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***FACULTY OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA "Hasan Prishtina"***

PRECLINICAL MEDICINE PhD

(RE/ACCREDITATION)

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

July 2022

DATE, PLACE



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: June the 15th 2022

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Dr Luc Hittinger, Chair*
- *Dr Joke Denekens*
- *Jadranka Pelikan*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Ilijane Ademai Ahmeti, KAA Officer*
- *Arianit Krasniqi, KAA Officer*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *SER Clinical Medicine, PhD*
- *CV*
- *Syllabi*
- *Annexes*
- *Complementary documents*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- Standard & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the accreditation
- Manual of KAA



1.2. Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at Faculty of Medicine, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”	
Programme:	Preclinical Medicine, PhD (Re-accreditation)
Online site visit on:	June 22nd, 2022
Expert Team:	Dr. Luc Hittinger Dr. Joke Denekens Jadranka Pelikan
Coordinators of the KAA:	Iirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer Flamur Abazaj, KAA Officer

On line Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Prof. Dr. Suzana Manxhuka Kërliu, Prof. Ass. Valon Krasniqi, Prof. Ass. Fatos Sada, Prof. Ass. Pranvera Breznica, Prof. Ass. Armond Daci
09:55 – 10:55	Meeting with the head/s of a doctoral programme	Shaip Krasniqi Hasime Qorraj-Bytyqi Valdete Topciu-Shufta Gazmend Kaçaniku Lidvana Spahiu



10:55 – 11:40	Lunch break	
11:40 – 12:30	Meeting with representatives of relevant doctoral committees, administrative and QA staff involved in doctoral programmes	Prof. assoc. Kreshnik Hoti, Besnik Loxha, Denis Raka
12:40 – 13:30	Meeting with research-teaching staff and supervisors	Prof. Assoc. Burim Neziri, Prof. Assoc. Ramadan Sopi, Prof. Ass. Armond Daci, Prof. Dr. Lul Raka, Prof. Ass. Jeton Shatri
13:35 – 14:25	Meeting with doctoral candidates	Dr. Shpat Rrusta, Dr. Dijon Musliu, Dr. Drilon Ahmetaj, Dr. Rilind Syla, Dr. Labinota Kondirolli
14:25 – 14:35	Internal meeting between expert team and KAA	
14:35 – 14:45	Closing meeting with the management of the institution/doctoral programme	

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

The faculty of Medicine was official created in 1969. It merged with the Hospital Center of Prishtina in 1973. It started as a faculty of General Medicine. In 1975/6, the first generation of the Department of Preclinical was registred, followed by the branch of Pharmacy in 1996/7, those of Physiotherapy in 2001/2 and the branch of Midwifery and Nursing in 2003/4. Finally, a branch of Health Management was created with the University of Vienna. It works as an academic unit and carries out educational activities with different Kosovo's Institutions.

The Faculty of Medicine offers 5 study programs (integrated and basic):

1. **General medicine** with a duration of 6 years - the title obtained is Doctor of Medicine
2. **Dentistry** with a duration of 6 years - the title obtained is Doctor of Dentistry
3. **Pharmacy** with a duration of 5 years - the title obtained is Master of Pharmacy
4. **Physiotherapy** lasting 3 years - the title obtained is a Bachelor of Physiotherapy
5. **Nursing** with a duration of 3 years - the title obtained is a Bachelor of Nursing.



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PhD Studies are also offered in: Preclinical Medicine, Clinical Medicine, Dentistry, Experimental Biomedicine and Public Health.

The main objectives of organizing the General Medicine program are:

- Continuous improvement of the quality of teaching and learning by applying interactive methods with the student at the center
- Achieving clinical and laboratory skills and performance for an independent job;
- Development of research capacities, research work;
- Preparing students for international exchanges with higher education institutions in Europe and beyond;
- Providing modern infrastructure for quality education
- Providing adequate and up-to-date literature.

Recently, needs for Ph.D. study and graduate students in Medical Faculty are increasing as a result of changing in Ph.D. study programs and the needs for building and renewing capacities of academic and scientific staff in UP. Based on this situation Medical Faculty has proposed and is committed to continuing the program of doctoral study (Ph.D.) in Preclinical medicine.

With this program, students gain experience, intensify scientific research activities, increase research mobility, strengthen innovation and internationalize their field of work, which is very important for the development of Kosovo. In addition, the program introduces high quality, modern doctoral program (PhD), fully compliant with the Bologna Declaration, thus contributing to the creation of preconditions to reform doctoral cycle (PhD) in general for future programs.



2- PROGRAMME EVALUATION: Doctoral programme in Medicine, PhD

2.1. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND FUNDING

CORE

According to the self-evaluation report (SER) “the PhD programme of preclinical medicine at the University of Pristhina is under formal policies, guidelines and regulations derived from the Law for Higher Education of Kosovo and the statute of the University of Pristhina: PhD regulation Nr1/96 date 24.06.2021 and all these legislative documents are publicly available to all staff and students”.

Also according to the SER “the program is derived as alternative of previous developed Phd program in “Experimental Biomedicine” 2013-2016 which has been financed by the project from EU Commission through TEMPUS programme(Nb. 159034-TEMPUS- 2009-XX-JPHES), title “Kosovo Interdisciplinary Knowledge Triangle center-PhD based Education, Research and Training for medical and natural sciences”.

The Regulation (dd 24.06.2021) on doctoral studies regulates the organization and implementation of doctoral studies at the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”. The regulation defines the responsibility of the institution and the criteria for the format and duration of the PhD studies, the criteria for enrollment in the studies, the way how the studies are conducted, teaching and research, the submission, evaluation and doctoral thesis defense procedures, the rights and obligations of the student in doctoral studies, the rights and obligations of mentors, ways of assuring quality, as well as other issues related to the organization and implementation of doctoral studies. His regulation shows a clear strategy for the delivery of the programme. The regulations stipulate that the programme is reviewed every 2 years. During the interviews the expert team heard that the programme is reviewed more often in order to ameliorate on the basis of the quality assurance methodology (questionnaires for stakeholders).

The Kosovo Interdisciplinary Knowledge Triangle Center gives support to the PhD students who have the opportunity to conduct research in the different departments of the Center (list p. 9-10 in the SER), Also the University Clinical Center of Kosovo is contributing to support the PhD students during their studies. Laboratory settings and lecture rooms, reading rooms, libraries are available for students (building of institutes B).



Sufficient human resources (academic and administrative) are allocated to the program (list p 13-15 in the SER)

Regular academic staff has 32 full time members, and 1 part time. 17 staff members meet fully requirements with published at least 3 papers as first or corresponding author in journals indexed in Scopus and web of Science for the last 5 years.

The financial plan of the faculty of Medicine is annually revised and guarantees the long term sustainability of the programme. Finances are allocated to staff members with grants for financial support of published articles. The vice-dean for financial issues and assests is responsible for oversight and development of infrastructure and resources.

Information on PhD studies is on the institutional website in the official language of Kosovo and in English.

1.1 The institution* has established institutional regulations for doctoral programmes that are either a) part of the existing regulations, but as a separate named section, or b) a free-standing document	X
1.2 The institution has allocated sufficient human (academic and administrative), spatial, physical and financial resources, specifically to support its doctoral programmes.	X
1.3 The institution has sufficient academic staff with a doctoral degree so that at least 50% of courses at doctoral level are delivered by academic staff from that institution. Further, at least 5 academic staff must have a PhD in the research field of the doctoral programme and have at least 3 papers, as first or corresponding author, published in international relevant publications in the last 5 years. Relevance of publications is defined according to international criteria for the particular field of science- indexed in WoS ¹ and/or SCOPUS ²).	X

**The institution may be a university, faculty, department, depending who is the main organiser and carrier of the PhD programme; while disciplinary programmes are usually organised by the department, or faculty, interdisciplinary programmes may be inter-departmental, inter-faculty or university-level.*

programmes may be inter-departmental, inter-faculty or university-level.

SUPPLEMENTARY

1.4 The institution conducts regular reviews and updating of the programme.	X
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¹ WoS (SCIE, SSCI and AHCI)

² SCOPUS (excluding predatory journals or publishers)



1.5 Doctoral education opportunities are shown on the institutional website, in an official language of Kosovo, and in English, and include all relevant information.	X
1.6 The Institution has a clear strategy for the delivery of its doctoral education. If this is embedded in a general institutional strategy, it is explicitly recognised in a separate section.	X

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *It will be very important in the future to foster multidisciplinary research according to priorities of the Health Sectoral Strategy.*

2.2. SELECTION AND ADMISSION CRITERIA

The selection and admission of doctoral students in the PhD preclinical medicine programme is organised under the statute of the university of Prishtina. Selection and admission criteria are transparent and competitive and well described in this PhD regulation Nr. 1/96 date 24.06.2021. Entrance exam has 2 parts: 1. Professional/scientific aspect and 2. the level of English language proficiency. Only students with more than 8 in the previous studies can be enrolled in the selection procedure. Students with higher average will get more points on admission, as the average grade on stated on diploma will be multiplied by four. Students research competencies are taken into account by the selection.

Criteria for determining the priority ranking of the candidates are well defined: 14 criteria p. 21-24 in the SER.

The requested number of students per year is 10. The expert team heard that it is difficult to attract enough candidates because of concurrence with the PhD programme in clinical medicine. This evolution is a real threat for the long term evolution of the preclinical sciences.

CORE

2.1 Doctoral candidates must be selected on the basis of a competitive and transparent process.	X
2.2 Applicants for a doctoral programme must have an educational level equivalent to a masters degree.	X



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2.3 In the selection process doctoral candidates' potential for research should be assessed	X
2.4 Applicants must be able to demonstrate a satisfactory working knowledge of English	X

SUPPLEMENTARY

2.5 Both, full-time and part-time doctoral candidates must have a clearly defined time for completion of their studies.	X
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Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *More information should be available for potential candidates to make the programme more attractive.*
2. *Interdisciplinary projects can augment the attractiveness of the programme*

2.3. DOCTORAL PROGRAMME STRUCTURE/CONTENT

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina prepared the SER for the Preclinical Doctoral study programme. The NQF of Kosovo (2020:37) defines that the Doctoral degree is organised according to Bologna 3rd cycle education programme, with EQF reference level 8. It is organised as a full-time study with duration of 3 full years i.e. four years at maximum length. The interviewees stated that the duration could be prolonged up to six years at the request from a PhD candidate.

Kosovo is a young country which strives to provide quality of life, work and education to the citizens. That process involves standardisation of education at all its levels. Therefore, the National Qualification Framework (NQF) sets the main goal aimed at "establishing the credit accumulation and transfer system" (ECTS) according to the Law (03 / L060 Art. 5, 1.6). The education systems and quality of teaching and learning differ in the European countries which brings difficulties for mobility and transfer of students and teaching staff among the countries. In that sense, the ECTS brings comparability of workload and the learning outcomes of the study programmes in Europe. One ECTS credit equals 25-30 hours, according

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to the NQF (2020). The calculated time for a full academic year is 60 credits. The Preclinical Medicine study contains, therefore, 180 ECTS spread within 3 consecutive years.

The ET examined the SER thoroughly and noticed that this PhD study programme is not entirely compliant with the NQF directives on doctoral degrees.

The NQF (2020: 49) presents descriptors for the Level 8 about individuals who achieve qualifications and they should demonstrate the following knowledge, skills and competencies:

Knowledge

They will have and use highly advanced knowledge in a field of work, study or research field to link different fields, drawing conclusions through critical review of a subject or discipline, by including critical understanding of theories, principles and concepts.

Knowledge and understanding is generated through personal research or related work that contributes to the development of a subject or discipline and provides original and creative knowledge as well as ideas and information on innovations, complex and abstract issues, developing creative and original approaches to problems.

This includes:

- work on very complex innovations and issues as well judging in the absence of complete or consistent data or information;
- the discussion, enhancement or contradiction of professional knowledge and practice within a particular field or the inter-domain connections.

The SER presents the syllabi that offers knowledge at the basic level which is more suitable for the Bachelor or Master study programme level.

The NQF (2020: 49) lists skills that doctoral candidates should achieve by finishing the doctoral degree in Preclinical Medicine, which differs from the SER listed ones. "They will be able to use a range of skills, techniques, practices and materials in the subject, discipline or field of work in order to acquire knowledge, ideas, information and innovations on complex and abstract issues as well as developing creative attitudes and skills". From the array of the NQF skills the learning outcome could be developed such as: applying a set of standard and specialised research and research methods (eg. synthesis and evaluation) to design and carry out research or development projects, with the aim of solving critical problems and laying down, advancing or challenging professional knowledge or practice; contributing to new knowledge within an educational discipline or field. This may include: reviewing the literature, experimenting and developing other approaches to a range of issues; research papers, critical



writing and insights, innovative developments in one or more areas of specialisation or research areas; Conducting a doctoral thesis.

In terms of competences, the graduated PhD students according to the NQF will be: autonomous and take initiatives for professional and related activities, demonstrating authority, innovative approaches and educational and professional integrity that encompass the highest levels in the context of work, study or research in the relevant field or discipline. They are responsible for their own work and the work of others, demonstrating leadership and originality in dealing with and solving problems. They are able to deal with complex ethical and professional issues, adjudicating new issues unaddressed by current professional and ethical codes or practices.

The NQF offered the list of the level indicators which contains: systematic expertise in the field of high knowledge specialisation and a capacity for critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas. These qualifications create the ability to conceptualise, design, implement and adapt substantive research processes. These qualifications also recognize leadership experience in developing new creative approaches that broaden or redefine existing professional knowledge or practice. The study of these qualifications is carried out in higher education institutions.

All courses should be revised and designed according to the NQF. In majority of courses the learning outcomes are at the knowledge level instead of the research one. Transferable skills are poorly presented.

The SER refers to the **Regulation for Doctoral Studies Number 1/96, date 24.06.2021** Article 5 (Teaching and research in doctoral studies), point (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) and in Article 6 (Forms of doctoral studies) according to which the structure and content of doctoral study are addressed. However, it does not derive the learning outcomes from the National Qualification Framework (2020).

CORE

3.1 Doctoral programmes must be research-based although they may include course work and other activities that contribute to critical thinking and the development of research skills.	X
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3.2 Doctoral programmes must have a time limit of 3 or 4 years for full-time doctoral students and of 7 years for part-time students.	X
3.3 The programme should enable individual research opportunities; courses should not exceed 1/5 of ECTS (36 credits) of total credit hours or 20% of the total workload; programme must develop transferable skills, and provide sufficient training in the methodology, ethics and integrity of research.	X
3.4 The programme should encourage mobility and participation in learning opportunities in other institutions.	X
3.5 The programme must have an established process for monitoring the progress of doctoral candidates.	X
3.6 A doctoral candidate must have a supervisor/s allocated within the first 12 months.	X
3.7 Acceptance of a doctoral research proposal must be subject to clearly defined and transparent procedures.	X

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SUPPLEMENTARY

3.8 Doctoral candidates' mentors and members of the doctoral committee should be involved in institutional bodies relevant for doctoral education.	X
3.9 Doctoral candidates should be allowed to take courses outside the institution, as well as afforded opportunities to gain other relevant experience, such as presentations at academic conferences, workshops and other relevant activities.	X
3.10 The majority of course work should be based on tutorials, seminars, discussion groups, workshops and individual work rather than predominantly didactic methods of instruction.	X
3.11 There should be evidenced data collection on cohorts of doctoral candidates.	X
3.12 If there is insufficient research capacity the institution is considering different approaches, such as joint programmes, collaborative programmes); a serious endeavour needs to be documented (please, see S 4.5).	X

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:



1. *There is a low level of the study completions, drop-out rates are high, therefore, the HEI should define activities to overcome these difficulties.*
2. *All syllabi should be revised with the learning outcomes written according to the NQF, prior the new academic year.*
3. *Biostatistics and Research Methodology should be divided into 2 courses to reduce the student workload, prior the new academic year.*
4. *This study programme does not include qualitative methods in research which are very important in biomedical studies. Therefore, the qualitative methods research should be an obligatory course.*
5. *More attention should be paid to microcredentials, short courses and trainings to recognize the transferrable skills of the doctoral candidates.*

2.4. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

The process of reaccreditation is conducted online, and it was not an easy task for the ET to evaluate the equipment and its availability to the doctoral candidates. Therefore, the ET approximates that the infrastructure and facilities are sufficient for the doctoral study conducting.

The SER (pg.56) states that The Faculty of Medicine with the strategic plan of UP has continuously increased the infrastructural development and the budget for scientific studies. There is a regulation for involvement in scientific projects at local and international levels.

CORE

4.1 Infrastructure and facilities must be up-to-date and compatible with the area of research of a whole doctoral programme and doctoral research projects.	X
4.2 It must be evident, and clearly documented, that research is performed according to international ethical standards.	X
4.3 An Ethics Committee should be responsible for approving research involving humans and animals. Members must be active researchers, with publications in relevant international journals with no record of any kind of misconduct of research, plagiarism or any other ethical issue, no identified conflict of interest, and committed to data protection.	X
4.4 No supervisor should have more than three doctoral candidates.	X

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SUPPLEMENTARY

4.5 In case of a need to up-grade research capacity, a joint doctoral programme with another university, preferably from abroad could be accepted (the whole programme with all the components needs to be documented, following all the applicable standards); other forms of collaboration with other institutions from abroad may also be acceptable.	N.A.
4.6 Taking in to account the field of research, employment opportunities, and its research capacity, the institution should consider the scheduling of enrolment of new cohorts of students.	N.A.
4.7 The institution should support research quality by requesting and reporting on research-paper quality and publication, external research funding, the establishment of research groups, etc.	X

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Each doctoral candidate performing research involving humans and/or using animals should be obliged to present the Ethical Committee approval for the research.*
- 2. The research quality should be improved in terms of establishment of the continuous research debate groups, not only as one semester course (even if it is an extracurricular).*
- 3. The researchers, both PhD candidates and the academic staff supporting them, should have developed an individual annual plan for research, publications and further improvement i.e education. Its implementation should be monitored.*
- 4. There is the Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes that is obligatory to all European researchers. Since the Study Programme researchers publish their work in international publications and participate in the scientific events with their results presentations at the same market as the European researchers, they should apply the Directive. Therefore, the recommendation is that the Study Programme should improve the quality of the research to be more compliant to the international/European scientific community by adopting the policy coherent to the Directive on the animal welfare. Additionally, annual action plan should be develop and submitted to the KAA regarding the policy design and implementation.*



5. *Experimental animals' living conditions should be presented to the ET during the next reaccreditation.*

2.5. SUPERVISION

The interviewees stated that PhDs have a supervisor from their area of research. The ET checked the list of the CVs attached, there are several of them very experienced researchers. The PhD candidates confirmed that their communication with the supervisor is quite frequent, very often on a weekly basis. The HEI provided a plenitude of the requested documentation. It is apparent that quality assurance is highly recognized among the academic staff.

CORE

5.1 A doctoral candidate must have at least one supervisor (two is advisable), covering the research area/topic that is the focus of his/her doctoral research.	X
5.2 Supervisors must be a member of academic staff of the institution, hold a PhD and an approved academic title, be an active researcher, with a minimum of three years' research experience following the award of his/her PhD; he or she must have at least 3 papers published in international relevant publications in the last 5 years (relevance of publications is defined according to international criteria for the particular field of science- indexed in WoS and/or SCOPUS).	X
5.3 Supervisors must have experience in research projects and participation in international academic conferences and workshops relevant to the field.	X
5.4 The number of doctoral candidates per supervisor should be compatible with the overall work load of a supervisor.	X
5.5 Supervisors and doctoral candidates must meet regularly (at the very least monthly) to discuss the candidates' research and monitor progress. These meetings must be documented.	X
5.6 Responsibilities of the institution, supervisor and doctoral student must be set out clearly in a policy document.	X

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programmes may be inter-departmental, inter-faculty or university-level.

SUPPLEMENTARY



5.7 The Institution provides professional development opportunities for supervisors.	X
5.8 Participation in international academic networks and similar activities should be documented.	X

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Each supervisor should attend the workshop for mentors and provide the attendance certificate by the next reaccreditation.*
2. *The monthly report of the PhD candidate progress or meeting minutes should be documented and available to the ET.*
3. *The HEI and the PhD candidate should formalise their relationship with a mutually signed contract.*

2.6. ASSESSMENT

Doctoral candidates are required to publish at least 1 paper as a first or corresponding author in a peer-reviewed journal relevant to the field (indexed in WoS and/or SCOPUS).

Protocol for the assessment process, including the composition of the evaluation committee is laid down in article 17 and 18 of the PhD regulation of U.P. The evaluation committee is composed of three members appointed by the academic unit committee. One of the members has to be from a university abroad. The supervisor cannot be a member of evaluation committee.

After the official submission of doctoral thesis to the faculty, with the consent and opinion of the supervisor, the doctoral study council of the academic unit reviews the reasoning of the mentor within 1 month and proposes to the council of the academic unit the appointment of members of the doctoral thesis evaluation commission. Simultaneously with the appointment of the commission for the evaluation of the doctoral thesis, the academic unit publishes the title and resume of the thesis in Albanian and English on its website for a period of 30 days.

The commission for the evaluation of the doctorate, within 2 months from the appointment, compiles the written report for the evaluation of the doctoral thesis and submits it to the council of the academic unit. In the next session the council of the academic unit decides on acceptance, return or rejection of the dissertation.



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If the thesis is returned for completion-change a period of 2-6 months is given, within which period the completion-change must be completed. The completed or amended thesis must be submitted to the council of the academic unit together with the opinion of the committee for the evaluation of the doctoral thesis.

In instances of the approval of the report of the evaluation commission, the council of the academic unit forms the commission for doctoral defense. The commission for defense of doctoral thesis consists of 3 members. Within 1 month from the date of submission, the positive decision of the council of the academic unit regarding the thesis, is reviewed by the central commission of doctoral studies, which in case of fulfillment of the conditions provided by this regulation proposes to the senate the ratification of the doctoral thesis.

The senate, within 1 month from the date of the positive recommendation from the central commission of doctoral studies, takes a decision regarding the ratification of the doctoral thesis. The doctoral student, in agreement with the dean of the academic unit and with the commission for protection of the doctoral thesis, makes the public defense of the doctoral thesis within 2 months from the day of ratification in the senate.

The supervisor participates in defense of the doctoral dissertation on the side of the doctoral student and has no right to make decisions. The defense of the doctoral dissertation is done with physical presence and is public. The Commission for the Defense of Doctoral Thesis makes the evaluation immediately after the public defense of the doctoral thesis. The evaluation of the defense of the doctoral thesis may be: a) defended, with great success; b) defended, very well; c) defended, with good success; d) defended, with sufficient success; e) did not defend. In case the defense commission assesses that the doctoral student has failed to defend the doctorate due to non-compliance with the defense procedures, the doctoral student loses the right to defend the doctoral dissertation. In case the defense commission assesses that the doctoral student has failed to defend the doctorate due to insufficient preparation, the commission may decide that the doctoral student should be offered a period of 1 year to repeat the defense process.

Ph.D. title can be revoked at any time in case that fabrication, cheating, plagiarism or infringement of author's rights during preparation of doctoral thesis is identified as described in article 19 of the PhD regulation of U.P.

During the on-line visit and the complementary documents that were received, the EC verified that most of these principles were respected.

CORE

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6.1 Doctoral candidates are supported and required to publish at least 1 paper as a first or corresponding author in a peer-reviewed journal relevant to the field (indexed in WoS and/or SCOPUS).	X
6.2 Doctoral candidates must confirm that the doctoral thesis is their original work.	X
6.3 Doctoral candidates must submit their thesis to the doctoral committee within the stipulated time frame and participate in an oral public defence.	X
6.4 The institution must have a clearly documented protocol for the assessment process including the composition of the evaluation committee, which should comprise at least three members	X
6.5 The institution must have clear criteria for the assessment of doctoral theses	X
6.6 The institution must have clear regulations governing the instance of a negative assessment.	X
6.7 Institutions must have clear policies and procedures to address any kind of misconduct such as unethical practice, plagiarism, fabrication of data, etc.	X
6.8 All the members of the committee for the evaluation of the public defence must be established authorities in the research field. The committee must have at least one external member from a domestic or international institution.	X
6.9 A supervisor may not serve as a member of the evaluation committee.	X

SUPPLEMENTARY

None

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *None*

2.7. DOCTORAL RESEARCH OUTCOME

The final outcome of the doctoral program PreClinical medicine is the public defense of PhD thesis. The PhD studies are finalized by successful public defense “Doctoral viva” of doctoral thesis.

The doctoral thesis reflects the reasonableness of topic and expectations of original scientific contribution of the proposed research, research expenses evaluation, and a statement that the dissertation has not been presented with same topic in other university studies, or in any other university. Furthermore, the doctoral thesis represents an addition to the current knowledge in



the field of preclinical medicine. As assurance for this element is publication of part of PhD thesis in high ranked journals, which in principle accept papers with novel ideas/findings. Doctoral program provides to successful candidate a set of competences that will provide him/her, with a choice for career path.

The successful finishing of PhD study, the Doctoral research outcome, the property right of research patent and other responsibilities are presented in Article 18, 19, 20 and 21 of PhD regulation of University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”.

The entire doctoral dissertation is published on the university website at least 1 month after the defense. The doctoral dissertation in printed form is kept in three copies in the archive of the academic unit, 3 copies in the archive of the university and 3 copies in the central university library.

There are provisions in the regulation of U.P. for cases where the result of doctoral thesis may lead to an award of patent. In such cases The Commission for the Protection of Doctoral Thesis must implement procedures for legal and commercial protection of research results in accordance with intellectual propriety regulations.

During the on-line visit and the complementary documents that were received, the mean duration of the thesis was evaluated between 5-6 years, with no dropout. After graduations, the PhD candidates obtained all a position in the public sector all in Kosovo. In the last 10 years, only 5 PhD students were graduated. The low number being explain in part by the Covid pandemic.

CORE

7.1 The final outcome of the doctoral programme is a thesis. There is no singular, stipulated, format for the thesis. However, the copy must be publicly available. This may be on-line, but a hardcopy must be held in the institution’s library and elsewhere, as deemed appropriate.	X
7.2 The thesis should reflect original thinking and represent a valuable addition to the knowledge base of the topic	X
7.3 Doctoral programmes should provide a successful candidate with a set of competences that will provide him, or her, with choice of career paths	X

CORE



7.4 Where a doctoral candidate does not complete his/her PhD studies successfully the institution may wish to consider issuing a certificate recording the courses he/she attended during the course of study.	X
7.5 There is a defined procedure for the assessment and public defence in cases where the results may lead to the application and award of a patent.	X

Compliance level:

Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Increase the number of graduates with the next 2 years*
2. *Invest the private sector as an additiionnal outcome for the PhD candidates*
3. *Put in place procedures to facilitate the European/international mobility of PhD candidates after graduation.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Subject	Core	Core compliant	Suppl	Suppl compliant
Institutional structure, administrative support and funding	3	3	3	3
Selection and admission criteria	4	4	1	1
Doctoral programme structure/content	7	7	5	5
Research environment capacity	4	4	3	1 + 2 NA
Supervision	6	6	2	2
Assessment	9	9	0	0
Doctoral research outcome	3	3	2	2
All	36	36	16	14 + 2 NA

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the doctoral programme in Clinical Medicine offered by University of Prishtina "Hasan Pristina" Faculty of Medicine *is Fully compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual for doctoral programmes* and, therefore, recommends **to accredit** the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number **10 students** to be enrolled in the program.



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

4. APPENDICES

1. A
2. B
3. C



Expert Team

Chair


(Signature)

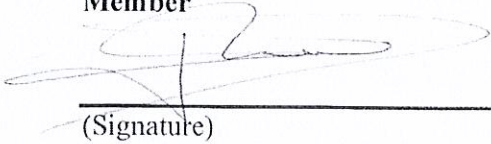
Luc Hittinger

(Print Name)

27.07.2022

(Date)

Member


(Signature)

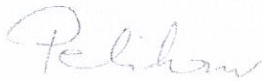
Joke Deneken

(Print Name)

27.07.2022

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Member


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Jadranka Pelikan

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Member

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