues that emerge from the external experts:

Issues and recommendations

- The Faculty should apply and work out in detail its existing strategy to establish its priorities and future curricula development plans for Departments and their disciplines. The existing Mission of Faculty and strategy for its implementation (SER, pages 12-13) are laudable and clear but need to be linked to the existing severe resource constraints, which means that plans to develop new programmes of study have implications for existing programmes.
- All teaching staff should receive feedback on quality assurance questionnaires that are completed by students. There are obvious difficulties associated with the form and nature of what can be distributed to staff given student anonymity requirements, but a feedback system that appears to be closed is of limited use.
- A resourced staff development policy needs to be developed that links to a research strategy reflecting Faculty priorities. There are enormous implications for properly resourced research time for staff associated with increasing postgraduate master and doctoral studies.

- A library improvement policy needs to be actioned to update stock, and increase holdings of texts and journals. This could be augmented by formal recognition and encouragement of the informal strategies emerging between staff and students that help students share texts and articles - in effect creating a virtual library; a consistent policy to develop qualified library staff needs to accompany the overall strategy.
- Where appropriate more teaching in a foreign language or languages should be structured into existing programmes of study as this facilitates student access to more cutting-edge research and Internet material and improves their employability.
- Currently, it is very difficult to establish staff student ratios (ssr) and the exact workload of individual members of staff, as many are also employed at other higher education institutions. A more transparent way to present the true workload picture needs to be found in order to provide external evaluators and quality assurance bodies with clear information.
- The new digital registration and student record system should be developed to facilitate the monitoring of student progress in the future. It is a potentially powerful tool to aid quality assurance and student support.
- Ensure all staff present full module outlines that conform to the example model (and level of details) contained in the SER document. In conjunction with this, develop a way to indicate staff workload across different qualifications within the University and Faculty as well as at outside higher education institutions.

The Faculty of Philosophy and its departments are clearly of good quality but exist under very difficult circumstances. Their ongoing development and progress is clear and they are to be congratulated for what they have achieved to date.

12. Recommendations to the KAA

The following are recommendations that the KAA might consider to enhance further their evaluation processes.

- 12.1** The KAA should ensure that the (re)accreditation processes are implemented on time so that there are no problems with the enrolment of students.
- 12.2** All proposals for qualifications (programme evaluation, accreditation and re-accreditation) should always provide the external experts with full documents for the qualifications and the modules/units it contains. This should include: learning outcomes and full details of assessments.
- 12.3** It would be beneficial if Kosovo adopted regulations and/or guidelines for approved titles and designations of academic and professional degrees.

13. Summary of recommendation for reaccreditation

13.1 Sociology (BA)

The Sociology BA is recommended for continued approval of five years.

13.2 Philosophy (BA)

The Philosophy BA is recommended for continued approval of five years.

13.3 History (BA)

The BA programme in History is recommended for continued approval of three years.

13.4 History (MA)

The History MA is recommended for continued approval of five years.

13.5 History (PhD)

The History PhD programme is recommended for continued approval of three years.

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