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University of Prishtina, Faculty of Arts

Dramatic Arts /MSc

Accreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

April 2021, Prishtina (Kosovo)



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 19th of March 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Oana Sarbu – University of Bucharest*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation
- Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-Evaluation Report of the Faculty of Arts – University of Prishtina*
- *The official website of the University of Prishtina*
- *Online evaluation meeting 19th of March 2021*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual*



Abbreviations

EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ET	Expert team
FA	Faculty of Arts
DA	Dramatic Arts
HEI	Higher Education Institution
KAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
KAA18	KAA Accreditation Manual – July 2018
OFQA	Office for Quality Assurance
SER	Self-evaluation report
SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UP	University of Prishtina

1.2. Online evaluation meeting schedule

19th March, 2021

09.00 – 09.40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (<i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i>) – Joint session
09.45 – 10.30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff - Joint session
10.30 – 11.15	Lunch break
11.15 – 12.15	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1. Dramatic Arts, BA
12.20 – 13.20	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 2. Dramatic Arts, MA
13.25 – 14.05	Meeting with teaching staff
14.10 – 14.50	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
14.50 – 15.00	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
15.00 – 15.10	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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

University of Prishtina (UP) is the main national higher education institution in Kosovo. It was established in 1969 by the Assembly of SAP Kosovo, which enacted the Law on the Establishment of the University. University of Prishtina provides education, research and serves to the society. It provides artistic creativity, professional counselling and other areas of academic activities. The Statute of the UP specifies the rules and processes at the University. The same Statute has been updated in 2012. The UP consists of 14 faculties/academic units, it has around 1200 employees of which around 900 are academic staff. The UP has more than 40 000 students, studying at all levels, bachelor master and doctoral

The Faculty of Arts (FA) was established in 1972, the first program in its structure being Fine Arts. The faculty has continuously developed, so that in 1975 was established the Music Art programme and in 1989, the first section of Dramatic Arts – Acting.

In 2016, the following study programmes were accredited by KAA at the Faculty of Arts:

- **Fine Arts:** Applied BA - (1 profile); Visual BA - (4 profiles / specializations); MA applied - (1 profile / specialization; 2 modules); Visual MA - (4 profiles / specializations).
- **Music Arts:** BMUS – (5 profiles); BMUS - (2 profiles); MMUS in Performance- (5 profiles); MMUS - (2 profiles).
- **Dramatic Arts:** Acting BA and MA; Dramaturgy BA and MA; Theatre Directing BA and MA; Film Directing BA; Sage and Costume Design BA and MA.

Considering the needs of the labour market and the development of the drama and film fields, at this time, the Faculty of Arts reorganized the programmes Dramatic Arts (bachelor and master), requesting two new profiles for bachelor (*Production and Camera and editing*) and one new profile for master (*Film and Television Directing*).

Consequently, the external evaluation process is carried out in order to accredit the following programme:

Master programme *Dramatic Arts (Acting, Theatre Directing, Dramaturgy and Film/TV Script Writing, Stage and Costume Design, Film and Television Directing)*



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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to the SER and to those discussed and mentioned in the online evaluation meeting the mission of the master programme Dramatic Arts is linked to the University of Prishtina mission, *to provide professional education by following up-to-date scientific developments in their respective fields of study*. At the same time, Dramatic Arts programme responds to the needs of the labor market. This was repeated by labor market representatives during the online meeting, in certain sectors of activity, being the only programme in Kosovo that trains specialists.

The SER indicates that development of the University and its study programmes are consistent with the National Qualifications Network and the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA. Particularly, from the discussions with the teaching staff and with employers it could be confirmed during the online evaluation meeting that there is academic and professional advice included in the definition of learning outcomes.

In fact, it is difficult to talk about a programme. Each profile represents a programme, with other expected competencies and leading to other possible professions. Each profile is well-defined overarching didactic and artistic activities concept, but research is not yet fully understood and implemented at programme level.

UP has formal policies, guidelines and regulations referred to in the SER dealing with responsibilities relating to the management and delivery of programmes, behaviour and to recurring procedural and academic issues. Specifically, these are referred to as a range of documents relating to academic integrity, internal and public accountability and a Code of ethics approved in 2013. Nevertheless, the Code of Ethics is not revised on a regular basis and it does not generate a public report to reveal its results. The mentioned documents are listed in the Additional documents provided and are available in the official website of UP, but unfortunately unknown for a part of the academic community.

As will be detailed in Standard 2.2, the processes of continuous evaluation and improvement are not fully integrated in daily activity, but there are compulsory accreditation and re-accreditation procedures established and regularly conducted by KAA on a regular basis.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

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ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure that all internal regulations, procedures, and decisions of governing bodies are publicly available on the web page of the institution/ faculty in easily available locations.*
2. *Find ways to inform the academic community about regulations, methodologies, institutional processes etc.*
3. *Adapt all policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years.*

2.2. Quality management

According to the SER and to the additional documents provided by the University, the quality assurance system at University of Prishtina is regulated by a set of Internal Regulations and the Regulation on Quality Assurance in line with the legal framework in Kosovo, such as the Law on Higher Education, the Administrative Instruction on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The regulations describe processes, mechanisms, instruments, reporting, data collection, timeframes, responsibilities, and units involved in the processes.

Teachers met during the online site-visit seem not be familiar with the functional regulations for QA. Certain issues have been identified by teachers as enforceable, but they have not been able to identify a regulation in this regard, whether it is public or not (Ex: *the regulation what give to the students the right to academic appeals*).

Quality assurance processes and management at the overall institutional level are managed by the Office for Academic Development, which closely cooperates with Central Commission for Quality Assurance and quality assurance coordinators at the faculty level as well as with the Vice-Rector for Development and Quality.

At Faculty of Arts level and, especially at Dramatic Arts programmes level is not evident that the QA processes are fully implemented in a formal way. SER and, the additional documents



provided do not present periodic analyzes of the activity or of the data obtained by applying tools such as questionnaires. The University provided as additional documents a new report, not the documents themselves. It is not at all clear if strategy, action plans, analyses of questionnaires, internal QA reports etc. really exist as a result of the internal quality assurance system, or if they are designed only for the external evaluations, without relying on clear evidence.

Learning outcomes are evaluated on course level by assessment, which includes attendance, homework, interactive exercises, final exam, according to the specifics of profile. The evaluations are well designed to demonstrate that the expected competencies have really been achieved by students.

The UP Internal QA processes provide an overview of quality issues for the overall programme as well as of different components within it. It is a very specific field, *a small world*, so the university's relationship with students, graduates and the labour market is almost a personal one and this aspect somewhat replaces the formal internal quality assurance processes.

UP uses regular survey with students and staff. The institution implements semester survey with students, considering teaching processes and students facilities, but the results of the surveys are not made publicly available. The University organizes informal consultations with different stakeholders as graduates or employers, but it is necessary to do this in a formal and regular way, applying periodical surveys.

Regarding the evaluation of the didactic activity by the students, some teachers mentioned questionnaires, others only face-to-face discussions with students.

Workload is documented in the SER and appears to be adequate. Even if the bachelor and master programmes functioned with another structures, this external evaluation represents an accreditation of the new programmes and, consequently, the results of course evaluation, academic success and employment of graduates are not available.

The QA assurance system and processes are regularly evaluated by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and updated according with KAA requirements.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Increase the internal commitment for the constant quality improvement and develop the quality culture across the faculty and particularly across the programmes.*



2. *Integrate evaluation processes and planning for improvement into normal planning processes at faculty level.*
3. *Ensure that the QA system and the data collection instruments cover the whole range of programme's activities.*
4. *Conduct regular evaluations to produce self-evaluations reports that provide an overview of performance at programme level.*
5. *Publish the results of the satisfaction surveys so that to increase the transparency and trust in these instruments, which can support the institution in safeguarding its response rates.*

2.3. Academic staff

In terms of employment, the FA respects the regulations established at institutional level, in accordance with national legislation. The institution uses a set of policies and regulations that are available to all teaching staff. It includes rights and responsibilities, recruitment processes, supervision, performance evaluation, promotion, support processes, and professional development:

- Academic staff at institutional level and at different faculties – appointment, re-appointment and advancement.
- Part-time staff regulations.

The recruitment processes ensure that staff have the specific areas of expertise, qualification and experience for the positions they occupy. The recruitment processes ensure equitable treatment of all applicants. The recruitment process is based on competition.

The academic staff having been present during the site visit not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time). However, it is quite difficult to check this requirement for all academic staff members. How it was mentioned during the discussions, most teachers are also active professionally in practice, but the KAA standard refers strictly to teaching positions.

According to the additional documents provided, the Department of Dramatic Arts is the Faculty's second largest department with 149 active students and 30 full time professors and 26 part time professors. At the same time, the SER presents 50 professors of which 31 with a one-year contract, which is not an element of stability in the organization of the programme.



Regarding the professional development of the teaching staff, there was no formal procedure reported during the site visit. The academic staff taking part in the discussion reported about respective courses, mostly done during visits abroad and in many cases quite some time ago. Some teaching assistants are professionally engaged in HEIs abroad where they could participate in activities for additional professional development (doctoral studies, artistic activities etc.).

The academic staff taking part in the site visit discussions reported that they offer such kind of consultancy for students on a regular basis.

There is a formal procedure established for academic staff evaluation done by students. This is based on a standardized questionnaire which is filled in anonymously. How it was already mentioned in the report, some teachers don't know about this formal procedure and they mentioned face to face discussions with students. However, as it has been reported during the site visit, the results of the evaluations are known only by the dean who forwards these results to teaching staff only in cases of insufficient performance of respective staff.

The evaluator strongly recommends that this process in future becomes more transparent. The results should always be provided to the respective teaching staff. Staff should reflect on the results of the questionnaire and - even more importantly - to the comments in the free-text section of the questionnaire. Finally, the actions taken and expected impacts should be reported to the students in a feedback-loop.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Increase the motivation of faculty staff to get involved in research and especially in the community service.*
- 2. Create a strategy for quality enhancement including improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials, containing at least objectives, resources, deadlines, methods, results.*
- 3. Reduce the number of teachers with a contract for only one year, in order to ensure the stability of the programmes development.*
- 4. The staff evaluation process should become more transparent. The results should always be provided to the respective teaching staff. Staff should reflect on the results of*



the questionnaire and - even more important - to the comments in the free-text section of the questionnaire. Finally, the actions taken and expected impacts should be reported to the students in a feedback-loop.

2.4. Educational process content

Each profile of the study Dramatic Arts master programme is proposed on qualification objectives.

The study programme complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The language of instruction for all profiles is Albanian.

The disciplines within the curriculum (for each profile) have analytical syllabuses which comprise: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. and they are provided in a logical flow. Maybe it would be a good idea for the master profiles to be named differently from the bachelor ones, this overlap can create confusion among potential students in terms of unclear differences in terms of content and competences.

Given the specifics of the programs, the small number of students, the way each discipline is designed, the student-teacher relationship is a partnership and teaching and evaluation strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes intended. The profiles of the master programme are developed as having 50% theory and 50% practical activities or 60% theory and 40% practical activities. Teaching sessions are combined in the form of lectures, discussions, and practical work.

As already mentioned in this report, it is difficult for the evaluator to identify clear objectives at the programme level, if at the administrative level, there are no clear analyzes and strategic documents. The desire to grow continuously and produce competitive graduates has often been met in discussions during the online visit, but it is not supported by institutional documents.

Employers' representatives confirmed during the online meeting that they have partnership agreements signed with UP and the students are involved in internship activities. They also pointed out that the labor market is also waiting for graduates of programs such as Animation or Stage Management. Thus, it can be said that it is difficult to develop more and more profiles in the same programme, bachelor or master. UP and the Faculty of Arts should consider the



possibility of separating the programmes, at least following the two major fields of Theater and Film.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Develop valid and reliable mechanisms for verifying standards of student achievement.*
- 2. Develop and apply policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with special situations in the teaching – learning – evaluation process.*
- 3. Explore the idea of naming master profiles differently from bachelor's profiles, to not create confusion in terms of content and competences.*
- 4. Consider the possibility of having several programs and not one with so many profiles.*

2.5. Students

From the beginning it should be mentioned that the evaluation of all the standards was difficult since the external evaluation was considered accreditation and the external evaluator did not meet students or graduates of the programme.

The evaluation process has confirmed the presence of information, outside the documents supplied in advance of the visit, that demonstrate institution-wide arrangements for student admissions, rights of representation, student's transfer, student feedback via 'satisfaction surveys'.

All students who will be enrolled in the master programme must own a bachelor's degree.

The study groups for each profiles of the programme are dimensioned to ensure, on the one hand, an effective and interactive teaching and learning process and, on the other hand the needs of the labor market, which can receive a limited number of graduates of these profiles.

The evaluator assumes that students will get feedback on their results according to UP internal regulations in QA.

The results obtained by the UP's students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.

According to the information provided, there are processes in place at institutional level to collect and analyse data referring to the student progression and drop-out rates. The institution also collects data on students' satisfaction with their programmes, the learning resources, and



administration and support services. The Faculty of Arts was not able to provide an internal QA Report (excepting the report prepared for the external evaluation provided by KAA), internal analyses based on real evidence and data analyses.

Flexible treatment of students in special situations is not ensured in a formal way. It is flexibility, only through openness and understanding of teachers.

The UP established different regulations to deal with academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating. Until then, there are no procedures in place to guarantee the originality of the submitted work. Given the specificity of the programmes, clear strategy on copyright must be added to the anti-plagiarism strategy.

The members of the teaching staff and the management of the programme confirmed in the interviews that time is available for individual counselling. The small number of students, the type of learning processes that involve the continuous interaction between teachers and students, is a guarantee of communication beyond the established schedule.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Ensure and formalise different ways to support students in special situations.*
- 2. Clear definition of a procedure regarding academic appeal and its consistent application.*
- 3. Regulate alternative mechanisms to ensure the originality of the work submitted by students as prevention activities, dedicated workshops, courses etc.*

2.6. Research

There is no research strategy at the faculty level and at the programme level. The research activity refers almost exclusively to artistic creation, which is often found in artistic programmes.

The teaching staff is young, well trained, there are human resources for research development. Currently, there are not sufficient financial resources allocated to develop real research activi-



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ties. The ET strongly recommends putting research more in the center of strategic considerations and to establish incentives and procedures to allow and foster high-level research activities.

According to the additional documents sent by UP *Faculty members of the Department of Dramatic Arts have on average a 10-30% research capacity in their contracts. Three Adjunct Lecturers are without research capacity, but four Adjunct Lecturers have 10% research capacity in the academic year 2019-2020. Five Assistant Professors have 20% research capacity, three Associate Professors have 25% research capacity, two Professors have 30% research capacity and one Professor in 40% working capacity has 10% research capacity. Furthermore, one Professor is on unpaid leave for 4 months in order to conduct research in 100% capacity during that time, funded by external grants. The UP Academic Framework was revised in spring 2020. In the new framework a defined research component is bound to the academic positions of professors (max. 30%), associate professors (max 25%) and assistant professors (max.20%). Changes to the framework have eliminated the research capacity of Adjunct Lecturers.* There are no evidence that the performance of teaching staff is evaluated according to these expectations and how artistic creation is assimilated to research activity.

As already mentioned, research is capitalized primarily through artistic products presented in different festivals, exhibitions, workshops etc. At the faculty level, there does not seem to have been a centralization of scientific activity / artistic creation. At the evaluator's request, they were sent separately, extracted from the teachers' CVs. Each academic staff member has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years under the name of the UP.

The curriculum of each profile and the syllabuses encourages the learning and use of new approaches in the field. Also, the fact that many teachers work in dynamic arts industries is an advantage in teaching.

The UP established different regulations to deal with academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating. Until then, there are no procedures in place to guarantee the originality of the submitted work. Given the specificity of the programme, clear strategy on copyright must be added to the anti-plagiarism strategy.

The specificity of the learning processes within these programmes involves the realization of artistic projects, encourages teamwork with students from different profiles of the programmes, and the results sent to the evaluator are appreciable.

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The Faculty of Arts could benefit from being part of a comprehensive university and develop interdisciplinary research projects in area as education, therapy, psychology, etc.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Approve a Research Development Plan at Faculty level with clear objectives for each study programme and each profile of the study programmes.*
- 2. Apply an individual performance review system taking into consideration the research activities.*
- 3. Increase institutional efforts towards the diversification of funding sources for research / artistic creation.*
- 4. Draft and formally adopt clear regulations for ethical principles in research / artistic creation.*
- 5. Explore the possibility of interdisciplinary research.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

First, ET should mention the fact that regarding the learning resources and facilities, the evaluation was made on the basis of the information received from the institution and those declared by the participants in the meetings during the online site visit.

SER mentions that the activities of the programme take place in two buildings, depending on the profile, but during the discussions in the online site visit, three buildings were mentioned by management and teaching staff. In fact, those present mentioned that they would like to operate in a single building, and they have the promise of institutional management that this will be the case in the next years.

According to the additional documents submitted, the allocated budget can ensure the operation of the programme, but not its development.

During the meetings, the evaluator found out that the institution provides an adequate, clean, attractive, and well-maintained physical environment for its building. The FA has laboratories, with the adequate equipment and adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the



curriculum, students Theatre, Art Centre, Sound Studio etc. Based on the discussions taking place during the online site visit, the facilities respond to the needs of education and artistic creation in accordance with the areas where the educational process takes place; there are not facilities and learning resources for students and staff with physical disabilities or other special needs.

Softs used in Dramatic Arts programmes, especially for film profiles:

Software	License validation
Adobe Illustrator	21/01/2022
Adobe Photoshop	21/01/2022
Adobe InDesign	21/01/2022
Video editing & Postproduction	Permanent licenses
Adobe Premiere Pro	21/01/2022
Adobe after Effects	21/01/2022
Creating 3D/4D	2025
Maxon: Cinema 4D	2023
3D Studio Ma	2022
Creative Cloud All Apps mac	2021
Da Vinci Resolve 16 mac	2025
FINAL CUT	2023
Steinberg Cubase Pro 10.5	Permanent licenses
Music Production Software	Permanent licenses
Final Draft 11	Free software
Movie Magic Screenwriter	Free software
Power Structure.	Permanent licenses
Story Development.	Permanent licenses
Save the Cat	Permanent licenses



Screenwriting Pro	Free software
Formatting software.	2021
Story View	Free software
Brainstorming/story development.	2022
Truby's Blockbuster	Free software
Story planner	Free software

The FA library operates in two locations: The Contemporary Art Center at National Library and Art Centre at University Library. In addition to the library, teachers and students have access to a selection of electronic databases and e-journals through the Kosovo Consortium made available online through the SEMS. The E-book SEMS is a service agreement between the National and University Library of Kosovo and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture that provides academic and scholarly content to anyone online with an Kosovo Service Provider and an Kosovo IP number.

Considering the small number of students compared to the number of classrooms, the program seems to provide conditions for carrying out theoretical and practical activities.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Ensure that the financial plan at the study programmes level is realistic, based on sustainable data.*
- 2. To explore the possibility that the teaching-learning activities within the programmes take place in the same building.*
- 3. Ensure suitable arrangements are made for the infrastructure and facilities to accommodate students with special physical difficulties.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The master programme of Dramatic Art, at the University of Prishtina responds to a clear need for training at the national level in the fields of Theatre and Film. Culture is a national asset,

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and such programme contributes, in addition to training, to the preservation of cultural identity and its promotion. The programme should be supported more by institutional management, there should be institutional policies and regulations clearly dedicated to its specifics. As already mentioned in this report, **the possibility of organizing more master programmes with fewer profiles should be considered in the future.** The evaluator is aware that organizing such programmes separately is expensive, but to be able to develop each profile equally, a more particular approach is needed.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the master study programme *Dramatic Arts (Acting, Theatre Directing, Dramaturgy and Film/TV Script Writing, Stage and Costume Design, Film and Television Directing)*" offered by University of Prishtina is substantially-compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit for a duration of 3 years (*due to the current open strategic decision*) with a maximum number of 40 students to be enrolled in the study program, respecting a good balance between profiles.

Expert Team

Prof. Oana Sarbu

01.04.2021