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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

***UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA “HASAN PRISHTINA”
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ORIENTALISTICS***

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

May 10, 2021, Zagreb, Croatia



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: April 15, 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Assistant Professor Vjerran Kursar

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 – Orientalistics (BA), Reaccreditation, January 5, 2021*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual, July 2018*
- *Information obtained during the site visit*
- *Meetings conducted with the management of the institution, teaching and administrative staff, students, graduates, and external stakeholders and employers of graduates*
- *Annex: Study Program: Bachelor of Orientalistics*
- *Annex: Plans for implementing recommendations – Orientalistics*
- *Annex: Academic staff scientific work – Orientalistics*

- Annex: CVs of the staff (6)
- Annex: Syllabi (50 courses)



Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual, July 2018*

1.2. Site visit schedule

09:00 – 09:40	Meeting with the management of the faculty
09:45 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
10:30 – 11:10	Lunch break
11.10 – 12:10	Meeting with the heads of the study programme
12:15 – 12:55	Meeting with teaching staff
13:00 – 13:40	Meeting with students
13:45 – 14:25	Meeting with graduates
14:30 – 15:10	Meeting with employers of graduates
15:15 – 15:25	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
15:25 – 15:35	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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

The Faculty of Philology (hereinafter: Faculty) started to function as an independent, separate institution in 1989 (based on the Law for the establishment of the Faculty of Philology in Prishtina no. 011-83/88, in Prishtina on the 22th of December 1988.), although it has much longer tradition which goes back to the year of 1960, when the Program of Albanian Language and Literature and the Program of Serbo-Croatian Language and Yugoslav Literature were established within what was then Faculty of Philosophy. Today the Faculty operates within the UP and has 8 departments: Department of Albanian Language, Department of Albanian Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, Department of French Language and Literature, Department of Orientalistics, Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Department of German Language and Literature, and Department of Journalism. Apart from basic studies, it also has two PhD programs: Linguistics and Literature. The Faculty thus provides study programs in the field of philological sciences, teaching and studying foreign languages, literatures and cultures, as well as journalism.

As stated in the SER, the mission and objectives of the Faculty are in compliance with those determined by the UP and all the programs offered by the Faculty have been drafted based on UP leadership principles, important strategic documents and current regulations (<https://www.uni-pr.edu/inc/doc/PLANI-STRATEGJIK1.pdf>).

The basic principles of the Faculty are mainly defined according to the aim of focusing on the development of young people in the field of humanities and communication sciences (journalism), as well as on the development of professionals such as lecturers of Albanian and foreign languages, translators / interpreters and philologists in various scientific disciplines for the needs of society and its institutions.

The Department of Orientalistics, founded in 1973, operates within the Faculty of Philology. So far it has offered only BA studies. In 2019, the MA program in Oriental and Cultural Studies at the Department of Oriental Studies was accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to the SER, the Faculty operates in complete accordance with the UP Statute and Administrative guidelines. The mission of the BA program of Orientalistics is to teach students



Arabic, Turkish and to some extent Persian languages, and introduce them to Oriental Islamic literature and culture. In addition, according to the SER, the students will “learn about the Oriental cultural heritage in the Balkans and the Albanian regions” (p. 13). The program provides an opportunity to continue education at the MA level in the department of Orientalistics (Oriental Cultural Studies), or in Departments of History, International Relations, Islamology, Anthropology, etc.

Table 1. Compliance with the standards required by the KAA Accreditation manual in the area Mission, objectives and administration

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X	
Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
Standard 1.6. 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 and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	X	



Compliance level: Fully compliant 100%

ET recommendations:

Employers of graduates, Mr. Habib Habibi, IOM Project Coordinator, Migrant Protection Unit, IOM Mission in Kosovo, and Mr. Ali Osman Cansizoglu, Quantum Corp LLC, Prishtina, Kosovo, suggested further cooperation of the Department with employers and opening of the department to general public for the sake of visibility via public lectures, etc. According to the response from the Department from May 6, 2021, this recommendation was accepted and the Department prepared the project “1001 speeches about Orient”, through which it aims to organize public lectures and discussions.

2.2. Quality management

Survey data is being regularly collected from students, graduates and employers. However, during the results of electronic questionnaires for students organized at the level of the UP is somewhat undermined by unwillingness of students to fill the questionnaires and address the real issues. According to the information obtained during the meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff, the administration is aware of the problem and is trying to solve it by raising student awareness of the importance of the issue. Lack of online resources, database and digital library access represents a big problem for both staff and students. According to the dean, Prof. Dr. Lindita Rugova, however, this issue is understood as a priority and will be solved soon.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	



Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.		X
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	x	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant - 89%

ET recommendations:

1. Students should be further encouraged to fill the questionnaires.
2. Online resources, database and digital library access should be granted to both staff and students as a basic tool for study and research.

2.3. Academic staff



The Department of Orientalistics currently has 9 doctors of science, as well as one doctoral candidate. The entire full time academic staff is teaching at the UP as the primary job. On the other hand, as one of the main challenges the SER underlines difficulties that prevent staff from full and free academic mobility: visa problems when traveling to the western countries, as well as political turmoil and wars in some countries of the Middle East. This was partially solved via Erasmus and Mevlana exchange programs, which are used by both students and staff. The Department has stable and solid contacts and collaboration with Turkey and its universities and scientific and cultural institutions.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties	X	



3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through selfevaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available	X	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	Not applicable	

Compliance level: Fully compliant - 100%

ET recommendations:

None.

2.4. Educational process content

According to the SER, “the BA program of Orientalistics is perceived as the basic general qualification, complemented by subjects that enable qualification in the field of language, literature and culture, methodology and translation / interpretation of Turkish, Arabic and partially Persian as foreign languages” (p. 22). Additional value of the program is provided by the focus on Albanian Oriental cultural heritage. While inclusion of courses on Islamic history, culture and civilization enriches the program, the difference between the obligatory courses Islamic Civilization I and Islamic Civilization II, on the one hand, and the elective course The History of Islam, is not clear from the syllabi. The elective course The History of Islam, according to the syllabus, looks like a summary course of the two obligatory courses Islamic Civilization I and Islamic Civilization II. The duplication of the courses should be avoided, and the course The History of Islam should be reconsidered in that respect.



Better funding of the purchase of literature for the university library and access to online resources, databases and libraries would significantly improve the quality of the education process.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modeled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	X	



Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	X	
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	X	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	X	
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	X	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	X	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	X	
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant - 100%



ET recommendations:

1. The elective course The History of Islam should be reconsidered in order not to repeat the content of the obligatory courses Islamic Civilization I and Islamic Civilization II. According to the response from the Department from May 6, 2021, this recommendation was accepted and the course "History of Islam" was cancelled and replaced by the course "Islam in the Balkans".
2. Library and online resources should be sufficiently funded.

2.5. Students

According to the SEV, “admission of new students is performed in accordance with the rules of the statute of UP and the public competition which is announced in the daily press and on the website of the University of Prishtina” (p. 109). The department accepts up to 30 students. Interview conducted with the representatives of the students revealed the students’ satisfaction with the program and the professionalism of the staff.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing students’ recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	



Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents	X	
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant 100%

ET recommendations:

None.

2.6. Research

The staff of the Department of Orientalistics is very active in various types of research activity and cooperation with external colleagues. It has established the Institute for Oriental Studies as a NGO and it is successfully publishing the journal "Oriental Studies". The department organized several conferences and workshops since 2014.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No



Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	X	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	X	
Standard 6.9. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	X	
Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	



Compliance level: Fully compliant - 100%

ET recommendations:

None.

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

1.1. Infrastructure and resources

The basic infrastructural and operational expenses for the program are included in the budget of the University of Prishtina. The budget is determined by the Assembly of Kosovo with the Law on the Budget and dependent on the income that the institution generates. The facilities of the Department Orientalistics are in solid conditions. The number of offices for teaching staff is not sufficient according to the SER. Another problem is a lack of a canteen. This, however, is within the responsibility of the University of Prishtina, and is determined by its budget. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is not adapted to students with special needs and should be paid due attention by the Faculty's and University of Prishtina's administration.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	



Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilization license; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	X	
Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the specialty disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	X	
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.		X

Compliance level: Substantially compliant - 83.3%

ET recommendations:

1. Improvement the infrastructure and facilities adapted to students with special needs.



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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The proclaimed mission of the BA program of Orientalistics to teach students Arabic, Turkish and to some extent Persian languages, and introduce them to Oriental Islamic literature and culture appears to be successfully fulfilled. The department accepted and implemented recommendations of the 2016 reaccreditation experts concerning the inclusion of cultural and historical courses, increasement of the number of staff, and improvement of the international cooperation and exchange.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Orientalistics, BA, offered by the Department of Orientalistics, Faculty of Philology, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” is substantially compliant with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number of 30 students to be enrolled in the program.

4. APPENDICES (*if available*)

None.

Expert Team

Chair

Vjerran Kursar

May 10, 2021

Member

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

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Member

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(Print Name)

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