Project No. 609990

Project Acronym: DI-PHDICTKES

Project title:

The development and implementation of PhD Curricula in ICT for Kosovo Education System

WP 2.3.4

Validation of PhD program proposal

Programme: Erasmus KA 2

Start date: 15.11.2019

Duration: 36 months

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Table of fulfilled standards according to Kosovo Accreditation Agency

Standards for evaluation of doctoral programmes is a document produced by Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) in June 2020, with the aim to extend and develop the scope of higher education legislation in order to further enhance the quality of doctoral programmes. These standards are also expected to provide a framework which will facilitate the establishment of more doctoral programmes. Standards are divided into seven categories:

- Institutional structure, administrative support and funding
- Selection and admission criteria
- Doctoral programme structure/content
- Research environment/capacity
- Supervision
- Assessment
- Doctoral research outcome

Validation of the PhD programme proposal under the project: The development and implementation of PhD Curricula in ICT for Kosovo Education System, falls under the task 2.3.4 of Working Package, responsibility of UP.

The working group of UP has created a table, which contains all 52 standards (36 core and 16 supplementary ones) and compared the produced PhD programme documentation towards those standards. The results are presented in Table 1, which contains several columns: one describing standards, another whether those standards are core or supplementary, another column if those are fulfilled by the PhD programme documentation and if yes, where those can be found in document, and the last column containing other comments towards that specific standard. Some of the standards are not applicable to the document, since are part of the institutional responsibility and as such are presented in the table.

Standard	Core /suppl.	Fulfilled	Position in doc.	Comment
1 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND FUNDING				
1.1 The institution* has established institutional regulations for doctoral programmes that are either a) part of the existing regulations, but as a separate named section, or b) a free-standing document.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT. For example, UP has a Doctoral studies Regulation. (Other local HIE can comment whether they have such a regulation).
1.2 The institution has allocated sufficient human (academic and administrative), spatial, physical and financial resources, specifically to support its doctoral programmes.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
1.3 The institution has sufficient academic staff with a doctoral degree so that at least 50% of courses at doctoral level are delivered by academic staff from that institution. Further, at least 5 academic staff must have a PhD in the research field of the doctoral programme and have at least 3 papers, as first or corresponding author, published in international relevant publications in the last 5 years. Relevance of publications is defined according to international criteria for the particular field of science-indexed in WoS1 and/or SCOPUS2).	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

1.4 The institution conducts regular reviews and updating of the programme.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
1.5 Doctoral education opportunities are shown on the institutional website, in an official language of Kosovo, and in English, and include all relevant information.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
1.6 The Institution has a clear strategy for the delivery of its doctoral education. If this is embedded in a general institutional strategy, it is explicitly recognised in a separate section.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
2 SELECTION AND ADMISSION CRITERIA				
2.1 Doctoral candidates must be selected on the basis of a competitive and transparent process.	Core	Yes	Page 7	This part is covered under the section of Admission Requirements in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
2.2 Applicants for a doctoral programme must have an educational level equivalent to a masters degree..	Core	Yes	Page 7	This part is covered under the section of Admission Requirements in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
2.3 In the selection process doctoral candidates' potential for research should be assessed.	Core	Yes	Page 7	This part is covered under the section of Admission Requirements in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
2.4 Applicants must be able to demonstrate a satisfactory working knowledge of English.	Core	Yes	Page 7	This part is covered under the section of Admission Requirements in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
2.5 Both, full-time and part-time doctoral candidates must have a clearly defined time for completion of their studies.	Suppl.	Yes	Page 5	This part is covered under the section of the Structure of PhD Study Program in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3 DOCTORAL PROGRAMME STRUCTURE/CONTENT				

3.1 Doctoral programmes must be research-based although they may include course work and other activities that contribute to critical thinking and the development of research skills.	Core	Yes	Pages 5,6,7,8,9,10	This part is covered under the section of the Structure of PhD Study Program, and section Coursework, in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.2 Doctoral programmes must have a time limit of 3 or 4 years for full-time doctoral students and of 7 years for part-time students.	Core	Yes	Page 5	This part is covered under the section of the Structure of PhD Study Program in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.3 The programme should enable individual research opportunities; courses should not exceed 1/5 of ECTS (36 credits) of total credit hours or 20% of the total workload; programme must develop transferable skills, and provide sufficient training in the methodology, ethics and integrity of research.	Core	Yes	Page 5, 8	The three-year PhD curricula in ICT foresees individual research of the students; coursework in total has 33 ECTS; under the coursework the programme foresees transferable skills, methodology, ethics and integrity of research.
3.4 The programme should encourage mobility and participation in learning opportunities in other institutions.	Core	Yes	Page 10	This part is covered under the section of the Publications and International Research Mobility in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.5 The programme must have an established process for monitoring the progress of doctoral candidates.	Core	Yes	Page 13	This part is covered under the section of the Progress Reports in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.6 A doctoral candidate must have a supervisor/s allocated within the first 12 months.	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.7 Acceptance of a doctoral research proposal must be subject to clearly defined and transparent procedures.	Core	Yes	Page 10	This part is covered under the section of the Thesis Proposal in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.8 Doctoral candidates' mentors and members of the doctoral committee should be involved in institutional bodies relevant for doctoral education.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

3.9 Doctoral candidates should be allowed to take courses outside the institution, as well as afforded opportunities to gain other relevant experience, such as presentations at academic conferences, workshops and other relevant activities.	Suppl.	Partially	Page 10, 11	This part is covered partially under the section of the Publications and international research mobility in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT. The three-year PhD curricula does not foresee taking courses outside the institution.
3.10 The majority of course work should be based on tutorials, seminars, discussion groups, workshops and individual work rather than predominantly didactic methods of instruction.	Suppl.	No	N/A	This part is not covered under the three-year PhD curricula in ICT. However, the course instructor defines the specifics of course organization in the respective syllabus.
3.11 There should be evidenced data collection on cohorts of doctoral candidates.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
3.12* If there is insufficient research capacity the institution is considering different approaches, such as joint programmes, collaborative programmes); a serious endeavour needs to be documented (please, see S 4.5).	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT/CAPACITY				
4.1 Infrastructure and facilities must be up-to-date and compatible with the area of research of a whole doctoral programme and doctoral research projects.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4.2 It must be evident, and clearly documented, that research is performed according to international ethical standards.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT. However, students have a mandatory course on ethics and research integrity.

4.3 An Ethics Committee should be responsible for approving research involving humans and animals. Members must be active researchers, with publications in relevant international journals with no record of any kind of misconduct of research, plagiarism or any other ethical issue, no identified conflict of interest, and committed to data protection.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4.4 No supervisor should have more than three doctoral candidates.	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4.5* In case of a need to up-grade research capacity, a joint doctoral programme with another university, preferably from abroad, could be accepted (the whole programme with all the components needs to be documented, following all the applicable standards); other forms of collaboration with other institutions from abroad may also be acceptable.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4.6 Taking into account the field of research, employment opportunities, and its research capacity, the institution should consider the scheduling of enrolment of new cohorts of students.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
4.7 The institution should support research quality by requesting and reporting on research-paper quality and publication, external research funding, the establishment of research groups, etc.	Suppl.	Partially	Pages 10, 11	This part is partially covered under the section of the Publications and International Research Mobility in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

5   SUPERVISION

5.1 A doctoral candidate must have at least one supervisor (two is advisable), covering the research area/topic that is the focus of his/her doctoral research.	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.2 Supervisors must be a member of academic staff of the institution, hold a PhD and an approved academic title, be an active researcher, with a minimum of three years' research experience following the award of his/her PhD; he or she must have at least 3 papers published in international relevant publications in the last 5 years (relevance of publications is defined according to international criteria for the particular field of science-indexed in WoS and/or SCOPUS).	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.3 Supervisors must have experience in research projects and participation in international academic conferences and workshops relevant to the field.	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.4 The number of doctoral candidates per supervisor should be compatible with the overall workload of a supervisor.	Core	Yes	Page 12	This part is covered under the section of the Supervising in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.5 Supervisors and doctoral candidates must meet regularly (at the very least monthly) to discuss the candidates' research and monitor progress. These meetings must be documented.	Core	Yes	Page 13, 14	This part is covered under the sections of the Supervising and Progress Reports in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.6 Responsibilities of the institution, supervisor and doctoral student must be set out clearly in a policy document.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions to have a clear policy document on responsibilities of engaged parties and this is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

5.7 The Institution provides professional development opportunities for supervisors.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
5.8 Participation in international academic networks and similar activities should be documented.	Suppl.	Yes	Page 10, 11	This part is covered under the section of the Publications and international research mobility in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6 ASSESSMENT				
6.1 Doctoral candidates are supported and required to publish at least 1 paper as a first or corresponding author in a peer-reviewed journal relevant to the field (indexed in WoS and/or SCOPUS).	Core	Yes	Page 10, 11	This part is covered under the section of the Publications and international research mobility in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.2 Doctoral candidates must confirm that the doctoral thesis is their original work.	Core	Yes	Page 11	This part is covered under the section of the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.3 Doctoral candidates must submit their thesis to the doctoral committee within the stipulated time frame and participate in an oral public defence.	Core	Yes	Page 7, 11	This part is covered under the sections of the Structure of the PhD Program and the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.4 The institution must have a clearly documented protocol for the assessment process including the composition of the evaluation committee, which should comprise at least three members.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.5 The institution must have clear criteria for the assessment of doctoral theses.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.6 The institution must have clear regulations governing the instance of a negative assessment.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

6.7 Institutions must have clear policies and procedures to address any kind of misconduct such as unethical practice, plagiarism, fabrication of data, etc.	Core	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.8 All the members of the committee for the evaluation of the public defence must be established authorities in the research field. The committee must have at least one external member from a domestic or international institution.	Core	Yes	Page 11	This part is covered under the section of the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
6.9 A supervisor may not serve as a member of the evaluation committee.	Core	Yes	Page 11	This part is covered under the section of the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
7 DOCTORAL RESEARCH OUTCOME				
7.1 The final outcome of the doctoral programme is a thesis. There is no singular, stipulated, format for the thesis. However, the copy must be publicly available. This may be on-line, but a hardcopy must be held in the institution's library and elsewhere, as deemed appropriate.	Core	Yes	Page 11	This part is covered under the section of the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
7.2 The thesis should reflect original thinking and represent a valuable addition to the knowledge base of the topic.	Core	Yes	Page 4,5,11,12	This part is covered under the sections of the Learning Outcomes/Objectives of the PhD study program in ICT and the PhD Thesis in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
7.3 Doctoral programmes should provide a successful candidate with a set of competences that will provide him, or her, with a choice of career paths.	Core	Yes	Page 4,5	This part is covered under the section of the Learning Outcomes/Objectives of the PhD study program in ICT in the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

7.4 Where a doctoral candidate does not complete his/her PhD studies successfully the institution may wish to consider issuing a certificate recording the courses he/she attended during the course of study.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.
7.5 There is a defined procedure for the assessment and public defence in cases where the result may lead to the application and award of a patent.	Suppl.	N/A	N/A	It falls under the responsibility of specific institutions and is not part of the three-year PhD curricula in ICT.

Methodology

Initially the first draft of the document was prepared by the UP working group and then it was distributed to other members of the project for additional comments. The final draft was produced by taking into account those comments and including them in the document.

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