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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju

Kosovo Accreditation Agency

University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”

Faculty of Medicine

Master of Science in Physiotherapy

120 ECTs

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

30th April 2024

Kosovo Accreditation Agency

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 30TH April 2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Joke Denekens*
- *Snjezana Schuster*
- *Nibal Sabri*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Lenda Hyseni*
- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Director of Department at KAA*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *The Self-Evaluation Report, Master (MSc) in Physiotherapy with the annexes as follows;*
 1. *Curriculum Vitae CVs of academic staff*
 2. *Syllabi Physiotherapy MSc*
- *Annexes composed of 28 appendices which were not all received in English language.*
- *Onsite interviews with personnel and stakeholders (one expert Prof. Schuster was online)*
- *Facility Site visit*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of Kosovo Accreditation Agency, 2021*
- *European Guidelines and Standards*



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1.2. Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at University of Prishtina, Faculty of Medicine	
Programmes:	Physiotherapy MSc (Re-accreditation)
Site visit on (hybrid):	30 April 2024
Expert Team:	Prof. Joke Denekens Prof. Snjezana Schuster Student expert Sabri Nibal
Coordinators of the KAA:	Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Director of Department at KAA

Site Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Prof. Ass. Fatos Sada Prof. Ass. Valon Krasniqi Prof. Ass. Zana Sllamniku Dalipi Prof. Ass. Floren Kavaja
09:55 – 10:40	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Besnik Loxha, Kreshnik Hoti, Sanije Gashi, Denis Raka, Doruntina Shala
10:45 – 11:40	Meeting with the heads of the study programme Physiotherapy MSc, 120 ECTS	Prof. Ass. Dr. Merita Qorolli, Prof. Assoc. Dr. Jeton Shatri
11:40 – 12:40	Lunch break	
12:40 – 13.20	Visiting Facilities	Facilities of the Faculty of Medicine, UP and University Clinical Centre of Kosovo
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff	Prof. Ass. Samire Beqaj, PT, PhD, Prof. Ass. Dr. Dafina Bytyqi, Prof. Ass. Eqrem Gara, PT, PhD, Ass. Arbnore Ibrahimaj Gashi, PT, PhD, Ass. Shkurta Rrecaj Malaj, PT, PhD
14:05 – 14:50	Meeting with students	Jetë Mehmeti, Fatlinda Fazliu, Lamir Kasumi, Lorik Reçica, Lirigzona Gashi, Dafinë Bërbatovci



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14:55 – 15:35	Meeting with graduates	Fitim Sadiku, Rilind Shala, Valdrin Tahiri, Deniz Sungur, Hajrije Zejnullahu, Lirije Aruqi
15:40 – 16:20	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Fejzulla Ahmeti, Kushtrim Zhjeqi, Valentina Dushi, Irfan Halimi, Professor Lorimer Moseley (online), Professor Daniel Belavy (online), Dr. Ardian Shefkiu
16:20 – 16:30	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:30 – 16:40	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

Overall instructions for HEIs:

1. No presentations of any kind are allowed, as the meetings are intended to be free discussions
2. The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc.
3. The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc.
4. The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution.
5. Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA, and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session.
6. Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.

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

On June 17, year 1969, the Parliament of Kosovo approved the law on the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine, within the University of Pristina (UP) (Official journal no. 20/69).

Since that time, the Faculty of Medicine functioned as an academic unit, and educational activities have been carried out in the following Institutions: University Clinical Centre,



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University Clinical Centre of Dentistry, National Institute of Public Health, Preclinical Institutes, National Blood Transfusion Centre, Institute of Medicine of Labor, the Centre for the Development of Family Medicine and the Kosovo Agency for Medical Products.

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 with the duration of 3 years - the title obtained is Bachelor of Physiotherapy
5. Nursing with a duration of 3 years - the title earned is Bachelor of Nursing

The Faculty of Medicine also offers two-year Master's studies (120 ECTS):

1. Education in Health Care
2. Master of Science in Physiotherapy

Also, the Medical Faculty offers the following Ph.D. studies:

Preclinical Medicine, Clinical Medicine, Experimental Biomedicine, and Public Health.

The Faculty of Medicine at the beginning of 2015 has established the Advisory Board of the Faculty with the aim to analyse the market needs in the field of medicine and health care.



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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The University of Prishtina has the following goals defined:

1. To act as an institutional and leading centre for the advancement of knowledge, creative ideas, and science in the higher education system of Kosovo;
2. To play the leading role in the development of education, science, culture, society and economy of Kosovo;
3. To help in the process of promoting civil democracy;
4. Aim to create and support the highest standards in teaching and learning, scientific research and artistic creativity;
5. To use its resources most efficiently;
6. Cooperate maximally and participate in all higher education activities at the national, regional, and international levels;
7. To promote and implement the European standards for sustainable development;
8. To be fully integrated into the European Higher Education Area, in the European Scientific Research Area and to undertake adequate reforming steps necessary to achieve this mission;
9. To be oriented towards innovation and excellence in scientific research.

The aims of the MSc in Physiotherapy program are:

1. Strengthening research capacities, skills, concepts, and knowledge related to evidence-based physiotherapy practice.
2. The ability to gain inter-professional, multi-disciplinary, and specific academic knowledge about the influences of different health sectors in the practice of physiotherapy.
3. Enabling students to identify and resolve professional issues, practice rational decision-making, to practice good judgment, and engage in best practices, as well as lifelong learning.
4. Improving aspects of internationalization and mobility within the MSc cycle.
5. Creating a knowledge base on the development and implementation of the MSc program through capacities and measures for building institutions.
6. To prepare graduate students to become good practitioners in their field.
7. To continue academic (i.e. Level 8 of EQF) and professional development
8. To facilitate the mobility of teachers, researchers, students, and professionals.



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If we compare the 2 lists of goals/aims, it is obvious that the programme is compliant with most of the institutional goals. For goal 3 and 7 the expert team has not found evidence in the goals of the programme.

The program is in full harmony with the demands of the labour market.

In the year 2022, the Kosovo Chamber of Physiotherapists (KCHPT) administrated a survey to the members of KCHPT, to gain information regarding the knowledge and implementation of physiotherapy practice of the 9 basic competencies of Physiotherapy for the 6th level of education (minimum necessary for practicing the profession) established by [World Physiotherapy, Europe Region \(ER-WCPT\)](#) (Appendix II). The data obtained from the survey have shown that about 20% of the graduates have completed their Master's studies, which shows the high need for the continuation of MSc studies in Physiotherapy. These data were presented at the second International Conference of Physiotherapy in Kosovo.

The SER states that the “mission of the Master of Science Program in Physiotherapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Pristina is to implement a high-quality European curriculum with qualified teachers and contemporary methodologies that enable the achievement of European standards for the education of future professionals in the field of Physiotherapy by linking learning to research through measurable results and qualitative knowledge, skills and competencies”.

The programme can be defined as a “research master” in the context of the EHEA criteria.

Candidates will be engaged in in-depth scientific research work and will be educated in entrepreneurship skills in order to be able to make the transfer of new evidence-based knowledge into society with economic and social impact of the candidates work.

The content of the programme is based on the recommendations of the World Physiotherapy, Europe Region and the international framework of competences for Physiotherapy and on the priority defined by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in the research and development strategy. Benchmark for content was done with the Master in Physiotherapy of the university of Ljubljana, Slovenië.

The didactic concept is based on diversity of teaching and learning activities that will enable students to learn in an activating learning environment and in a nexus of teaching, research and service to society. Students are supported to become independent learners and researchers. Therefor are entrepreneur skills, critical thinking, creation of evidence-based knowledge in interdisciplinary context in the centre of learning. The research concept is implemented in the courses with activating assignments (individually and in group)



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During all interviews the expert team was able to see that this didactic and research concept is really implemented in the courses and that teachers have internalised these concepts and are able to teach in this way. During the interviews with all groups the enthusiasm was shown to realise these high quality learning processes.

Modern and updated regulations, formal policies and guidelines, in favour of the teaching process and the daily work of the Faculty of Medicine are in place and are publicly available.

All issues related to ethical conduct in research, teaching, and evaluation in all academic and administrative activities are addressed by the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo and by the code of Ethics of the University of Prishtina. Staff and students know the Code of Ethics of the University of Prishtina.

All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the programme are in place. The updating of those documents is an ongoing process in the institution.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	x	
<i>Standard 1.2.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	x	
<i>Standard 1.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	x	
<i>Standard 1.6.</i> All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are	x	



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reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.		
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Compliance level: fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. The expert team recommends to train the teachers for community service learning
2. The expert team recommends to give best evidence practice a central place in the teaching and learning activities

Performance indicators

- 1.1. The expert team has not seen a set of KPI at the level of the study programme.
- 1.1. Systems for central recording and analysis of course completion, program progression, completion rates and program evaluations are in place. A systematic and structured way of comparative analyses of data with conclusions to steer decisions on the long term will be possible
- 1.2. Policies and procedures are in place to deal with situations where standards of students achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed. Implementation of the activating teaching and learning activities will make it possible to discover in a preventive way students with difficulties and to give feedback and individualised approach to help students overcome this difficulties in time.
- 1.3. A central database is in place in this way a systematic and structured way of comparative analyses of data to steer decisions on the long term is possible.
- 1.4. Because it is an accreditation procedure no statistical data on indicators over the years is possible at the moment.
- 1.5. The concepts of gender justice and the promotion of equal opportunities for students in special situations is covered in documents.

The expert team wants to commend the University of Prishtina, the faculty of Medicine and the staff of the new programme for the creation of this “unique” master of which not only the prepared documents are aligned with the best research masters in Europe but also the Faculty and the staff are ready with full enthusiasm to start this programme with full transformation of the learning environment.



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2.2. Quality management

The University of Prishtina works with an internal quality assurance system based on the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo, the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education, the Statute of the University of Pristina as well as the regulations in force which guarantee the achievement of international objectives and standards, standards which originate from the Bologna Declaration and are summarized in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education.

The Regulation for Master studies defines the criteria for master studies, the conditions of the study registration, the conditions of the registration of the next year, the organization of the program, the duration of studies, transfer of the study program, the organization of the exams and evaluation of success, and the procedure of proposal and protection of the master's degree work.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is used to define the volume of learning based on defined learning outcomes and their workload required to complete a full year of study within the ECTS system, for the accumulation of study credits based on transparency and comparability of qualifications. The amount of work includes not only lectures, practical work and seminars, but also training, research or fieldwork, self-study, examinations and other assessment activities. At the University of Pristina, one ECTS corresponds to the student's workload of 25 hours. According to the ECTS system, the amount of work for one year of study corresponds to 60 ECTS credits, and the study of one semester corresponds to 30 ECTS credits. The "Master of Science in Physiotherapy" program lasts two years, with a total of 120 ECTS.

The program is prepared based on the standards required by the Kosovar Agency for Accreditation (KAA) where the learning outcomes of the study programs are in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework of Higher Education, and as such are subject to external evaluation.

Reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically for review within the institution showing its strengths and weaknesses. The expert team recommends to inform



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internal and external stakeholders about those reports in order to give feedback and to show the actions done according to the evaluations. In this way more evidence and effectiveness can be shown as also transparency of procedures and results will be in place.

The SER gives an overview in Albanian of structures involved in the process at central level and decentral level. The SER gives also an overview of instruments and procedures that have to be used and followed. The university has established a process to review the questionnaires regularly.

The electronic system SEMS enables an evaluation, which can deliver some of the results promptly.

According to the SER all staff participate in self - evaluation assessments, organised by the department and discussed with the supervisor/dean.

The dean or supervisor discusses with the academic staff those self -assessments and together improvement processes are defined and followed-up. Trainings to the needs of the staff are programmed and followed.

Also, the systematic monitoring of teachers' performance is done by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Head of the program, to assess the quality of teaching and to see which teaching and learning methods are used by the academic staff. This process includes evaluating the content delivered during each lecture. For this purpose, periodic visits are made to all teachers.

After each semester, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Quality Assurance organises various surveys with current students, such as teacher performance evaluation, student evaluation services and other evaluations of their satisfaction with the overall services provided by the Faculty.

The results of the student surveys are going to the vice-chancellor, who defines with the central committee the actions that have to be undertaken. There is no return to the students about the results of the surveys and the implementation of actions. The results are not on the website. Because of confidentiality issues the results are made publicly on an aggregated level.

For the evaluation of programs 7 criteria are used: Quality of teaching and learning, quality of scientific activity, international cooperation, graduates' perceptions of the quality of the studies, employers' perceptions of the quality of the graduates, quality of services of students, quality of organisational culture and management.



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Appropriate program evaluation mechanisms, including graduates' surveys, employment outcome data, employer feedback and subsequent performance of graduates are used to provide evidence about the appropriateness of intended learning outcomes and the extent to which they are achieved.

During the interview with the heads of program, it was obvious that the role of the head of program is crucial in steering innovation in the program to an international level. During the interviews with graduates and employers (from bachelor in science of Physiotherapy) the expert team found evidence that overall appreciation of the program on input, process and outcome level, is very high. Graduates are satisfied with teaching and learning environment and are proud to be a graduate of Prishtina University. Employers found that graduates (for bachelor programme) are fit for purpose. The expert team has not found evidence for workload measurements of students and teachers. During interviews it was said that quality instruments were updated according to specific situations. The expert team has not seen a structural and systematic procedure for updating the quality tools, procedures and arrangements.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
<i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
<i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
<i>Standard 2.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	



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<i>Standard 2.7.</i> 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
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.		X

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Make work of a set of KPI at the level of the programme at institutional level in order to be able to follow progress and enhancement in quality in a systematic and structured way.
2. Make the overall data registration in a way progress in quality can be monitored and make data easily accessible in a way that effectiveness of actions can be monitored.
3. Use annual reports of results of quality assurance endeavours more to inform stakeholders, graduates, the public. The expert team recommends to inform internal and external stakeholders about those reports in order to give feedback and to show the actions done according to the evaluations. In this way more evidence and effectiveness of quality assurance can be shown as also transparency of procedures and results will be in place.
4. Give feedback to students about the surveys of teachers and show them the actions undertaken to ameliorate the situation.
5. Empower student union to take leadership and responsibility and to communicate more with all students about the endeavours of quality assurance in a proactive way.
6. Try to work with “good practices”



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Performance indicators

- 2.1. Program evaluation mechanisms are in place but not yet as a defined set of KPI at the level of the study programme to provide enough evidence of the effectiveness of the actions undertaken in the frame of quality assurance
- 2.2. Reports are provided on the delivery of courses for the bachelor programme. Adjustments are made in plans for teaching after consideration of the reports as the expert team heard during interviews with teachers and heads of programme.
- 2.3. is not in the KAA text
- 2.4. it is an accreditation of a new programme
- 2.5. Students of the 3 year programme have a say in the implementation of quality but not really in the design of the programme



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2.3. Academic staff

The faculty provides a comprehensive "Regulation on selection and advancement of academic staff" ensuring transparency in qualifications and experience required for academic roles. The detailed listing of full-time and part-time academic staff with their qualifications, contract durations, and workloads also aligns with the standards.

The faculty's adherence to the "Regulation on selection and advancement of academic staff," based on Law No. 10.04/L-037 and the University Statute, ensures compliance with legal requirements for academic titles.

Academic staff sign declarations at the beginning of the academic year confirming they are not engaged in more than two teaching positions. This is reported annually to the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, ensuring compliance.

The faculty has a sufficient number of employees to implement the MSc program; 60% of the academic staff are full-time employees and can cover most of the lecture programme.

The faculty ensures that for every 60 ECTS credits, a sufficient number of full-time staff are employed, meeting the standard.

The faculty provides a professional development opportunities through the Centre for Excellence in Teaching, international collaborations, and systematic workshops.

The responsibilities are clearly defined in the university's statute, study regulations, and syllabuses, including engagement in the academic community, student consultations, and community service. During interviews with students and teachers it became obvious that teachers are available for questions and feedback. The expert team is convinced of the quality of the educational relationship of students and teachers.



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Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly through self-evaluation, student evaluations, peer evaluations, and superiors' evaluations, occurring formally at least once each year. Results are made publicly available. Peer to peer evaluation is starting.

The faculty conducts annual evaluations by students, peers, and management, with results interpreted individually and used to address commitments for improvement.

Strategies for quality enhancement include improving teaching strategies and the quality of learning materials. Faculty members participate in training to improve teaching strategies and learning materials, supported by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching.

The expert team commends the work of the Centre for Excellence in teaching. More can be done on the individual level to enhance quality of teaching. The expert team has not seen that special assistance is offered to staff facing difficulties.

The expert team recommends to align the program of professional development with the changing educational trends needed to align with the market dynamics and with the needs of the individual teachers to be able to teach in the modus of the innovative teaching and learning activities (student -centred and research based).

The expert team was pleased by the “mobil monitor groups” initiative that is installed for control of attendance (in other faculties the monitoring is automatically in the SEMS system). The expert team recommends to use the mobil monitor groups to work on quality by going in the teaching rooms in order to give feedback to teachers about the quality of their teaching and to check the implementation of innovations learned during trainings. After such direct feedback teachers as a team can discuss strong and weaker points in the performance as a team. In this way more evidence will be gathered about effectiveness of professional development than with peer to peer evaluation in the opinion of the expert team.

Updating a program is regulated at the University of Prishtina and is done by an evaluation every 3 year. In the Faculty of Medicine the initiative for updating the courses lies by the teacher; there is not a system to overview the total update at program level. The expert team recommends to install structurally and systematic procedures and regulations to update the content of a program in order to guarantee relevance of the programs with international benchmark. Especially at the level of learning materials more can be done in a structured way.



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Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 3.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	x	
<i>Standard 3.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.5.</i> 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	



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<i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		x
<i>Standard 3.7.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.		x
<i>Standard 3.10.</i> Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	x	

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- Aligning of the program of professional development with the changing educational trends and market dynamics and with the needs of the individual teachers. There is a need for increasing active participation in international fora and professional development programs to broaden academic perspectives, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and enhance the expertise of the university's faculty and staff.
- Increasing financial support for professional development is necessary due to limited resources for faculty development, which can hinder the attraction and retention of talented academic personnel, leading to stagnation in teaching quality and research productivity.
- effective management of the potential risk of academic experts' outflow due to external engagements is crucial.



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- The expert team recommends to align the program of professional development with the changing educational trends needed to align with the market dynamics and with the needs of the individual teachers to be able to teach in the modus of the innovative teaching and learning activities (student -centred and research based).
 - The implementation of a teacher portfolio will be useful to encouraged professional development and to make evaluation more evidence -based.
 - The expert team was pleased by the “mobil monitor groups” initiative that is installed for control of attendance (in other faculties the monitoring is automatically in the SEMS system). The expert team recommends to use the mobil monitor groups to work on quality by going in the teaching rooms in order to give feedback to teachers about the quality of their teaching and to check the implementation of innovations learned during trainings. After such direct feedback teachers as a team can discuss strong and weaker points in the performance as a team. In this way more evidence will be gathered about effectiveness of professional development than with peer to peer evaluation in the opinion of the expert team.
 - The expert team recommends to install structurally and systematic procedures and regulations to update the content of a program in order to guarantee relevance of the programs with international benchmark. Continuous analysis of the alignment of physiotherapy education programs with international standards and with industrial needs is essential for the continuous relevance of the program.
 - Especially at the level of learning materials more can be done in a structured way.

Performance indicators

PI 1. A portfolio of evidence of evaluations and strategies for improvement is not yet in place.

PI 2. Training programs in teaching skills are provided for both new and continuing teaching staff. More strategic planning can be useful in order to realize high quality teaching and learning activities with aligned assessment.

PI 3. Better monitoring of the effectiveness of the professional development has to be installed

PI 4. The results of the academic staff evaluation are taken into account for promotion purposes and renewal of contracts. More can be done in a structured and systematic way in order to make more and faster progress with implementation of innovative projects.



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2.4. Educational Process Content

The SER states that the “mission of the Master of Science Program in Physiotherapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Pristina is to implement a high-quality European curriculum with qualified teachers and contemporary methodologies that enable the achievement of European standards for the education of future professionals in the field of Physiotherapy by linking learning to research through measurable results and qualitative knowledge, skills and competencies”. The mission is very ambitious ,challenging and demanding for the staff and the students.

The programme can be defined as a “research master” in the context of the EHEA criteria. Candidates will be engaged in in-depth scientific research work and will be educated in entrepreneurship skills in order to be able to make the transfer of new evidence-based knowledge into society with economic and social impact of the candidates work.

The content of the programme is based on the recommendations of the World Physiotherapy, Europe Region and the international framework of competences for Physiotherapy and on the priority defined by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in the research and development strategy. Benchmark for content was done with the Master in Physiotherapy of the university of Lublijana, Slovenië.

The didactic concept is based on diversity of teaching and learning activities that will enable students to learn in an activating learning environment and in a nexus of teaching, research and service to society. Students are supported to become independent learners and researchers. Therefor are entrepreneur skills, critical thinking, creation of evidence-based knowledge in interdisciplinary context in the centre of learning. The research concept is implemented in the courses with activating assignments (individually and in group)



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During all interviews the expert team was able to see that this didactic and research concept is really implemented in the courses and that teachers have internalised these concepts and are able to teach in this way. During the interviews with all groups the enthusiasm was shown to realise these high quality learning processes.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina adheres to national accreditation standards. This compliance ensures that the program meets the criteria set by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

There is a need for a clearer connection between the qualifications and experiences of the academic staff and the specific skills and competencies student have to master by graduation. This linkage should be explicitly detailed to demonstrate how staff expertise directly contributes to student learning outcomes. There is an opportunity to provide more specific examples of how learning outcomes are communicated and discussed with students. Detailed descriptions of these practices would demonstrate how the Faculty engages students in understanding the relevance and importance of their learning goals, ensuring that they are well-informed and aligned with their educational journey.

The self-report emphasizes the Faculty's commitment to hiring qualified staff with relevant academic titles and experience, suggesting a focus on subject-related competencies. The staff of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina includes experts with extensive knowledge and experience across various medical and physiotherapy disciplines, ensuring a comprehensive educational environment. The inclusion of professors from various medical departments (Physical Medicine, Rehabilitation, General Medicine) indicates an multidisciplinary approach. The Faculty is actively involved in multidisciplinary teaching and research. More can be done to teach interdisciplinary in order to integrate different areas of expertise, enriching the learning experience for students and fostering innovative research collaborations that span multiple disciplines. These efforts are needed in order to implement community service learning for all students.

There is an opportunity to enhance the curriculum by providing a more detailed mapping of competencies. Clearly outlining how each course and module contributes to the development of specific skills and competencies will help ensure that students achieve the intended learning outcomes. The expert team recommends to elaborate in each course/syllabus a table with alignment of the learning outcomes of the course with the competencies of the program. In this way an overview is available that gives more evidence about the effectiveness to realize the intended competences of the program and to overview strong and weaker parts in



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the program. Such elaboration can make it possible to follow the competence development for each individual student over the semesters and gives evidence that graduates are fit for purpose. The expert team recommends to work with matrices and grids for judgment to augment reliability and validity of assessment formats.

The Faculty is an active member of various European educational networks. The involvement in international projects, research, and continuous professional development reflects a commitment to developing disciplinary and methodological skills. However, the report could further elaborate on how these efforts translate into capabilities for employment, societal contributions, and personal development for students. The Faculty maintains international ties through collaborations and participation in global projects but still not enough in the domain of physiotherapy.

The Faculty could provide more detailed examples of how they support and foster students' personal development and their ability to contribute to society. Highlighting specific initiatives, programs, or activities that promote these aspects would offer a clearer picture of the Faculty's impact on student growth and societal engagement. The Faculty has the opportunity to showcase examples of how they adapt teaching and assessment strategies to cater to the diverse needs of their student body. Highlighting instances where flexibility in instructional approaches has been successfully implemented would illustrate the Faculty's responsiveness to varying learning styles and requirements, thereby supporting inclusive and personalized education.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina emphasizes the importance of study regulations and syllabuses. By outlining these foundational documents, the Faculty ensures that the academic framework is well-structured and provides a clear guide for both students and faculty on course expectations and educational standards.

The report does not mention the language of instruction explicitly or the provisions for ensuring adequate language skills for both students and staff. Given the international collaborations and visiting lecturers, it is likely that multiple languages may be involved. Details on how language proficiency is managed are lacking. During interviews with heads of the program the expert team heard that students have no problems with English language.

To support the diverse linguistic needs of their academic environment, the Faculty should implement and communicate specific policies or practices to ensure that both students and staff possess adequate language proficiency. This could include offering language training



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prior to the commencement of studies or providing ongoing language support throughout the academic program. Such measures would ensure effective communication and comprehension, facilitating a more inclusive and successful learning experience.

During interviews the expert team heard that teachers have to update their courses every year. The initiative lies by the teacher, there is not a system to overview the total update at program level. The expert team recommends to install structurally and systematic procedures and regulations to update the content of a program in order to guarantee relevance of the programs with international benchmark. Especially at the level of learning materials more can be done in a structured way.

The report emphasizes the annual evaluation process involving student feedback and engagement, suggesting a partnership approach. The commitment to teaching quality through continuous professional development also supports this standard. The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina conducts annual evaluations that incorporate student feedback. This process allows the institution to gather valuable insights directly from students at the level of satisfaction. More can be done to measure effectiveness of the overall educational experience by working with a teacher portfolio.

The Faculty places an emphasis on the continuous professional development of its academic staff. Through regular training and workshops, the Faculty tries to ensure that teaching methods and materials are updated and enhanced. More can be done to measure the effectiveness of these endeavours.

The self-report highlights the participation of academic staff in training workshops on teaching strategies and quality improvement. This suggests a proactive approach to adopting flexible and effective teaching methods. However, more details on the specific teaching and assessment strategies employed and their alignment with different learning outcomes would enhance the understanding of how this standard is met.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing teaching strategies by providing regular training opportunities for academic staff. According to the self evaluation report, professional development is organised by the Center of Teaching Excellence in order to equip teaching staff with the latest pedagogical techniques and best practices, fostering an effective and engaging learning environment. Effectiveness has to be monitored. It is not enough to have 2 teaching certificates from the Center of Teaching Excellence to be sure that teaching practice has changed and that innovative teaching methods are implemented.



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The report mentions regular evaluations and peer assessments, suggesting a systematic approach to student assessment. However, specific mechanisms for ensuring fairness, objectivity, and appropriateness of assessments, along with clear communication to students, are not elaborated in detail. There is an opportunity to provide more comprehensive descriptions of the assessment methods used in the Faculty's programs. By clearly detailing how these assessments align with the course objectives and intended learning outcomes, the Faculty can better demonstrate the effectiveness of their evaluation processes in measuring student achievement and progress. The self evaluation report does not provide explicit details on the mechanisms used to verify and maintain consistent standards of student achievement. Mentioning peer evaluations and regular assessments indicates a process is in place, but further details on how standards are verified and maintained across courses and in comparison with other programs would be beneficial. To enhance transparency and student understanding, the Faculty could develop and implement clear communication strategies for conveying assessment methods and expectations. Ensuring that students are well-informed about how they will be evaluated, what criteria will be used, and how these assessments relate to their learning objectives will foster a more supportive and clear educational environment. The expert team has not seen the use of matrices and grids for judgement.

There is an opportunity for the Faculty to establish clear policies and procedures for addressing inadequate student achievement and inconsistent assessments. These policies should outline steps for identifying and addressing academic deficiencies, ensuring fairness, consistency, and transparency in the evaluation process. To demonstrate accountability and effectiveness, the Faculty could provide examples of actions taken in response to issues related to inadequate student achievement and inconsistent assessments. This could include interventions such as additional tutoring or support services for struggling students, as well as measures to address inconsistencies in grading or assessment practices. By showcasing concrete examples of problem-solving and improvement initiatives, the Faculty can illustrate its commitment to academic excellence and student success.

During interviews the expert team heard that criteria for students with special needs are defined and that 1 academic staff member in the faculty is responsible for the procedure to adapt the learning environment aligned to the individual special needs.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina benefits from having qualified staff members responsible for practical lessons during the bachelor of science in Physiotherapy program. These individuals bring expertise and experience to the practical components of the curriculum, enhancing the quality of hands-on learning experiences for students. The self



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evaluation report indicates that practical lessons are conducted by qualified staff, but it does not provide detailed information on the learning outcomes for practice stages or how these are developed and monitored. Information on ETCS credit allocation for practical stages and the involvement of tutors would strengthen this standard's fulfilment. There is an opportunity to provide detailed specifications of learning outcomes for practice stages within the curriculum for the master years. Clearly defining the expected competencies and skills that students should acquire during practical training will help ensure alignment with educational objectives and enhance the effectiveness of these learning experiences.

The Faculty could establish robust processes for monitoring and supporting students during practical stages of their education. This could include regular check-ins, feedback sessions, and mentorship opportunities to ensure that students receive adequate guidance and support as they progress through their practical training.

It's important to establish clear ETCS credit allocation for practical stages and ensure appropriate tutor involvement. Assigning ETCS credits to practical training components helps recognize the value of hands-on learning experiences, while active tutor involvement ensures that students receive sufficient supervision and guidance to meet their learning objectives effectively.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina has established international cooperation agreements with various institutions, fostering collaboration and exchange opportunities in education and research. There is an opportunity to provide specific details on agreements for practical training established through international cooperation. This includes outlining the terms of these agreements, the institutions involved, and how they contribute to facilitating practical stages of students' education.

The Faculty could offer examples illustrating how these international agreements support student learning during practical stages. This may include opportunities for international internships, access to specialized facilities or equipment, and exposure to different healthcare systems or practices. Providing concrete examples will demonstrate the tangible benefits of international cooperation for student development and education.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No



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<p><i>Standard 4.1.</i> The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.2.</i> The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.3.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.</p>		<p>X</p>
<p><i>Standard 4.4.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.5.</i> If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.6.</i> The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.</p>	<p>X</p>	



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

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina demonstrates a commitment to maintaining academic standards and improving educational quality through qualified staff, international collaborations, and continuous professional development.

However, to fully align with the provided standards, the Faculty could benefit from more explicit details on curriculum alignment, competency mapping, teaching and assessment strategies, and support for practice stages. Addressing these areas will further strengthen their academic programs and compliance with national and international frameworks.



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Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- More can be done to teach interdisciplinary in order to integrate different areas of expertise, enriching the learning experience for students and fostering innovative research collaborations that span multiple disciplines.
- The expert team recommends to elaborate in each course/syllabus a table with alignment of the learning outcomes of the course with the competencies of the program. In this way an overview is available that gives more evidence about the effectiveness to realize the intended competences of the program and to overview strong and weaker parts in the program. Such elaboration can make it possible to follow the competence development for each individual student over the semesters and gives evidence that graduates are fit for purpose. Furthermore the possibility to follow individual achievement of students would be possible.
- The expert team recommends to work with matrices and grids for judgment to augment reliability and validity of assessment formats.
- The expert team recommends to install structurally and systematic procedures and regulations to update the content of a program in order to guarantee relevance of the programs with international benchmark. Especially at the level of learning materials more can be done in a structured way.
- Effectiveness of implementation of innovative teaching and learning activities and assessment has to be monitored.
- The expert team recommends to define clearly the expected competencies and skills that students should acquire during practical training to ensure alignment with educational objectives and enhance the effectiveness of these learning experiences and allocate ECTS points in the program for this practice stages.

Performance indicators

PI 1. The academic feasibility of the program is ensured by taking into account the expected entry qualifications, a suitable design of the curriculum. Student workload can only be made



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theoretically. Number of assessments is adequate, formats have to be aligned with learning outcomes at competence level.

PI 2. Teachers are trained and use new IT resources.

PI 3. Effectiveness of planned teaching strategies cannot be measured for the moment.

2.5. Students

The UP has a formally adopted admission procedures. The University enrolls up to 12% full time students from the non-majority communities who are distributed proportionally according to the percentage of the total number of students for each department or program per the SER page 63, which is a very commendable approach to show inclusivity.

All candidates who have completed bachelor studies in Physiotherapy in Kosovo are eligible for admission and the candidates are selected according to the accumulated points with a maximum possible score of 100 points. Up to 30 points can be earned from the success in undergraduate studies, while up to 70 points are gained from the success in the entrance exam for the which consists of the subjects Statistics and methodology of scientific work and English language, per the SER page 64 .

Yet, all students and graduates who have been interviewed onsite have finished their bachelor's degree at the UP. It has been stated in the SER page 63 that under equal conditions, candidates who have completed their Bachelor or undergraduate studies at the University of Pristina have priority in admission. Therefore, it will be valuable to see an analytical data analysis identifying the numbers of applicants and candidates from other universities. This can be highly recommended to the next program evaluation cycle since the Bachelor program in Physiotherapy at UP has been suspended for the time being.

The study groups are dimensioned to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process including seminars, exercises and practical work for smaller groups of students.

The students were very satisfied with the grouping and the mentoring they receive.

Yet per the SER page 63, they have identified a maximum number for the group up to 15 students in their practical sessions, which is considered very high given the small cohort they have. This has to be reevaluated from the program coordinator to ensure quality of teaching,



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despite the fact that during our onsite visit we have witnessed different number of students during their learning practical session ranging from 5 and up to 10 students in different occasions.

Throughout the interviews students confirmed that feedback is being offered continuously during their learning process and through their assessments. Face-to-face consultations are properly coordinated and ensured. It was also evident that the students have a favorable student-teacher relationships. Course syllabus and learning outcomes are all explained and discussed with students at the beginning of the course and placed at SEMS.

The evaluation mechanism used by the academic staff for seminars and proposals follow a matrix with defined descriptive criteria. It is highly recommended to train students not only to use the course syllabus but also this matrix for reflection to best guide them towards achieving the learning outcomes. Moreover, the SEMS system serves well as an assessment and communicating platform, where learning materials are shared by their corresponding professors.

Per the SER, page 94, “the Physiotherapy branch has appointed one of the academic staff who guides students in case of emotional problems, financial problems, family-related problems, in international matters, legal advice, and interdisciplinary guidance,” while this is seen as a very welcomed initiative yet a mechanism to endure its functionality and effectiveness should be endorsed.

Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses offered by UP, so there is no reason to believe otherwise.

Student rights are publically available, including the right of academic appeal. They are defined in their statutes article 114 and 115. Yet, the SER did not point out how do they promote these rights. There was no evidence found that it is integrated in the student handbook which is available on their website, “University of Prishtina Student Handbook – Yearbook”. It is highly recommended as a best practice to collate student related matters, rights and obligations in a written handbook and make it available online.

At this moment, the academic staff is responsible for checking the originality of the work submitted by the students using Turnitin software, where they ask the students to translate their work from Albanian into English before submitting . This mechanism is carried only for the final thesis. Despite the effectiveness of this mechanism in ensuring originality of student work yet it is not seen as efficient, consuming students time and posing extra financial burden



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on them. We recommend the University to explore different modalities such as a cross-lingual plagiarism checker software to endorse. Additionally, the mechanism for checking on the originality of students' work throughout their courses during the program was not elaborated on, and this might raise concerns about its subjectivity and effectiveness.

The students have access to an e-library whether onsite in the building of Institute B or offsite. The students said that they have accessibility to a large selection of databases for research purposes.

The student representatives are present in the decision-making processes and their feedback is taken into account even in drafting the staff evaluation or service evaluation questionnaires. Each cohort has an elected student who share their concerns and wishes further onwards. The process works very well to students who agreed on its effectiveness. Per the SER page 17, a representative of the Student Council of the Faculty participates in various working groups. The numbers of students participating in working groups should include other students than only the representatives and more based on interest. The representative student's participation up the ladder in the hierarchy of the decision-making bodies should be promoted.

Students and staff emphasised the need for more internationalisation. Students, specifically, have highlighted that they would benefit from exchange programs. According to the University records, there is currently no MSc physiotherapy student mobility within Erasmus mobility program. Yet the University offered on several occasions' platforms such as conferences for students to present their work and offered lectures as well from international experts in the field. On 08.09.2023, on the World Physiotherapy Day, the Physiotherapy Branch of the Faculty of Medicine at UP and Savonia University of Applied Sciences, School of Health Care, Kuopio, Finland held a meeting through video conferencing, which is very commendable. Yet, the program, staff and students would highly benefit collectively from more inclusive and diverse international opportunities.

The UP has very well structured and clear course syllabi with defined ECTS that can be translated into workload, however given the fact you have identified "Discontinuing of the studies due to students' engagement in their clinical professional field." page 11 as a threat in your SWOT analysis to your mission, and moreover elaborated on in your SWOT analysis in the student section page 65. Therefore, a more in-depth evaluation of student workload by



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involving them in the process, is highly recommended to better understand and assess the extent of the burden they have from their studies.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
<i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.		X
<i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
<i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
<i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
<i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
<i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		X
<i>Standard 5.9.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	



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<i>Standard 5.11.</i> 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	
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Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Provide more inclusive and diverse internationalization opportunities for your staff and students, through ERASMUS mobility programs, conferences, trainings workshops and, joint research projects within the EU and beyond.
2. We encourage subscription in a cross lingual plagiarism checker software that could be adapted to your own context and needs to ensure efficiency as well as effectiveness across the program as a whole.
3. Involve all students in evaluating workload required from them to better understand and assess the extent of their studies load on their lives , and then draw conclusions based on a longitudinal data .
4. Make all student related matters/ procedures, rights and obligations, academic appeal, publicly and online available in one handy book directed to students.
5. By the next evaluation cycle, it is recommended to have an analytical data analysis identifying the numbers of applicants and candidates from other universities compared to candidates from UP.
6. We recommend the program coordinators to reevaluate the numbers of students per group in the practical sessions to ensure quality of teaching.
7. Enhance student involvement and representation for quality assurance purposes by transitioning from mere consultations via questionnaires to more inclusive engagement, where students actively participate and take ownership of decision-making processes related to various activities.

Performance indicators



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- 5.1. Adequate selection process and recognition rules for foreign qualifications as well as qualifications obtained outside higher education institutions are defined.
- 5.2. The expert team has not seen systematic monitoring and coordinating student workload across courses.
- 5.3. Matrices are used to ensure that all learning outcomes of courses are assessed.
- 5.4. support services including extra mentoring for emotional problems are in place and working not only for the quality of the programme but according to students also for emotional, financial and other problems.
- 5.5. Textbooks and reference materials in sufficient quantity are up to date and incorporate the latest developments in the field as is seen in the syllabi and the policy for the library.
- 5.6. The supervisor and the vice-dean of academic affairs monitor the process of updating the content of the courses and the implementation of quality assurance topics according to the surveys, with individual teachers each year during the evaluation process of the teachers.

2.6. Research

This self- evaluation report provides a comprehensive overview of the Master of Science program in Physiotherapy at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Pristina, Kosovo, and its alignment with various national and international standards and objectives.

The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives, 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.

The report highlights that the program's research objectives are aligned with the development strategy of the Ministry of Health, the University of Pristina, and international standards. The faculty has sufficient resources, including equipment, facilities, and financial plans, to support research activities, ensuring long-term sustainability.



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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.

The self-evaluation report outlines that the teaching staff is actively engaged in research, with their involvement being evaluated for performance and promotion.

There are clear policies for the acceptability of research, and the faculty has established frameworks for project proposals.

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.

The faculty adheres to clear policies for research, ensuring consistency with international standards and norms.

There is a framework for application and project proposals, ensuring alignment with international standards.

The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

The report provides a list of scientific publications by the academic staff, demonstrating their research track record. Publications are indexed in reputable databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed, and others.

The academic and research staff publish their work in specialty journals or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars, etc. Academic staff members have published their work in reputable scientific journals and presented at conferences, both domestically and internationally.

The faculty collaborates with international institutions and actively engages in research projects.

The faculty validates research through publications, presentations, and collaboration with international partners. There is evidence of technological transfer through collaboration with international institutions.

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. The faculty demonstrates a consistent level of research productivity, with multiple publications and outputs over the past five years.

The academic staff publishes their work under the affiliation of the University of Pristina, Kosovo.



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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.		X
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
<i>Standard 6.7.</i> 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
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.a	x	



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<i>Standard 6.9/6.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		X
<i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.		X

The self- evaluation report indicates that the Master of Science program in Physiotherapy at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Pristina, meets or exceeds the specified standards for research activities and outcomes. The faculty demonstrates a strong commitment to research excellence, with clear objectives, sufficient resources, and a track record of scholarly achievements.

Increasing the budget for research projects can address the lack of funds for equipment and reagents, thereby bolstering the university's research capabilities (actively participating in international research projects can not only enhance the university's reputation but also attract funding for infrastructure and equipment. The establishment of maintenance services for laboratory equipment and accreditation of research laboratories can further enhance the quality of research facilities, improving the overall academic environment).

However, the University also faces threats that must be carefully managed. Reductions in financial support from both the public and industry can strain resources and limit the university's ability to carry out research effectively. Moreover, competition from other universities for international grants poses a challenge that the University of Pristina must navigate to ensure continued access to external funding sources.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:



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- enhance scientific activity by organizing domestic and international scientific conferences.
 - increase student involvement in research.
 - publish in stronger journals with higher impact factors.
 - more collaboration with international researchers.
 - increase public funds for faculty investment in research;
 - increase employment of administrative staff to improve service quality and streamline business process management
 - ensure realistic workloads for teachers in relation to teaching duties and obligations, as well as workload related to scientific research and leading or participating in projects.

Performance indicators

- 6.1. Assistance and support to teaching staff to develop collaborative research arrangements with colleagues in other institutions and in the international community is given but can be strengthened.
- 6.2. The Faculty of Medicine organizes periodically scientific sessions, symposia, conferences, round tables with the involvement of teaching staff, researchers and students and graduates while proceedings are published in ISBN, ISSN, or in magazines specific for that activity
- 6.3. More strategic planning can be done to support junior teaching staff, especially with assistance in developing research proposals and working with seed funding.
- 6.4. More strategic planning and realization and professional development has to be done in the domain of community services in order to strengthen the nexus between teaching, research and community services for all students.
- 6.5. Staff capacity of generating financial returns is considered in the individual performance review system. More opportunities for financial return have to be created in a strategic way of collaboration with strong partners regional, national and international.
- 6.6. Joint research projects with shared use of equipment have to be stimulated.



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2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The expert team had the opportunity to visit the facilities and found evidence for ensuring long term implementation of the study program. Long- and short-term formal plans are developed by the Faculty of Medicine for the provision and improvement of infrastructure and resources, and the implementation and effectiveness of those plans are monitored annually. The responsibility for oversight and development of infrastructure and resources are assigned to the Vice-Dean for Financial Issues and Assets.

The Faculty of Medicine uses not only the spaces and equipment of the University Clinical Centre of Kosova but also National Institute of public Health and preclinical institutes spaces for the needs of the educational process. The laboratory settings within the building of Institutes 'B' are owned and maintained by the Faculty of Medicine, where lecture rooms, reading rooms, and libraries are available for the students. The new building of the "Clinic of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation" and "Institute of Sports Medicine" has been completed and operationalized for use by patients, therefore the spaces and resources for the requirements of the study program have been increased.

The following clinics of the University Hospital Clinical Center of Kosovo are available to maintain the learning process.

1. Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology
2. Gynecological-Obstetric Clinic
3. Radiology Clinic
4. Clinic of Physiatry with physical rehabilitation

Students also have access to the following services and institutes:

4. Orthoprosthetics Service
7. Preclinical institutes:
 - Institute of Anatomy
 - Institute of Physiology



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- Institute of Histology
 - Institute of Pathological Anatomy
 - Institute of Pathological Physiology
 - Institute of Pharmacology

In Institute B building, there is also a physiotherapy laboratory equipped with numerous instruments and equipment which are necessary for assessment and physiotherapy treatment, and which are used for teaching and research purposes. In 2022, the sophisticated DIERS formetric 4D Spine & Posture Analysis equipment is added to the physiotherapeutic laboratory for the assessment of deformities and function of the spinal axis, as well as gait and gait disorders.

The SER states that “libraries within FM have sufficient stock of the literature, mainly in English, but also in Albanian and other languages, with titles covering more than 50% of the subjects of the study program. These libraries have also adjacent reading rooms with the capacity of seats for more than 10% of the students in the study program”.

Facilities dedicated to the study program are accessible to students with special needs.

The survey of student usage and satisfaction is provided using the Electronic System for Students’ Management (SEMS) at the end of each academic year for the infrastructure and resources. The data from these results are carefully analysed.

The budgeting and financial issues are planned by the Vice-Dean for financial issues and is consistent to the financial capabilities of the University of Prishtina.

Regular maintenance of the premises and the equipment, as well as supplies of the expendable materials is annually organized by the same Vice-Dean, in order to fulfil the requirements of the study program.

The financial plan of the Medical Faculty is annually revised and projected in long-term aspects to ensure the sustainability of the study program. SWOT analysis states under the weaknesses that there are not enough public funds to invest in new equipment and infrastructure and there exists the lack of a virtual laboratory.

In the frame of activating teaching and learning small rooms are available, but have to be augmented in the future when didactical innovations will be implemented fully.

The Student Electronic Management System gives students the opportunity of access to all study material. Students are very satisfied with the moodle system. Especially the possibility that lecture material is online is highly appreciated and the possibility for immediate feedback.

Surveys for students are made available via the SEMS system at the end of each academic



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year. During interviews with students evidence was given that they are satisfied with the infrastructure, the availability of books and digital platforms.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process. b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities. c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with 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	
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program. b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program.	x	



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<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p>		
<p><i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</p>	<p>x</p>	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations: no

Performance indicators

- 7.1. Formal plans are developed for the provision and improvement of infrastructure and resources.
- 7.2. A senior staff member is assigned the responsibility for oversight and development of infrastructure and resources
- 7.3. The effectiveness and relevance of infrastructure and resources is regularly monitored by surveys of students.



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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Considering the documentation provided and discussions with the program development team, the ET gave the following compliance levels:

Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Fully
Quality management	Substantially
Academic Staff	Substantially
Educational Process Content	Substantially
Students	Substantially
Research	Partially
Infrastructure and resources	Fully
Overall Compliance	Substantially

Recommendation: accreditation for 3 years, number of students to start the first year 40



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Expert Team

Chair

(Signature)

Joke Denekens

09/06/2024

Expert Member

(Signature)

Assoc. Prof. Snjezana Schuster

(Print Name)

12/06/2024

(Date)

Student Member

(Signature)

Nibal Sabri

(Print Name)

12.06.2024

(Date)