

## **Final Report**

### **Master Programme Coaching (MA)**

**The expert report has been written on the basis of the application document submitted by the applicant institution and findings collected during the on-site visit at the Faculty of Sport Science, University of Priština on April 26<sup>th</sup> 2017 as well as supplementary documents, which were sent per Email (28<sup>th</sup> of April 2017).**

#### **Introductory Remark**

The application documents are not prepared in an adequate professional manner: The table of content, the overview about the study programme (p. 15) as well as some of the module descriptions are incorrect.

### **1. Academic Programmes and Student Management**

#### **Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?**

The mission of the faculty hasn't change over the past years and it's still to become a recognised higher educational institution dealing with physical education and sport in the region. Its aim in particular is to improve teaching and research activities to comply with the guidelines of European Union and produce the graduates with complex knowledge, skills and competences to be able to compete for jobs on the field of physical education, sports management and sport sciences. Despite of some deficiencies, as specified below the programme submitted does meet the mission statement of the Faculty.

#### **Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to the academic degree?**

The Master Programme in Coaching was developed in a consortium of partners with support from the European Union within the TEMPUS Project "with the title "Sport Professions: Education, Employment, Development in the Balkan Region (SPEED). The three years project

(2014 - 2016) was coordinated by the University Foro Italico in Rome with partners from Austria, Greece, Denmark, Albania, Serbia as well as the University of Pristina.

Considering the composition of curriculum as well the content of particular subjects, the one-year vocational Master programme in Coaching does formally meet the EU standards. There is an acceptable vocational orientation and a balance between practical and theoretical subjects. Practical classes as well as experiences in the field of coaching are supposed to facilitate the process of theoretical learning.

Within the EU standards for master programmes, there is also a strong emphasis on master thesis based on a scientific project. This concept is respected in the new MA Coaching.

**Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and adopted by the teaching staff?**

The programme offers a continuation of bachelor's degree education. Some of the theoretical subjects (e.g. Advance Sport Physiology, Advanced Training Methods) represent an extension of a basic knowledge acquired in the bachelor's programme.

The overarching concept, which is the vocational orientation, is visible: There is a good mixture between field experience (Coaching Practice I and II), but it's not clear if this orientation is already adequately communicated to the teaching staff. It seems that there are a range of cooperation activities between some federations as well as the Kosovo Olympic Committee, but the vocational orientation of the programme should be based on proper MoUs with potential employers in order to support the students to become a job offer after they have finished the degree.

**Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?**

The academic degree to be awarded after finishing the one-year master programme based on 60 ECTS does correspond to international standards.

**Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis? (e.g. what is the proportion of independent study time compared to online/distance teaching and classroom units?)**

The documents submitted contain a number of hours to be spent for each subject in forms of lectures, seminars and practical coaching. There is enough time and space for individual study. On-line or distance teaching are not foreseen in the accreditation document.

**Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?**

The ECTS allocation corresponds with the EU standards and can be considered as justified.

**Is the workload required for the academic programme manageable for students?**

The total teaching workload of 1500 hours/ 60 ECTS spread over one year (750 hours/ 30 ECTS in each year) as well as the content of subjects offered corresponds with common practice and should be manageable by the students.

**Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes (competences and qualifications, knowledge and skills)?**

The content and teaching methods, foreseen for particular subjects, correspond with EU standards. The most important issue here is the implementation of the programme. Are the teachers of the university prepared to a) teach the subjects in the way the curriculum is designed and b) to foster the vocational orientation?

Furthermore, the important distinction between **participation oriented coaching, which is related to Sport-for-All activities** and **performance oriented coaching, which is related to High Performance Sport** is missing. These different approaches – especially in relation to the different target groups - should be outlined in the following modules:

- Training process in Individual Sport
- Training process in Sport Games
- Advanced training methods
- Exercise testing and training recommendations

**Is the overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum comprehensible and transparent?**

The document shows that basic subjects are followed by their more advanced versions to extend knowledge of coaching and training practice. However, advanced versions of some subjects taught in the MA programme should be more clearly distinguished (for example: What is the difference between Coaching Practice I and II)?

Furthermore, there is a substantial duplicity in the subjects "Sport Nutrition and Anti-Doping" and "Recovery and Nutrition for Elite Athletes" in the part of "Nutrition" (same content... it seems a copy/paste issue?).

Despite of this, the curriculum submitted can be considered as comprehensive and transparent.

**How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure up to international standards?**

Students to be enrolled are supposed to be the graduates of 4 year bachelor's programme, which is one year longer than a standard duration of bachelor programme in Europe. Not only duration, but also the content of the bachelor programme (which is also a subject of evaluation) meets the usual European standards. So admission criteria for the Master programme can be considered acceptable.

**Is the ratio of academic/artistic staff to students appropriate?**

The exact number of students to be enrolled in the master programme in the first year is 30. The plan for 2018/19 is to enrol 40 and then 50 (2019/2020), which is - considering the vocational orientation - ambiguous (especially because of the Coaching Practice modules)!

Considering this number and looking at the list of staff members at the faculty, the ratio seems to be acceptable. Nevertheless, the faculty runs two more programmes (BA and MA in Physical Education) and it's not clear from the documents, how the overall distribution of the teaching in the faculty is organized. The overview (p. 50, table 12) shows a ratio of 1:2 (Professor/ Student), but it's not clear how this is measured and if it's really the case.

## **2. Staff**

### **Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?**

Quantity of the staff, which is supposed to teach the programme, seems to be adequate. There is no information about international staff from abroad.

### **Does the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria?**

In the original documents submitted for the evaluation there were missing information on teaching staff for substantial number of subjects. The list with the teachers responsible for particular subjects was submitted upon request during the side visit. The staff listed seems to formally meet the criteria of the University of Pristina for the positions they hold within the Faculty. However, from the international point of view, their ability to work at a high academic level has to be substantially improved.

## **3. Research and International Co-operation**

### **Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course contents?**

Evaluation of publication listed in accreditation materials submitted revealed that the research activities at the Faculty do not fully meet the European standards. Research papers, published mostly in a form of conference proceedings or in domestic or regional journals, focus on the very basic topics covering almost exclusively practical aspects of sports.

Generally, research activities are limited within the institution itself. There are few exceptions having some sort of international cooperation. This kind of activities should be strongly encouraged in the future.

Lack of proficiency in English language among the substantial part of teaching staff seems to be one of the major limiting factors of international scientific cooperation. Management should try to find the means to encourage improvement of English skills among the teachers.

**Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate?**

The international cooperation is currently limited to a small number of short visits of teachers and students at foreign institutions. Activities on this field should be endorsed by providing more possibilities for working visits of recognized universities in Europe.

EU funded programme carried out during the past 5 years (Such as the SPEED Project) offer an excellent opportunity to enhance knowledge and teaching experience for teaching staff.

In general extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching is not satisfactory and should be improved.

**Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?**

Within the frame of the programme submitted, the students are supposed to be involved in research activities while preparing their master thesis. Though current facilities for research are still rather limited and have to be improved, if used more extensively not only by teachers, but also students should enable to carry out decent scientific projects.

**4. Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment**

The faculty seems to have sufficient budget to cover the salaries of the teaching staff and maintain the facilities. Infrastructure, though rather limited, if used efficiently, would allow carry out the master programme submitted. With the focus on theoretical teaching here is not a high need of practice facilities. Existing exercise physiology laboratory with the equipment funded by external sources should be used more extensively not only for research projects, but for teaching as well.

**Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?**

According to local system of financing there is budget secured for salaries of the permanent and part time teaching staff. However, budget for other activities, including research, has to be obtained by activities of Faculty itself. This indicates one of the major drawbacks for future fostering of scientific activities, which are nowadays considered an important

attribute of university type educational institutions. Budget allocation for research should be an integral part of the financial plan of the faculty.

**Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?**

The infrastructure remains to be one of the most problematic issues affecting the teaching and research activities of the faculty. There seems to be a disproportion between the total number of students (over 700) and facilities available (one artistic gymnastic hall, one sport games hall and one fitness gym, 3 middle size auditoriums and one small lab).

However, in the master program submitted, due to its theoretical orientation, the majority of subjects do not put a demand on sports facilities. In addition part of educational activities is planned to be carried out over the weekends, namely on Saturdays, what further ameliorates pressure on teaching facilities. Considering all the aspects involved it can be concluded that available teaching facilities are not going to restrict realisation of master program submitted.

## **5. Quality Management**

**Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?**

According to materials submitted as well as discussion with the Faculty management there is a university evaluation system based on questionnaires filled in by students. As Faculty was not receiving appropriate feedback from the understaffed central office of the University, they decided to put in place own system of internal evaluation. Such a system, if applied effectively, would allow to evaluate the teaching as basis for further improvement of its quality.

**To sum up, following recommendations have to be taken into account:**

1. The topic of “psychological evaluation” which is a part of course “Exercise testing and training recommendation” should be transferred to the course “Psychological Aspects of Sport Performance”.
2. There is a substantial duplicity in the courses “Sports Nutrition and Anti-doping” and “Recovery and Nutrition for Elite Athletes”. Content of nutrition in the latter one (in fact a copy paste paragraph from the first one) should be omitted and replaced by the topics of massage and nutritional supplements.
3. Though separate courses “Training Process in Individual Sports” and “Training Process in Games” can be accepted, the course “Physical Preparation of Elite Sportsman” seems to be clearly redundant. Removing this course would create space for implementing a course focused on Anti-Doping only.
4. The distinction between participation oriented coaching, which is related to Sport-for-All activities and performance oriented coaching, which is related to High Performance Sport is missing. These different approaches – especially in relation to the different target groups - should be outlined especially in the following four modules: Training process in Individual Sport, Training process in Sport Games, Advanced training methods, Exercise testing and training recommendations.
5. All the literature recommended for the students are books in English. Though selection seems to be quite appropriate, there are doubts related to such an approach: First one is the sufficient accessibility of those books to students and their English proficiency to use them. Even more serious concern raises very limited knowledge of English among the teaching staff. It is difficult to imagine that somebody can do an efficient teaching based on the books, he/she is not able to read. Management should foster improvement of English skills of the staff by positive or even negative stimulation.
6. Management should encourage the staff to publish in international journals.
7. Under employment opportunities (pp. 17 and 18) also teaching at sports school is listed. This is in fact not specific to this programme, as it is already covered by the other BA/MA programmes offered by the faculty.



8. Existing laboratory facilities should be used more extensively not only by teachers, but students as well.
9. Budget for the research should be adopted.

**Conclusion: We do recommend the Accreditation of the MA Coaching for three years.**

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