University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj

Reaccreditation Procedure

of Study Program **Management of Tourism and Hospitality** (BSc)

and

Accreditation Procedure

of Study Program **Design and Construction of Wood Products** (BA Professional)

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Final version

(Based on the Site visit of 14 -15th of May 2017)

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The Expert Report is based on the SER from University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj from May 2017, the Expert Report on Accreditation of Study Program Management in Tourism and Hospitality from 2014 and the visit of experts from 15th of May 2017, that included discussion with the management staff (three people), with the responsible person for the study programs (for both programs – 8 people), with the academic staff (8 people), and with the students (8 students).

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Evaluation report for Study Programme: Management of Tourism and Hospitality (BSc), Re-accreditation

1 Overall appreciation

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) Standards (Annex 1) were followed in undertaking the evaluation, and a synthetic view of findings and recommendations is presented in the Table 1. The overall appreciation is positive: the creation of the Programme proved to be an opportunity to adapt the educational offer to the market demand and to provide to the private sector qualified staff to deal with management of tourism and hospitality. The latest three years signify a lot of progress for the programme development, e.g. e a close cooperation with the tourism services and industry, achieve to have a high number of candidates for admission, select and hire professors (full and part-time), achieve the transformation in an university, and put in place the Industrial Board as main stakeholder for analysing with the academic staff the feasibility of the study programmes and curricula.

The analysis of the Self evaluation report and the discussion on the field visit show that the major part of the recommendations from the 2014 expert report on the accreditation of the Study Program Management of Tourism and Hospitality were implemented.

Table 1. Overall evaluation of the Study Program Management of Tourism and Hospitality

Criteria	Evaluation	Short recommendations
1.1 Academic Programmes and Student Management		
1. Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?	Yes.	
2. Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to academic degree?	Yes.	
3. Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and adopted by the teaching staff?	Yes.	
4. Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?	Yes.	
5. Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection, analysis?	Yes.	
6. Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?	Yes.	
7. Is the workload required for the programme manageable for students?	Yes.	Give them the opportunity to work in-between the lectures in the library or in the computer room.
8. Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes?	Yes.	60% to 80% of the teaching modules includes a lecture given by a private sector representative.
9. Is the overlap of academic content between the	Yes.	Continue to analyze

various parts of the curriculum comprehensible and transparent?		regularly the content of the programmes (committee). Also, the content should be discussed by the respective teachers.
10. How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure-up to international standards?	Yes, above-standards.	Continue with admission based on exams.
11. Is the ratio of academic/artistic staff to students appropriate?	Rather yes.	Recruitment would be necessary, at least oen additional PhD in the field of economics/management.
1.2 Staff		
1. Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?	Rather yes.	Recruitment needed.
2. Does the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria?	Rather yes, to be re-assessed later.	Needed effort to publish in the field of the programme.
1.3 Research and International Co-operation		
1. Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course contents?	Rather yes.	Improvements are possible in the publication list of each teaching staff member.
2. Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate? Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?	Rather yes.	Students' involvement in tourism-related research is highly recommended.
1.4 Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment		
1. Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?	Yes.	
2. Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?	Yes.	High quality web access services. Good IT maintenance services.
1.5 Quality Management		
1. Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?	Rather yes.	Publications by the teaching staff should be yearly monitored. Numbers and values for the indicators recorded with the help of the Questionnaires should be available.

2 Evaluation criteria

2.1 Academic Programmes and Student Management

1. Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?

Yes. The analysis of the programme overview and of the module description reveals that the study programme corresponds to the University assumed mission (teaching and research and contributing to the regional development). A strong point of the education the students will receive is the fact that they will be prepared not only for employment in tourism industry, but also for taking the responsibility of being themselves entrepreneurs, which is a "plus" that the institution can bring to the regional development.

2. Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to the academic degree?

Yes. The Programme overview provides enough information to appreciate that the programme is appropriate as quality, range and aims for an academic degree.

3. Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and adopted by the teaching staff?

Yes. The information from of the staff's available CVs offers arguments for a positive answer to this question. Also, during the discussions, the academic staff showed to work in close-cooperation with stakeholders, which is an argument that case-based approach, highly recommended in management teaching, is intensively used in the programme. A beneficial approach to make students more aware about the object of their work would be to introduce a didactic concept developed in other tourism faculties. Thus, each student has to do the promotion of the local cultural value, history, natural landscape or rural traditions specific to the place from where he/she is coming. That may be practiced in the disciplines such Geography of tourism, Historical and cultural heritage, or International Tourism.

Recommendations: Computers and tables should be available in the library for students who want to work out of the class room and do not dispose of a personal laptop. For instance, the library is not really appropriated for studying, it does not offer a "working place" for students.

4. Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?

Yes. The courses were carefully selected and they correspond to a modern curricula in Management of tourism and hospitality.

Recommendations: For instance, it seems that the local tourism opportunities/strong points are not enough valorized in the curricula. There are development towards new kind of urban consumers (from Kosovo and abroad), that want to have nature experience, cultural contacts, village-like food and traditions. The students have to be prepared for this new of tourism, that requires a different approach of management. For example, as practical trainings, the students can do mountain walking, for knowing better the local tourism opportunities, and they may be encourage to discover and marketing their own region as a destination for tourism.

5. Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis? (E.g. what is the proportion of independent study time compared to online/distance teaching and classroom units?)

Yes. The curricula seems to leave enough time to the students in the latest semester (semester VI) for independent work and for finalizing the studies.

6. Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?

Yes. The allocation of ECTS is appropriate, and justified for the modules chosen.

7. Is the workload required for the academic programme manageable for students?

Yes. Students' assessment indicated a rather good time balance of the academic programme.

8. Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes (competences and qualifications, knowledge and skills)?

Yes. The contents of the teaching units are appropriate for the programme goals and lectures given by the external stakeholders are a current practice. These lectures complement in a worthy way the theoretical lectures and the internship information, as provided in the list of students' internship.

9. Is the overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum comprehensible and transparent?

Yes. The academic content is clear and does not overlap.

Recommendations. As a means to increase the quality of teaching, the expert proposes that once in the year the content of the similar or interlinked lectures should be discussed in small groups by the respective teachers, using the detailed information of the official curricula. The Self evaluation Report mentioned a committee that is analyzing the curricula, but regular teaching staff discussion should take place as well.

10. How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure-up to international standards?

Yes, **above-standards**. The admission procedures are on international standards. The admission based on exam is rather an above-standards practice that guarantee high level of motivation from the candidates.

11. Is the ratio of academic/artistic staff to students appropriate?

Rather yes. There is a total number of students of 320 for 4 full time staff and 7 part-time staff. Per total, the ration is 11: 320, e.g. one professor for more than 30 students. If considering the part-time the ration is probably 1:40. The recruitment plan aims to improve this situation. Hopefully that the plan would be implemented.

The list of permanent staff complies with the List of academic staff provided by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

2.2 Staff

1. Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?

Yes. The permanent staff is composed by at least three PhD degree professors. satisfactory from the viewpoint of the qualification in the field of the programme (Mr Pira –field: technical sciences; Mr. Loku, field: management/economics, and Mr. Thaci: field forestry). From the part-time staff, out of 7 persons, 4 are specially qualified in the field of the study (three CVs are missing).

Recommendations: Need to recruit amongst the people with qualification in the field and transform the part-time in full time.

2. Does the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria?

Rather yes. We have dispose of CVs for the staff. Their publication record shows good academic and didactic level. The situation is satisfactory from the viewpoint of the qualification in the field of the programme (Mr Pira –field: technical sciences; Mr. Loku, field: management/economics, and Mr. Thaci: field forestry). From the part-time staff, out of 7 persons, 4 are specially qualified in the field of the study (three CVs were missing).

Recommendations: The programme is launched now. The staff should direct their effort to publish (books for students or scientific publications) in the field of the programme. Their publication records will further prove the capacities to do research in the field of the programme.

2.3 Research and International Co-operation

Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course contents?
Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate? Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?

Rather yes. The institution proved in the Self evaluation report the existence of the cooperation with other universities from abroad, with the local and national business community and there are some research published results, most of them in cooperation. Erasmus + project is implemented, which is an excellent start for the new programme. The records of publications shows some 9 publications in the field for the period 2014-2017, which is rather good if considering the low number of staff.

2.4 Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

1. Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?

Yes. The explanation provided by the management team seems to show an intentional strategy of development reflected in the budgetary projections.

2. Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?

Yes. Efforts have been made to procure some books in the library.

Recommendations. A study place should be created for students with computer access for library-based individual or group work, with high quality web access services. Good maintenance services for computers and web access should be ensured. An option to improve the students' life will be a living place, such a cafeteria, that will allow students to spend their time in-between the lectures.

2.5 Quality Management

1. Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?

Yes. The forms and questionnaires provided in the self-evaluation report show that the basic procedures for quality management are implemented. The self evaluation report was clear in terms of progress in publications in the latest three years, which suggest that the University is monitoring the staff's performance.

Recommendations. The University management and academic staff should pay attention to plagiarism and auto-plagiarism. Many of the journals that are listed in the publication lists might not be have procedures to detect plagiarism. Better is to prevent than to assume the consequences of this kind of mistakes. In this sense, the students' works should be carefully supervised. At the national level, it is highly recommended to have a soft for plagiarism detection in Kosovo universities (for students and teaching staff works).

3 Conclusion and recommendation

Taking into account the self-assessment report and the facts recorded during the field visit at the Faculty facilities, we propose to KAA **to re-accredit the study programme of Management of Tourism and Hospitality**.

Evaluation report for Study Programme Design and Construction of Wood Products, BA professional, Accreditation

1 Overall appreciation

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) Standards (Annex 1) were followed in undertaking the evaluation, and a synthetic view of findings and recommendations is presented in the Table 2.

The analysis of the Self evaluation report and the discussion on the field visit show that the major part of the recommendations from the 2014 expert report on the accreditation of the Study Program Management of Tourism and Hospitality were implemented.

Table 2. Overall evaluation of the Study programme Bachelor

Criteria	Evaluation	Short recommendations
1.1 Academic Programmes and Student Management		
1. Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?	Yes.	
2. Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to academic degree?	Yes.	
3. Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and adopted by the teaching staff?	Yes.	
4. Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?	Yes.	
5. Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection, analysis?	Yes.	
6. Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?	Yes.	
7. Is the workload required for the programme manageable for students?	Yes.	
8. Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes?	Yes.	60% to 80% of the teaching modules includes a lecture given by a private sector representative
9. Is the overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum comprehensible and transparent?	Yes.	Once a year the content of the similar or interlinked modules should be discussed by the respective teachers.
10. How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure-up to international standards?	Yes, above-standards.	Continue with admission based on exams.
11. Is the ratio of academic/artistic staff to students appropriate?	Yes.	Recruitment would be necessary.
1.2 Staff		
1. Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and	Rather yes.	

appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?		
2. Does the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria?	Rather yes, to be re-assessed later.	Needed effort to publish in the field of the programme.
1.3 Research and International Co-operation		
1. Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course contents?	Rather yes.	Improvements are possible in the publication list of each teaching staff member.
2. Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate? Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?	Rather yes.	Students' involvement in international research cooperation or projects is highly recommended.
1.4 Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment		
1. Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?	Yes.	
2. Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?	Yes.	High quality web access services. Good IT maintenance services.
1.5 Quality Management		
1. Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?	Rather yes.	Scientific publications by the teaching staff should be yearly monitored. Future numbers and values for the indicators recorded with the help of the Questionnaires should be made available.

2 Evaluation criteria

2.1 Academic Programmes and Student Management

1. Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?

Yes.

Recommendations: In the further development of the study programme, the staff should pay even more attention to research, as an essential element of the Faculty mission.

2. Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to the academic degree?

Yes. The programme overview seems appropriate in terms of quality, range and aims of the specific professional degree.

3. Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated to and adopted by the teaching staff?

The criteria does not apply, as far as the programme did not start yet. However, the information from of the staff's available CVs offers arguments for a positive answer to this question.

4. Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?

Yes. The courses of the academic degree were well selected and they correspond to a modern curricula in similar international institutions.

5. Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis? (E.g. what is the proportion of independent study time compared to online/distance teaching and classroom units?)

Yes, to be re-assed later. This criteria need to be re-assessed (possible with the students also) when the programme will be running. The proposed curricula seems to leave enough time to the students in the latest semester (semester VI) for independent work and for finalizing the studies.

Recommendations: Computers and tables should be available in the library for students who want to work out of the class room and do not dispose of a personal laptop. For instance, the library "working place" for students is very limited.

6. Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?

Yes. The allocation of ECTS is appropriate, and justified for the modules chosen.

7. Is the workload required for the academic programme manageable for students?

Yes, to be re-assed later. However, this criteria need to be re-assessed together with the students when the programme will be running.

8. Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes (competences and qualifications, knowledge and skills)?

Yes, improvements possible. The contents of the teaching units are appropriate for the programme goals with possible minor changes that were highlighted during the meeting.

Recommendations. The contact with the relevant industry in fundamental for the adequate implementation of the degree.

9. Is the overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum comprehensible and transparent?

Yes.

The academic content is clear and does not overlap.

Recommendations. As a means to increase the quality of teaching, the expert proposes that once in the year the content of the similar or interlinked lectures should be discussed in small groups by the respective teachers, using the detailed information of the official curricula.

10. How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure-up to international standards?

Yes, **above-standards**. The admission procedures are on international standards. The admission based on exam is rather an above-standards practice that guarantee high level of motivation from the candidates.

11. Is the ratio of academic/artistic staff to students appropriate?

Probably yes. The ration is appropriate for the number of students proposed now, e.g. 30 students. The case-study based work needs carefully supervising by teachers (assistants) who should be fully available for students needs and questions.

2.2 Staff

1. Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?

Yes.

Recommendation: The managerial team should envisage the strengthening of computer-teaching (and computer-maintenance) capacities by additional recruitment. Only enough and well trained staff will make possible that the teaching modules can use computers for applications and practical training.

2. Does the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria?

Rather yes. We have dispose of CVs for the staff. Their publication record shows good academic and didactic level.

Recommendation: once the programme launched, the staff should direct their effort to publish in the field of the programme. Their publication records will further prove the capacities to do research in the field of the programme.

2.3 Research and International Co-operation

Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course contents?
Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate? Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?

This criteria **does not apply yet**. The institution should prove to the next assessment stage the existence of the research projects, research cooperation and research published results preferably with international research partners.

2.4 Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

1. Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?

This criteria **does not apply yet** for this programme.

2. Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?

Yes, improvement possible.

Recommendations: Further refurbishment of the laboratories and workshops of the current buildings is a basic requirement for efficient class-room activities.

2.5   Quality Management

1. Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?

This criteria **does not apply yet**. However, the forms and questionnaires provided in the self-evaluation report show that there are implemented the basic procedures for quality management.

Recommendation. The number of staff' scientific publications and their value in terms of international visibility should be yearly monitored and the progress made should be stressed put in the next evaluation report. The future evaluation report should provide also some numbers and values for the indicators recorded with the help of the Questionnaires.

3   Conclusion and recommendation

Taking into account the self-assessment report and the facts recorded during the field visit at the Faculty facilities, we propose to KAA **to accredit the BA professional study programme on Design and Construction of Wood Products.**

4 Annex

Conditions for Accreditation taken into account for the undertaken evaluation

1. Legal Form and Location The applicant Institution must be legal person located in Kosovo. – *Criteria is fulfilled.*

2. Study Offers A schedule of study programmes should be delivered alongside the application: a University should offer accredited courses or programs for a minimum of at least four years in at least five different subject areas who have issued at least one graduate with an accredited doctorate in each of these programs. international standards and is awarded for full-time studies. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

3. Comparability of studies
If the applicant Higher Education Institution wishes to award the same academic degrees as other institutions in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), then studies and overall educational outcomes at the applicant institution should be comparable with those of similar institutions in the EHEA. *The studies are comparable and well defined. Criteria is fulfilled.*

4. Teaching Staff
The qualifications of teaching staff in Higher Education Institutions must meet international scientific, artistic and professional standards. Legally binding contracts with these staff must be submitted with the application. These contracts should demonstrate the staff's suitability for the institution's planned studies. *Existing staff is permanently and part time employed with valid contracts. Criteria is fulfilled.*

5. Facilities
The applicant institution should have at its disposal sufficient staff, space and equipment (e.g. computers, library, etc.) for effective studies. These should be provided in accord with the type of educational institution. Evidence about teaching and support staff, space and equipment should accompany the application. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

6. Principles
A Higher Education Institution should orientate its own activities in accordance with the following principles: Freedom of science and teaching; - Freedom of artistic activities, of artistic expression and its teaching; - Linkages between research and teaching; - Diversity of artistic theories, methods and teaching ideas. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

7. Institution denominations
Criteria is fulfilled.

8. Basic Criteria
• **Academic Freedom**
Higher Education Institutions should be autonomous and should guarantee academic freedom. Their statutes and organizational structures should provide freedom in research (both in respect of submitting questions, theories and methods and also in disseminating research outcomes and its assessment) and freedom of teaching (in respect of diversity of content, methods of course delivery and freedom to express scientific and artistic opinions). *Criteria is fulfilled.*

- **Scope and Diversity**

The institution should have a broad and diverse range of studies within one or more disciplines, which accord with the European concept for higher education. Disciplines can include traditional fields e.g. medicine, music, law or theology, and also other new combined courses with comparable breadth. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

- **Research at the Institution**

The research should be undertaken at the institution. This determines the presence of a critical mass to the institutionalized production of knowledge and its contribution to teaching. *Criteria is fulfilled, progresses are expected.*

- **Teaching Staff**

The institution should have at its disposal sufficient permanent academic, scientific and artistic staff, on full-time employment contracts which are valid for at least three years. This permanent teaching staff should be qualified or distinguished in arts and must cover at least 50% of the entire teaching load of a course of study and be qualified (via Ph.D. or artistic achievements). To provide the connection between research and teaching this permanent teaching staff should have at least three persons for each study program, and at least one of them should have the status of professor. This person should hold a higher scientific or artistic qualification. *Criteria is fulfilled. Improvement possible with recruitment in the next years.*

- **Procedures for selecting the teaching staff**

The institution's procedure for selecting all its academic staff must be transparent, competitive and determined by quality. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

- **Quality Assurance**

Institutions must have in place internal policies and procedures for quality assurance of their study programs and awards. *Criteria is fulfilled, progresses needed according to the new requirements, e.g. ethics and plagiarism.*

- **Study plans**

Study plans (detailed curricula) and examination regulations should meet all material, professional and formal requirements, and accord with international standards. Admission to studies must correspond with Kosovo's rules and overall conditions for admission to higher education. *Criteria is fulfilled.*

- **Facilities and equipment**

Facilities and equipment must provide adequate tools for studies in accordance with international standards. *Criteria is fulfilled. Need of additional computers, books and special working/living places for students.*

- **Financing**

Support for the mid-term financing of the institution should be demonstrated through a detailed Business-Plan. *Not the case for the programme.*

- **Development plan**

The institution must demonstrate how it will fulfil all of the above requirements in a development plan covering a period of three years. *Not the case for the programme.*