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**UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA “HASAN PRISHTINA”
FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**PROGRAM:
Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy
ACCREDITATION**

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

18 April 2021



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 26th March 2021, ZOOM conference meeting.

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. dr. Josip Burušić*
- *Ms. Delia Gologan*

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*
- *Ilijane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report and annexes*
- *Discussions during the online site-visit*
- *Video presenting the faculty premises*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual 11.07.2018*
- *Additional requested and received documents after the site-visit*

Requested and received documents after the site-visit:

- *Programme of the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) for 2018, 2019, 2020., 2021. (including descriptions of the seminars and trainings offered to teachers)*
- *List of teachers from General pedagogy (BA) program who participated in activities of Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) for 2018, 2019, 2020., 2021.*
- *Information about professor/academics from Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program related to a) in-class teaching hours per week in Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program; b) in-class teaching hours per week in other programmes (Bsc & Msc) offered at Faculty of education; c) in-class teaching hours*

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per week in other programmes offered at University of Prishtina (outside of Faculty of education).

- *Information about professor/academics from Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program related to a) current engagement in research projects (number of research projects), b) number of WoS and Scopus publication published in last 4 year.*
- *Information about PhD thesis of professor/academic staff from Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program.*
- *Information about a) number and b) full reference of publication published by academic staff in previous 4 years related to VET.*
- *Information about procedure and indices how a) needs of VET education system at Kosovo are recognized and integrated in VET program? (with example from program structure and contents); b) how Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program comply with National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area?*
- *The description, documents, and protocols about how the Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program was developed and operationalized regarding to didactic concepts of similar VET programmes?*
- *Information about procedure, indices and exactly data about ensuring comparability of Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program with similar VET programmes (in Europe and abroad) (e.g. how is calculated and determined?)*
- *Statistics about the enrolled students in Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program (e.g. average age, share of elder students etc., part-time, full time, employed/not employed?).*
- *Information and description about procedure how internship for students in VET pedagogy program is conceptualized and ensured?*
- *Information about conditions for students transfer to and from Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program?*
- *Information and more details about the library (e.g. no. of seats, no. of computer, schedule).*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards and performance indicators for external evaluation according to the KAA Accreditation Manual (July 2018)*



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1.2. ESG;Site visit schedule

26th 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 – 10:25	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff – joint session
10:30 – 11:10	Lunch break
11:00 – 12:10	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1. General Pedagogy, BA
12:15 – 13:15	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 2. Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy, MA
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff
14:05 – 14:45	Meeting with students
14:50 – 15:30	Meeting with graduates
15.35 – 16:15	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
16.15 – 16:25	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
16:25 – 16:35	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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

The ET found out from the Self-evaluation Report (SER) the following details about the institution that offers the evaluated *Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program* [p.3]:

- *Faculty of education is part of teacher education system in Kosovo, system which started in 1958 when the Higher Pedagogical School (HPS) was established in Prishtina. Later on, the higher education institutions in Prizren, Gjakova and Gjilan were added to this institution, which had been part of the University of Prishtina since 1980. Higher pedagogical schools offered two-year study programs aimed at preparing teachers for the primary (grades 1-4) and middle (grades 5-8) education levels, in which the subject education programs were focused on one or two disciplines.*
- *In 1997/98 the Faculty of Teaching started its work, offering a 4-year curriculum for subject teachers*
- *The Faculty was functionalized in the 2002/03 academic year as a result of the collaboration of MEST, University of Prishtina and the Kosovo Teacher Training Project (KEDP) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA);*
- *Initially, only preschool and primary teacher education programs (grades 1-5) were developed. However, since the academic year 2003/2004, teacher education programs for lower secondary school subject-teachers in grades 6–9 were developed;*
- *In the 2010/11 school year, within the framework of the European Commission-funded Project Tempus, the Faculty enrolled its first students in the first two master programs: “Teaching and Curriculum” and “Educational Leadership”*
- *By 2010, the Faculty of Education operated in four centers: Prishtina, Prizren, Gjilan and Gjakova. Eventually, these centers continued their activity within the newly developed Universities in those cities.*
- *During the academic year 2015/2016, a doctoral program was also accredited in cooperation with University of Ljubljana and University of Tirana, as partner universities. (SER, p.4)*
- *In 2007: teacher education for subject teachers was transformed into a new format with 3-year academic studies in other academic units and 2 years master studies with pedagogical content at the Faculty of Education; (SER, p.3)*
- *In September 2010, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) accredited four programs of the Faculty of Education for a three-year period: Preschool and Primary Program (in all three centers), as well as two newly launched master programs. However, all other programs providing teacher education for lower secondary - subject teachers*



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were accredited for a period of one year, and only in Prishtina. Until the academic year 2012/2013 these programs continued to operate with a limited number of enrollments by MEST, and eventually ceased operation.

- *In November 2014, Kosovo Accreditation Agency accredited 60 ECTS Master Programs, which started with the admission of new students in the academic year 2015/16 and which aimed at preparing subject teachers who had completed four-year bachelor studies. However, these programs were transitional programs until 120 ECTS subject teaching MA Programs were drafted and accredited, in accordance with the decision of the Minister (see above).*
- *In September 2016 Kosovo Accreditation Agency accredited: Master of Subject Teaching, MA, 120 ECTS (with specializations: Mathematics; Physics; Biology; Chemistry; History; Geography, Technology and ICT), Master of Pedagogy for Vocational Schools, MA, 120 ECTS; and Master of Inclusive Education, MA, 60 ECTS. In the meantime, preparations began to phase-out the 60 ECTS MA programs.*
- *Today the Faculty of Education offers three programs at the Bachelor level (Preschool, Primary, and General Pedagogy Program); 7 Master programs (Pedagogy, Teaching and Curriculum, Leadership in Education, Inclusive Education, Subject Teaching, Albanian Language and Literature Teaching and Pedagogy for Vocational Schools) and the Doctoral program in Education Sciences.*



2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

ET used available information from SER, information received from the faculty management after the site visit (through requested and received documents) and information provided during on-site discussion with relevant stakeholders participating in discussion.

The Program “MA Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy” is one of the graduate programs offered by the Faculty of education, consisting of 120 ECTS. Program duration is 2 academic years, period allocated in courses offered in 4 semesters, and structured as full-time program. Successful fulfilment of program and successful completion of master thesis - activity which is regulated by Master's Degree Regulations at the Faculty of Education and other relevant regulations at the University of Prishtina – is prerequisite for obtaining MA/Msc degree with qualification ‘Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy’.

SER documents provide relevant information about program mission and objectives, and related information about program foundations and background, which are useful in the context of evaluation of that aspect of the program:

- *The mission of the program is to prepare vocational education teachers on pedagogical dimensions to be able to deliver vocational school curriculum. [SER, p.17]*
- *The program is designed in line with other similar international programs. For the preparation of this program, the Faculty was based on Universities with which previous cooperation was developed under the TEMPUS Project "Modernization of Teacher Education in UP / 544023" funded by the EU and implemented in 2013-2017 and other programs. JAMK University program was used as the main reference point https://www.jamk.fi/globalassets/yhteiset-lohkot-ja-tiedostot--global-blocks-and-files/esitteet/jamk_applicants_guide_2019_210x210_web.pdf [SER, p.17]*
- *Based on the legal requirements for teacher training in the Republic of Kosovo, internal analysis of the Faculty of Education, professional advice received by the KAA expert committee and external partners, labor market analysis and international comparability of these program, the Faculty of Education has decided to seek accreditation for this program that prepares professionals from non-education profiles to become vocational school teachers, to comply with both legal terminology and employment norms approved by the MEST. [SER, p.17]*
- *The program "Pedagogy for Vocational Schools" was originally developed in 2014-2015 in the framework of the TEMPUS project "Modernization of Teacher Education in UP/544023" funded by the EU and implemented in 2013-2017. For the preparation of this specialization we consulted with partners from the TEMPUS project, especially with professors from JAMK University of Applied Sciences in Finland` [SER.p.30]*



- *This program is offered to in-service teachers and those aiming to work in vocational schools. The program is designed for non-educational profiles who need pedagogical qualification. The program content is intended to make the theoretical and practical interconnection of work in vocational schools. Graduates from non-educational profiles such as economics, law, medicine, engineering, agriculture, machinery, etc. who work or intend to work as teachers in vocational schools, will be able to enroll in the program. [SER.p.29]*

ET requested from Faculty of education additional information related to the issue of program mission, foundation, and objectives, and information about other conceptually related issues, which we missed in SER. After online site visit, Faculty of education provided ET with written information, about:

- *The program Master of Vocational Pedagogy has been developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (VET Department) whereby two representatives from the department were members of the working group within the TEMPUS (EU) funded project “Modernizing Teacher Education in Kosovo”. The analysis from the Ministry, and legal requirements based on Ministerial Decision 2012 (101/01B), states that teachers working in Vocational Schools lack pedagogical qualification to work with students including the lesson planning, implementation and assessment in addition to the foundations of education such as theory and philosophy of education. Therefore, the decision was that the program does not address the technical side of VET, but provides a general pedagogical training for all profiles of VET with the attempt to link general pedagogy with the context of working in VET. Therefore, the program has two components including the general pedagogy such as courses in the first year of program (curriculum, education policies, using ICT in education, research methods, communication in education, psychology of education etc.) and more specific courses that link with the work of teachers in vocational schools (such a curriculum development in vocational education, entrepreneurial education, teaching strategies, schools as communities of work). In addition, there is practical placement of students in VET schools where they will be assigned specific projects and work on a master thesis that links the development of practice in VET schools, including the links of VET schools with labour market. All Ministry of Education strategic documents emphasize the gaps of teacher pedagogical qualification in the system, therefore this program meets that need.*
- *The Kosovo, as well as European, qualification framework, specify the descriptors for the provision of Master level program. Therefore, this VET Pedagogy master program provides a good link of the program learning/expected outcomes with the level of outcomes foreseen at the qualification framework level. The master program is not meant to ensure the employment qualification but more so an upgrade of qualification to fill the gap of pedagogical qualification of teachers in VET schools.*
- *The VET program on pedagogical qualification of VET teachers is not a standard program one would find in all education systems. There are examples that have been used from JAMK University of Applied Sciences. Therefore, the content and concept addressed by various system in Europe have been analysed as well as competencies needed by teachers to operate in VET school setting in order to promote the same in the VET program.*



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During online site visit, regarding to program's mission and objective ET was informed that the program was offered already by the university, but has now been revised and since more than 30% of it's content were changed, it has officialy applied to KAA with accreditation request.

Regarding to the changes and modifications of the program or/and as an activity prior the program design, the SER mentions how:

- *Prior to the design of the program, the Office of Academic Development contacted relevant stakeholders to obtain their opinions on the purpose and expected results of the program, and this feedback was considered when designing the program [SER, p.18].*

The program mission is consistant with the mission of the Faculty of education. While *`The Faculty of Education has a clear mission that aims at preparing teachers of all levels and advancing the Faculty's research activity in order to advance and enhance quality of education`* [SER, p.16]. The SER mentions: *`The mission of the program is to prepare vocational education teachers on pedagogical dimensions to be able to deliver vocational school curriculum`*. [SER, p.17]. Therefore, one can conclude that the mission of the study program is partially compliant with the overall mission of the faculty, being however less focused on research. This might be explained by the fact that this program is designed to some degree more like a professional program, which could be additionally supported by the fact that an one applied university post-degree program is used as comparability benchmark [namely *JAMK University of Applied Sciences*].

ET considers also issues of administration and formal policies. In the SER there are several formal policies, guidelines and regulations mentioned as the new program will follow the rules of the university – e.g. Statute of the UP, procedures for reviewing and approving new programmes, regulations for the MA thesis, Manual for Pedagogical Practice etc. The ET could not find all of these online, but the online site-visit discussions with different stakeholders indicated that they were aware of these documents and mentioned they are online, probably referring to the internal platform the university is using. However, the ET must mention that knowing the regulation is not the same with complying with them and that at this moment the faculty has only a few instruments to check if the members of the academic community comply with the internal regulations – e.g. attendance is closely monitored and there is a committee for ethics. This is mentioned in the SER: *`At the end of each month and each semester, the office of the Vice-dean for Teaching monitors the frequency and quality of the delivery of courses and the organization of the exams. The statistics of exams are also collected and analyzed`* [SER, p.21]

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The SER mentioned that the mission of the faculty of education is revised every 2-3 years along with the strategy [SER, p.16], but no mention is made regarding the reviewing of other policies and regulations. The university later on clarified that the revision of the internal regulations happens periodically – this practice should be continued. The ET indicates also how some parts of the program were designed and developed during the TEMPUS Project, which began in 2013. and finished four year ago.

Taking in account all relevant information which are at our disposal, ET denote how at the moment there are several ambiguity, uncertainty and not fully consistent information regarding to the mission and objective of Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program. To be able to fully address this issue, the ET should be in some aspects more familiar with requirements and proposition of Republic of Kosovo legislation and regulation. Mainly, regarding the question of types and forms of study programs at MA/Msc level without qualifications and employability objectives.

ET holds opinion how in current version of program there are many open issues - beside of qualification uncertainty - related to structure, level of learning outcomes or expected congruency of MA general pedagogy program with common accepted expectations to university programmes at MA level. Intention how MA program should be considered as intention of some kind of “upgrade” for existing students qualification, which they still have, is one of open issues, as well.

In the current version of the program, there is a lot of open questions, unaddressed issues, and most of existing information / data provided leads the ET to the conclusion that the program is marginally or partially compliant with provided criteria, standards, and performance indicators linked to this 1st general area of the KAA manual. Therefore, ET recommendations should be considered as issues which are focal for more detail consideration and better conceptualization, and which influence evaluation of compliance level in the future.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The program should be further considered from qualification framework perspective. There should be addressed and argumentated ‘not-employability’ of students who recive MA diploma. Many provided information from SER, discussions and extra-documents provided, indicate that the main purpose of the program is to ‘upgrade of*



qualification to fill the gap of pedagogical qualification of teachers in VET schools’, preparation of ‘vocational education teachers on pedagogical dimensions to be able to deliver vocational school curriculum’, or preparation of “professionals from non-education profiles to become vocational school teachers, to comply with both legal terminology and employment norms approved by the MEST”.

- 2. The heads of the program should provide a description of Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy qualification, and its connection to some occupation(s) which is/are part of national qualification framework. Graduates of the evaluated MA program should be able to get a job without possessing or obtaining additional qualification as prerequisite for employment.*
- 3. Program is intended and designed as MA full-time program. The heads of the program could consider the possibility of designing this program as double major/double degree program with another study programmes at UT which offers education for VET education pre-service teachers, or as some dual study program, or hybrid study program, for existing in service teacher, which could be organized as part-time study program.*
- 4. The program mission should clearly define the research objective (concept) of the program.*
- 5. Consider new ways in which QA procedures can help check if policies and regulations are followed by the academic community.*



2.2. Quality management

According to the SER there is a complex QA system in place within the university, that the VET pedagogy program will also use *'The quality assurance mechanism at the Faculty of Education functions within the broader quality assurance mechanism at the University level as well as in the context of internal quality assurance mechanisms at the faculty level'* [SER, p.20].

The SER mentions that the QA system includes: self-evaluations conducted by all staff members and evaluations of teachers by students. The latter were also more frequently referred to during the online site-visit. However, there was no mention of questionnaires for the administrative staff, employers or graduates. The ET commends on the efforts done by the faculty to revise the existing QA instruments and to improve the QA system by creating new instruments through the QATEK project – including the ones mentioned above. Even if these instruments were recently developed, most likely they did not get the chance to be implemented yet, since nor the employers, neither the graduates of the VET program (in its previous form) ever received such questionnaire to offer feedback about the program. Developing such instruments as well as a way for supervisors to assess the activity of the academic and administrative staff would complement the self-evaluations and the evaluations done by the students in the effort to constantly question the quality of the current activity and identify new ways to improve it. As the UP clarified some of these have already been developed – after the submission of the SER – and will be implemented starting with this academic year. However, since nor the SER, neither those participating in the online discussions knew about them, the ET had to emphasize the importance of their existence, implementation and periodical revision.

The SER report mention that these evaluation processes are integrated in the normal planning processes as they are organized generally at the end of the semester.

'University of Prishtina aims to provide conditions for improvement of all services offered according to the best European standards in teaching, learning and quality of development and scientific research' [SER, p.20]. However, there is no evidence that the QA instruments – e.g. applied surveys – manage to cover all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources. The evaluations of the teaching staff cover the inputs and process, but not really the outputs and the learning outcomes. Future revisions of the QA system – including its instruments – should make sure that the QA procedures are not a burden (or *'a challenge'* as they are called in the SER, p.20), but rather an instrument for constant improvement. The link between there instruments and the internal standards of quality of the faculty – for every part of the day-to-day activity – should be ensured. Some such standards already exist: *'In the interest of increasing the quality, the Faculty of Education has set the*



standards of research work at the master level in the Handbook of Master Themes`, ` The standards and procedures for the selection and promotion of academic staff are set out in the Statute of the University of Prishtina` [SER, p.21] – they just have to be connected with the QA system. The latter seems to be for now connected with the KAA manual and standards, but it should be adapted to the needs of this faculty.

The ET takes the opportunity to commend on the development of the Academic Development Office (ADO) at the level of faculty, that could ensure the fact that the QA system is adapted to the needs of this faculty and its programs (something that is much more difficult to be done from the university level). Moreover, it is a good thing that there is a Vicerector for Quality Development that is a proof of the continuous commitment of the university management to QA.

The SER mentioned that the results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program, however this was not proved by reports being published. Though the QA structures collect data about the academic success of students it is not obvious if they use all these data to improve the program. The only procedure confirmed by all the stakeholders was the discussion the dean has with all teachers on the reports of the evaluation done by students. The ET recommends that the annual reports on the overall quality of the program should consider the institution's strengths and weaknesses and should be published on the website along with a plan to improve it. Such program reports could feed into the periodical institutional reports – e.g. the SER therefore making it more easy to be done, as a natural result of the QA system and processes.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Review the QA system and make sure it is not a burden, but rather an instrument for improvement. This could also mean giving up some instruments and only using those that bring added value to the program.*
- 2. The QA instruments should be adapted to the needs of each program and linked with the internal standards of quality for each part of the day to day activity.*
- 3. Consider in time the possibility to assess the quality of outputs (e.g. final theses) and/or the way in which the students reach the intended learning outcomes.*
- 4. QA should benefit of its own budget to cover for expenses with dedicated administrative staff or training of the members of the QA structures.*



2.3. Academic staff

The Faculty of Education provided in the SER comprehensive information about academic staff, which in case of Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program include one associate professor, who serves as a Head of Program and course leader, 12 assistant professor, two members of academic staff with PhD without teaching professorship status (e.g. dr. A. Metaj and dr. V. Nimonaj), and one assistant. In regard to evaluation Standard 3.5, Faculty of education, for the MA Master in Vocational Education Pedagogy, for a total of 120 ECTS, employs 2 full-time staff with doctoral degrees, adequate for the Program and specializations as per AI 15/2018 (Prof. ass. B. Saqipi and Prof. asoc. K. Buza). As ass. Professor B. Saqipi is at the same time the Dean of Faculty, there is open issue of possibility for substantial fulfilment of proposed standard, at least at the time of accreditation or/and during a dean period mandate. Observation: The UP representatives did mentioned that they intend to hire new staff, should the program will be accredited.

ET requested and received information about the workload of each academic staff member of the Faculty of education including all various programmes offered by Faculty and another programmes of University of Prishtina in which the academic staff is involved. Information about academic staff provided in SER and information about existing workload for academic staff who is currently proposed to be included in the VET pedagogy program are to some degree different. ET explains these small differences as results of change and modification which are done during a process of program modification, as a step in accreditation preparation, but recommends the faculty management to monitor this aspect (of teachers workload) closely.

Workload of academic staff in all Faculty programmes seems to be generally very high. This makes the ET wonder if the academic staff can offer the needed attention for all students. Their workload makes the ET consider the challenges for providing teaching quality at expected level, availability of academic staff for students needs and demands, which can affect students expected learning experiences. This could be emphasized by evident involvement of the academic staff (of this program) in several academic programmes offered by Faculty (e.g. A. Metaj in total 36 teaching hours in 6 programmes; K. Shatri in total 30 teaching hours 4 programmes, M. Rashiti in total 25 teaching hours in 4 programmes, V. Sylja in 25 in 4 programmes, A. Beka in total 24 teaching hours in 3 programmes).

The ET also has some ambiguities regarding to the involvement of one professor, who is designated to be fully involved in the program: Professor K. Buza. He is proposed to be full-time academic adequate for the Program and specializations [SER, p.26], but at the moment,



is also involved in 3 others programmes offered by Faculty of education, with in total 20 teaching hours. Additionally, ET didn't find in SER (SER part 2.4. 'Educational process content'), information about involvement of employed full-time academics who is adequate for the program and specialization (in this case prof. K. Buza), in the proposed course structure in the role of course leader.

ET considered available information about strategies and practice for quality enhancement initiative related to academic staff, which include information about staff professional development and information regarding to a teaching strategies and quality of learning materials. In addition to SER based information, ET was provided with the information about staff participation in training opportunities through Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) of UP.

Faculty of education SER provided information how:

- *The Faculty of Education has full-time qualified staff in the field of education and is dedicated to focusing the most professional capacities in the field of education in its programs.*
- *Standards and procedures for the selection and promotion of academic staff are set out in the Statute of the University of Prishtina (Articles 175, 176, 177, 178), and the Faculty of Education proceeds with the recruitment and promotion of academic staff in accordance with the UP Statute. All teaching staff comply with the legal requirements regarding the profession of teaching positions.*
- *All academic staff of the Faculty of Education is registered on the E-Accreditation platform and within the academic year, they are not allowed to establish other regular working relationships in a public or private institution, local and international, inside or outside the country.*
- *The responsibilities of all teaching staff are detailed in the decision of the Governing Council of the University of Prishtina no. 03/881 dated 11 December 2020.*
- *Teachers retire at the age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers. Such can be hired as part-time teachers. However, most academic staff are full-time employees.*
- *In each academic year the evaluation of the quality of teaching and teachers is organized by the students, and the results of the evaluation of the academic staff are always considered for the purposes of promotion and renewal of contracts.*
- *Faculty of Education highlighted importance of continuous teacher education and improvement, develops plan for enhancement of teacher capacity and skills, and organize various kind of training program.*



- *Faculty of Education realized several programs, projects and other means action related to international cooperation with USA and European academic institution in order to improve teaching staff competence and capabilities. Among them especially important could be considered study visit, stay and activities of 15 teachers who spend 2 months at Indiana University as part of the capacity building initiatives for the academic staff. In addition, 3 received Fulbright Scholarships for a one semester stay at USA Universities in the USA, and one of Faculty's academic staff is currently in the US as a visiting professor.*
- *Faculty organize on the local level various seminars and trainings for academic staff including a cooperation with academic partner region's countries, which is enhanced with annually thematic conference organized by Faculty and partners.*

Available information about participation of academic staff involved in Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program [SER, p. 18, p.26, pp.28-29] in the training programmes offered by Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE), indicate how two academics (asoc. professor B. Gerbeshi and A. Hykolli) participated recently in training.

ET discussed during on-site visit the issues of peer and supervisor' evaluation as basis and source of information for staff professional development. ET was provided with information about students-based assessment - which represents the main source of information for that type of quality assessment. The academic staff faced with the clear question "How do you know who is the best, or who is a good or not so good professor?" was not able to provide information about staff quality assessment or some defined structure of staff KPI.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. ***Allocate full-time academic staff for this program only.*** *The overall academic staff workload in all the existing programmes at Faculty in which they are involved is high. This raises concerns on how the full, two years MA program, which is based mainly on the engagement of existing, full-time academic staff could be realized on expected quality level, where students expected learning experiences and learning outcomes will be not compromised or threatened.*
2. ***Clarify the roles of the academic staff.*** *Program design and description should strongly highlight a role of full time employed academics dedicated to Program. At the moment of evaluation – based on the available information and as indicated above – there is uncertainty about the role of one academic in the program and the possibility of another one to contribute, considering his on-going managerial position.*

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3. ***Complete the QA system with Peer' and superiors' evaluations. These procedures should be clearly communicated and established with special focus on producing information for comprehensive evaluation process and thus individual and program level improvement and quality enhancement.***
4. ***Professional development opportunities for all. Differences in using existing professional development opportunities between teaching staff should be reduced. To do so, the faculty could consider offering additional training opportunities for senior academic staff, in accordance with professional needs and rules.***
5. ***Provided information from SER related to observed weakness in the context of SWOT analysis of academic staff should be transformed in action plan for improvement.***



2.4. Educational process content

MA Program ‘Vocational Education Pedagogy’ is described as two-year, full-time 120 ECTS graduate program, which provide qualification/academic profile ‘Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy’ Program is offered [SER, p.28] *‘to in-service teachers and those aiming to work in vocational schools. The program is designed for non-educational profiles who need pedagogical qualification. The program content is intended to make the theoretical and practical interconnection of work in vocational schools. Graduates from non-educational profiles such as economics, law, medicine, engineering, agriculture, machinery, etc. who work or intend to work as teachers in vocational schools, will be able to enroll in the program’.*

On the Program level, expected learning outcomes are [SER, p.16], presented over describing how graduate will be able: a) critically analyze the link between vocational education and training with the labor market and future demands; b) critically review and contribute to curricula development process through engagement in professional activities and research in the field of education; c) create suitable environment for all students, based on understanding the relations between pedagogical theories and teaching practices; d) develop critical and creative thinking and acquire skills for practical implementation of various learning theories and use of educational sources including use of communication and information technology; e) develop deep and systematic knowledge of the concepts, such as: inclusiveness, pupils with special education needs (including the talented pupils), gender equality, etc., reviewed from various perspectives; f) demonstrate understanding and skills for planning, effective implementation and evaluation of contents of vocational subjects through implementation of contemporary teaching strategies; g) demonstrate skills of effective communication in the class and outside the class, with pupils, parents, colleagues, community, the labor market in the field of vocational education and training; h) link knowledge on education legislation and policies of the country with their personal experiences and their professional development; i) develop ideas related to importance of continuous professional development and orientate students into creation of entrepreneurship concepts.

Program is designed to be study program at graduate/master level. According to The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) the MA Program ‘Vocational Education Pedagogy’ is program at Level 7. Relevant documents /European Commission. (2008). [The European qualifications framework for lifelong learning \(EQF\)](#). Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities/ provide further information, how at Level 7, Program’s expected learning outcomes relevant to Level 7 are a) highly specialised knowledge,



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some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research; b) critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields; c) specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields; d) manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; e) take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams. Another relevant document, ‘Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area’ on similar way when competence profile and skills level is a topic, describe expected learning outcomes which student should acquire and possess after completion of the second cycle (e.g. Master's degrees) study program.

ET compared MA ‘Vocational Education Pedagogy’ program and expectation provided as requirements from qualification frameworks, from several perspectives. The first issue is related to qualification and modelling a program on qualification objectives principle. There is not enough information, and existing provided information are vague. ET addressed that in a first part of this report - related to program mission and objective. The provided information indicated how obtained qualification is not intended to be recognized as qualification for employability *per se*, but rather as supplemental form for another qualification. Therefore the program seems to function more as post-degree program or as a form of fulfilment of professional teacher education requirements, or in the form of continuous professional education. ET raises the question of whether such purposes justify the nominal existence of an MA program, or *de facto* whether there are better forms of educational program for this purpose.

Comparison of learning outcomes of the Program, and widely accepted learning outcomes at qualification level 7, indicate that they are in many aspects congruent. The visible and noticeable exception is unsatisfactory and insufficient focus on highly specialized competencies, and competence for critically based transformation.

ET compared and related program-level expected learning outcomes, with program curriculum, course structure and course-level learning outcomes. The program curriculum contains several courses (compulsory or elected) which are more appropriate to Level 6 (BA/Bsc) program, such are Quantitative Research Methods, Communication in Education, Academic Writing, Academic Learning Skills, Evidence-Based decision making, Qualitative Research Methods, History of National Education, International and Comparative Education, Statistics and SPSS, Education and Society, Social and Cultural Context of Teaching. As named courses represent

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huge amount of allocated ECTS, there is questions if there is enough justification by course learning outcomes for proposed learning outcomes at program level. That raised a question if the structure of curriculum justifies such a program to be at Master level, as well. It is expected that master level students during previous education (Cycle 6) already obtain most of competencies which are learning outcomes of listed courses (e.g. research methods, statistics, SPSS, academic writing skills, communication skills, and to have broad overview of history of fields/subjects, most dominant theoretical concepts in fields and related to fields). As stated in EQF and FQEHEA Level 6 (bachelor's degree level) students after that level should, furthermore, possess 'advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles'.

The program curriculum does not provide enough courses for justification how expected 'highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research' will be achieved in the context of complexity of current VET education. As it is designed and expected, Program should attract for enrolment and recruit students *'graduates from non-educational profiles such as economics, law, medicine, engineering, agriculture, machinery, etc. who work or intend to work as teachers in vocational schools.* Most of information on ET disposal, doesn't indicate how there is great possibility for specialisation, and acquiring highly specialized knowledge, for thematic and focused preparation of teacher to successfully face challenges in vocational education in mentioned fields or at least in broader thematic area. Number and structure of offered elected courses, mostly of them thematic designed as general or introductory courses, further narrows the specialization option.

The Practical component in the program needs more further elaboration and synergy with program design and objective, where different students are expected to be enrolled. The SER indicates on page 31 that the Faculty of Education and the Municipal Directorate of Education - Prishtinë have a cooperation agreement for sending students to complete practice in pedagogical, preschool and school institutions. As the program is intended for 'Vocational education pedagogy', ET found not clear the context and opportunity of preschool and pedagogical institution in ensuring practice in VET oriented education. Expected profile of enrolled students, calls for broader inclusion of institutions where full spectra of practice could be organized and help in students' professional specialization.

ET still considered in part one of this report, some inadequacy of using program from one university of applied science as program for benchmark and comparison. Especially for the purpose of university-based Master level program development. In addition, all available

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information for ET team indicate how JAMK University of Applied Sciences in Finland program is a 60 ECTS post-degree program, designed as a form of teacher professionals education program, and not as Bachelor or Master degree program.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Program objectives should be harmonized with the structure of program curriculum. The intended learning outcomes and the competences proposed for such a highly specialised program as a Vocational Education Pedagogy master program should be considered and discussed (as now they are not appropriate for a level 7 qualification). Obs. Structure of offered course and learning outcomes of some courses are more appropriate to bachelor than to master level.*
- 2. Additional consideration should be made regarding to expected structure of students and possibility of different students' groups to obtain expected competences for successful and effective teaching profession in various areas of vocational education.*
- 3. Professional practice, internship, and existing possibility for specialisation in various institutions for different groups of students should be emphasized in the program.*
- 4. Harmonization and comparison of program with programs of more academic institution, especially those programs intended for VET education should be ensured.*
- 5. Given the recent experience of the teaching staff, structure of students, and possibility to enhance effectiveness of the program, a particular priority should be to integrate e-learning and online teaching and learning at all levels of the teaching concept and the entire curriculum in a differentiated way.*



2.5. Students

The number of students enrolling in the first year is 40. In the first year of studies, all candidates who have completed Bachelor degree and pass the entrance exam are eligible to enrol. There is a formally adopted admission procedure at the level of university and the MA VET pedagogy study program will follow it. The Selection criteria are [SER, p.32]:

- Average grade in Bachelor studies
- The result of the English language test
- The result of the entrance exam

However, the SER mentions: *‘These conditions and criteria may vary from year to year’* [SER, p.32] while the online discussions revealed that the admission was already organized. Since the program is not yet accredited this is impossible, thus probably just a misunderstanding which however proves that the formal procedures are not so clear for everybody. The faculty needs to ensure that the admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.

All students that will be enrolled in the MA study program will possess a high school graduation diploma, according to MEST requirements, just in the case of the other programs.

Program: Master in Vocational Education Pedagogy, is dedicated to all students who have completed 3 and 4-year studies, in non-education background. [SER, p.32]

For the VET pedagogy program the heads of the program intend to organize *‘Student groups in lectures correspond to classroom capacities and quality teaching. There are usually 30-40 students in the lectures, while 10-20 students in the exercises.’* [SER, p.32] However, this is not enough to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process, but it needs to be complemented by investing in teachers’ continuous training.

The SER mentions *‘Students in the exams are assessed based on the nature of the subject and all assessment methods are presented in the syllabuses of the subjects (see the syllabuses attached). The results of their performance and assessment are given promptly and accompanied by support mechanisms if necessary.’* [SER, p.32] The ET recommends that the heads of this program support and motivate their academic staff to offer constant feedback to students regarding their progress in reaching the learning outcomes.

In the case of other programs offered by the university, *‘the results obtained by the students are evidenced in the academic data’* [SER, p.32] therefore there is no reason to believe that it



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will be differently for this program. However, it is not clear whether the academic results are used as quality indicators in assessing the quality of the disciplines or programs.

Nor the SER, neither the discussions online indicated that there is any procedure for granting flexible treatment of students in special situations, besides some individual efforts of the teachers. The ET recommends that the faculty develop such procedures.

In the case of other programs offered by the university, the coordinator is responsible to ensure that the work submitted by students is original. More institutional effort can be invested in this. For example an anti-plagiarism software can be acquired and used to run all the final thesis through it. Moreover, preventive measures could be extremely useful – e.g. teaching students about academic and professional ethics and about the rules to cite correctly the works of other authors etc.

The students of the former version of the program confirmed that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities as all the regulations are available to them. However, the ET did not find all of them online and recommends the faculty to make sure they are all published online and available to everyone. The students mentioned that they can reject a grade. The difference between this and the appeal procedure is that in the appeal procedure the student is allowed to question a grade if he/she considers it unfair during the same exam session. Usually a special committee is named to re-evaluate the students' paper. However, the students of this program rarely reject their grades because it means sitting the exam again, during the next exam session.

Student transfers are allowed and there is a commission dealing with this. The process is facilitated by the implementation of the ECTS: *`All courses have an assigned number of ECTS in accordance with the calculated student workload and the relevance of the course. Transfer of ECTS from other faculties/universities is also enabled. Students submit the proof of ECTS and request for transfer of to the ADO at FEdu. Their request is reviewed in the relevant department and approved by the Studies Commission.`* [SER, p.15] *`Students can apply for a transfer only if they have finished first year of the study program. Exams that are similar to the other program are recognized and transferred. Exams passed through a mobility in other international universities will be also recognized and transferred to a similar subject of the study program`* [additional docs].

Students were happy with their relationship with their teachers mentioning they are very open and easy to communicate to. Teachers allocate 4 hours for consultations, though it is not clear if they allocate 4hours for each of the programs they are involved in or 4 hours in total. The ET



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commends on the fact that ` *Students have the right to attend elective courses from one program to another including all Academic Units inside University of Prishtina` [additional docs].*

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Develop QA instruments to ensure that all admission requirements are fairly and consistently applied to all potential candidates (according to the standards of KAA) .*
- 2. Support and motivate the academic staff members to offer feedback to students constantly;*
- 3. Reevaluate the appeal procedure so that students can use it upon unfair evaluation.*
- 4. Intensify institutional efforts to prevent and discourage plagiarism.*



2.6. Research

The ET considered the Research component of the MA ‘Vocational Education Pedagogy’ program proposed for accreditation on three levels: Faculty of Education level, MA Vocational Education Pedagogy program level, and teaching staff level, with the aim to synthesize and appropriately evaluate the research activity.

As stated in SER, Faculty of Education placed among five long-term strategic objectives of the Faculty, establishment and full functionality of Institute for Development and Research in Education (IRDE). IRDE’ should represent some connection bridge between the Faculty of Education, as academic institution and society by fostering professionalism through professional development of teachers, excellence in research in the field of education, collaboration and partnership for sustainable education reforms, and promotion of social responsibility. The Faculty has a clear mission on how IRDE should be committed to achieving research capacity where continuous professional development of teachers will be supported, policy makers will be provided with evidence-based support for all needed educational reform, and research collaboration related to all aspects of education will be enhanced and improved.

As stated in this report earlier, the research component of the evaluated program is not highlighted enough on the Vocational education pedagogy program level (for example: it is insufficiently incorporated in the mission). Related to status of research incorporated in the program, the SER states that the focus on research represents an integral part of the program, and to some degree, some research related courses and competences, are redundant with expected competences students should still have at bachelor level (e.g. familiarity and competence related to quantitative and qualitative research methodology and methods, academic writing, statistics and SPSS). Students in addition to those general research competencies have courses in fourth semester which are designed as research seminars, and the 20 ECTS for master thesis, which include a research part, as well. Academic staff, especially through research seminar, and master thesis research, have good opportunity for research in community with students, and for transfer of research competence to students and assistants involved in activities. This should be an opportunity as well, for broadening research capabilities and for proliferation of research groups and teams.

Related to research, SER provide information on pp. 36-37:

- *Research within the Faculty of Education takes place in various forms.*



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- *Individual staff subject specific research in the recent time could be combined with broader research project where research groups are formed.*
- *Younger teaching staff used opportunity of international projects and opportunity for master or PhD based research in foreign (EU, USA) based academic institution*
- *The Faculty considered scientific/applied research objectives, which are also harmonized with mission and long-term objectives at the Faculty level.*
- *In the recent time program for promotion and enhancement of research for academic staff and the PhD students at UP is established*
- *Faculty of education has allocated a special budget for the participation of academic staff in scientific conferences.*
- *International standards and norms for classifying forms, level and quality of research are followed.*

ET requested through additional documents statistics on the number of published items of professors, and teaching staff, with full references to publication and additional dissemination information. Provided dissemination information helped us sharpening a picture obtained from SER and information we got from discussion with academic faculty members during site visit.

All available information indicates that a significant part of the academic staff, which is included in Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy program (as in another programmes of Faculty, as well), has a proven track record related to research. When we take in account how teaching load of staff is quite demanding, the overall results of the research activities are good. This represents solid bases for all expected enhancement and improvement stated in Faculty mission, as well as for reaching the objective of increasing the number of high-level publications.

The analysis of existing publication indicated orientation for publishing in international journals, where academic staff publish their work in international indexed journals. The overall good picture is to some degree shaded with evidence about the modest number of publications thematically related to VET education. Moreover, no member of academic staff obtained PhD thematically focused on VET education. In the case of needed specialization this aspect should further be addressed at the program and at the Faculty level.

Dominantly, ET received various information which indicated and confirmed how expectations for inclusion of teaching staff in research and academic activities are defined, and how Faculty has a strategy and idea related to research. As it stated, performance related to these expectations is considered in the criteria for staff evaluation and promotion are set out in the

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Regulation on Selection Procedures for Appointment, Not Appointment and Advancement of Academic Personnel at the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina". The discussion with academic Faculty members during the site visit provides us feedback how academic staff is informed about the criteria for evaluating and promoting staff.

Faculty of education organizes every year scientific conferences jointly with international and local partners, which is important. In SER are provided information how Faculty has orientation to enhance research capacity through grant projects schema, with EU and USA academic partners. In addition, Faculty signed Memorandums of Understanding with several partners for joint implementation of projects as well as investment in the development of FEdu programs and staff.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The study program needs to add the scientific/applied research objectives based on the priority areas of research*
- 2. All academic staff should be oriented concerning their research to course or subject specific topics they teach, and to VET education, which will increase reputation and recognisability of Faculty of education, and provide credibility for Program.*
- 3. Academic staff with greater involvement and success should be recognized and promoted, where allocation of available resources should be related to real research performance.*



2.7. Infrastructure and resources

'The Faculty of Education possesses a 6000m² quality facility with 13 classrooms, 8 laboratories, 1 large 350-seat amphitheater, 2 medium-sized amphitheaters, 1 library, 1 reading room, teacher's cabinets, and extensive open space inside and outside the faculty. A few classrooms are fully equipped with individualized computers and modern technologies for use by students' [SER, p.37] These spaces are shared by all current programs of the faculty – including the old VET program that will be replaced with a new one should this review finish with an accreditation decision. However, there is no monitoring of the load of all these spaces and the ET feels they are already stretched and that they would not be able to cover the needs of other new programs. Before any other program is proposed – as the discussion with the management of the faculty indicated – there is need for investment in new spaces.

'The library and reading room are well equipped and provide ample space to accommodate an adequate number of students and meet the conditions for individual student work.

The library holds approximately 3,000 books, dedicated to the staff and students of the Faculty of Education.

Infrastructure and resources are constantly monitored for their functionality and modified depending on the assessment and needs. Attached in the annex you can find the FEdu inventory list' [SER, p.37]. The library serves all the programs of the faculty and it is not evident whether it is adequate equipped for the needs of all the enrolled students and/or if it already has the books necessary for the new version of the VET pedagogy MA program. Students however confirmed that they get their learning materials from the library or from their teachers who are constantly helping them. The ET recommends the university to intensify the efforts for ensuring access to its students and teachers to international journals and databases. Until now, all students and staff have access to Science Direct, while efforts are made to ensuring access to EBSCO in the near future.

The ET understands the difficult situation of the heads of the program since the budgeting in the university is centralized at university level. This makes it impossible to know the budget that the program will rely on and make any investment plans for more than one year. The ET recommends the university to increase transparency about how is the university budget split among faculties – a clear procedure implemented fairly could help each faculty predict the budget they will get based on their indicators. Moreover, the university management should continue to negotiate with the Ministry of Education for more funds for research, mobilities and investments – all strategic priorities for Kosovo.



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Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Continue the efforts for ensuring access to its students and teachers to international journals and databases.*
- 2. Increase transparency about how is the university budget split among faculties – a clear procedure implemented fairly could help each faculty predict the budget they will get based on their indicators.*
- 3. Continue discussions with MEST for receiving constantly grants for research, mobilities or investments.*



3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The compliance level per general area looks like this:

1. Mission, objectives and administration	Partially compliant
2. Quality management	Partially compliant
3. Academic staff	Partially compliant
4. Educational process content	Partially compliant
5. Students	Partially compliant
6. Research	Substantially compliant
7. Infrastructure	Partially compliant

To summarise, the ET commends on the efforts put by the faculty management and heads of the programs to prepare this unique program for Kosovo. However, there are many elements to be clarified before accreditation: full-time academics dedicated only to this program, the preset learning outcomes in accordance with the level of proficiency expected from a MA program, the proposed curriculum and discipline order, more relevant opportunities for practical stages etc.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program **MA Master of Vocational Education Pedagogy** offered by the University of Pristina 'Hasan Prishtina' is *partially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *not to accredit* the study program.

4. APPENDICES (if available) – not the case

Expert Team

Chair

(Signature)

Prof. dr. Josip Burušić

(Print Name)

26/04/2021

(Date)

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Member

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