

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT (Independent Higher Education)

NAME OF INSTITUTION: New University

ADDRESS: Delpinova 18b
5000 Nova Gorica
Slovenia

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Professor Peter Jambrek

DATE OF INSPECTION: 30 March & 1–2 April 2021

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Deferred decision

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Accreditation awarded for the full four-year period
- Probation accreditation
- Decision on accreditation deferred
- Award of accreditation refused

DATE: 26 January 2023

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

New University (NU/the Institution) is a privately owned higher education provider that offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes in areas such as law, real estate management, public administration, international and diplomatic studies, and Slovenian studies.

The Institution has study locations in Nova Gorica, Kranj and Ljubljana. The Institution's administrative centre is based in Nova Gorica.

NU aims to become an elite and unique Slovenian educational, scientific and research institution with international comparability, by offering high-quality study programmes and application selection, and in respecting the highest ethical standards.

NU is a private higher education institution, owned in its entirety by its sole founder, the Institute of Constitutional Organisation and Human Rights, which is a limited liability company. The Institution has degree-awarding powers granted by the Slovenian Government. Overall governance is provided by the NU's President and the Director, who together make up the management board.

The Institution was founded in 2017, comprising the European Faculty of Law, Faculty of Government and European Studies, and the Faculty of Slovene and International Studies. At the time of the inspection, the Institution was in the process of seeking government approval for a fourth study location in Maribor, but this location did not form part of the inspection.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution offers 17 educational programmes at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral level across three faculties. The European Faculty of Law offers two undergraduate Bachelor's degree programmes in Law, and Law and Management of Infrastructure, and four postgraduate Master's degree programmes in Law, Law and Management of Real Estate, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Civil and Commercial Law. The Faculty also offers Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes in Law, and Law and Management of Real Estate.

The Faculty of Government and European Studies offers two Bachelor's degree programmes in Public Administration, and Governmental and European Studies, and two Master's degrees and PhD programmes in International and Diplomatic Studies, and Public Administration. The Faculty for Slovene and International Studies offers a Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programme in Slovenian Studies.

All the programmes are usually delivered in person. At the time of the inspection, as a result of changes in local conditions and in compliance with directives from the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, all teaching was taking place online. Most students study between 20 and 30 hours each week. A set number of government-funded tuition places, known as concessions, are available on six programmes. Students taking these places are classed as full-time students. Students on non-funded places are described as part-time students.

At the time of the inspection, 3,324 students were enrolled. The Institution has a capacity for 822 students to be on site across the three delivery locations at any one time. All students are aged 18 or over. The majority of students are female. The very large majority of students are Slovenian. Other countries represented include Kosovo, Turkey, Croatia, Serbia and Nigeria.

Students are enrolled once a year in October. They must meet published entry criteria, for example achievement of prior qualifications, at the required level.

3. Inspection process

Desk-based review of evidence provided by the Institution to show how they have addressed all of the action points from their full inspection report.

4. **Background to supplementary inspection**

At its meeting in July 2021, the Accreditation Committee agreed to defer a decision on the award of accreditation to New University until confirmation had been received that the action points detailed in Part C of the full inspection report had been addressed.

5. **Inspection history**

Inspection Type	Date
Full Accreditation	30 March 2021

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1. Response to actions points in last report

14.8 The Institution must complete a formal risk assessment and put in place training for all staff regarding preventing radicalisation and extremism.

The action has been met. A 'Prevent Risk Register' has been submitted, which provides a risk scoring against a number of appropriate factors relating to preventing and reducing the risks from radicalisation and extremism. Factors considered by the Institution include online safety, staff training, external speakers and events. Each of the factors has been allocated a risk score based on an evaluation of severity and likelihood. The risk assessment has been further developed and now includes a summary of existing controls and actions needed to further reduce the risks posed by each factor. It would be helpful if the additional action points had indicative timescales for completion.

A 'Prevent' policy is now in place. Staff have completed the UK government's online Prevent e-learning training course to help them understand the role they can play in supporting those at risk from radicalisation and extremism. Certificates of completion have been previously submitted for all full and part-time permanent staff employed by the Institution.

17.1 The Institution must publish and implement an appropriate policy on required student attendance and punctuality.

The action has been met. An updated attendance and punctuality policy has been devised and adopted by the Management Board in November 2021. The revised policy outlines that the Department for Student Affairs will contact students if student attendance falls below 80 per cent after the first semester. The policy guidance is in line with written communications sent to staff and students, which clearly outlines how students must attend a minimum of 80 per cent of their lectures and tutorial sessions to be eligible to participate in modular exams.

17.2 Leaders and managers must ensure that there are effective procedures and systems in place to enforce attendance and punctuality requirements.

The action has been met. The Rector has formally communicated the new attendance and punctuality procedures and systems to all staff. The procedure outlines how attendance and punctuality levels will be monitored and enforced by relevant staff in each faculty. A broad range of email communication examples has been submitted, demonstrating how the policy is being applied and how students' attendance concerns are followed up on promptly. Guidance on the minimum attendance levels is now consistent with the updated student attendance and punctuality policy adopted by the Management Board in November 2021.

27.4 The Institution must undertake a systematic analysis of student data against appropriate performance indicators.

The action has been met. A detailed quality manual sets out a comprehensive range of quality assurance measures and mechanisms, including the consideration of specific quality monitoring indicators. Ten strategic areas cover many aspects of the Institution's provision, including research activity, student engagement and staff management. Each strategic area sets out a variety of quantifiable performance indicators where data will be used to evaluate performance. Performance is monitored systematically by the Quality and Evaluation Group, with appropriate records maintained.

27.10 Key and general performance indicators linked to analysis of student data and staff performance must be developed and incorporated into reports.

The action has been met. The module and programme reports submitted include clear examples of how student satisfaction, retention and achievement data is analysed. A comprehensive self-evaluation report, ratified and approved by the Quality and Evaluation Group, effectively uses student and staff performance data. The report is professionally produced with effective use of data tables to inform the evaluations and action plan.

PART C – SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High

Medium

Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

It is recommended that assessment and grading criteria for all forms of assessment should be made available to students in advance as part of module and programme information.

The Institution should consider implementing a systematic approach to the collection and monitoring of stakeholder feedback to inform programme-level and institutional monitoring processes.

It is recommended that end-of-module reports should include a systematic analysis of student retention and grade profiles, as well as student satisfaction, to facilitate the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all elements of programmes.

The Institution should consider further developing and implementing mechanisms for sharing all aspects of good practice across the Institution.

Managers should consider providing lecturers with additional training to further enhance their online pedagogical skills to support more active student learning practices.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE
