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PROVISIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT
PRIVREMENE INSTITUCIJE SAMOUPRAVLJANJA

QEVERIA E KOSOVËS – GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO – VLADA KOSOVA

MINISTRIA E ARSIMIT
SHKENCËS DHE TEKNOLOGJISË

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

MINISTARSTVO ZA OBRAZOVANJE
NAUKU I TEHNOLOGIJU

Kosovo Bologna Promoters' Team

MEST policies on integration in the European Higher Education Area

developed in the frame of the project
"Promotion of the Process of Bologna in Kosovo"

Prishtina, October 2007

Edited and published by:

Kosovo Bologna Promoters' Team (KBPT)
Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology

For the editor:

Dr. Dukagjin Pupovci, Coordinator of KBPT

Contents

Foreword

The Kosovo Bologna Promoters' Team (KBPT) has been established in January 2006 by the mintser of Education, Science, and Technology with the purpose to undertake all measures needed for the promotion of the Process of Bologna and for integration in the Euroean Area of Higher Education (EHEA) in Kosovë. In the frame of its activities, the Group developed a project: "Promotion of the Bologna Process in Kosovo", which was implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST) in cooperation with partner universities: University of Prishtina, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and University of Peloponnese (Greece).

During the one year of project implementation, over thirty Kosovar education experts from the MEST and from higher education institutions, together with experts from Slovenia, Greece and other European countries, involved intensively in capacity building and policy making activites in fields requiring special attention from decision makers in Kosovo. This was carried out through concrete activities such as: study visit, seminars, workshops, conferences, etc., which were finaly crowned to take the shape of four policy documents presented in this publication:

1. MEST policy on development of curricula in higher education in Kosovo,

2. Common criteria for implementation of ECTS in higher education in Kosovo,

3. MEST Guidelines on evaluation of higher education institutions in Kosovo,

4. MEST policy on recognition and comparability of pre-Bologna and Bologna degrees and study programs.

These documents, developed through a process with wide participation, have been approved as oficial ministry policies and guidelines by Mr. Agim Veliu, Minister of Education, Science, and Technology. It is expected that their efficient implementation would accelerate the journey for integration of Kosova into the EHEA, and perhaps even more importantly, critical capacities have been built in Kosovo for policy development in the field of higher education.

On behalf of the Kosovo Bologna Promoters' Team (KBPT), I express my appreciation to the European Commission and Tempus Program for financiar support, University of Prishtina for making available the needed expertise, University of Ljubljana and the University of Peloponesus for their unreserved support and high leve of professionalism and expertise, as well as the Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Mr. Agim Veliu for his continued supporting during all phases of the project implementation.

Prishtina, October 1st, 2007   Dukagjin Pupovci
                                                                KBPT Coordinator

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY
POLICY STATEMENT
ON**

DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULA IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN KOSOVO

I. Introduction

Implementation of the Process of Bologna in Kosovo started during the academic year 2001 / 2002 with several efforts for reform of curricula at the University of Prishtina, at that time the only higher education institution in Kosovo. This took place at a time when there was a merger of leadership functions in higher education, with the international administrator of the University of Prishtina serving at the same time as the Co-head of the then Department of Education (which performed functions of a ministry of education). This process was organized through top-down approach that did not include university staff in situation analysis, in assessment of needs and in planning of the process, but only expected from them to implement development of curricula (when they were not given ready made) according to objectives of the Bologna Process. No specific policies or guidelines were developed at that time for reform of curricula, apart from an instruction for dividing year-round courses into two semesters' courses and for linear transformation of first cycle study programs from four years to three years' study programs. However and despite these shortcomings, University of Prishtina was among the first institutions of higher education in the region to undertake a comprehensive process of reforms according to the Bologna objectives and focusing its activities in implementation of

objectives two and three of the Process.[1] This period is also characterized by difficulties in developing curricula and in implementing the second cycle study programs.

This situation continued with ups and downs until academic year 2006 / 2007. During this year the UP leadership carried out review of curricula to establish a better connection of ECTS credits with student workload and consolidated the syllabi and course descriptions trying to put them in line with European processes in curriculum development (TUNING[2]). On the other hand, private institutions of higher education have developed their own curricula either by drawing largely on UP ones or by using other models from the region or wider in Europe. The American University in Kosovo makes an exception in Kosovo in this regard since it is completely based on the American model of higher education study programs. The other public university in the north of Mitrovica engaged in a few efforts to reform its study programs, which failed as a result of blatant interference of (Serbian government) politics in the leading structures of this university in 2004.

At the end of academic year 2006/2007 the UP decided to commence the process of consolidation of curricula and of implementing study programs of the second cycle according to Bologna. These processes at the UP have been developed based on relevant decisions of the UP Senate, which offer the basic framework for the process. At the same time, the academic studies commission has drafted and the UP Senate approved the regulation for third cycle (doctoral) studies, as part of efforts to implement the tenth objective of the Bologna Process. More recently the Quality Assurance unit and Center for Academic Development were established with a task to follow up on quality assurance in its every aspect of functioning, with a particular focus on quality of curricula.

In all these developments, the University of Prishtina has ensured a full and active participation of the majority of academic community. Thus, four of eleven members of the Study Commission at the UP are students (also represented in the relevant commissions of academic units), which has also helped in accomplishing objective eight of the Bologna Process for inclusion of students in processes of curriculum reform.

II. A systematic approach for integration in European trends of higher education

The process of curriculum development in higher education institutions in Kosovo will take place in full harmony with the relevant processes in the European Higher Education Area.

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[1] ECTS and implementation of two levels/cycles of studies: bachelor and master.
[2] Tuning is a project supported by the European Commission which aims tuning of learning structures, procedures, and instruments for development and review of curricula. This methodology emphasizes importance of competences, learning outcomes, and connection of ECTS credits with the student workload.

In implementing this process higher education institutions and authorities will be guided by the following **principles**:

- Autonomy of higher education institutions and academic freedom;

- Leadership and management of processes by the higher education institutions and their staff;

- Full respect of student interests and ensuring their active participation in the process;

- Integration in the European Area of Higher Education (EHEA)

Government/MEST and public and private institutions of higher education will make sure that all conditions and the needed material, physical, financial and academic resources are available for setting up of new programs or for better application of the implementation of existing ones. At the same time, during the process of program development particular attention will be paid to the quality of design and implementation of curricula.

Study programs will be clear, readable, measurable, comparable and as such also serving to facilitate the process of evaluation and accreditation.
These programs and curricula will be based on:

a) a genuine assessment and analysis of labor market needs both at home and abroad;

b) an assessment of national development priorities;

c) a meaningful process of consultations with all involved parties;

d) existing and available academic potential.

III. Policy goal and objectives

The MEST and HEIs will engage in joint efforts to ensure a coherent and transparent process for development of curricula in line with the objectives of the Process of Bologna and with best practices in the region and in Europe, and to establish e logical connection between the aims of the higher education system with the standards of the National Qualifications Framework in a process of active consultations with social partners.
This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- identify market and societal needs for experts in a number of fields and to stimulate development of attractive curricula in deficit areas and in fields of special relevance to the society;

- set up new profiles and study programs based on identified needs and prospects by at the same time improving and maintaining the level of quality, as well as by broadening the range of education services in the field of lifelong learning;

- observe procedures of Tuning approach and methodology in the process of design of new study programs and curricula by determining relevant learning outcomes expressed in generic and subject specific competences for given profiles[3];

- provide more flexible and individualized study programs by structuring them into modules and course units;

- apply a coherent approach in developing and approving study programs for three levels/cycles of studies[4];

- standardize professional terminology in the field of curricula in languages of instruction in higher education.

IV. Policy implications

On its way to integration into European Area of Higher Education, Kosova is strongly determined to accomplish all objectives of the process of Bologna. Any other option would only undermine all the commitment and engagements of the Kosovar academic community and leadership during the last decade together with their unwavering orientation in favor of European trends in higher education.

The fact that Kosova is not yet formally admitted as one of signatory countries of the Declaration of Bologna (due to its unsettled political status), does not diminish our efforts and determination for a full and formal integration in this process. Based on experience from previous years, this process of integration may encounter resistance whether for conceptual reasons (because of the personal attitude towards Bologna of some individuals) or, because of the speed of the changes. Malfunctioning or, as is the case in several institutions, lack of real and functioning professional and governing bodies in some private institutions of higher education may affect the implementation of this policy and their integration in the relevant trends in European universities. Budget limitations in the higher education sector, which comes as a result of the low GDP, may slow down the dynamics of change and development.

On the other hand, the strong orientation of academic community in favor of European trends will also facilitate the process of integration of the Kosovar society in the family of EU countries through:

- economic development of the country and of its human resources,

- affirmation of European democratic values,

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[3] In the process of design and review of its study programs and curricula, HEI-s will pay continuous attention to ensuring coherence between descriptors, generic and subject specific competences and learning outcomes.

[4] In accordance with objective 10 of the Process of Bologna, addressed more particularly during the works of the Conferences of European ministers responsible for higher education held in Bergen (2005) and in London (2007).

- increased social cohesion,

- affirmation of tolerance, diversity and inclusive and global education, as well as through promotion and creation of a knowledge based society.

V. Implementation plan

In order to accomplish the aforementioned objectives, the MEST and HEIs will engage in a series of measures. The measure will be undertaken in the following fields:

a) Capacity building measures:
- Relevant mechanisms and instruments are set up for assessment of market and societal needs for professionals and experts in given fields.
- HEIs will establish institutional mechanisms for capacity building in designing of curricula according to Tuning approach and methodology.
- Funds are provided for professional development and study visits abroad for information and exchange of experience on Tuning approach.

b) Incentives:
- MEST and public HEIs will develop incentives for deficit professions and for those of special importance for the society (including waiving of study fees, giving of grants and scholarships, assistance with accommodation, literature, travel expenses, etc.);
- During the process of licensing government / MEST give priority to HEIs engaged in offering new attractive and competitive study programs in full compliance with the market and societal needs;
- Round table discussions, debates, and surveys are organized with the academic community and other stakeholders and brochures, fliers and other promotion materials are developed and disseminated on the process of curriculum development.

c) Measures for quality assurance and comparability of programs:
- Review of existing curricula and their harmonization according to Tuning approach and methodology (until 2009);
- Academic units will engage regularly in improving and advancing their curricula with the purpose of ensuring quality and for keeping in line with academic developments in given science fields;
- HEI-s will periodically review curricula of their academic units with the purpose keeping updated with technologic changes and developments;
- MEST establishes a mixed group of experts to standardize terminology in the field of curricula and study programs.

d) Broadening of education provision

- Until 2010, all authorized higher education institutions will be involved in the process development of curricula and implementation of study programs of the third cycle by also including other organizations and entities in the development of scientific research;

- The program of in service teacher training program will operate as a permanent program and will extend its services to include experts from other non-teaching professions, always maintaining full respect of academic criteria and procedures;

- Higher education institutions will engage in diversifying and broadening education services in the non-university sector, in lifelong learning and in the field of applied sciences.

For various reasons, the process of implementation may encounter reluctance, passive attitudes, negligence, and even open opposition These attitudes may come from the teaching staff, but also from students as final users of education services. MEST, HEI-s, UP Students' Parliament and other student organizations will be address these attitudes by organizing round table discussions, debates, study visits, information and capacity building activities, increased student and teacher mobility and through other stimulating measures that will encourage the academic community for active participation in these processes.

VI. Implementation budget:

Quality curricula, in line with the market and societal needs are among the pillars for an efficient and effective system of higher education. This policy, together with other complementary documents, allows for improvement of these curricula. However, implementation of this policy requires additional funds to be provided by MEST, HEI-s and from various donors since it involves extra efforts on the part of academic community, education experts and international partners. MEST and UP will engage the national Bologna Promoters Team to draft an schedule of activities, for coordination of efforts and for providing funds for implementation of this policy during the 2008 – 2010 period.

VII. Policy monitoring and evaluation

There will be an annual internal evaluation and a comprehensive external evaluation (in 2010) with the purpose of analyzing the impact of the curriculum development process. Academic units will include students in the process of internal evaluation to find out about the actual student workload and the programs' contents and methodology. This will be done by following up on alumni on given periods after graduation, the level and dynamics of their employment, and efficiency of the gained knowledge. This evaluation will be extended to include also their employers and social partners in order to gain

information on quality of graduates' performance. The external evaluation will be carried out by independent agencies authorized for this purpose (according to ENQA guidelines). Evaluation will be used to assess the need for possible corrections of the process of curriculum development and for improvement of their quality.

In 2010 the MEST will undertake a comprehensive evaluation in order to find out about the:

a) implementation of this document and about participation of involved parties;

b) extent to which market and societal needs are met for/by graduates of higher education institutions;

c) level of graduates' employability, and

d) performance of HEI-s.

Based on results and recommendations of this evaluation, MEST and HEI-s will engage in continuous efforts to harmonize all study programs, structures and courses with the requirements of the Process of Bologna and of quality assurance in higher education.

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COMMON CRITERIA FOR IMPELMENTATION OF ECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN KOSOVO

I. Introduction

In the academic year 2001/2002 the University of Prishtina (UP) approved the structure of studies 3+2+3 and started the implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

Since 2003 Kosovo has participated in the Bologna Process Conferences as observer. Even not being a full member, Kosovo authorities and higher education institutions (HEIs) are committed to full implementation of requirements of the Bologna Process. The Law on Higher Education promulgated in 2003 refers to the Bologna Declaration and requires all HEIs to operate in accordance with this Declaration. In 2004 Strategy for the Development of Higher Education was approved which takes into account all the requirements of the Bologna Process. Also, the statutes of all HEIs refer to the Bologna Declaration in the part concerning ECTS.

In 2005 the UP established ECTS units and appointed institutional coordinator for ECTS, as well as ECTS coordinators for each academic unit. This was a positive move and facilitated the flow of credible information on credit allocations.

Despite positive developments related to ECTS there is still missing unique approach to ECTS implementation in similar programs offered by various HEIs. The purpose of this document is to offer basic principles for full implementation of the ECTS in all the HEIs.

II. Purpose of the document

Pursuant to the Law on Higher Education, article 4 and the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education 2005-2015, and based on ECTS User's Guide of the European Commission for implementation of ECTS, the Ministry recommends in this document common criteria for application of ECTS in study programs.

This document contains criteria for application of ECTS in study programs and shall serve as a basis for full implementation of ECTS in all HEIs (public and private).

III. Purpose of ECTS

ECTS is a student-oriented system for transfer and accumulation of credits and reflects the workload of a student to achieve objectives of a certain study program.

This system facilitates the recognition of a period of study in other institutions (in country and abroad), transfer of credits accumulated from one HEI to another, and therefore enables increased mobility of students across Europe.

ECTS makes study programs easily readable and comparable and helps HEIs design and review their study programs.

IV. Credit

A credit is a measurable unit of work that a student should accomplish (student's workload) to achieve learning objectives and outcomes in a certain course (module). One credit entails 25-30 working hours, so the annual student's workload ranges from 1,500 to 1,800 hours.

Student's workload includes:

    Lectures,
    Exercises,
    Contacts with teacher,
    Practical and laboratory work,
    Field work,
    Colloquia, quizzes, seminars,
    Research tasks in a library,
    Time of individual studying,
    Projects, etc.
    Preparation for exams and examination time,
    Preparation of final exam (diploma thesis).

Student receives credits only after having completed all necessary requirements of a program.

A HEIs determines the way credits are allocated to specific courses of a study program.

V. Study cycles and ECTS

The study programs are designed in a way that one year of studies has 60 credits (30 credits per semester). Each course should be allocated certain number of credits.

During the first study cycle (bachelor), from 180-240 credits should be accumulated.

During the second cycle (master), one should accumulate from 60-120 credits, in a way that, at the end of the cycle, the graduate should have accumulated at least 300 credits.

During the third study cycle (doctorate) 180 credits should be accumulated.

Duration of specific study programs (medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, etc.) should be in line with the respective directives of the European Commission.

VI. Documents for implementation of ECTS

In order to ensure full implementation of ECTS, each HEI should undertake the following steps:

    a. Include ECTS in the statutes,

    b. Design an information package on ECTS (data about the HEI, study programs, description of courses and number of credits, as well as data on examination terms and assessment),

    c. Use/design the following documents:

- standard student application form for mobility,

- learning contract,

- transcript of records, and

- other necessary documents.

Exception to this rule are the HEIs operating based on arrangements with higher education institutions accredited by accreditation authorities of the countries not applying ECTS.

VII. Implementation of this document

The following measure should be taken in order to implement this document:

- MEST will prepare an administrative instruction for implementation,,

- Six months after the administrative instruction is approved, HEIs should prepare all documents envisioned by ECTS,

- Kosovo Accreditation Agency shall set criteria requiring HEIs to prepare documents needed for ECTS,

- If needed, training seminars on ECTS will be organized for all HEIs.

VIII. Evaluation

MEST shall organize an independent evaluation of this policy and the respective administrative instruction one year after the entrance into force of the administrative instruction. Public higher education institutions shall include information on implementation of this policy and other provision in their annual reports for MEST, as well as in reports KAA may require. Also, private higher education institutions shall prepare and submit reports to MEST on implementation of ECTS as part of evaluation and licensing procedures.

GUIDELINES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON

EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN KOSOVO

I. Introduction

Eight years after the the Bologna Declaration in 1999, a very strong Process in the sector of higher education covering most of Europe is already well under way. With its mobility schemes, numerous exchange programs and initiatives, with recognition, accumulation and transfer of studies and learning experiences, this Process of reforms of learning structures has become one of the 'living connecting tissues' of the European integration processes. However, in order for this new 'connecting tissue' to really function it is necessary to establish various descriptors, standards, learning outcomes, competences and other reference points to make studies across Europe measurable, comparable and transparent. Another necessary element is to ensure quality higher education services across Europe. Again, mechanisms and procedures are needed to ensure that quality study programs are organized and that they issue quality degrees offering the needed skills, competences and knowledge for the market and for the knowledge societies of the new era.

In this broader context, with most of the European countries having met most of the requirements in the field of quality assurance, Kosovar institutions of higher education and other agencies, each in their domain, will have to double their efforts in order to keep up with the developments in other countries, develop their mechanisms and procedures for internal and self-evaluation, start implementing processes and activities of external evaluation and finally to jointly build a transparent, efficient and effective system of quality assurance in higher education in Kosovo. Kosovo follows the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – which were adopted by the ministers in Bergen in 2005.

Evaluation of HEI is very important since it helps in creating conditions to ensure quality in higher education. This paper gives main guidelines for the higher education institutions to more actively involve in self- and internal evaluation, on one side, and describes how the evaluation processes will be done in Kosovo as part of external evaluation efforts (mainly coming from the Agency for Accreditation of Kosovo).

II. Policy statement

Kosovo must involve in a fast track process of internal and external evaluation in the institutions of higher education, in order to keep up with other countries both in the region and wider in Europe.

Establishing the needed mechanisms and procedures for internal and external evaluation and their proper and swift implementation are a key option (and challenge) facing Kosovar the government and HE institutions, on their way of building a quality assurance system in higher education in harmony with the objectives and action lines of the Bologna Process.

III. Policy goals

These guidelines tend to serve as a roadmap for both institutions of higher education and for the government agencies in:

- Setting grounds for an efficient and objective process of accreditation

- Improving processes, procedures, mechanisms and in developing a culture of continuous self- and internal evaluation in HE institutions

- Making curricula and study programs (externally) more transparent, readable, and easy comparable in order to allow for easier external institutional and program evaluations to take place.

- Regular internal and external evaluation should serve to assure for the quality of Higher Education in Kosovo.

IV. Implementation guidelines:

Assesment of teaching and learning is the process of evaluating the quality and appropriateness of the learning process, including teacher performance and pedagogic approach.

IV.1. Self evaluation

Internal evaluation is a continuous internal process of every HEI in Kosovo applying the set of guidelines given by European Standards and Guidelines. The main purpose of this continuous process is to improve the quality culture inside HEI. Below are given aspects of internal evaluation to serve as recommendations for HE institutions when establishing their procedures of internal evaluation:

- Internal and Self-evaluation segments
  Self-evaluation shall be directed towards monitoring and analysis in several segments, especially towards:
  - the mission and goals of the HEI;
  - strategy of achieving the mission;
  - description of the faculty /HEI / research institutes, accredited for undertaking higher education activities;
  - study program and subject courses;
  - teaching staff and assistants;
  - teaching and learning activity;
  - students;
  - facilities and material conditions (resources);
  - logistics;
  - external co-operation;
  - scientific research activity;
  - financing.

- From among the above mentioned segments, the mission and strategy should be worked out by the university community and assessed and evaluated regularly for the purpose of continuous improvement of the quality of provision and outputs. Self-evaluation is a succinct internal report for external use. Most importantly, every HEI shall establish and maintain a permanent structure for internal evaluation and a self assessment group in the context of external evaluation.

IV.2. Self-Assesment

Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of ones own performance and provision.

Self-assessment may be undertaken on an individual basis or, in the context of external quality review, on a collective basis.

Self-assessment is used interchangeably with self-evaluation and self-study in the contect of higher education quality. They all involve a process of self-reflection by the institution or sub-instituational unit being reviewed and the preparation of a document reflecting that self-reflection.

Self- assessment is done before external evaluation (it is in a way part of external evaluation and results from internal evaluation).

IV.3. External Evaluation

Due to the specific situation in Kosova, where most of the academic staff are in one or another way directly linked to the until recently the only public University of Prishtina, every external evaluation undertaken in Kosova will have to draw largely on foreign regional and international expertise in most of academic fields. In this regard, Kosovo is vitally interested in developing regional cooperation in the field of evaluation. Namely, this means that any evaluation team shall consist of at least one expert from the region and another one from a country in Europe.
Other basic aspects of external evaluation are given below:

- Self-Assessment by every HEI is required as a first step of external evaluation

- Self assessment with site visits is basic for external reports

- Every HEI must have 2 levels of evaluation:
  - institutional and
  - program evaluation
- One or two site visits of the expert team after presentation of self assessment

- Evaluation teams for external evaluation set up:
  - Every team shall cinsist of 3 to 5 members, depanding on the size of the university[5]
  - Every team should have at least 1 or 2 international members
  - Evaluators should not be in any relations whatsoever to the evaluated HEI
  - Students should be (in some way) present in evaluation teams
  - The chair of every team will be a foreigner

- There will be an exhange of discussion between expert-team and evaluated HEI

- Evaluation teams will submit their report to the KAA Board

Every licensed HEI must be externally evaluated at least every 4 or 5 years. The evaluation process will take one academic year and the reports of external evaluation will be published. Evaluation reports give a quality status of each HEI and serve further to the Ministry I brining informed decisions regarding their licenses.

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[5] Size of university means:
- volume of students
- number of programs
- structure (geographical structure; branches, locations)

IV.4. Site Visit

Site visit is when an external evaluation team goes to an institution to evaluate verbal, written and visual evidence.

The purpose of site visits includes observing facilities, interacting with staff and students, accessing documentation, scrutinising tangible evidence of student achievments and checking the veracity of self-assessment statements.

V. The key implementing agencies

Together with the institutions of higher education (whose role is essential in all aspects of evaluation and most notably in self- and internal evaluation), the KAA and the MEST have a key role to play in planning, coordinating and helping in implementation of these guidelines. These two institutions see their role primarily as one of advising, coaching, assisting, enabling and recommending. However, these two institutions are also responsible to ensure that best, most efficient and most effective higher education services are provided for the society. In this regard they need to also engage in a coordination and supervisory capacity.

V.1. The role of the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation

The KAA is responsible for the process of evaluation, offering such services to all HEIs in Kosovo. The KAA will commission and coordinate the external evaluation and will oversee and assist higher education institutions in carrying out internal evaluation. The KAA does not make any difference between private und public universities.

The KAA itself shall engage to fulfil the requirements and criteria in order to become a member of the ENQA and to be introduced into the European register of accreditation agencies. In order to achieve this it is necessary for the KAA to apply for membership, but more importantly, it has to achieve and maintain high standards of operation. This automatically implies that the KAA will periodically, too, undergo a process of international external evaluation.

V.2. The KAA structure and duties

- KAA has a board and an office for administrative support
- Members of the board are appointed by the ministry

- The board exists out of 3 foreign and 6 Kosovo experts

- KAA works out rules and procedures

- KAA must inform all HEI about procedure and criteria of evaluation

- Assistance should be provided for all HEI for evaluation

- KAA specifying the timeline

- KAA board recommends to the minister

- Publishing of reports

- KAA follow up on the recommandations of the external report

V.3. Role of the Ministry of Education and Technology

Role of the MEST is provideddefined for in the Law on Higher Education 2003/13:

Licences are issued by the MEST based on the recommendation of the AAK. The Law also provides that the Minister must give a license when the accreditation-process shows positive quality, but he/she must refuse when the evaluation shows negative result.

It should be perhaps taken in consideration to undertake some changes and amendments in this Law to allow and one industry representation in the Board of the AAK, students are present in the teams of evaluators, and lowering the number of 3000 students for private universities to start operating..

VI. Model of Work Flow
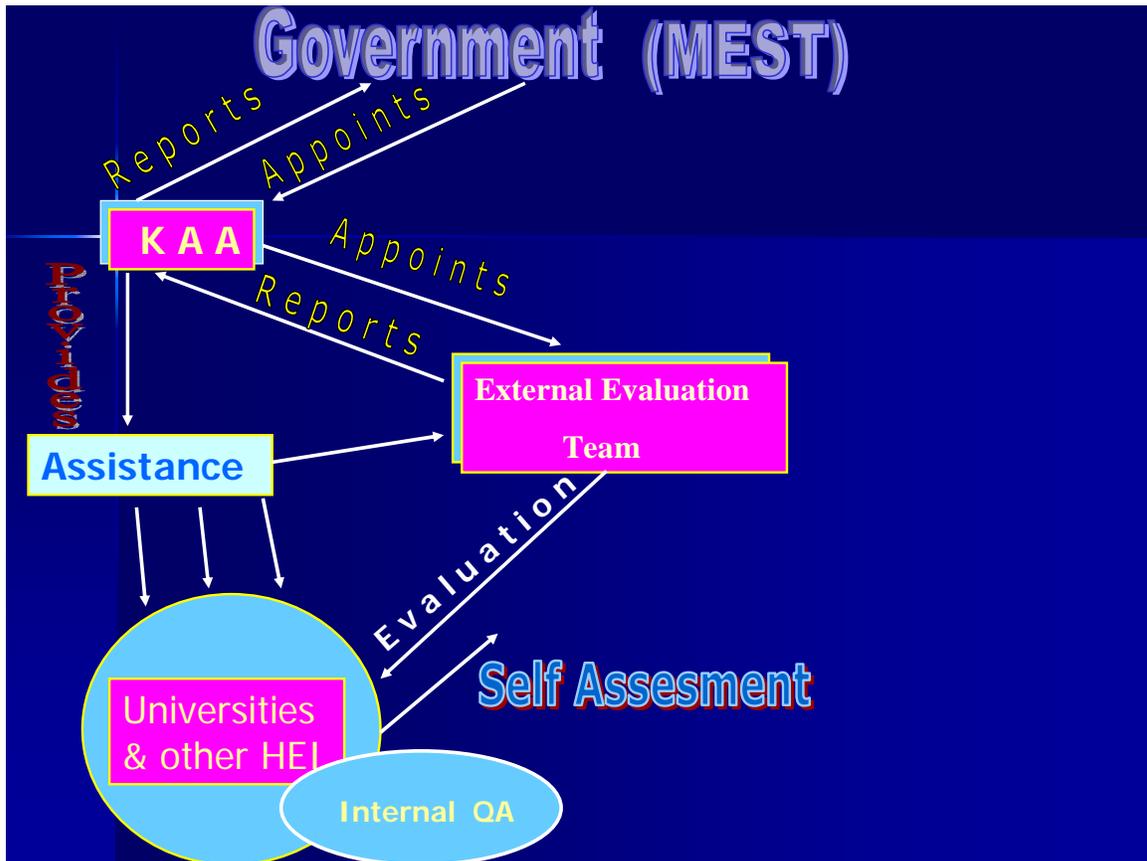
Abbreviations

HEI   Higher Education Institute
KAA   Kosovo Accreditation Agency
MEST   Ministry of Education and Technology Kosovo

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GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
VLADA KOSOVA - MINISTARSTVO ZA OBRAZOVANJE NAUKU I TEHNOLOGIJU

Kabineti i Ministrit - Cabinet of the Minister - Kabinet Ministra

POLICY OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON

COMPARABILITY AND RECOGNITION OF PRE-BOLOGNA AND BOLOGNA DEGREES

INTRODUCTION

All legislation and policy documents in the field of Higher Education in Kosovo make clear reference to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, as well as to the Bologna Declaration. The Law 2003/14 on Higher Education in Kosovo, drafted under close supervision by the Council of Europe is fully compliant to the Bologna Declaration and subsequent documents. It requires Kosovo higher education to develop towards the goals set by the Bologna process. At the same time, Kosovo is actively participating in all relevant European processes in education, including the drafting of the European Qualifications Framework; in this context, the Law on the National Qualifications Framework has passed the Government procedure, and is expected to be enacted soon by the Kosovo Assembly.

Since 1999, the organizational structure of higher education in Kosovo has changed. These changes aimed at, among others, making the education system in Kosovo compatible with the countries party to the Bologna Declaration. The system provides 3 years of undergraduate studies, 2 years of master studies and 3 years of doctoral studies.

Higher Education in Kosovo consists of:

1. The University of Prishtina, with over 32,000 students in 2006/2007 (or about 67% of student population in HE in Kosovo).

2. The University of Mitrovica with Serbian as language of instruction. It is estimated that the number of students there ranges between 4,000 and 6,000 in 2006/2007 (around 11% of all students in higher education).

3. There are also 19 private providers of HE with 10,191 students in 2006/2007 (or 22% of all students in higher education). All private institutions, with the exception of one (the American University of Kosovo) operate in accordance with the Bologna process.

POLICY ISSUES

With gradual introduction of the Bologna compliant study programs, the new graduates face the challenge of employability in the local labor market due to the shorter study period and lack of awareness among employers on competencies acquired through the new system. On the other hand, the former graduates from pre-Bologna undergraduate level programs (ISCED 5) encounter difficulties in continuing post-graduate education because of the new entrance requirements.

Therefore, the main policy issues are:

- Transfer[6] from old to new degrees;

- Differentiation of old and new degrees and the issue of employment;[7]

- Employability after the first Bologna cycle.

POLICY GOALS

The following policy goals have been identified:

- To encourage lifelong learning by facilitating continuation of studies of pre-Bologna graduates within the same or higher Bologna cycle;

- To help employers assess higher education qualifications acquired in the pre-Bologna period in comparison with qualifications acquired in Bologna period

- To raise awareness among employers on employability of the Bologna first cycle graduates

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[6] Transfer means a right of the candidate to continue his/her studies within the same or higher cycle depending on recognized previous learning outcomes
[7] Employability represents a government wide concern

POLICY OPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In order to achieve the policy goals, the following policy options were considered:

1) Encourage flexible and fair assessment of attainment of pre-Bologna graduates/students;
   Alternative is Regulatory approach towards equivalency of old and new degrees that sets strict mechanisms and rules for recognition of degrees awarded through the pre-Bologna programs.

Flexible and fair assessment of pre-Bologna graduates as opposed to regulatory approach has significant advantages. This approach increases transparency and encourages lifelong learning of the pre-Bologna graduates implying increased employability and new opportunities for personal development, fulfilling the needs of the society.

2) Build an information system/database on pre-Bologna and Bologna programs

An effective information system/database on pre-Bologna and Bologna programs would contribute to transparency, information of the public and comparability of study programs and academic awards. This system would represent a reference for employers and those who assess degrees attained for any other purpose. Also, various forms of dissemination of information among employers will be considered in order to improve understanding on the new Bologna programs.

3) Update and apply regulations on the diploma supplement

The content of the diploma supplement is prescribed by the MEST Administrative Instruction no. 02/2005, but it has not been implemented up to date. On the other hand, implementation of the diploma supplement on a national level is a European wide trend and in line with the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications.

MEASURES

The following policy measures will be implemented in order to achieve the policy goals:

Goal 1. Encourage flexible and fair assessment of attainment of pre-Bologna graduates/students

Measure 1.1. Oblige HEIs to develop internal rules on this issue
HEIs will have to fairly and objectively assess the credentials of each individual. Procedures should be accomplished in a timely fashion. Continuing a degree under

Bologna is an inherent right of an individual whose previous work should not be disregarded, but assessed objectively. The Ministry shall issue an administrative instruction setting forth basic principles of assessment in partnership with other stakeholders.
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Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: The Administrative Instruction shall be issued three months after the approval of the Policy

Goal 2. Information system/database on pre-Bologna and Bologna programs

Measure 2.1. Build a database on pre-Bologna and Bologna programs

The database should contain broad overviews of pre-Bologna degree programs (lists of courses with contact hours, major requirements, etc.) whereas the universities are obliged to publish the data on new Bologna programs in their web pages, including curricula and syllabi. This constitutes public responsibility of HEIs and will be regulated by an administrative instruction developed in cooperation with HEIs and relevant stakeholders.

Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: The database shall be completed until June 2008.

Measure 2.2. Collect the basic data from HEI and regularly update the database

MEST will design a common template and instructions for HEIs in order to facilitate the collection and comparability of data for pre-Bologna and Bologna programs. A deadline will be set for submission of initial data, and the beginning of academic year will be due date for any updates.

Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: Permanent task

Measure 2.3. Disseminate information among employers in private and public sector on qualification structures and the Bologna Process

MEST will employ various forms of dissemination of information among employers on qualification structures and the Bologna Process including publications, access to databases, dissemination events, etc. MEST will encourage HEIs to have pro-active approach towards employers in order to disseminate information on their programs and collect their feedback.

Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: Permanent task

Goal 3. Update and apply regulations on diploma supplement

Measure 3.1. Update the administrative instruction on diploma supplement

HE Law regulates the responsibility of the MEST to authorize the format and content of the DS. The work should be based on ENIC/NARIC Recommendations and good practices and formalized as an administrative instruction. The AI will set realistic deadline for HEIs to issue the DS.

Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: The Administrative Instruction shall be issued three months after the approval of the Policy

Measure 3.2. Assist HEIs to issue the diploma supplement

HEIs will be requested to submit plans for issuing the diploma supplement. They will be encouraged to build information systems that facilitate the issuing of such document. The MEST will also disseminate information and facilitate sharing of experience from other countries related to this issue.

Responsibility: MEST

Timeline: The plans for issuing diploma supplement are due six months after entrance into force of the Administrative Instruction.

EVALUATION

The focus of evaluation will be on tangible outputs of the policy. The evaluation will check the effect of the policy measures against the following indicators:

- A functioning information system on pre-Bologna and Bologna programs
- Most of the HEIs have effective systems for assessing attainment of pre-Bologna graduates
- The AI on diploma supplement is in line with ENIC/NARIC updates
- Diploma supplement issued in most HEIs as prescribed in the AI

An expert-based evaluation will be carried out one year after the approval of the policy in order to assess the progress of implementation. The evaluation report will be used to improve/update the policy. Further evaluations will take place, as a rule, bi-annually, and will serve to inform the decision making.

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