UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA, FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

(RE-ACCREDITATION)

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

6 April 2021, Prishtina (Toulouse, Zagreb)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 11th March 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Dr. Sonja Kačar, University of Toulouse*
- *Mr. Juraj Bogat, student expert*

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 "Master of Philosophy", 2021 (no precise date)*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual (July 2018)*
- *Internal Staff CVs*
- *Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (July 2016)*
- *Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 – 2023 (July 2018)*
- *Regulation for Master's Scientific Studies (approved on 10/06/2019) and Updated Regulation (19/11/2020)*
- *Example of a Master thesis*
- *Example of a Department's journal "Agora Philosophia"*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

● *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, July 2018*

1.2. Site visit schedule

(Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and traveling restrictions, the evaluation process was conducted online via Google Meet platform)

09.00 – 10.00   Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (Room 302)

- Prof. Asoc. Dr. Dashamir Bërxulli – Dekan (M)
- Prof. Ass. Dr. Selim Bezeraj - Prodekan për mësimdhënie & çështje të studentëve (M)
- Prof. Asoc. Dr. Muhamet Qerimi - Prodekan për financa & infrastructure (M)
- Prof. Ass. Dr. Adem Beha - Prodekan për kërkime shkencore (M)
- Lumnije Ahmeti – Sekretare e Fakultetit Filozofik (F)

10.05 – 11:00   Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff (Room 302)

- Besnik Loxha – UD - Zyra për zhvillimi akademik (M)
- MA Ass. Dorajet Imeri – Koordinator për zhvillimin akademik të Fakultetit Filozofik (M)
- Mentor Maka – Administrator IT (M)
- Milazim Hajra – Administrator (M)

11:00 – 11:45   Lunch break

11.50 – 12:50   Meeting with the heads of the study programme

- Prof. Ass. Dr. Hasnije Ilazi (F)
- Prof. Ass. Dr. Kriste Shtufi (M)

12:55 – 13.35   Meeting with teaching staff (Room: Zyra e Dekanit)

- MA Lekë Nikollbibaj - Asistent / Bashkëpunëtor i Jashtëm (M)
- MA Labinot Kelmandi - Asistent / Bashkëpunëtor i Jashtëm (M)
- MA Kastriot Kurti - Asistent / Bashkëpunëtor i Jashtëm - (M) <u>not present on the meeting</u>

13:40 – 14:20   Meeting with students (Room: Zyra e Dekanit)

3

- Burbuqe Latifi (F)
- Xhezair Dashi (M)

14.25 – 15:05   Meeting with graduates (Room: Zyra e Dekanit)

- Arjeta Fejza (F)
- Dafina Arifi (F)
- Zenun Gashi (M)

15.10 – 15:50   Meeting with employers of graduates (Room: Zyra e Dekanit)

- Mustafë Hoti (M)

15:50 – 16.00   Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts (Room: Zyra e Dekanit)

- Arianit Krasniqi (KAA)
- Dr. Sonja Kačar (University of Toulouse)
- Juraj Bogat (Student expert)

16:00 – 16:10   Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

not open for Expert team

- Prof. Asoc. Dr. Dashamir Bërxulli – Dekan (M)

- Prof. Ass. Dr. Selim Bezeraj - Prodekan për mësimdhënie & çështje të studentëve (M)
- Prof. Asoc. Dr. Muhamet Qerimi - Prodekan për financa & infrastructure (M)
- Prof. Ass. Dr. Adem Beha - Prodekan për kërkime shkencore (M)
- Lumnije Ahmeti – Sekretare e Fakultetit Filozofik (F)

Nr.	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs		
1	Philosophy /MA (Reaccreditation)	Dr. Sonja Kačar Mr. Juraj Bogat	Hasnije Ilazi	Kristë Shtufi	

4

AKA | Qendra e Studentëve, kati 2-të, 10000 Prishtinë, Kosovë
Tel. +381 38 213722 | Fax +381 38 213087 | www.akreditimi-ks.org

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

The Faculty of Philosophy is organized as an academic unit of the largest public higher education institution in Kosovo, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina". Founded in 1960, it represents the oldest institution of higher education in Kosovo.

According to the *Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 – 2023* (p. 6) and to the *Self-evaluation Report* (p.3), the main mission of the Faculty of Philosophy is to "educate the young people of Kosovo and to prepare them as worthy and useful citizens for the country". The Faculty's vision is, according to the *Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 – 2023* (p. 4), to become a "leader on the development of critical thinking for a free and democratic society". It aims at (according to *Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 – 2023*; p. 5):

- Advancing knowledge, critical thinking and creativity;

- Providing quality programs and a quality study environment;

- Cultivating the values of a democratic, equal, inclusive and diversified society;

- Providing a cultured, friendly and cooperative environment within the institution.

In addition to providing education in different fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty aims at intensifying scientific research and preparing the students for the labour market. Chiefly, to achieve these goals, the Faculty seeks to develop human resources, implement interdisciplinarity and increase national and international cooperation.

The Faculty of Philosophy is organized through departments, as follows:

1. Department of History
2. Department of Philosophy
3. Department of Sociology
4. Department of Psychology
5. Department of Political Science
6. Department of Social Work

7. Department of Anthropology

The Faculty offers 15 programs of which 6 are accredited (1 PhD, 1 MA and 4 BA) while 9 (6 MA and 3 BA) are in the evaluation process.

Name of the study programme under reaccreditation: **Master of Philosophy**
Scientific area and field (Erasmus Subject Area Codes - ESAC): 08.1

The Department of Philosophy offers BA and MA programmes. Around 40 students enrol in the MA of Philosophy every year. Master studies last for 2 years (4 semesters), by successfully completing them, the students are awarded 120 ECTS.

The program includes a taught portion and a research portion. The last semester is lecture-free and the students are committed fully to the writing of their Master's thesis.
Currently 11 teachers (7 permanent, 3 external, 1 emeritus) are working on the Department and are involved in the Master programme.

Currently Prof. Ass. Dr. Kristë Stufi is the Head of the Department of Philosophy while is Prof. Ass. Dr. Hasnije Ilazi is the Head of the Master programme.

6

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution and has been defined in the *Development Strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 – 2023* and stated in the *SER*.

The overall mission is clear and reflects the uniqueness of the programme of MA in Philosophy within the national higher education system. Although the SER has not provided any comparison with similar programs within the European Higher Education Area, the overall concept is comparable with the regional MA programs and it meets the criteria of the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area.
The programme has received a positive reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and scientific activity.

The MA of Philosophy includes teaching and research and is open to the community service. Teachers, students and former students are socially active, either via citizen associations or political engagement.

The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept. However, while the didactical approaches and learning outcomes are well defined within the SER, the information on research activities and their practical implementation in the study programme is somehow overly generalized. The research strategy of the Department does not seem to articulate around specific research topics, instead each professor teaches his subject. However, during the interview, Department members mentioned the intention to create an additional, interdisciplinary Master program, for example "Philosophy, Politics, Economy", and interdisciplinary PhD program "Philosophy, sociology and political science". Such projects are welcomed and can develop intra- and inter-Institutional communication and cooperation.

The program is designed based on rules, guidelines and laws issued by the The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and the University of Prishtina, which are publicly available. However, while SER claims that the MA program educates teachers for the educational system, providing future high school teachers (p. 39, 42), according to the MEST

regulations (Udhëzim Administrativ nr. 10/2018 të dt. 20/07/2018), only the MA graduates from the Faculty of Education can teach secondary education.

As noted in the Appendix II, Action 2 (p. 107-108), "*the Department of Philosophy and Kosovo Philosophical Association have opposed this regulation by the letter sent to Minister of MEST and to the Prime minister, as well as during the meeting with the Minister of MEST, but without any positive result*". During the interview, the Heads of the Department again expressed their disagreement with MEST proposal/decision.

This urgently needs to be regularized (see recommendations below).

Standard	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.	N/A
*Comments: Standard 1.1. See recommendation 1, below. Standard 1.3. Didactic concept is well defined, research concept needs improvements (see 2.6. p. 30). Standard 1.6.The evaluation team does not have precise information whether such practices occur at least every two years.	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The question which Institution (Faculty of Philosophy or Faculty of Education) trains future secondary education teachers should be regularized. The evaluation team considers that, given the specificity of each school subject, only the Faculty of Philosophy can form future teachers of philosophy and logic. From our personal experience and from the information gathered during the interviews with students, graduates and the employers, only the passionate teacher engages young people in the excitement of learning and ideas. Given the fact that the students at the Faculty of Education do not have any course from the field of philosophy, it is difficult to imagine that they could generate excitement and enthusiasm for philosophy among students. The regularization of this issue will be beneficial for both the Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Education and we encourage both Institutions to develop interdisciplinary cooperation. For example, the Faculty of Education could provide additional and education-oriented courses such as Didactics, Psychology of education,*

Pedagogy, and even, provided that they have a qualified staff, Methodology of teaching philosophy and mentoring the practical work in schools. Nevertheless, such cooperation has to stand on the basis of the Philosophy program as it is taught on the Faculty of Philosophy (BA or MA level).

2. *The Department could define more precise research strategy in the way that the program articulates around more specific research topics. The creation of an additional, interdisciplinary Master program, besides the existing MA in "pure" philosophy (and/or history of philosophy), is very welcomed as it can rigorously structure the program.*

3. *While teaching staff is actively involved in different citizen or professional associations and some are politically engaged, the MA program does not offer any practical training, which is unfortunate. Such practice enables acquisition of transferable skills and increases professionalization and employability of the graduates.*

4. *The fulfilment of evaluation standards should be substantiated through evidence-based, empirically testable statements, and not through exclusively normative statements.*

2.2. Quality management

While the Government of the Republic of Kosovo approved the document entitled "Quality Assurance Strategy for Pre-University Education in Kosovo 2016-2020" in December 2015, it seems that similar documents do not exist for Higher Education. However, the existence of the Quality Insurance Office within the University of Prishtina asses that the University has formally adopted a quality assurance policy.

The quality assurance is very briefly described in the *Development strategy of the Faculty of Philosophy 2018 - 2023* (p. 9) and in Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (p. 23). Nevertheless, based on the SER and during the meetings, the expert team got an impression that both the Faculty Management and the Department of Philosophy are aware of the importance of quality assurance and that they are working on the improvement of the study program.

10

According to SER, the Department holds monthly meetings in order to reflect, discuss and take appropriate actions for improvement of the staff's professional activities. The modifications of study programs are made following the internal evaluation (in cooperation with the Faculty's Council and the Management of Faculty) and the evaluation of the international experts (via KAA agency). The last accreditation of the program *Master of Philosophy* was in 2013 (then under the name "Teaching Philosophy"). According to publicly available documents (docplayer.net) it can be concluded that the Department of Philosophy has respected and implemented the required recommendations from the KAA external experts. Such recommendations refer to the adjustments of the study programmes, including program title and content, curriculum and workload.

The quality assurance of teachers and study programs is assessed through student surveys.
The data is being collected through the Electronic System for Student Management (SEMS) system. The sample of questionnaire for students (= *Questionnaire for students for teachers evaluation in the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Prishtina*) is available in the SER, p. 125-134. The questionnaire meets the requirements of the Bologna status for evaluating student's satisfaction. Unfortunately, the SER acknowledges students lack of interest for such surveys and their general low participation in the questionnaire.
Besides, the SER states that the academic staff is not always informed about the results of student's evaluation.
In this sense it has to be noted that, even though the survey's results are available on the SEMS, they seem to be accessible only by Faculty's management who then "communicates individually the results of the Questionnaire to each academic staff "(SER; p. 27). Therefore the results of student evaluations are not publicly available and lack transparency.

Such survey data is being collected only from students, meaning that there are no similar survey instruments for academic staff, administrative and supporting staff, graduates etc.
Self-evaluation of teachers at the study programme are monitored on the basis of published papers, participation in scientific conferences and management of scientific projects.

Since there are no institutionalised surveys of alumni, it is difficult for the Department to assess what their students accomplish after graduation. A creation of the Alumni network enables the University to track the employability of their graduates. In such a way, alumni can help to raise the profile of the Department/University and can provide mentoring, internships and career opportunities to students.

11

Standard	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
*Comments: Standard 2.4. According to SER, quality evaluations of the Department includes only the results of student's surveys. There is no information that regular evaluations are carried out and that reports are prepared that provide an overview of performance for the institution as a whole. Standard 2.6. Only from students and it is not public. Standard 2.7. However there is no alumni tracking.	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Implementation of electronic questionnaires for academic staff, technical staff and graduates (alumni) through which it assesses quality, complaints, and suggestions (such practice already exists at the MA program International Relations and Diplomacy).*

2. *Creation of the alumni associations in order to support a network of former graduates.*

3. *Statistical data relevant to the quality assurance should be retained in an accessible central database and provided routinely to departments for their use in preparation of reports on indicators and other tasks in monitoring quality.*

2.3. Academic staff

Currently 11 teachers are working at the Department of Philosophy: 7 full-time employees, 3 external employees and 1 emeritus. Among full-time employees, 1 is an associate professor, 5 are assistant professors and 1 assistant holds a PhD. Staff appointment and ranking is determined by educational and research criteria, but there is currently no full professor at the Department.
Two professors are primary appointed to other departments (Department of Sociology and Department of Political Science) and teach one subject at the Department of Philosophy.

Expert team noted surprising gender inequality at the Department: among 11 employees only one is a woman.

Three external employees are employed as assistants, they hold MA degrees (two of them are currently PhD students outside UP) and they are engaged only in seminars, not in lectures. While this information could not be initially verified in the documents provided (assistant's tasks and workloads are not mentioned in the SER and their CVs were not submitted), according to the interviews, the assistants have a norm of 10 hours per week.

Therefore the teaching staff complies with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.

According to the SER, the Faculty provides opportunities for additional professional development of teaching staff by financially supporting conference participations and journal publications. However, it seems that external members (assistants) do not profit from full financial assistance since the costs of travelling to doctoral workshops are on their own expense.

14

Submitted CVs provide supplementary information on Staff's additional education, such as attending seminars and workshops in Kosovo and abroad.

The majority of teachers were educated abroad, both in the region and in the Western Europe (Croatia, Albania, Austria, France), while assistants are enrolled in the PhD programs in Slovenia and Croatia. This practice is extremely important for the development of the Department and for the education in Kosovo in general as the employees educated abroad gain important knowledge and skills that they transfer to their home country. These kinds of experiences lay the foundations for long-term international cooperation.

Besides, many teachers are politically engaged or are active members of civil societies and/or had/have experiences in media or translations. Such practical experiences of employees can be beneficial for the study programme and students employability.

The teachers are qualified, committed and enthusiastic about the Master programme. They are actively engaged with the topics they teach, providing a quality study programme. As such they are able to deliver quality learning experience to their students through inclusive, relevant programmes and updated curriculum. Teaching staff is accessible and encourages students to communicate.

While there is no particular self-assessment format which would allow teachers to reflect upon and describe their teaching and learning goals, challenges and accomplishments, the qualifications of teachers are monitored on the basis of published papers, participation in scientific conferences and management of scientific projects.

Standard	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*
Standard 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 self-evaluation, 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	

*Comments:

Standard 3.1. Information about research activities are missing in the Table p. 32-33 and the Table p. 80-93 contain only a list of publications (and no information on research projects). But the information is available from Staff's CV.

Standard 3.6. Not actually because there is no financial assistance for external employees (assistants); they pay themselves travels to Universities where they are enrolled in PhD programs.

Standard 3.8. As already observed in the "Quality" section, objective evaluations of the teaching staff is carried only via questionnaires for students. These results are not publicly available. There is no information that regular evaluations took place at least once each year.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. The expert team advises of requesting the Governing Council of the University of Prishtina for additional funding for students and assistants engaged in the teaching at the Department of Philosophy.

18

2.4. Educational process content

The study program at the University of Prishtina has been developed in full compliance with the standards of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) where the programmes are offered at three levels – undergraduate, graduate and doctoral studies. In such a three-cycle system model, the Master studies refers to the second level whereas the successful completion of a study programme is awarded with 120 ECTS.

The Master of Philosophy at the University of Kosovo (Prishtina) is organized as a single (general) Master program. M.A. program applicants are expected to hold a B.A. in Philosophy or a related discipline. Taking into consideration that the Department offers a unique MA program and that the program is open to both categories of students, the expert team thinks that the program is well designed. With regard to content and learning outcomes, the curriculum is well organized and structured. It includes required and elective courses where mandatory courses cover major areas of philosophy, and optional courses include subjects in analytical and practical philosophy. As such, the curriculum is broad and balanced. Disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and they meet the defined competencies at a general level. The structure of teaching mainly relies on lectures combined with exercises (seminars). The interdisciplinary aspect of the study program is assured through both mandatory and elective courses which offer subjects that develop critical thinking and analytical approach to regional, European and global issues in key thematic areas such as international politics, globalisation, human rights, religion, role and meaning of media, etc.

At the Master level, course selection is important because it helps students focus their interests and learn more about a field they are interested in. However, it is unfortunate that elective courses do not include foreign language courses, namely English. As it can be seen from the SER, the required literature is often in English while foreign language proficiency of some students can be poor and unsatisfactory (despite the fact that knowledge of a foreign language is apparently a prerequisite for enrolment in this MA program).
This could create first and second-class student experience and result in restricted opportunities for students not being fluent in English. Since it is impossible to avoid literature in English, this problem will have to be solved somehow (through language training before the start of the program/ during the program?).
According to the previous experience of the teaching staff, English language courses within the MA program did not have any effect in improvement of students' language proficiency

since the problem comes from previous levels of the education system (primary and secondary schools). However, the Department agrees that the University could offer additional trainings to improve students' foreign language skills by involving the Faculty of Philology in this matter.

The MA reading list is carefully selected and updated, however, University's budget is insufficient meaning that neither teachers nor students have adequate access to contemporary literature.

Although some courses might appear similar to those taught at BA level (e.g. Greek philosophy), they are not repetitive, instead they are designed to broaden the knowledge and deepen the understanding of particular philosophical topics.

A course of Academic writing in philosophy is an example of good practice: it enables students to elaborate and articulate philosophical and scientific ideas in written form. As such this course has a role to prepare students for writing the MA thesis and for eventual future research work.

With 11 teachers and 30 to 50 enrolled students per year, the Department of Philosophy is rather small, and as such provides a friendly atmosphere and ample opportunity for student-teacher interaction and for students to interact with one another. This impression was confirmed in meetings with both professors and students. Students appreciate the availability of teachers and emphasize the collegial and supportive ambiance. Although student assessment mechanisms are not explicitly stated in the SER (i.e. use of the criteria list and the answer key), according to students, the teachers explain to the students how the test will proceed while the verification of student achievement is objective and fair.

This study program does not involve a practical phase, which is understandable g iven the current design of the program. However, students having affinities to practical philosophy, have expressed great interest in such a possibility.

Standard	Compliance

	Yes	No
Standards 4.1. The study program is modelled on the qualification objectives. These include topics related to interdisciplinary subjects and the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and disciplines. Aspects refer in particular to academic or artistic competences, the ability to acquire adequate employment, contributing to civil society and the development of student personality.	X	
Standards 4.2. The study program is in compliance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. Individual program components combine in a way that best suits the specified training objectives and provide adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standards 4.3. Disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise definition of general and specific competences, as well as compliance with study programs and curricula submitted to the EAR. There should be at least 7 learning outcomes for the under study program.	X	
Standards 4.4. Disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses that include at least: discipline objectives, fundamental thematic content, learning outcomes, classroom distribution, seminars and application activities, student evaluation system, minimum bibliography, etc. Full descriptions of subjects / syllabuses for each subject should be submitted in electronic form only to the evaluation report for the under study program.	X	

Standards 4.5. If the language of instruction differs from that of Albanian, measures are taken to ensure that the language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for teaching in that language when students start their studies. This can be done through language training before the start of the program.	**X***
Standards 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each takes the responsibility of achieving the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the point of view of their importance in student development.	**X**
Standards 4.7. Teaching strategies are appropriate for the different types of learning outcomes that are intended to be developed. The teaching and assessment strategies set out in the specifications of the programs and courses are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different student groups.	**X**
Standards 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are developed fairly and objectively, are suitable for different forms of learning required and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of the courses.	**X***
Standards 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used to verify student achievement standards. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable to the courses offered within a program and compared to other study programs in the assessed institutions.	**X**
Standards 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken to address situations where student achievement standards are insufficient or are assessed inconsistently.	**X**

Standards 4.11. If the study program involves a practical phase, the expected learning outcomes of the students are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that learning outcomes and strategies to develop that learning are understood by the students. Practice stages are awarded ECTS credits and the work of students in practical training organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during the internships have assigned teachers from academic staff to the study program.	**N/A**
Standards 4.12. To facilitate the internships, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions / organizations / training units.	**N/A**
*Comments: Standards 4.5. No measures have been taken. Yet, given the number of mandatory literature in English and student's insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, some actions need to be set. Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are not sufficiently explained in the SER. For example, in regard to oral exams, how to: 1) standardize the assessment and 2) allow fair comparison?	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. As already noted in Section 1 of this document, the expert team would recommend to the Department of Philosophy the creation of additional program(s) in MA in Philosophy: besides the existing MA in "pure" philosophy, creating an additional master program that focuses on practical philosophy would be welcome. Such a program in practical philosophy

23

would attract students who consider finding a job outside Academia immediately after graduation, i.e. those who are not interested in research and who are not envisaging further academic education (PhD). This type of study program could include a practical phase via internships in NGOs, media houses, government agencies, schools, etc.

2. ET advises the implementation of certain measures in order to overcome potential language barriers (language training before the start of the program, mandatory or elective language course, etc).

2.5. Students

Admission and enrolment procedures into the MA studies at the Department of Philosophy seem to be simple, transparent and straightforward. This statement was confirmed during the meeting with the students and graduates, as well through the fact that many applicants and future MA students come from other departments, faculties, or even universities. The majority of students and graduates that the expert team met seem to possess an impressive knowledge of English language, and some of them are even included in translation of the literature, yet it is stated in the SWOT analysis in the SER (p. 76.) that students lack knowledge of foreign languages. As seen in the syllabi of the MA level courses, most of the basic literature is written in English language. The Department should consider an additional enrolment condition which would confirm that candidates have a minimum required foreign language level or some other type of solution which would overcome and solve the language obstacle.

According to the Table 6 of SER, there were a total number of 31 students enrolled into the MA studies at the Department of Philosophy in the academic year 2020/2021., of which three were repeated enrolments, while the enrolment quota is 40 students. Total number of enrolled students at the MA studies is 93. Higher number of repeated enrolment in the second year of studies is presumably the result of additional time needed to finish the master thesis which should not have a negative effect on the size of the study groups.

Conditions for passing a course, as well as final grade structure are presented in detail in the syllabus for each course conducted at the studies. A lot of the emphasis is put on the activity during lectures and seminars which indubitably adds to student professional development.

Communication between students and professors, and vice versa, is effective and prompt, be it in regard to the test results, homework and seminars feedback, master's thesis mentorship, additional inquiries about the course materials and matters or even the extracurricular activities. All of the student basic rights seem to be met. Since the student results and grades are stored in both physical and digital form, they provide a great database for further statistical analysis.

In theory (based on the Faculty regulation which is not still implementable), students have their representatives in the Faculty council and the Department council, and they are also active in the Students Parliament. Faculty exists because of its students and it is therefore necessary for them to be included in the decision making on all the levels of Faculty.

The Expert team must refer to "*Performance indicator 5.4. Support services (e.g. regarding the study program, student counselling in case of emotional, financial or family-related problems, career guidance, international matters, legal advice etc.) as well as subject-related and interdisciplinary guidance are provided* for which nothing is answered in SER. This criticism is mostly directed to the management of the Faculty. Academic life can be stressful to both students and professors. Students are faced with a new way of life, their new role in the world, and with different types and amounts of stress that new way of life may produce. Professors, on the other hand, can be torn with balancing their teaching and scientific work (along with their personal life). And while a part of students and professors manages to handle those situations on their own, a part of them needs external help, be it through counselling, time management advice, and all other situations mentioned in the Performance indicator 5.4.

Mental health is equally important as physical health. The Faculty management should consider organising and implementing a Student and professor counselling centre, and even consider the option to provide its services to students from the entire University. The Centre could also serve for practical work of students of psychology.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No

Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising 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*
*Comments 5.8. It is necessary for the Department to acquire some kind of plagiarism detection software. As the Department of Philosophy students do not undergo some practical work during their studies, nor do they (usually) conduct empirical experiments, their work relies almost exclusively on writing scientific articles. In that manner, using the plagiarism detection software would warn both students and professors about accidental (or non-accidental) plagiarism, which would ultimately increase relevance, originality and credibility of the Department and its students and professors. The expert team is aware of the fact that that kind of software licence can be expansive and that they are usually implemented across the entire University or Faculty, and the expert team is also aware of the fact that the Department cannot afford such investment at the moment. We strongly suggest	

27

| taking steps towards the Governing Council of the University of Prishtina and stating the need and obligation in acquiring such a software licence.

5.11. Considering the fact that the Department of Philosophy is currently denied the teacher training program, the expert team suggests a practical internal solution which consists of mentoring BA students by the MA students. It would be entirely optional and an extracurricular program where young and inexperienced students would get mentorship from older and more experienced students regarding the Department and Faculty in general, student obligations and student rights, homework, seminars, and administration. While the role of the academic staff is irreplaceable in these processes, it would still take additional burden off of them. | |

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Acquisition of a plagiarism detection software.*

2.6. Research

According to the SER, research activities of the Department of Philosophy are organized in cooperation with the Institute for Social Studies and Humanities at the University of Prishtina. On the basis of the documentation submitted (SER and staff's CVs), the expert team gained insight into the scientific interests and research activities of employees. In this sense the academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

However, the Department of Philosophy has not clearly defined research objectives as the priority areas of research are not explicitly specified in the SER. Defined scientific research objectives are too general (e.g. "Increase of international cooperation", "Invest in subscriptions to international journal databases") and as such can be applied to the entire Faculty or even to the University as a whole. Therefore, besides these general objectives, the Department needs to develop its own strategic research plan that clearly articulates research priorities, i.e. identify

research themes and key research areas in which the Department will focus its efforts for the period of five years.

Research activities (publications and participation in scientific conferences in the past five years, participation in research projects is not mentioned) are provided in the tabular form (p. 80-94). According to it, full-time staff appear to be research active within the last five years. However, only one teacher has produced at least one paper per year for the past three years (2018-2020).

Most publications are in in-house, local or regional journals. Although accreditation standards at the European level often insist on publications in international high-quality journals, it must be acknowledged that such practices are not sufficiently developed nor in the other countries of the region (Croatia, Serbia).

However, both teachers and students should target journals indexed in Scopus or similar databases (for example, journals entitled *Balkan Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* and *European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences*, might sound international, but cannot be found in these databases) and publish articles categorized as "scientific" (instead of "professional" and "review" papers).

Moreover, the tabular data provided for the SER is incomplete, lacks standardisation and includes errors. As a consequence, a full quantitative assessment of data was not possible.
A best solution to avoid such mistakes is the creation of an online bibliographic database as an organized digital collection of references to published literature, including journal articles, conference proceedings, books, reports, etc. The same database could also serve as an open archive where authors can deposit scholarly documents.

Academic staff present their research to a wider public by participating in scientific panels at national and international conferences. According to SER, the Department organizes scientific conferences, but again, this information cannot be verified on the basis of the documentation submitted.

In 2018, in association with Kosovo Philosophical Association, the Department of Philosophy has launched the journal "Agora Philosophia" (in Albanian) in order to publish the work of the Department and of the other members of the Albanian-speaking philosophical community. Under the supervision of Academic staff students are encouraged to publish within the journal.

The Expert team considers that such attempts represent an example of good practice and believes that in the next five years the journal will start publishing papers in foreign languages, which is a prerequisite for internationalization. Given that a large number of employees have been educated abroad and that the Department maintains links with the regional and international research community, we believe that it will be possible to attract an international editorial board in the future.

A next step in the internationalization strategy should be the formalization of relationships with other institutions that provide opportunities for student exchange and staff mobility.

Finally, the SER emphasizes the general lack of funds for the research development, on Faculty and University level. While this is something that should be resolved internally, the Expert team can advise staff and students to apply for the independent research grants and funds from the external funding.

Standard	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	

30

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*	

*Comments:

Standard 6.1. Research objectives are not clearly defined as the priority areas of research are not explicitly specified.

Standard 6.7. According to the Table on pages 80-94, only prof. Ilazi has produced at least one paper per year for the past three years (2018-2020).

Standard 6.11. As it is noted in the SER (p. 96), students are not directly engaged in research projects, but are encouraged to participate and publish in the Department's journal and to attend conferences.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Developing a Five-Year Research Plan*
2. *In order to improve the research visibility, staff should increase publishing of scientific papers*
3. *Teachers should verify that their work is properly listed in the SER and that the mode of entering the data is invariable.*
4. *Creation of an online bibliographic database*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

A single faculty building provides space for classrooms, professor offices, faculty management, administration, library, and students. Classrooms and general faculty interior (as seen in the YouTube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmCaWjXmoHI) seems to be pleasant, sufficient and adequate for teaching. All of the classrooms are equipped with digital video projector and a whiteboard, and there seems to be more than enough seating places for all students in all of the classrooms shown in the video. Both students and professors use

32

projectors to give their lectures and discussions an additional, visual, dimension which adds to the quality of the program.

Library seems to be scarce with working space for students since there was a need to erect tall wooden barriers around the working area. Library employees (or other instances) need to make sure that students and professors working in those cubicles get sufficient amounts of light, as not to damage or further damage their eyesight.

In the SER (p. 43) employees mentioned the absence of an online library for staff and students as well as limited literature that students can use for their work, and also limited accessibility in digital resources that provide teaching materials. In order to produce relevant and professional graduates, the Faculty needs to enable access to contemporary scientific works, be it physical and/or digital. While foreign literature donations are welcomed, the library cannot entirely depend on them. Effort needs to be put into actively procuring relevant literature because most of the syllabi for MA courses call upon foreign literature. Furthermore, not providing access to databases and relevant literature may result with copyright infringement which is something no higher education institution should practice nor tolerate and it can also be a burden for professors who need to go above and beyond to provide relevant literature for their courses.

Infrastructure is somewhat adapted to the students with special needs, but it seems not all of their needs are properly addressed. While the classrooms and professor offices are accessible with elevators, the needs of the students with visual or hearing impairments are not addressed. One of the solutions that arises, as seen in practice at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, is to provide personal assistants to students with needs. Assistant is usually another student of the same faculty who helps and guides or navigates a student with special needs around the faculty premises. The assistant engages in that kind of activity as a way of working out (instead of paying) some or all of his or her scholarship fee, and as well as out of empathic and altruistic reasons. The benefits of implementing this or similar kind of assistance are enormous for all parties included - the Faculty, the person with special needs and the student assistant.

Standard	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; KAA Accreditation Manual – July 2018 35 c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; 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 speciality 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;	X
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;	X*
c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years;	X
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;	X
e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	X*
7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs	X*
Comments: *7.2.* Since neither the Department of Philosophy, nor the Faculty in general, is not in charge of their financing, the expert team cannot be compliant in that regard. *7.5. b:* Since the library is not equipped with group work rooms, the expert team cannot be compliant in that regard.	

7.5. e: The SER (p. 101.) only states that "the library is in the process of digitizing" and that "the National library has been digitized". The expert team has no other insight in the subscriptions to databases, scientific journals (foreign or domestic), periodicals or other types of publication which are crucial in order to produce relevant academic works. **7.6.:** The needs of all students should be met, and that includes students with visual or hearing impairments. The adaptation of faculty infrastructure can be costly and take up a lot of time, and therefore the student assistant option seems like an elegant and satisfactory solution.	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Adoption of proactive literature acquisition procedures and access to foreign databases and periodicals.*
2. *Addressing the needs of all the students with special needs, not just some of them.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The Expert Team would like to thank the Department members for their cooperation and proactive engagement with the ET during the re-accreditation process. Having considered the documentation provided and discussing it with the Department members, the Expert Team evaluated the study program "Master in Philosophy" as follows:

Standard	*Compliance Level*
1. Mission, objectives and administration	*Substantially compliant*
2. Quality management	*Substantially compliant*
3. Academic Staff	*Substantially compliant*
4. Educational Process Content	*Substantially compliant*
5. Students	*Substantially compliant*
6. Research	*Partially compliant*
7. Infrastructure and resources	*Substantially compliant*

Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

The overall compliance is assessed by the Expert Team as "Substantially Compliant" and consequently, the MA programme in Philosophy is recommended for continued approval for three years.

In addition to the recommendations given after each general area (Standards 1-7) which could be used to improve some aspects of the program and learning outcomes, the following recommendations should be considered in relation to program re-accreditation:

1. Self-evaluation report improvement

Although the expert team is aware that writing a SER requires extra work and is time consuming, department members should put more effort into preparing for the self-evaluation. A number of grammatical, translation, spelling and formatting errors have been recorded across all sections of the original self-evaluation report. Most spelling mistakes could be avoided by simply enabling spell checking in Word.

In addition, the tabular data provided for the SER is incomplete, lacks standardisation and includes errors. As a consequence, a full quantitative assessment of data was not possible. Teachers should verify that their work is properly listed in the SER and that the mode of entering the data is invariable. Besides, responses to individual standards are too short or too general.

Since the quality of the Faculty and the program is assessed on the basis of the submitted documentation which includes CVs, it is important that the teacher CVs are well written, detailed and standardised. They should be provided in PDF, not in Word.

2. Regulation of teacher education

What are the educational requirements to become a teacher? Which institution (Faculty of Philosophy or Faculty of Education) trains future secondary education teachers?

The evaluation team considers that, given the specificity of each school subject, only the Faculty of Philosophy can train future teachers of philosophy and logic. From our personal experience and from the information gathered during the interviews with students, graduates and the employers, only the passionate teacher engages young people in the excitement of learning and ideas. Given the fact that the students at the Faculty of Education do not have any course from the field of philosophy, it is difficult to imagine that they could generate excitement and enthusiasm for philosophy among students. The regularization of this issue will be beneficial for both the Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Education and we encourage both Institutions to develop interdisciplinary cooperation. For example, the Faculty of Education could provide additional and education-oriented courses such as Didactics, Psychology of education, Pedagogy, and even, provided that they have a qualified staff, Methodology of teaching philosophy and mentoring the practical work in schools. Nevertheless, such cooperation has to stand on the basis of the Philosophy program as it is taught on the Faculty of Philosophy (BA or MA level).

3. Creation of additional MA program

While the Expert Team is aware that the design and the creation of an additional MA study program demands extra efforts for both Department and Faculty, they believe that such attempts are necessary at least in order to regularize the teacher training. Therefore, the Faculty should create at least an additional MA program "Methodology of teaching philosophy" (provisional title). Similar practice exists at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Zagreb (Croatia): students can choose between professional (educational) or research-oriented MA programs.

In addition, the expert team would recommend to the Department of Philosophy the creation of an additional interdisciplinary master program (in cooperation with the Departments of Political Science? Sociology? Anthropology? Or even other Faculties?). Similar programs can be found in some Western European Universities (*e.g.* University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, University of Grenoble).
Such a program in practical philosophy would attract students who consider finding a job outside Academia immediately after graduation, *i.e.* those who are not interested in research and who are not envisaging further academic education (PhD). This type of study program could include a practical phase via internships in NGOs, media houses, government agencies, schools, etc

4. Clearly define research objectives

Department needs to develop its own strategic research plan that clearly articulates research priorities, i.e. identify research themes and key research areas in which the Department will focus its efforts for the period of five years. Such actions are a prerequisite for the development of a PhD program in the future. In this sense, the ET supports the intention to create an interdisciplinary PhD program "Philosophy, sociology and political science".

5. Creation of an online bibliographic database

The University should create an online bibliographic database in order to provide direct online access to the documents and publications of all Kosovo researchers (for example see: https://www.bib.irb.hr/ or https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/). The same database could also serve as an open archive where authors can deposit scholarly documents.

6. Providing additional funds for library and translation

The Faculty/ University should improve the library research facilities available to students, especially access to modern philosophical literature (books and international journals). In addition, since the Department members are already active in translation, the Expert Team recommends extra funds for the translation of major works into Albanian language.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Master of Philosophy offered by the Faculty of Philosophy, 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 **40** students to be enrolled in the program.

Expert Team

Member

	Sonja Kačar	**06/04/2021**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Juraj Bogat	**06/04/2021**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

41