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University of Gjakova “Fehmi Agani”

Programme Family Medicine and Palliative Care(MSc)

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Slovenj Gradec, 24 of May 2019



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 7th May 2019

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Danica Železnik, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, SG, Slovenia
- Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri – University of Tirana

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Avni Gashi, Acting Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-evaluation report
- Meeting with the Management of Faculty and extensive discussion between the responsibility persons of program and the expert team, and representatives of KAA
- The Code of good practice and guidelines for site-visit, provided by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency
- Site-visit of the facilities and equipment
- On-site visit 7 of May 2019 and discussion and observations during that visit

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- Health legislation in Kosovo



1.2. Site visit schedule

Site visit was scheduled as follows:

07.30	Meeting at the reception of the hotel
09.00 – 09.30	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
09.35 – 10.45	Meeting with the head of the study programme
10.50 – 11.50	Meeting with quality assurance representatives
11.55 – 12.45	Lunch break
12.45 – 13.30	Meeting with involved teaching and administrative staff
13.35 – 14.20	Meeting with external stakeholders
14.25 – 14.50	Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure
14.50 – 15.00	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

During the visit the experts discussed their impressions of the self-evaluation report. It was allocated of responsibilities within the expert team in a following way: Prof. dr. Danica Železnik was responsibiled of *Family Medicine and Palliative Care* program, Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri was responsibiled of Science in Teaching Albanian Language and Literature (MSc) program. Professor dr. Danica Železnik and professor dr. Dhurata Shehri both met and discussed with head of study programs. Expert team was involved in discussion with the management group of the institutions, the head of the study programme, quality assurance representatives and administrative staff, and stakeholder. Prof. dr. Danica Železnik was chair of expert team. All members of the expert team agreed to conduct their work during the on-site visit together divided those responsibilities according to KAA's invitation. All work was done in close co-operation.



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

The University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" started its work on October 1st 2013 in the Faculty of Education with Preschool and Primary Programs, the Faculty of Medicine with Nursing and Midwife programs and the Faculty of Philology with Albanian Language and English Language and Literature programs, which programs were all accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in April 2013.

The University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" offers these bachelor level programs, which are: Faculty of Education from the academic year of 2013-2014 works in the following programs: Preschool (BA, 240 ECTS); Primary (BA, 240 ECTS); Faculty of Medicine from the academic year of 2013-2014 works in the following programs: Nursing (BSc, 180 ECTS) Midwife (BSc, 180 ECTS) Faculty of Philology from the academic year of 2013-2014 works in the following programs: Albanian Language (BA, 180 ECTS); Albanian Literature (BA, 180 ECTS) and English Language and Literature (BA, 240 ECTS) .

The University of Gjakova, as a public university, every year enrolls a considered number, in accordance with the allowed quota of students. One hundred (100) of them are enrolled in the Faculty of Medicine, the Nursing programs enrolls 60% of them and the rest in the Midwifery Faculty. The University of Gjakova with its two programs in Faculty of Medicine covers the whole three main regions: Gjakova, Prizren, Peja. Also in this University, more precisely in the Faculty of Medicine there are students coming from neighboring states like Albania, Montenegro and other populated Albanian speaking areas. The Faculty of Medicine is a partner in various international Projects.

The programme of the *Family Medicine and Palliative Care (MSc)* is new and well correspondent with the mission of the institution and it relates well to the principles of employability. Program is focused on preparation of the staff in health sector where a need for the staff clearly exists, both in Kosovo, and abroad.

The Master Science Study Program on "Family Medicine and Palliative Care" is based on four pillars: a written examination of applied knowledge (1); an assessment portfolio based on the practical work (2); designing, implementation, completion and writing of a research project (3); and selection of four elective modules (4). All this focuses on improving and strengthening the healthcare system and the use of WHO global standards for education in the health field. The orientation of the study program according to the guiding principles of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" is based on the aim of the MEST that is to increase participation in higher education.

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The ET would like to stress that all the comments will be offered in this report and will be intended to contribute to further improvements of the institution as it strives towards the achievement of its mission, which is to meet the needs of ‘the labour market especially in education, health, economy, administration and other fields that will increase the region’s and Kosovo’s competitive advantage and level of education.’

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

Based on self-evaluation report (SER) the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" wish to be the most preferred institution of higher education in Kosovo that builds upon the positive educational tradition, realizes standards of the study and researches in line with relevant trends in the region and Europe and utilizes the achievements in education and scientific researches in the function of the economic, social and cultural transformation and development of country and beyond. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution. During the site visit, it was found that employees were familiar with the mission of the Institute and the program.

The Mission of the program “Family Medicine and Palliative Care” is to implement a curriculum with qualified lectures, based on self-evaluation report is “to implement a European high-quality curriculum with qualified teachers and contemporary methodologies that enable the achievement of European standards for education of future health professionals by linking learning with research through the outcome of measurable and of quality knowledge skills and competences”. The aim of this program is to prepare professionals who are capable on working in various specific health care fields, research institutions and similar fields of health activities. The profile and the program of the study is depicted and aimed at preparing professionals who are capable working in: all primary care institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary care institutions), in various specific areas within the ever-increasing demand of the health system.



Based on SER this study program is drafted based on the European Parliament Directive 2005/36/EU (amended) 2013/55/EU for the recognition of Professional Qualifications. EU Directive as a part of the package of the development and improvement of healthcare field.

The content of the study program is well thought out, but the name of the program is too much medically oriented. The program is not intended for the education of medical doctors, but for other health professionals. Some of the content should be adapted to program participants.

Family medicine (FM) is a medical speciality devoted to comprehensive health care for people of all ages; the specialist is named a family physician or family doctor. In Europe the discipline is often referred as general practice and a practitioner, as a general practice doctor or GP; this name emphasises the holistic nature of this speciality, as well as its roots in the family. Family practice is a division of primary care that provides continuing and comprehensive health care for the individual and family across all ages, genders, diseases, and parts of the body; family physicians are often primary care physicians. It is based on knowledge of the patient in the context of the family and the community, emphasizing disease prevention and health promotion. According to the World Organization of Family Doctors the aim of family medicine is to provide personal, comprehensive, and continuing care for the individual in the context of the family and the community. The issues of values underlying this practice are usually known as primary care ethics.

Mission and aims are ambitious. The expert team believes that the Mission Statement is satisfactory and acceptable. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of institution. There is relevant academic and professional advice in 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. Overall, the study program is well defined overarching didactic and research concept. In program there are formal policies, guidelines, and regulations dealing with recurring procedural and academic issues. Also, the all staff complies with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Program name should be changed*
2. *Some of the content should be adapted to program participants*



2.2. Quality management

Evaluation process and develop processes to improve quality are the part of normal quality management process. Quality assurance covers all areas from planning, implementation and evaluation. As well, it covers all issues of study program and its outcomes and improving of that. Quality assurance processes ensures both that required standards are met and continuous improving is made.

Quality management face all standard specified in the KAA accreditation manual. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the University of Gjakova “Fehmi Agani” has established an Office for Academic Development and Quality Management with the aim of ensuring excellence, equality, transparency and efficiency. The University is also committed to high quality performance in every department and programme and sees the improvement of quality as an individual and collective responsibility. The University is developing a culture for quality by paying special attention to quality assurance and management. The core aim of quality management is the effective development and monitoring of policies and procedures.

In order to achieve this, the University focuses and incorporates components of quality in its strategic plan and policies for quality assurance with clearly defined roles and activities, both of which are the basis for functioning of the quality structure. The assessment and measurement of achievements and implementation of the key priorities for quality enhancement is conducted through action plans of departments and programmes, which are approved and monitored by senior management. The University also aims to increase the number of research institutions and journals. The Office of Research and the vice-rector for teaching support these important activities. The University aims to support effective performance of academic personnel.

In addition to the provision of written documents the management of the University gave detailed presentations that were conducted in a highly professional manner. A strong impression was conveyed of the University of Gjakova as an institution where management decisions are made by a core group of individuals working in close consultation with staff from across the academic and administrative areas of the institution.

All the staff are obligated to participate in the evaluation process and all these processes are related to the integrate procedure for personnel development. All the staff participated in the self-evaluation process. They took very active part in the site visit and they were cooperative when discussing options and activities for improvement.



According to the information gathered during the site visit and talking to different stakeholders potential students and employers, it seems that there is a need for such a programme, which offers many options for employability.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1.) *Strengthen the development of one's own autonomy and identity.*

2.3. Academic staff

It was clearly indicated in the self-evaluation report on the table (according to standards of KAA accreditation manual) the name of academic staff, full time or part-time contract, academic title, qualifications, duration of contract and labour load. These all fulfil the standard specified by KAA accreditation manual. At the University of Gjakova “Fehmi Agani” Faculty of Medicine staff seems to be a strategic matter.

There is an internal staff development initiative (focused on teaching skills); the research activities of the staff seem to be having a chance to develop further.

Information and way they were presented in the SER were mainly meeting all the criteria specified in the KAA Accreditation manual. Some relevant additional information were also provided after the site visit. Still, there is a need to work on unified way of presenting the Cvs and published work, as well as to provide the reliable and constant distinction between the relevant and non relevant information as well as to follow European, international standards when presenting the academic staff.

Staff are competent and professional. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities and, according to the meetings conducted by the ET, they use teaching strategies suitable for the different kinds of learning outcomes. In the future, the number of nurses with an academic background in the field of health promotion and palliative nursing care, should be strengthened. Addition to qualifications of academic staff there is enough full time teachers, with medical education, work load is divided in proper way, the work contracts are according to standard and responsibility of staff is presented well and according to standards. 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.



There are eight professors employed in the Faculty of Medicine, with a regular contract. In terms of the engaged/part time staff at the Faculty of Medicine, there were four lecturers and all of them had academic degrees of PhD of Science, three assistants completed undergraduate studies of the Faculty of Medicine, 10 assistants for clinical practice (nurse and midwife) who had a bachelor degree, some of them with master and one is PhD candidate. This institution has also employed two workers for administrative issues. The teaching staff comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.

According to self-evaluation report and discussion with academic staff was also emphasized that faculty offers continuous professional development opportunities according to development plan including among others, to improve teachers pedagogical competences and as well as support to do research and learn more methodology. Academic staff fulfil all standards indicated by KAA accreditation manual. The staff group is highly academic and dominated by doctors of medicine.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. It should be assured to have more permanent staff with PhD degree of health sciences (nursing, physiotherapy, work therapy ..) with emphasis on health promotion and palliative care.*

2.4. Educational process content

The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education. The curriculums fulfil all standards presented in KAA accreditation manual. The program has analytical syllabuses according to standards. As it seems, the quality, range and academic aims of the curriculum are – generally – appropriate to the academic degrees awarded, and there is a correspondence to the international standards.

This program will prepare students theoretically and practically in the field of health education with emphasis on palliative care and professional development. With this obtained knowledge, they will be able to communicate with children, third-generation adults, terminal illness patients and managing situations when the patient is in pain and so forth.



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The program will prepare the diplomants to realize their study objectives, those the evaluation of educational activities; the recognition and development of the curriculum for specific cases of sick patients; thorough knowledge with the methodology to be practiced to implement the curriculum; and fulfilling and recognizing the needs and individual interests of life and longevity of patients regardless of their cognitive, social, cultural, racial and religious diversity.

The advantages of this program in comparison to the existing programs are linked with the small number of students to be enrolled, despite the enormous needs of the labor market, whether they are public or private institutions, because of the comfortable and spacious existing environment at the University and health institutions, a close cooperation between UNGJFA and many well-known multinational institutions which provide the opportunity to introduce modern teaching equipments and technologies in the field of family medicine and palliative care and the qualified and highly motivated teaching staff guarantees positive results.

The program is designed for a full-time study form. The teaching methods seems to be understandable and acceptable in given circumstances; there is a mix of larger as well as smaller groups used during the teaching process it seems. One of the stronger aspects of the program is practice exercises in a cabinet and exercises in a clinical environment across the whole region. The amount of practice is satisfactory and the system of organizing practice as well (there is involved a supervisor from the Faculty, a mentor from the health institution site during the process of practice). An overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum is possible in some extend.

The program follows the European standards. Allocation of ECTS seems to be acceptable. The program is divided into four semesters (each with 30 ECTS) and the duration of study is two academic years, equivalent with 120 ECTS. All courses carrying ECTS points and 1 ECTS is equivalent with 30 hours. There is proper number of ECTS of elective studies according to the European Directive and its amendment mentioned above. The structure of curriculum provides a space for independent study, reflections and analysis, and the workload seems to be well manageable by students. Curriculum is written comprehensible. The aim of program is appropriate for the Master degree. Learning outcomes and core competences are logically connected to aim of the program. All courses carrying at least 3 ECTS which is according to requirements mentioned above. The curriculum consists of 13 obligatory subjects, 9 elective subjects and a graduation thesis. There is a substantial needs for more practical learning, work-based training and contact with paliative patients, their family and

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practitioners. In presentation of the programme, arguments are provided to ensure quality of teaching and learning.

The syllabuses of the study programmes present a short description of the course, the learning outcomes, curriculum, evaluation methods, student workload, ECTS number etc. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities and, according to the meetings conducted by the ET, they use teaching strategies suitable for the different kinds of learning outcomes.

The master's curriculum will be realized using the following key methods: lecture based learning; problem based learning; simulation based learning; practice based learning; reflective based learning; research based learning. It is clearly indicated teaching and assessment methods and they are appropriate and relevant in a relation to learning outcomes.

The academic feasibility of the study program is ensured by taking account the expected entry the qualifications, a suitable design of the curriculum, a student's workload that has been checked for plausibility as well as an adequacy number of exams. Generally, the learning methods are considered student-centred and stimulates a students' motivation. The teacher/student ratio seems to be acceptable.

The chosen courses for the Master study program offers students the opportunity to acquire professional and practical knowledge in many medical fields and to offer assistance whenever necessary. The program also offers elective courses with the aim to get a scoop of expertise in certain medical fields based on the individual characteristics and personal interests of students. Educational process faces the standards of KAA accreditation manual.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- *The name of the Program should be changed "Family Medicine and Palliative Care" to be "Health sciences and Palliative Care"*
- *There should be additional analysis and implementation of distribution of hours and ECTS*
- *It is necessary to revisit logic behind obligatory and elective courses and to make adjustments: such as an elective subject with the title "Principles and Practices of Palliative Care Education" as obligatory subject.*
- *It should be change the name of subject "Evidence Based Medicine" to be "Evidence Based health care"*



2.5. Students

The programme is not started yet, but all the provided informations are related to students are in accordance of the standards of the KAA Accreditation manual. The requirements for the admission are also following the prescribed standards as well as the admission procedure itself is well defined.

In the Family Medicine and Palliative Care program, the number of students enrolling in the first year is 30 in regular studies, which indicating the quality of the study. Candidates who are enrolled from outside Kosovo, before the competition they have to certify their education previously. The admission of candidates is based on the list of applications and points that candidates have achieved. Applicants from other countries hand documents to certify their previous schooling in order to enroll in the faculty.

It is commendable that students have the opportunity to obtain a scholarship in the framework of UGJFA, based on the achieved success in the courses during their studies.

The Faculty of Medicine University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" is assuring all the standard procedures for quality and provides adequate services for its students, so one expect that the same standards will be applied on this programme as well. The list of candidates applying for enrollment in the program are selected according to a testing system consisting of several instruments.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations: NO

2.6. Research

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" is dedicated on the development of a 3-5 year research plan that met both, requirements, commitment and contribution. The plan is designed in such a way that all teaching staff members have the ability to contribute to the institution's efforts. Since institution programs represent multiple approaches and knowledge, it is convenient to involve all faculty members in discussion and preparation of the institution's first research plan. The institutions strategy is to link teaching and research which is very good because all over the health care it is moved strongly toward evidence based health care. There is a staff with international affiliations and established



collaborations with other institutions, research is quite strongly put in a focus. Research face all standards of manual of KAA accreditation.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. There should be well developed action plan and fitted to the capacity of staff and institution how to proceed with research.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The infrastructures for the teaching are in a place and in a good condition. There is also proper financial plan to maintain high quality education and resources. All other resources, for example such like rooms for group works, library, IT-technology and softwares, rooms for staff and students, are good. The Faculty of Medicine has a total of 3 laboratories equipped. There are places to perform the practical work and trainings for specific needs of assessment health care and palliative care interventions, it still needs to be further improved and enriched.

Infrastructure and resources face all standards according to accreditation manual by KAA.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations: NO

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

ET has recommended changes in the study program of the Family Medicine and Palliative Care (MSc) at the University of Gjakova “Fehmi Agani” and the Faculty followed some of the recommendations.

The Faculty wrote in the explanation that they will follow the ET recommendations, some of the changes have already been mentioned in the attached list. Changes should be entered in the program itself, which would otherwise be named, but the updated program was not included. Because of the substantive corrections, new curricula should also be included, which the Faculty did not do it yet. Also, the faculty did not answer in which way it will be acquired by trained professionals with an academic education for the promotion of health and



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palliative care. Once the entire program will be re-designed in accordance with all changes, it will meet the accreditation criteria.

Expert Team

Chair

	Prof.dr. Danica Železnik	10. June, 2019
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)
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