UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

PRPGRAMME ACCREDITATION
MA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Site visit 27-28th May 2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Date of site visit: 28-29th May 2019

Expert Team (ET) members:
- Prof. Stephen Adam
- Ms. Keti Tsotniashvili

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

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

Sources of information for the Report:
- The new KAA guidelines for institutional and programme evaluation
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Pristina
- Information obtained during the site visit;
- Supplementary documents requested by the ET

MA Political Science – additional documents requested * denotes documents received:

     i. The Faculty of Philosophy has approved the 2018-2023 Development Strategy *
    ii. UP Statute * (in local language)
   iii. Code of ethics * (in local language)
   iv. Master's Degree Regulations, 2017 * (in local language only)
    v. Regulation on Student Admission * (in article 89 Statutes - in local language only)
   vi. TOR for program coordinator *
  vii. Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Prishtina, 2016 * (in Local language only)
 viii. TOR Central Quality Assurance and Evaluation Commission at UP Rectorate level
   ix. Guide for Student Assessment of Students and Their Use at UP, 2018 *
    x. TOR for the office of academic development *
   xi. TOR of department chief *
   xii. Library Development Plan for the faculty (including the allocated annual budget) * (but no detailed plan)

All document requested above should only be sent if they exist already – no new documents to be created.
*N. B. Document denoted with * have been received but many were only available in local language and thus inaccessible to externals.*

Criteria used for program evaluation:
- The new KAA Accreditation Manual, guideline materials plus examples of 'new style' reports.
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Pristina
- Information obtained during the site visit;
- Supplementary documents requested by the ET.

1.2   Site visit schedule

27th May

19.45	Meeting at the Reception of the Hotel
20.00	Working dinner

28th May

08.45   Meeting at the reception of the hotel

09.00 – 09.30   Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (*no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion*)

09.30 – 10.30   Meeting with the head of the study programme

10.30 – 11.00   Meeting with quality assurance representatives

11.00 – 11.40   Meeting with teaching staff

11.40 – 12.40   Lunch break

12.50 – 13.20   Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure

13.20 – 14.10   Meeting with students

14.10 – 15.00   Meeting with graduates and employers of graduates

15.00 – 15.10   Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

Nr.	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs	
1	International relations and diplomacy/MA	Stephen Adam and Keti Tsotniashvili	Bekim Baliqi	Ibrahim Gashi

1.3   A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

The Faculty of Philosophy is the first academic unit of higher education in Kosovo founded on October 30, 1960. The mission was and still has the proper education of young people of Kosovo to prepare them as worthy and useful citizens for the country. The role of the foundation of the Faculty of Philosophy has always been and remains a source of reflection as well as political and social changes in the progress of the country and Kosovo society. At the Faculty of Philosophy, there are currently seven departments: 1. Department of History; 2. Department of Philosophy; 3. Department of Sociology; 4. Department of Psychology; 5. Department of Political Science; 6. Department of Social Work; 7. Department of Anthropology.

The mission of the Faculty of Philosophy is that, through enhancement and strengthening of academic capacities, enriching the academic tradition with advanced European and international experience and practices, through expanding cooperation, increasing professionalism, intensifying scientific research, and digitizing administration and services to students, to become an academic institution of the prestigious international universities, with emphasis on the European Union, and to be a serious competitor in the academic market not only in the region but also beyond as well.

The Faculty of Philosophy has 13 programs with valid accreditation, as well as 3 programs at MA level in the accreditation process.

The Faculty of Philosophy is located within the university campus, near the National Library of Kosovo, the University Library and the Rectorate of the University of Prishtina. The address of the Faculty of Philosophy is, Rr. Mother Teresa, n.n., 10000, Pristina Kosovo.

Overview of program

Name of the study program	International Relations and Diplomacy
KKK Level (with abbreviations BA, MA, PhD, doctoral program, university degree, certificate or professional diploma)	MA, (Level 7 / NQF / KEK-Higher Education - 2nd Bologna cycle (Master) -S Master Grade(A)
The academic degree and title of diploma in full and short form	Master in International Relations and Diplomacy
Field of study according to Erasmus Subject Area Codes (ESAC)	14.6
Profile of the academic program	Scientific
The minimum duration of the study	Two academic years, four semesters.
Form of study (regular, free from work, distance study, etc.)	Timely study /full time study
Number of ECTS credits (total and per year)	The total number of credits (ECTS) accumulated per year is 60 ECTS

2. PROGRAM ACCREDITATION – MA International Relations and Diplomacy

2.1 Mission, objectives and administration

The initial meeting was held with the faculty management Prof. Dr. Bujar Dugolli (Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy) and Prof. Ass. Dr. Hasnije Ilazi (Vice-Dean for Teaching Issues). The Dean introduced the new MA programme as designed by two Faculty Departments - Politics and History. Part of the logic behind this union was to strengthen both departments, offer an interdisciplinary programme and maintain compliance with KAA minimum staffing requirements.

The Dean indicated that there had been a number of changes since the last visit as detailed in the new '*Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018-2023',* sent as part of the additional documents requested. It was indicated that the Vice-Dean compiled the SER document. It was also indicated that the new Strategic Plan was linked to a costed action plan but this did not appear to be the case. The plan is a useful statement of aims but has no costing, resource allocations, short-medium- or long-term monitoring points or criteria, identification of persons/committees responsible etc.

It was reported that since the last visit three new Professors had been employed to improve the staff student ratios (SSRs). The Faculty recognised the need to reduce SSRs to 1:25 or less. Unfortunately, funding had not increased over the period and the Ministry (MEST) restricted the number of new academic posts.

The mission of the Faculty is stated in the Development Strategy document as:

> '*The Faculty of Philosophy aims at: (i) Advancing knowledge, critical thinking and creativity; (ii) Providing quality programs and a quality study environment; (iii) Cultivating the values of a democratic, equal, inclusive and diversified society; and (iv) Providing a cultured, friendly and cooperative environment within the institution.'*

This is a particularly broad mission that would fit any Faculty no matter what disciplines it embraces. This very simplified mission is quite different from that quoted in SER section 1.1, pages 3-4. The detailed and more complex set of mission statements in the SER provides a significant, coherent and suitable pro-active set of aims. The mission statement of the overall University of Pristina, as indicated in the statutes of the university, is also quite broad as the following keynote statement typifies:

> '*The university is an autonomous public higher education institution that develops academic education, scientific research, artistic creative activities, professional counseling and other areas of academic activities'* (Google translation).

The mission statements of the university, the faculty and the rationale and outcomes of the programme are all consistent but the linkages could benefit from being made more explicit. It should be noted that the University website does not appear to include any information on the overall university mission statement which acts as a context for the Faculty mission. The ET

had to use Google Translate to interpret the mission statement indicated in the statute of the university which was provided in local language only.

The SER gives a very general description of the aims of the programme as following "this program aims to provide a qualitative study opportunity, in accordance with the best standards and best practices in the field of higher education, applied in the European Higher Education Area". During the site visit ET has learned that the staff had some informal feedback received from the stakeholders regarding the need of this program, however students', alumni's and employers' knowledge about this program was only limited with the title of the program. Thus, relevant academic and professional advice has not been used for defining the intended learning outcomes of the program. The program does not have identified research priorities and concept.

The university statutes represent a further complication. These were sent as part of the requested additional documents. As it was mentioned above, unfortunately, they are only available in the local language so no exploration by the externals was possible of the nature and suitability of these key sources of guidelines and regulations.[1] This makes impossible any effective judgement associated with the new KAA standard 1.4. Furthermore, the Master degree student regulations were only available in the local language which made any evaluation of them impossible and any judgements concerning standards 1.4 and 1.5 futile.

The multiple number of MA modules in the programme was raised as many other similar recent European programmes have fewer modules in order to enhance the depth of the student learning. The multiple module approach appeared to be traditional practice. It was indicated that multiple modules required multiple assessments and had the potential to overload students with constant and inappropriate examinations.

The meeting with the head of the study programme involved Prof.(ass) Bekim Baliqui and Prof. (ass) Dr. Ibrahim Gashi. Prof. (ass). Dr. Adem Beha - Head of the Department of Political Science (as indicated on SER section 1.1, page 5) was not present. The externals did not meet Prof. (ass) Dr. Anton Vukpalaj who is indicated as co-person in charge of the MA (see SER, section 2.1, page 12). The staff who were met elaborated on the mission and strategy. They indicated that the new MA evolved from inter-departmental discussions and conversations with existing students, NGOs and the Ministry. However, there was no formal market research or dedicated special funding for prospective teaching staff. This is especially important for any staff with no previous MA teaching experience.

ET recommendations:
  A. *Reconcile variations in the faculty mission stated in different documents and ensure the key new Development Strategy document fully reflects the detailed mission texts in the SER.*
  B. *The Faculty should make explicit reference to the overall University mission statement and suggest to the university that all missions statements (especially the university mission statement) should be available (or accessible) from the main university website.*
  C. *Develop a more explicit study program mission so that demonstrably takes into account the main characteristics of the program and the mission of the faculty and overall university;*

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[1] Past experience indicates that many old university statutes inKosovo are often inappropriate, limit university freedom, constrict development, dictate inappropriate structures and terms of reference of posts and thus require urgent reform/revision.

D. *A Faculty/Quality Assurance requirement should exist that demands that detailed, formal market research should take place before any new programme of study is progressed.*
E. *Consult with internal and external stakeholders, including, teaching staff, students, alumni and labour market representatives, not only about the demand of the specialist in the field but also regarding the specific learning outcomes of the programme.*
F. *The Faculty should enhance its development strategy as indicated in the text above.*
G. *Define the main research areas and concept for this program.*
H. *All key documents relating to the University and Faculty must be available or appropriate judgements cannot be made by externals on many important KAA standards. A significant number of the 'additional documents' requested were only available in local language versions (see 1.1 above for listing).*
I. *Existing university statutes are often inappropriate, limit university freedom, constrict developments, create outdated regulations, dictate inappropriate structures and terms of reference of posts and thus would probably benefit from review.*
J. *MEST should facilitate the reform of outdated or inappropriate university statutes.*
K. *The Faculty should ensure that its documentation for a programme has consistent and accurate information on proposed programme leadership.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6					
Compliance:	yes	no	no	part?	?	?					

N.B. Any blanks (or?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Partial compliance.

2.2 Quality management

Unfortunately, the regulation on quality assurance procedures was not available in English language, thus the ET can only base its judgement on the information provided in SER, documents provided in English language and the interview results. According to the "Guidelines for the Evaluation of Classes and the Use of their Results" the UP has a Vice-Rector who supervises the Quality Assurance System.

The university also has established the Central Commission for Quality Assurance, which according to the above-mentioned guideline is responsible on supervision of the questionnaires and guidelines. Unfortunately, the detailed terms of reference of the commission was not provided in English. The guidelines also define "initiating the evaluations, processing the data, forwarding and publishing the results" as the responsibility of the Office for Academic Development and Quality. However, no such functions are mentioned in the TOR of this office in the responsibilities of the director and the accreditation officer. Their functions and responsibilities mainly focus on the coordination of the accreditation process of the programmes, but do not include the implementation and development of the internal quality assurance mechanisms.

The coordination and distribution of responsibilities related to the quality management between the central (Academic Development and Quality Office, Central Commission for Quality Assurance System) and faculty level units is ambiguous. From the interviews the ET has learnt that on a faculty level the dean and the program coordinator are responsible on the quality assurance of programmes.

The SER for this programme has been complied by the vice-dean and the teaching staff of the program participated in the process.

The above-mentioned guideline misses the description of the responsibilities of the dean, vice-dean and head of study program related to the QA function and does not mention the program coordinator as a responsible for this function at all.

The guideline for evaluation of the classes describes the student questionnaires as the only internal mechanism for programme evaluation. According to the SER the UP' Senate has approved and implemented three types of quality evolution instruments: academic questionnaires, questionnaires for administrative staff and questionnaires for students. The feedback from these questionnaires is reviewed at the faculty level and, in coordination with relevant departments, in this programme.

According to the guideline Academic Development Office initiates the students' survey through the electronic system and it is conducted by the end of each semester. The questionnaires include questions related to the delivery of the course and related available resources. However, the ET has learned that the student response rate on the surveys is very low, which is mainly cause for two reasons: 1. the surveys are not anonymous and students do not feel comfortable to participate in it; 2. Student complaints made though the surveys are not considered by the institution. It was also mentioned that the questionnaires do not allow collection of useful information and they need to be reviewed. According to the guideline for evaluation of the class assessment the Central Commission for Quality Assurance review the questionnaires in every five years, and the ET could not identify an example for improving the mechanism so far.

The data is collected and processed in the electronic system. According to the interview, in case the survey results are negative the rectorate communicates with the dean about it and the dean discusses the specific issues with the lecturer. The results of the surveys are not publicly available.

The guideline for evaluation of the classes, itself, includes some questions and question marks in the text, so the ET suspects that this is a working document rather than the officially approved one that is followed by the institution.

According to SER, the program International Relations and Diplomacy has undergone an internal evaluation process that has already passed through initial quality assurance criteria, and several other stages of evaluation through the following instances:
• Joint study commission between the two departments;
• Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy
• Office for Academic Development of UP;
• Central Quality Assurance and Evaluation Commission at UP Rectorate level;
• Rector;
• Senate.

However, the ET believes that if the above-mentioned instances had carefully discussed the program, the process should have identified the numerous issues mentioned in section 2.4 and should have been addressed before submitting the program to KAA for external Evaluation.

ET recommendations:
  A. *Enhance the regulations related to the quality assurance at the university in a manner that it gives a clear guidance on all the quality assurance mechanisms implemented at the university for the development of the new program and improvement of the existing once and ensure that they are respected and followed*
  B. *Enhance the regulations related to the quality assurance at the university in a manner that there is a clear distribution of the responsibilities on development and operation of the quality assurance system on a central and faculty level.*
  C. *Improve the quality assurance mechanisms, such as questionnaires and procedures for conducting survey to ensure that the quality assurance mechanisms generate valid data (e.g. revise the questionnaires, ensure anonymity of the surveys)*
  D. *Ensure that all relevant stakeholders participate in the QA processes, such as students, alumni, staff, employers, etc. and the results are publicly available.*
  E. *Ensure that the survey results are used for the improvement of the programmes and the teaching and learning environment.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9		
Compliance:	part	no	part	no	no	no	no	?	no		

N.B. Any blanks (or?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Non-compliant

2.3   Academic staff

The academic staff met by the externals were very professional, open, well- qualified and positive in all their discussions. A priority of the '*Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018-2023*' is a commitment to provide more and better-quality teaching and aims to develop human resources by the recruitment of new academic staff assistants, lecturers and teachers. This to be supported by Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and the advancement of regular staff through provision of training, financial and other support. Unfortunately, the Faculty Development Plan is not costed and short-medium- and long-term goals and monitoring of progress is not included.

The staff confirmed that the promotion process is a fair, transparent and open process but improved support to fund publications is necessary. However, the results of staff evaluations are not considered for the promotion of academic staff, thus staff see little value in the operation and results of the staff performance evaluation.

The Faculty have systems for monitoring and gaining feedback of staff through the student surveys. The results of the surveys are discussed with the dean. The faculty also monitors the academic staff presence during the teaching hours. However, no other mechanisms such as self-evaluation, peer or supervisor evaluation and the evaluation system does not include the staff research performance.

Staff have contracts and know their duties and responsibilities under these. There are clear times posted when staff are available for consultations with students. There are opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) but these are limited by funding constraints. There is no overt Faculty 'teaching-learning-delivery-assessment' policy document or strategy;

only faculty regulations exist. It was reported that MEST has a theoretical €500,000 fund for research but access is problematic.

ET recommendations:

A. *Develop a free-standing 'teaching-learning-assessment policy to support staff.*
B. *Seek to improve CPD and research funding and transparent access to the MEST research funds.*
C. *Develop the academic staff evaluation system that includes evaluation of all activities of the academic staff through self-evaluation, student, peer and supervisors' evaluation and ensure that it is conducted on a regular basis.*
D. *Ensure that the results of the academic staff evaluation are considered in the decision making regarding the promotion or professional development of the academic staff.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.10	
Compliance:	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	part	yes	part	part	?	

N.B. Any blanks (or?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant.

2.4   Educational process content

The proposed MA International Relations and Diplomacy has eight overall learning outcomes (SER page 31) although these are identified as just 'some' of the expected learning outcomes. It is normal to indicate a full list. These overall learning outcomes are a mixture of very broad statements that would benefit from some explanation in a programme rationale. The use of the KAA standards and SWOT framework as an explanatory system has drawbacks. It should include a clear explanation of the programme rationale as well as an explanation of the sequence of learning and the role and implications of elective choices. This is essential for any effective external evaluation and student understanding of the prospective programme of studies. In addition, it is difficult to evaluate the learning outcome-delivery-assessment relationships without full and appropriate information within each of the module outlines.

The proposed programme title MA International Relations and Diplomacy is problematic in that only two modules include 'diplomacy' in the title (History of Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy) and only one has a more practical focus. The stated overall programme learning outcomes do not highlight 'diplomacy'. If diplomacy was to be an important element of the proposed programme it is expected that it would contain several practical modules that would encompass: negotiation skills; compiling ministerial briefing documents; media briefings; position papers; development of alternative policy recommendations; commentaries; simulations; teamwork, etc. There is certainly a need within Kosovo for graduates with practical diplomacy skills but this would require several teaching staff with appropriate experience.

Given the nature of the programme the benefits of outside speakers and expert practical input were discussed. The envisaged employment opportunities for graduates suggest that there should be some formal, regular and agreed set of outside speakers (easily available from

Pristina as a capital city) to support the programme, including Ministry officials, Kosovo diplomats, Ambassadors/Embassy officials, members of Parliament, NGOs, local politicians, media representatives, etc. The proposed MA would be greatly enhanced by the provision of regular outside speakers and practitioners built into the programme. Clearly the Faculty and Department already encourages and invites outside speakers but a more formal permanent programme would be not just advantageous but essential. Furthermore, such an input enhances two-way links with key stakeholders who could naturally advise and support such a programme. The programme is designed to be delivered as full time but the formal adoption of an overt part-time mode would open the programme to many who work for NGOs, Ministries, press, etc., and seek to enhance their skills and qualifications.

The pattern of assessment was explored and defended by staff as the normal higher education pattern. However, the modules provide no detail or explanation of the assessment, just simplistic statements and/or variations of the following: a test, exam, written test, seminars, mid-term exam. It is not possible to gauge whether the level and nature of assessment is appropriate for Master level studies with such lack of detail. Furthermore, numerous small assessments for most modules raises important questions of assessment overload and whether the assessment diets are appropriate for the stated learning outcomes. It is not clear how the current module (multiple and often similarly patterned) assessment diets are collectively or individually appropriate for the delivery of a sophisticated Masters International Relations and Diplomacy degree. It is not clear how essential generic transferable sills and competencies are tested by the stated assessment diet. These do not appear to be highlighted in the proposal.

Most modules enjoy a common approach to assessment that includes a weighting for 'attendance' and 'active participation'. This commonly accounts for a total of 20-25% assessment weighting. It is not clear why attendance (not the achievement of learning outcomes) should result in the gaining of ECTS credits, or how active participation is measured (the criteria used?). There also appears to be no progression in the nature, or sophistication of assessment activity between year I and year II modules. It is not clear how module assessment component marks are assembled to provide a final grading - do all assessments need to be passed? Can students miss out an assessment component?

One way to alleviate some of the assessment issues above is to consider merging modules (reducing their overall number) and developing a themed approach, which is quite common in many European MAs. This has the benefit of reducing the piecemeal assessment diet and deepening the nature, level and type of assessment tasks. It can also deepen the learning experience and level of learning.

It was confirmed that the proposed MA International Relations and Diplomacy is designed to be largely delivered in Albanian. It is indicated that up to 30% of the programme can be developed in English (SER, page 16). The SWOT analysis (SER page 29) indicates that most staff are proficient in English. Given the nature of the programme and the employment opportunities envisaged it is questionable to offer such a graduate programme primarily in Albanian. Furthermore, many/most of the key new texts and journal articles are only available in English. This means that any student admitted to the programme with poor English will be severely disadvantaged compared to those who have advanced English skills. The SER itself acknowledges that young people who speak English have more opportunities for employment (SER page 23). The meeting with students confirmed their support of the benefit of such a programme being delivered mainly in English.

Examination of the proposed modules reveals a number of issues for further consideration:

- It is not clear why 'Kosovo Foreign Policy' (year I, semester I) is an elective given the nature and title of the MA programme.
- Most modules fail to recommend specific (or any) journal articles that are essential at Master level studies.
- There is no module outline for the important 30 ECTS credit Master Thesis module. Its role, purpose, nature (disciplinary/interdisciplinary, theory/practice balance), learning outcomes, generic assessment and weighting criteria, support elements, etc. all require full explanation. Clarify its purpose.
- It is stated (SER page 100) that *'Students voluntarily and with support from teachers can attend internship and practical work programmes where they can'*. Situated in the heart of Pristina, the hub of national diplomatic activity, the Faculty should offer the possibility of an 'elective' fully credited internship module. There appears to be no proper ECTS credit-rated internal (in-country) Kosovo internship module on offer (excluding the EU Erasmus programme) - this type of MA would particularly benefit from such a possibility with allocated ECTS credits attached to those who undertook it. Such a module must have defined learning outcomes; a clear process outlining the nature and approval of internships; mechanisms criteria for the evaluation and nature of the experience; weighted assessment element, mentor criteria and support mechanisms, etc.
- Specific module issues/observations include:
  - The Research Methods and Analysis module states it is introductory. Is this appropriate for Master level studies?
  - The History of Diplomacy module looks interesting but the most recent recommended text is dated 1999. Is Trumpian diplomacy to be excluded?
  - Is the 'History of Kosovo' module (year I, semester II) perhaps better designated as an obligatory elective for those students who have not completed a previous BA Politics or are from other disciplines?
  - The module Counter Terrorism and Security Policies (Year I, semester II) has just two vague/idiosyncratic learning outcomes and a limited description – although it looks potentially very interesting. It has potential overlap with another elective 'The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU' module.
  - Year II, semester III module proformas indicate that: Law and International Organisations; Balkan Geopolitics; International Conflict Resolution; Common Foreign and Security Policy – are elective (see module outline SER pages 71-82) although they are described elsewhere as compulsory core units (see SER page 11 and page 38).
  - Documentation needs to be consistent so that all modules should be correctly identified as core or electives.

During the interviews the ET has learnt that the faculty does not have a clear estimation for planning the numbers of student enrollment in relation with the number of teaching staff and other resources. Regardless of that, for the first year the faculty is planning to enroll 60 students, which means that for the next year the number of students enrolled on this program can be double of that. The teaching staff has noted that this number might be higher compared to the capacity of the program resources and offered that enrollment of approximately 45 students might be better. Thus, the ET considers that in order to ensure provision of the quality teaching and learning environment for students the faculty should reconsider the estimation of student enrollment and impose a realistic limit.

ET recommendations:
  A. *Refine the programme learning outcomes that include some very broad categories as there appears to be no specific mention of 'Kosovo' or 'diplomacy'.*
  B. *Include in the programme proposal a clear explanation of the programme rationale with an explanation of the sequence of learning (module development) and the role and implications of elective choices.*
  C. *The KAA standards and SWOT framework should not dictate or constrain the inclusion elsewhere of full detailed programme explanations in the SER, covering programme rationale, logic of module sequencing, assessment policy explanation and progression, etc.*
  D. *Reconsider the MA title since the inclusion of 'Diplomacy' is not properly borne out by the programme content, assessment or learning outcomes.*
  E. *Respond to and consider the general and specific module issues identified in the text section above.*
  F. *Ensure that the stated assessment diets include full explanations and are appropriate for Master level study and are consistent with the stated advanced learning outcomes.*
  G. *Reconsider the awards of credits towards assessment in terms of attendance.*
  H. *Seriously consider the delivery of the programme primarily in English alongside appropriate changes to the admission language criteria and the possibility of pre-study language support as well as separate concurrent/ongoing language study for those students who require it.*
  I. *Establish a formal and regular programme of 'practitioner' outside speakers, drawn from the local international and diplomatic community, to enhance the programme.*
  J. *Given the issues raised above the 'Guide for Reviewing the Syllabus 2018' and the 'Guide for Student Assessment of Students and their use' may benefit from review (mentioned SER, page 14)*
  K. *Reconsider the estimation of student enrollments based on* based on the human, administrative and material resources of the program and also the demand form the labor market while planning the student enrollment.

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.10	4.11	4.12
Compliance:	part	no	part	part	part	?	no	no	no	no	no	no

N.B. Any blanks (or?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Partial compliance.

2.5   Students

Admission of new students is done according to the requirement of the MaSHT, UP Statute and the public announcement announced. Basic criteria for student enrolment to the Master program shall be: successful completion of Bachelor studies, at an average score of over 8.5, verification of the English language skills and successful completion of admission exam.

During the interview with the students of related programmes, the ET has learned that the students are mostly happy with the teaching and learning methods used, however it was emphasized that more practical work is essential to be included in the program. Students have

also stressed on importance to be trained in research method in a more intensive manner and to be involved in research activities.

ET has found out that one of the most problematic issue related to the program resources is access to the international scientific library databases that significantly impedes students while working on their term papers of the MA thesis.

Regarding the communication with the academic staff and receiving the feedback from them, it was emphasized that students have an opportunity to make appointments with staff or to communicate via email, however in spite of the fact that the counselling hours are included in the syllabus, not all professors are available for student consulting and individual discussion.

Students in accordance with the Statute of the University, in particular cases have the possibility of extended duration of studies and exams. But the extension of studies should not be more than double extent time of the duration of the studies and the request for this should be justified and approved by the Faculty Council,

The results of the students and assessment are stored and protected in the SEMS electronic system.

Generally, students are aware of their responsibilities and rights related to the academic process. However, in case they are not happy with the grades, students prefer to discuss this with the professor and if they do not reach the agreement to retake the exam. Student occasionally use the formal appeal procedure as it is a lengthy process and low probability that it will result the desired outcome.

ET recommendations:
   A. *Ensure that the program gives students sufficient practical and research skills*
   B. *Ensure that all the faculty members are available for consultation and discussion with the students at least during the hours that are indicated in the syllabus.*
   C. *Ensure that students have access to the international scientific library databases that include the literature in the field of International Relations and Diplomacy.*
   D. *Ensure that the appeal procedure is clear, transparent and efficient.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.10	5.11
Compliance:	yes	yes	yes	subst	yes	subst	yes	yes	yes	yes	subs

N.B. Any blanks(?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Compliant

2.6   Research

The Faculty of Philosophy explains its research objectives when it justifies its adherence to KAA standard 6.1 (SER section 2.6, page 95) and links this to its 2018-2023 Faculty Development Strategy. Unfortunately, this justification in the SER indicates little about research and is more about the interdisciplinary nature of the proposed MA. There is no formal interdisciplinary research centre. Furthermore, the Faculty Development Strategy points to the future and contains no specific funding for staff associated with this new degree proposal, although there is some support for junior teaching staff. Staff can apply for continuing professional development (CPD). Staff can potentially seek sabbatical research after five years of employment. The link between research and teaching is encouraged but not in any practical or dedicated way. It is clear that staff do seek, where possible, to involve students in their research and positively support students in numerous other ways.

The Faculty/University also expects staff to be active researchers and involved in scholarly activities. It also makes research a criterion in staff promotion as established by its statutes. There are also regulations covering research standards and the type of acceptable journals for publication. It is clear that many staff publish in appropriate journals and produce texts (see Appendix 1, table 12, pages 128-148). Examination of staff CVs also confirmed this.

The SWOT analysis recognised as a weakness its lack of funds to support any in-depth extensive research.

ET recommendations:

A. *Staff associated with new Master level programme proposals should be supported in terms of dedicated staff development and research funding.*
B. *The Faculty should explore future research funding from NGOs, Ministries, foreign embassies, media bodies, etc., that by close association with the proposed MA might develop mutually beneficial relationships.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	6.10	
Compliance:	no	yes	yes	part	yes	yes	part	part	yes	yes	

N.B. Any blanks (or?) above indicate not evaluated and/or impossible to evaluate.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant.

2.7   Infrastructure and resources

The Faculty of Philosophy offers sufficient and high-quality infrastructure and resources to develop this study program. The space includes teaching rooms, offices for academic and administrative staff, library and the reading room. The strategic development plan of the faculty also identifies development of the infrastructure as one of the priorities. However, ET has noted that the issue with the access to the international scientific library databases is not included neither in the strategic development plan nor in the budget estimations indicated in the SER.

While working on papers, students have to rely on the limited literature that the professors provide or open access papers. On average the cost per article e.g. in Jstor is 25 euros. This issue has been emphasized by both the students and graduates. ET considers that not only for

the proper implementation of the MA program, but also for supporting the research activities on the faculty it is essential that the university ensures free access to the international scientific library databases and access to open sources is not sufficient.

According to SER the budget allocated for the implementation of the study program for 2019 is 7100 euros and 9000 euros for purchase of books, but there is not a detailed breakdown of the costs given in the document. As the faculty is planning to hire three new academic staff, the ET suspects that the allocated budget might not be sufficient for the implementation of the program.

ET recommendations:

        A. *Revise the strategic development plan to ensure that the development of the recourses and infrastructure addresses the development of the library resources.*
        B. *Ensure that there is sufficient funding allocated in the budget for the development and provision of the library resources, including the international scientific library databases*
        C. *Ensure that all student have equal access to electronic journal articles to avoid any penalization of poorer students.*

Compliance with KAA standards and performance indicators (KAA manual refs):

Standard:	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6					
Compliance:	yes	part	yes	yes	part	?					

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

2.8   CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS:

The Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Pristina, in common with many public universities in Kosovo, is clearly under considerable pressure from social, economic and political realities. The new KAA approach to quality assurance also increases the burden upon them, with its emphasis on documentary evidence and proof of multiple set standards and performance indicators.

It is also bound by outdated founding statutes that are problematic to amend and require the cooperation of MEST to achieve this.

The Faculty of Philosophy is caught between competing and sometimes contradictory forces including the central University authorities, MEST, KAA, and Bologna requirements. In addition, it needs to modernise its study programmes but without resources to boost their libraries, access to modern journals, staffing levels, etc., this is very difficult.

The recommendation below is primarily based on structural, content and discipline-based weaknesses indicated in the report. However, there is a clear need in Kosovo for post-graduates with knowledge, skills and competencies in the areas of International Relations and Diplomacy. The Faculty is recommended to resubmit a suitably revised MA programme of studies.

OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

FINAL RECOMMENDATION:
The MA International Relations and Diplomacy is <u>not</u> recommended for accreditation.

Expert: Prof. Stephen Adam, Ms Keti Tsotniashvili, July 2019

The External Team (ET) welcomes the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Politics constructive and positive responses (see below) to the research elements of the report on the MA International Relations and Diplomacy. Two small changes to the ET report have been made. One recommendation has been deleted from section 2.7 and some extra wording has been added to the end of the penultimate paragraph (before the recommendations).

The ET encourages the Politics team to consider all the recommendations in the report in similar detail.

Comments on ET recommendations

After reviewing the Accreditation Expert's Report regarding the Master's Degree Program, the Department of Political Science provides the following comments on the recommendations for the research component:

21. Mission, objectives and administration

As per the faculty's mission being very broad as depicted in the Faculty of Philosophy Development Strategy, we do agree with the comments of the experts, however, it is not in the hand of our department to amend it. With regard to this, we will inform the faculty's management and we will inform them accordingly with this recommendation.

2.3 Academic staff

The Faculty of Philosophy has developed an action plan for the implementation of the strategic goals foreseen in the 2018-2023 Development Strategy. Significantly, this action plan addresses these goals, including some of the ET recommendations given in this report. With regard to Continuous Professional Development (CPD), as foreseen in the Development Strategy and the action plan, the Faculty of Philosophy promises to organize trainings for academic staff (through cooperation with the Center for Teaching Performance in UP), financial and professional support for research and publications. Also, this action plan foresees the conduct of study visits, encouragement for participation in training according to priorities and specifications for assistants and staff in the promotion procedure.

According to this, the action plan also foresees support for the staff scientific publications (with a cost of 21,600.00 € for three upcoming years), which will be conducted in accordance with the Regulation on Publications of the University of Prishtina.

Also, with regard to Continuous Professional Development (CPD), the action plan foresees staff promotion in carrying out activities through exchange of experiences and familiarization with contemporary research and teaching practices in the European Higher Education Area. Moreover, the stimulation of staff and departments for membership in relevant international professional associations and networks is considered as one of the key priorities. In this context, the plan also envisages the continuation of mobility activities of staff and students through the network "Philosophy and Interdisciplinary" - CEEPUS; with ERASMUS +; etc. In addition to these activities, this plan makes the faculty management responsible for facilitating the procedures related to the application in the MEST financial support scheme for academic and research mobility. Consequently, the plan also foresees the commitment of faculty management in the active search for potential partners for joint programs, as well as the multiplication of donor-sponsored international agreements.

Regarding the policies for developing the academic staff assessment system that includes evaluating all academic staff activities through self-evaluation, student evaluation and peer

evaluation is set as a high priority for the Faculty of Philosophy in its development strategy and in the action of this strategy.

Goals	Activities	Meansures	Staff/ Person in charge
- Increasing the quality of teaching and developing new teaching practices - Increasing the responsibility of academic and administrative staff with their own obligations - Improvement of the electronic evaluation system (SEMS) Ensuring quality and accountability	- Identifying eventual gaps in the process of implementing the recommendations - Discussion of problems within the departments and the FF Council - Continuous coordination with the Central IT Office - Timely publishing and observance of lecture, examination and consultation schedules, as well as other materials needed for students (Syllabuset)	Regular, obligatory meetings of staff within the departments Meetings with the Student Council Regular Meetings with Central office of IT Publication of schedules throughout the academic year	

The issue of evaluation results of academic staff and their equivalence increases their credentials for advancement is regulated at central level through regulation for advancements and re-election of UP academic staff. This regulation also foresees and takes into account the performance of professors, which is drawn from the respective faculty.

2.4 Educational process content

The program rationale is a careful balance between academic thoroughness and practice-oriented approaches to fully prepare the students for the professional careers. The program will be developed as follows:

Fields of knowledge	Skills/learning outcomes Following the successful accomplishment of this study program, students will be able to:	Evaluation or measurement of learning outcomes for this program is done through:
Knowledge	Define, describe, and demonstrate the knowledge of international relations and diplomacy; Describe and identify principles and standards, practices, key models of international relations and diplomacy.	Informal assessment by professors in interactive lectures, seminars and exercises. • Tests or quizzes in class in most subjects. • Final examinations, various assignments and collocations

Understanding	Explain the main theories in the field of international relations and diplomacy. Introduce and discuss the basic theories and models applied. Recognition and identification of local and international diplomatic institutions, their roles, functions and importance.	Informal assessment by teachers in interactive lectures, seminars and exercises. • Final examinations, various assignments and collocations. • Presentations and group work • Writing reports and essays.
Application / Implementation	Apply the knowledge gained from the study of international relations and diplomacy in situations where relevant, practical or theoretical problems are considered; apply the best international academic experiences and refer to them during their empirical or theoretical research.	Presentations and group work. • Writing reports and essays • Interactive lectures.
Analysis	analyze, compare and measure the development of phenomena in the field of international relations and diplomacy.	Final examinations, various tasks and collocations • Presentations and group work. • Writing reports and essays • Interactive lectures
Summary	To synthesize phenomena, problems, issues, theories in the field of international relations and diplomacy on certain issues that are addressed during the study.	Final examinations, various tasks and collocations. • Presentations and group work.
Evaluation	To demonstrate free thinking and the ability to offer sustainable solutions in terms of harmonizing the principles, objectives and strategies of the state of Kosovo in the field of regional and international areas. Be consistent with regard to scientific progress and develop scientific research ambitions.	Final examinations, various tasks and collocations • Writing reports, projects and essays. • MA Diploma Thesis • Informal Evaluation by Teachers in Interactive Lectures, Seminars and Exercises

We completely agree with ET-s suggestions and think that Academic freedom of professors to organize their work and research without interference or restriction from law, institutional regulations, or other kind of pressure should be the rule as well as the right to teach in the manner they consider professionally appropriate.
We propose that the title should be MA PROGAM IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
The number of students should not be higher than 45 and therefore we completely agree with the experts suggestions.
2.5 Students

Based on report of the KAA expert' for the accreditation of the Master study program, the Department of Political Science held a council meeting where the comments and recommendations are taken accordingly in consideration and are to addressed in the final version of the study program.

In RVV section on students expert findings have highlighted the lack of reliable an access to the library and relevant scientific sources and insufficient practical and research skills. Further the experts recommend ensuring of a more consultation hours and transparent and effective appeal procedures chances for the students. In this sense, the working group of DPS have made commitment; sciencedirect.net

To increase within different courses and throughout the study program an component of a practical and research skills. This should be implement by offering more research based learning opportunities, by modifying assessments models in several courses and ensuring that students will also have chances for internships in different government institutions and non-governments organisations.

By offering consultation and discussions of the staff with students not only during the hours indicated in the syllabus and in the website of the Faculty but being approachable via email and social media, the interaction will be ensured to be open and very effective.

Faculty members have access to the prominent database sciencedirect.net; thus students could have also access to the scientific articles and sources. But, also in other open access journals and research platforms like https://core.ac.uk/; https://doaj.org/. Moreover, in the academic staff will offer during the courses additional print and electronic sources.

Regarding appeal procedures there are specific University regulations and exists Faculty committees that ensure to have transparent and very clear appeal procedures and opportunities for students.

2.6 Research

The staff engaged in teaching in the new Master's Degree Program will be supported in academic development as well as in scientific research, but the issue of funding research remains a challenge not only for the Department of Political Science but also for University in general.

Within the University there is an Office for Academic Development within which the Core Group has been developed to provide technical assistance for drafting research projects, based on the requirements of the academic units.

Within the University there is a Research Projects Support Unit whose purpose is to facilitate research activities, encouraging external funding of research activities, and knowledge transfer through collaboration with local, international partners and other institutions and organizations that assist researchers in fundraising and negotiating partnerships, exchanging knowledge, building partnerships between academic, governmental, business and charitable organizations, etc.

To support staff research the University has created access to digital libraries such as the Balkan Online Library Platform, supported by the Erasmus + Program, as well as Faculty access to the prominent database sciencedirect.net; thus students could have also access to the scientific articles and sources. But, also in other open access journals and research platforms like https://core.ac.uk/; https://doaj.org/.

To ensure sustainable funding for scientific research, the University / Faculties continue to make use of various funds, one of the most important ones from the EU's Education Support Program known as Erasmus +

Universities / faculties cannot receive funding from revenues as a result of various research work from independently executed projects for business and economy needs. According to the Law on Public Finances, the funds thus created should be transferred to the Kosovo Budget. To address this problem Erasmus + has supported a project called EUFORIA

(Entrepreneurial Universities For Industry Alliance). From this project, there is a letter to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament of Kosovo asking for amendments to the Law on Public Finances to create bank accounts for the faculties so that the revenues generated by own activities should use for staff development and research.

The Faculty / Department of Political Science will continually seek alternative funding from non-governmental organizations and other institutions that support research projects, local and international.

2.7   Infrastructure and resources

The budget of 9000 EURO will be in the function of increasing library funding intended for the needs of this program. These tools will be spent on purchasing books and editing in electronic journals, the selection of which will be made after consultation between the teaching staff engaged in this program. The selection of main readings will also be in accordance with the course syllabi's.

Allocated budget funds for the funding of this program, especially the part dealing with the library's supply, as well as the electronic revival database, we consider being sufficient, because part of the cost for electronic journals is also covered by other departments and programs.

Budgeting for the implementation of this program was done in consultation with representatives of teaching staff and students. There are many professors and assistants in the Faculty teaching Council, where the budgeting of the program was discussed, as well as three students' representatives.

Student access to articles published in electronic journals is free and equitable for everyone. It has been suggested that the institution (Faculty of Philosophy) should provide access to a greater number of electronic journals and then students to use in an organized manner equal access to these journals.

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