

**Final Report**  
**For**  
**Kosovo Accreditation Agency (Agency)**  
**Concerning an Accreditation Procedure of:**  
**'University of Applied Sciences Ferizaj, Kosovo'**

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**OVERALL APPRECIATION**

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) Standards were followed in undertaking the evaluation. The expert team notes the impressive achievements of the new University and the high motivation and engagement of the staff of the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj.

Nevertheless, a number of suggestions and recommendations are made on the following chapters.

**1. MISSION STATEMENT**

**1.1. Assessment of the aims and objectives of research and teaching (mission statement)**

The mission statement consists of vision, mission and strategy. The quality of the efforts is appreciated especially considering all factors involved (e.g. a new development process for the first University of Applied Sciences in Kosovo).

*Recommendations:*

Within the mission statement the question “what is real the aim of the University?”, is still not answered clearly. The mission can thus be improved by giving a clearer image

of the objectives. The strategy should be improved based on the revised mission but also on the definition of what are the priorities (e.g. fields of study?) and on quantitative measures including the timeline of the different strategic measures to be implemented (give milestones).

### **1.2. Assessment of the potential for innovation**

In the self-evaluation report, the mission of the university already says that it will work to connect local partners and economic needs with the necessary growth of quality in learning.

In the context of country rapid and changing evolution, the University responsibility is to provide specialists whose qualifications meet the development demand in the field, to undertake scientific and applied research addressing the industry needs, and to sustain therefore the sustainable regional development.

#### *Recommendations:*

The potential for innovation is present and links have been established with local industry that will help define priorities (e.g. industrial board). Definition of strategic lines of research and further development of internationalization should be a priority.

### **1.3. Is the mission statement appropriate as regards the resources available and is it communicated in an adequate way?**

The mission statement identifies the available resources and resource gaps.

## **2. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

### **2.1. How does the institution guarantee that through its statute and its organizational structures it provides freedom in research and teaching?**

Through the structure, the voting strategies and the statutes, the freedom in research and teaching is guaranteed.

## **3. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES AND STUDENT MANAGEMENT**

### **3.1. Do the academic programmes correspond to the institution's mission statement and the principles of employability?**

The programmes correspond to the institutions' mission statement and the employability is guaranteed through the industrial board that supports the development of the university.

The academic programmes were not the objective of the present accreditation procedure and therefore are not discussed in this report.

The examination regulations are appropriate and the admission criteria and the admission process can be compared to international standards.

### **3.2. Is the ratio of academic staff to students appropriate?**

The number of students per study program is adequate and should not be increased within the next years without increasing teaching resources.

#### **4. RESEARCH**

##### **4.1. What are the institution's research expectations, and how do these relate to the number and quality of its permanent staff?**

The main research will be done in collaboration with companies. This is a characteristic of Universities of Applied Sciences. Students and Teachers are involved in this industrial research projects.

*Recommendations:*

The position of the Director for Research and Business relations has to be defined more precisely in the statutes.

##### **4.2. Are teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities feed back into teaching/course content?**

The level of research activities of the teaching staff is variable and is open to significant improvement. Research has not been the main area of work within the University, mainly due to site and equipment related difficulties, but the academic staff clearly acknowledges the need to develop that area and with suitable equipment the University has more than enough conditions to develop work of international standard.

*Recommendations:*

Investment is needed on the equipment of laboratories and workshops. That will lead to an increase number of research projects, research cooperation (agreements, memorandums) and research published results with an obvious positive impact on the *status quo*.

##### **4.3. Are students involved in research and in co-operation projects?**

The teaching staff is clearly aware of the need to improve the students' participation on research and co-operation programmes nationally. The links to the industry seem to be already working with prototypes produced in industrial environment.

*Recommendations:*

The suggested improvements of the strategy should take into account the need to involve the students on the process to achieve the milestones. The future Director for Research and Business Relations can play an important role in the definition of the objectives for students in this particular area.

#### **5. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION**

##### **5.1. Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate?**

The international cooperation is in extent and quality adequate, both for applied research and teaching.

The strategy to involve staff and students in international cooperation and mobility programmes is adequate and should be enhanced.

**5.2. Are the strategies of internationalization and the involvement of staff and students in training co-operations and mobility programmes adequate?**

The teaching staff is clearly aware of the need to improve the students participation on international research and co-operation programmes. Links are already established with foreign Universities and relevant activities have been conducted and are planned for a near future.

*Recommendations:*

Extend the co-operation links with further Universities and Research Laboratories. Create a data base of research funding options for students' mobility within Europe.

**6. STAFF**

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

The actual situation is not fully satisfactory but as shown in the development plan, the portion of permanent staff and external staff is appropriate.

*Recommendations:*

When possible keep the strategy to employ, when needed, younger academic staff preferably with experience in other universities / countries. Intensify research work and thereby teaching on the basis of empirical research and cooperate with other universities of applied science and exchange teaching personnel.

**6.2. Do 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?**

The actual development of staff, especially the impressive number of doctorates of young researchers, shows a continuous development of the academic and didactic level.

**6.3. Is there an equal proportion of women amongst the academic staff?**

The proportion of women amongst academic staff is rather low and can be improved.

**6.4. Does the institution have transparent, competitive and quality driven regulations for the selection and employment of staff?**

The internal regulations for selection of staff seem to be transparent, competitive and quality driven.

**6.5. Does the institution have development strategies to ensure that its academic staff maintain a continually high standard?**

The University acknowledges the need for continuous training programmes of the academic staff at the different levels.

*Recommendations:*

Continuous training programmes for staff should be clearly elaborated after definition of priority areas of formation.

**7. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

**7.1. Does the institution have transparent decision-making structures for governance, management and administration matters?**

The institution has planned transparent decision making structures for governance, management and administration matters.

**7.2. Does the institution have transparent decision-making structures for academic matters?**

For academic matters also transparent decision-making structures are intended. Due to the recent status of the university these structures are actually under development.

**7.3. Is there a development strategy and how is it internally communicated?**

**7.4. How well does the development strategy correspond to the institution's overall aims and funding plans?**

There is a development strategy that links to the institution's overall aims.

*Recommendations:*

As stated before, the strategy can be improved based on the suggested revised mission but also on the definition of what are the priorities (e.g. fields of study?) and on quantitative measures including the timeline of the different strategic measures to be implemented (give milestones).

**8. FINANCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE / SPACE AND EQUIPMENT**

**8.1. Does the institution have an adequate budget and sufficient financial resources?**

The budget is adequate according to the plan and the financial resources are expected to be sufficient.

*Recommendations:*

The financing of equipment for workshops and labs should be listed and prioritized.

The costs for internationalization should be taken into account in the budget.

**8.2. Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure as regards the requirements of the academic programme on offer and the research to be conducted (libraries, computers, laboratories)?**

The new building is adequate for teaching but still need adequate equipments and material for research.

*Recommendations:*

As mentioned before the required equipments for workshops and labs should be listed and prioritized according to the strategic plan.

## **9. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

### **9.1. Does the institution have a quality assurance system for teaching, research and services?**

The institution has a quality assurance system for teaching, and services.

### **9.2. What methods of communication, implementation and documentation are used by the quality management system?**

The main methods are questionnaires.

In questionnaires, the anonymity should be guaranteed (questions like gender or age do not seem to be necessary in some cases).

### **9.3. Does the institution carry out regular self-evaluations?**

The self-evaluation is carried out and reported.

### **9.4. Are the results of evaluation put to use and included in the institution's development planning?**

The results are used in the development strategy.

### **9.5. Are the criteria for the award of academic honours and honorary academic degrees adequate?**

The criteria for the award of academic honours and honorary academic degrees are adequate.

## **10. CONDITIONS FOR ACCREDITATION**

Conditions for Accreditation taken into account for the undertaken evaluation:

	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Fulfillment</b>
<b>Legal Form and Location</b>	The applicant Institution must be legal person located in Kosovo	Fulfilled
<b>Study Offers</b>	A schedule of study programmes should be delivered alongside the application	Not objective of the present evaluation
<b>Comparability of studies</b>	The studies are comparable and well defined.	Not objective of the present evaluation
<b>Principles</b>	A Higher Education Institution should orientate its	Fulfilled

	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	
<b>Institution denominations</b>	The LHE specifies when an education institution has the right to call itself a “University”.	Fulfilled
<b>Basic Criteria - Academic Freedom</b>	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).	Fulfilled
<b>Basic Criteria - Scope and Diversity</b>	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	Fulfilled
<b>Basic Criteria - Research at the Institution</b>	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 does not fully apply yet; recommendations given
<b>Basic Criteria - Teaching Staff</b>	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.	Fulfilled; recommendations given
<b>Basic Criteria - Procedures for selecting the</b>	The institution’s procedure for selecting all its academic staff must be transparent, competitive and determined by quality	Fulfilled

<b>teaching staff</b>		
<b>Basic Criteria - Quality Assurance</b>	Institutions must have in place internal policies and procedures for quality assurance of their study programs and awards.	Fulfilled
<b>Basic Criteria - Study plans</b>	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	Not objective of the present evaluation
<b>Basic Criteria - Facilities and equipment</b>	Facilities and equipment must provide adequate tools for studies in accordance with international standards	Partially fulfilled; recommendations given
<b>Basic Criteria - Financing</b>	Support for the mid-term financing of the institution should be demonstrated through a detailed Business-Plan	Not possible to evaluate at the present initial stage
<b>Basic Criteria - Development plan</b>	The institution must demonstrate how it will fulfil all of the above requirements in a development plan covering a period of three years.	Fulfilled; Recommendations given

## 11. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Taking into account the self-assessment report and the facts recorded during the field visit at the University facilities, we propose to KAA to accredit the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj, bearing in mind that the suggestions above will improve the standing and the success of the institution.