

Report for the **KAA regarding the** **University of** **Prizren ‘Ukshin** **Hoti’**

A Report Prepared for the KAA by:
Andrew Goodspeed
Patricia Kotnik
Peeter Normak
Dhurata Shehri

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Introduction

This report conveys the findings of an external expert team, assembled by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. The team was convened to examine reaccreditation requests for five academic programs at the University of Prizren 'Ukshin Hoti.' The team consisted of the following members, listed in alphabetical order by surname:

- Prof. Dr. Andrew Goodspeed
- Prof. Dr. Patricia Kotnik
- Prof. Dr. Peeter Normak
- Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri

Before the site visit, the team were provided with a number of relevant documents, including the institutional Self Evaluation Report for the programs under consideration; lists of eligible staff; the KAA code of conduct; etc. Each member of the team submitted a signed declaration of confidentiality to KAA, and will respect that commitment.

The team gathered in Prishtina on 15 May 2017 for a working dinner, and with the assistance of Mr. Fisnik Gashi, the KAA Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring. The team would like to thank Mr. Gashi here for his generous assistance throughout this evaluation process.

The team undertook a site visit to the premises of the University of Prizren on 16 May 2017. There they were able to meet with University executive leadership; academic staff responsible for the programs under consideration; academic staff; and students. The team were also able to tour the facilities of the University, and to examine classrooms, larger amphitheaters, and the library.

This report therefore reflects the collective judgments of the team. Each member of the team was responsible for his or her section. Because Dr. Goodspeed is a native speaker of English, it was thought useful to have him serve as a coordinating writer for the report, in order to make the language usage of the report uniform. He has tried to do this with as little textual intrusion or change as is possible, in order to preserve the original comments of the other team members. This has resulted in slight inconsistencies of style and structure from section to section; this was considered unavoidable, in order to maintain the structure and argumentation of the individual team members.

The entirety of this report should be considered the collective opinion of the team. This submission differs from the preliminary report in two ways: it silently corrects a technical error (reported in the addendum), and adds an addendum, in light of the UPZ comments. The addendum is to be considered an integral part of this report.

General Remarks

This section makes general comments about the institution, its structure and its facilities. Because this was not an institutional accreditation inspection, the team have largely confined their remarks to program-specific comments. Yet there were several areas of discussion that appeared across the board, and it was felt useful to digest them here, for the ease of the institution and for any future accreditation teams.

In general, the premises seem fit for purpose. The buildings are spacious and clean, and seem to be usefully adapted for the access of disabled students (i.e., doors are often at ground level, or alternative entries are available; there are lifts that work, etc.). The classrooms and amphitheaters again seem suited to purpose, although it was noted that—in at least one amphitheater we visited—there were no electrical plugs by the seats, which made computer usage for the listening students dependent upon previously charging their batteries. Nonetheless, the general impression of the team was that the facilities are appropriate to the programs being examined here. (There are individual facilities comments, where appropriate, in the program sections).

The team feels that attention should be paid to increasing and making more relevant the holdings of the library. Although the team fully understands that library budgets are tight, and resources are difficult to obtain for some programs, the physical resources of the library seemed to represent often either donations, or else the cheapest available paperback copies of the relevant literature, often without scholarly apparatus or footnotes. It might be worthwhile for the University to clarify with staff and students precisely what the acquisitions policy is for the library, and who has the authority to request and/or authorize the acquisition of a physical book. The team empathizes with the predicament mentioned on several occasions, that additional research databases are desirable but likely too expensive for institutional subscription at present.

It was mentioned on several occasions that decision-making processes are heavily centralized, and many institutional decisions seem to be made by central commissions or boards of which ‘regular’ staff do not seem to be members. The team reports this without comment, as it is impossible for us to verify; but it should be noted that a more transparent managerial decision-making process would likely be welcomed by students and staff.

This was verified in the area where the team has substantial concerns: research. The executive management of the University assured the team that there is research support, and that the staff and students are provided assistance in their various research endeavors. Yet the staff were unfamiliar with the process for requesting conference attendance support funding, and the concept of sabbatical was mentioned only as a vague rumor that applied to someone (unnamed) who was not present in the room. Again, the team fully understands the need of management to make difficult decisions about

resource allocation. Yet it is effectively impossible for academic staff to build careers in academia without a continuing and evolving research profile. It is therefore the strong suggestion of this team to clarify and publicize the research funding and sabbatical policies of the University of Prizren. It should also be noted, in this respect, that the team was informed of—and requested—the University’s research strategy; the team received instead the ‘Quality Assurance Enhancement Strategy.’ The team is not convinced that a formal research strategy actually exists.

It also emerged, in discussion, that there is effectively no advocate for either the students or staff members. What is envisioned here is something like a student ombudsman/ombudswoman, and a staff ombudsman/ombudswoman. This would require essentially no investment by the University—excepting possibly the provision of an office—but would give powerful support to staff and students who would simply feel more comfortable being represented by an advocate in disagreements or disputes within the University. It can sometimes take great courage for a student or staff member to disagree with institutional decisions or policies, and it is a strong support for them to have an identifiable representative who can advise and assist them. It might be worthwhile for the University of Prizren to consider establishing two such positions.

Finally, a very minor note: there were times, during the visit of the team through the facilities, that seven or eight different individuals from the University of Prizren were following along, often from very high levels of management. This is unnecessary as a use of their valuable time, and also somewhat disruptive to the general process of observation; it is hard to make quiet and inconspicuous visits to buildings when there are fifteen people walking in a group, of whom two or three are Pro-Rectors. The team would therefore gently suggest that for future accreditation visits, one or two ‘guides’ be nominated to accompany the future teams, but not to accumulate a large entourage when moving from building to building.

The team would like to thank all of the members of the University of Prizren community who met with them.

MSc, Computer Science and Technology of Communication

General Introduction

The master level study program *Computer Science and Technology of Communication* was accredited in 2014 for three years. *The External Panel of 2014 proposed the following recommendations for improvement:*

1. *The content is overloaded and has no clear structure for students to follow. The situation in 2017: The structure of courses is unified: each course has 6 ECTS, lasts 15 weeks and has 4 contact hours a week (lectures – 2, exercises – 2).*

2. *It has a bias towards mathematics and should give more weight to skills and applications. The situation in 2017: Curriculum has not been changed except that one course in mathematics (Discrete Mathematics) was moved from compulsory to elective.*

3. *The content: the modules should show the inter-linkages between them and have to be thoroughly reformulated, including the list of literature. The situation in 2017: the inter-linkages between the courses are not explicitly shown. However syllabi of the courses are thorough enough for adequate understanding about the content of the courses.*

4. *Research should be further intensified in the framework of cooperation agreements and institutionalized by the institution. Individual research co-operation are the second best solution. The situation in 2017: this recommendation is not satisfactorily taken into account; more about this topic in the Research and International Co-operation section below.*

5. *Even more important is the creation of in-house research, taking place in the campus of Prizren University. The situation in 2017: this recommendation is not satisfactorily taken into account; more about this topic in the Research and International Co-operation section below.*

Conclusion: the recommendations of the External panel of 2014 assessment concerning the study program are taken into account, but those concerning research have not.

Program Specific Comments

The following comments are based on the documents presented to the Expert Team, on

the 16 May 2017 site visit and on discussion with some academic staff members: Ercan Canhasi, Naim Bafiu, Xhevahir Bajrami, Zirije Hasani and another individual whose name was not noted (the team will correct this omission in the final submission report, if the University of Prizren will submit that individual's name in their reply to the preliminary draft of this report). Note again that the Research and Development Strategy 2014-2017 of the University was not provided to the Expert Team, despite the team's request (as mentioned in the 'General Remarks' section, above).

1. Academic Programs and Student Management

- Does the academic program correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of operation?

The mission statement is formulated in the Statute of University of Prizren (UPZ, that in fact was not initially provided to the Expert Team) and emphasizes a desire to promote integration of Kosovo into the European Union. It does not specify any subject area, nor are the role of the University or work division with other higher education institutions in Kosovo clarified. Therefore, formally the academic program corresponds to the mission statement of the institution.

- Are the program's quality, range and academic aims appropriate to the academic degree?

The study program has 17 intended learning outcomes, which is about double what master's programmes normally have. These are formulated in very general terms and partly not in terms of competences (for example, "Development of critical, analytic and synthetic thinking"). Overall, the expected learning outcomes should have been formulated in a more specific manner, allowing the expected competences of the graduates to be differentiated. Currently the formulations of expected learning outcomes are too general, not describing explicitly enough the actual intended learning outcomes. For example, the meaning of the learning outcome "The ability to transmit knowledge" remains unclear, especially if one takes into account the fact that the study program does not contain any course on human communication. Moreover, the term "information science" is repeatedly used in the learning outcomes, while the courses in the study program hardly tackle this topic.

It is difficult to adequately decide about the relevance of each particular course without having a clear understanding about the expected learning outcomes of the whole study program, especially when no correspondence table of learning outcomes of the study program and of the learning outcomes of the courses (called "Benefits of the Student" in the syllabi/course descriptions) is provided. We remark that some sections have partly different titles in the syllabi, as for example: Study goal and table of content/Study aim of the course/The study aim of the course/Case study goal. As was explained during the

meeting with the staff responsible for the SER, these inaccuracies were caused because of translation.

The literature indicated in the course descriptions does not contain original course materials of the teachers and is partly not accessible to the students.

Concerning the structure of learning: each student has to take 4 compulsory and 1 elective (out of two) courses each having 6 credits each semester during the first three semesters. The *Master Thesis* has 30 credits.

Concerning the study program, the following remarks can be made:

1. The name of the program consists of two parts – 1) *Computer Science* and 2) *Technology of Communication*. But the vast majority of courses belong to computer science, and only a couple of the courses could be considered as belonging to the second group (these belong at the same time to computer science as well). Therefore, the second part of the name of the study program is redundant.
2. The scope of the study program is relatively broad, containing courses in information systems, software engineering, network technology, language technology, multimedia and mechatronics. Such a wide scope is normally used for bachelor programs; master programs are more focused. In fact, a master program could be devoted to an arbitrary single topic listed above.
3. UPZ is based on a Pedagogical school. This means that the university accommodates significant competence in pedagogy that could be used to strengthen the interdisciplinary component of the study programs. However, this has not been done in the case of the *Computer Science and Technology of Communication* study program. On the other hand, synergy with education would offer an opportunity to form a unique identity among the ICT study programmes in Kosovo (just a few examples: Educational Technology, Digital Learning Games, HCI, ...).
4. As the share of courses in information systems is the biggest in the program, a most natural development would probably be to rename the study program suitably (for example, to Information Systems or to Data Science) and adapt its content accordingly.

Conclusion: *Despite the remarks above, the program's quality, range and academic aims are appropriate to the academic degree.*

Recommendation: the title and the content of the study program need to be harmonized.

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

The SER does not describe any overarching didactic concept. The teaching and learning methods are described in syllabi in the most formal way, using almost an identical

formulation (for example, “This is a combined course with lectures, discussions, exercises, homework, labs, task in which subjects are presented by professor of course and assistant in the laboratory.”). On the other hand, discussions with the teachers revealed that teachers use some elements of project-based learning and even of the flipped classroom.

- Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?

The fundamental principles of the design of the program are not revealed in the SER nor satisfactorily explained during the site visit. According to the explanation of participating teachers, similar programs of other universities were taken as examples. In this relation, the *University of Ljubljana* (marked bold in the SER) and the *University of Zagreb* were named. In fact, study programs in these universities are completely different. For example, the corresponding study program of the University of Ljubljana has only four compulsory courses (Mathematics II, Algorithms, Programming, Computer Systems), each 12 ECTS, Thesis 24 ECTS and a big list of optional courses (<https://fri.uni-lj.si/en/study-programme/computer-and-information-science-2>).

As a whole, the academic degree corresponds to the international standards, although the curricula recommendations of international professional organizations and frameworks (for example ACM, EQANIE or e-CF) have not been considered.

- 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?)

The courses have the size of 6 ECTS and weekly 2+2 learning in the classes, in total 15x4 = 60 hours. Therefore, the number of hours for independent study of the students during a course is supposed to be 90. That gives the students enough opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis. However, due to the big amount of hours for independent study, supervision and support of independent work of students as well as the access to the literature should be guaranteed. The SER does not discuss this topic. It was explained during the site visit that students are provided mostly with electronic copies of the textbooks for independent studies.

- Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?

Although the guiding principles of composing the study program were not clear nor satisfactory explained, the principle that the study program consists of courses with 6 ECTS each is general appropriate. However, the students expressed a wish to have more practice during the studies.

- Is the workload required for the academic program manageable for students?

The number of hours spent in classes is adequate. However, the majority of the literature is not available in the university's library in a necessary amount, and teachers distribute

in many cases – sometimes illegally – the pdf-versions of textbooks *via* e-mail. The university does not have an electronic library. Should a student have a need for a book, (s)he should turn to a librarian. A test the Expert Team conducted for finding books that were listed in syllabi of the courses was not successful – a librarian was able to find them in 10-15 minutes. As already mentioned above, the students are supposed to do 90 hours individual studies for each 6-credit course. This makes altogether about $5 \times 90 = 450$ hours for a whole semester, or $450/15 = 30$ hours in average a week. However, meeting with the students (of all specialties) showed that they devote on average about 20 hours weekly to independent studies. Therefore, taking into account the fact that students devote normally more time to learning during the examination period, it can be concluded that the total workload of students is adequate and manageable.

Recommendation: avoid distributing illegal copies of textbooks to the students.

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

As is mentioned above, the aims/goals and expected learning outcomes of the study program are given in very general terms. Therefore, it is not possible to answer to this question. Concerning the teaching methods, the SER uses standard formulations in most cases, as mentioned above. Nevertheless, the content of the courses allow us to decide that the studies offer an opportunity to acquire master's level competences.

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

There is no other division into parts of the curricula as division to semesters. There seems to be no considerable overlap between the different courses.

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

No specific criteria for admission are used. The study program is mainly targeted to the graduates of TIT, Software Design and Computer Science bachelor graduates.

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

According to the SER, there are currently in total 144 students admitted to the study programme in years 2013-2015. According to the program description, there are altogether 8 teachers teaching on the program (5 full-time and 3 part-time). The ratio of academic staff to students (about 1:18) is significantly lower than in leading universities. The university cannot expect from the teachers high quality teaching and high-level research with such a low teacher-student ratio. This is most probably one of the reasons for the low graduation rate (four graduates during the last two years). A low completion rate of the theses is another reason for low graduation. The Students can register the topic for theses only when they have collected at least 84 credits. Although they can start with

their thesis already earlier, they do not have incentives for that.

Recommendation: consider the possibilities of revising the regulations concerning preparation of master theses, with the purpose of motivating students to start preparation of master theses in an earlier stage of their studies.

2. Staff

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

The share 5:3 between the total numbers of full-time and part-time teachers is adequate. The staff is relatively stable – all full-time teachers and the majority of part-time teachers were employed also at the time of previous accreditation in 2014.

- 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?

The qualification of the academic staff is appropriate – all responsible teachers have doctoral degrees and scientific publications. However, while most of the teachers are continuously active researchers, some of them have in fact stopped publishing. For example, the latest publication of one assistant professor is dated 2011.

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?

This is certainly the bottleneck. Although some teachers are research active, no research groups are formed and consequently no joint R&D activities conducted (research seminars, conferences, joint projects etc). This is partly due to the high teaching load of professors, which can be up to 16 contact hours a week. Therefore, UPZ resembles in terms of research in ICT more a college rather than a university. Even more, the university administration seems not to understand the mission the public universities have in advancing contemporary – knowledge based – society. The administration claimed that it is possible to get financial support for conducting research and for participation in the activities of the international research community. However, none of the teachers the Expert Team met has ever got any support for that. On the contrary, an example was brought where a teacher had to cover the costs for participating on a conference from other sources. Discussions with the staff responsible for the SER revealed that they are fully aware about necessity of consolidating research activities and even some possible titles for a common theme were discussed, for example, *Data Science*, *Internet of Things* or *Industry 4.0*. The staff complained that there are no procedures introduced for regular sabbaticals in the university – none of the staff the Expert Team met ever had any sabbatical.

Recommendations:

1. Determine the research and development priorities for the Faculty of Computer Science and compose an R&D strategy accordingly.
2. Take initiative for setting up support schemes for R&D activities in the university (for example, establish a Research Fund) including the introduction of regular sabbaticals and international networking (participation in conferences, conducting joint research etc).
3. Revise the nominal workload of teachers, with the purpose of enabling the academic staff to devote enough to research.

- Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate?

International cooperation in research is conducted on an individual level. The international cooperation is two-fold: 1) joint articles and 2) many teachers have conducted some of their studies in foreign universities and still keep academic contacts with these universities. However, there are no joint R&D projects with foreign academic institutions. We remark also that the visibility of the university is one of the major pre-requirements for international cooperation. Information in English language on the major sources about the university (the official web page of the university and the Wikipedia article https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Prizren) is extremely scarce.

- Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?

The students are motivated to compose and publish an article based on their research. The majority of these articles are published, some even in international journals and proceedings.

4. Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

- Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?

The Expert Team was given the budget (income and expenses) for years 2017-2019 and expenses only for 2016. ICT investments were not specified. Because of the expected capital investments, resources that are obtained from the consolidated budget of Kosovo is expected to be increased considerably in 2018 (2017 – 2 484 346; 2018 – 3 377 000€). The finances are managed centrally, the faculties do not have separate budgets. All expenses are decided by a university level steering committee. There is no section in the budget for supporting R&D. This in fact contradicts a widely accepted principle that university education should be research based, and that universities have two major basic processes: 1) Research and development (including R&D based services offered to other institutions) and 2) Teaching and learning. Yearly self-income was surprisingly low – only 10 000€ (less than 0,5%). It was explained that it is because of certain legal restrictions.

Recommendation to the administration: re-conceptualize the role of the university in serving the society and revise the administrative structures, regulating documents and processes accordingly.

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

The number and size of rooms for lecturing is adequate. The Faculty of IT jointly with the Faculty of Law has about 2400 m². The faculty has two traditional computer labs, both with 30 PC computers. Computers are outdated (not upgraded since the previous accreditation visit in 2014). As the two labs do not satisfy the needs, computer labs of the faculty of education are also used for conducting regular classes. There are additionally 40 computers in the library. Taking into account that there are two BA-level and one MSc-level ICT study programme, the amount of computer labs is not satisfactory, especially considering the fact that there are no additional specialized computer labs.

A new building is currently under construction, and one additional computer lab is planned to set up there.

Recommendation: set up at least one additional computer lab and upgrade the current labs.

5. Quality Management

- Are the institution's programs assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?

The university has established internal quality assurance regulations and procedures. The program was previously internationally accredited in 2014. Concerning internal evaluation process, no additional procedures on top of the general university procedures were demonstrated. Involvement of teachers in preparation of SER was on an individual basis, no general discussion of SER was organised in the department. The studies are discussed twice a month on departmental meetings.

As the reorganization of research and development takes time and it is not realistic to be properly done during one year, the expert team would recommend to KAA an accreditation of the master level study program **Computer Science and Technology of Communication** for three years.

B.A., English Language and Literature

General Introduction

The University of Prizren has requested the reaccreditation of their 240 ECTS B.A. program in the field of English Language and Literature. Accordingly, KAA contacted Prof. Dr. Andrew Goodspeed to conduct a review of the program and to participate in the site visit. He had the opportunity to meet with three program representatives, Sermin Tertulla, Sejdi Sejdiu, and Teuta Kafexholli. Dr. Goodspeed also had (separately) an opportunity to speak with some current students in the English program (during the general meeting of the team with student representatives); he values greatly their discussion but, as promised, he mentions none of their names, to assure the anonymity of their comments.

What follows here is a general narrative consideration of important elements of the program, with specific details following in the section thereafter.

The program is generally consistent with similar programs at comparable universities in the region and, more generally, internationally. There is a strong differentiation in the field between those who teach 'English Language and Literature' to native speakers and those whose primary student body will be non-native speakers. The UPZ program is consistent with students specializing in English for whom English is not their native language, and therefore the curriculum is more heavily weighted towards language skills classes than would be the case in a native-speaking environment. Yet the program is consistent with the non-native model, and seems appropriate to their student intake.

This point raises the question of student enrolment and registration. As reported in the SER, the expected intake of students for this program, per generation, is 100. This is generally justifiable, assuming that they do not have an unexpected departure of staff, nor an unexpected problem with student progression. Yet it must be emphasized that the intake of 100 would be essentially the outside limit of the feasibility of the intake for this program. Accordingly, this report will recommend that student numbers must be capped for this program at no more than 100 students per year, irrespective of any pressure that may come from budgetary or management quarters to admit more students. Please note that this is substantially lower than the intake in recent years: 2014: 138, 2015: 150, 2016: 206.

It should also be noted that staffing presents a problem. In 2014, the external evaluator of this program (Prof. Dr. Dieter Petzold) wrote specifically that 'the future of the teaching staff as a whole seems rather precarious. For the sake of stability and continuity it is absolutely necessary that more permanent positions be created and filled with well-qualified persons. In particular, measures should be taken to ensure that at least one position is always filled with a native speaker of English with TEFL qualifications.'

Staffing remains a problem in 2017. The contracted staff presented meet the minimum requirements of the KAA, and therefore there is no automatic dismissal of the application based on staff numbers and specializations. But it seems that little progress has been

made since 2014; indeed, a native speaker who was previously engaged in the English program ('Christina Nichol') has moved on to other opportunities. The staff responsible for the program assured Dr. Goodspeed that top-quality people engaged in the department are on the cusp of defending their PhD theses; this is good news, but also surely does not represent the clear urgency Prof. Petzold noted for establishing permanent and clear teaching assignments. It was disheartening to see that the staff listing relies heavily upon people described as 'PhD Candidate,' which is a description of their studies, but is not an academic title. Accordingly, although the staff of the program seem committed, this report will strongly recommend that the next accreditation team take a very close and unsparing examination of whether or not any real, evidenced, contractually proven progress has been made in truly building a diverse and permanent staff.

Recommendations:

- student numbers must be capped for this program at no more than 100 students per year, irrespective of any pressure that may come from budgetary or management quarters to admit more students
- the next accreditation team is urged to make a very close and unsparing examination of whether or not any real, evidenced, contractually proven progress has been made in truly building a diverse and permanent staff for this program.

Program Specific Comments

The following observations are intended to reflect the appropriateness of the program for both the subject being taught and the students being attracted. It is based upon the site visit, and the materials provided in support of the application for accreditation. It should be noted, however, that there were strange formal inconsistencies in the SER submission for this section. To provide examples of this, it may be noted that in the course syllabi for the offerings on this program, the means of assessment varied notably, and were clearly specific to the individual teaching the course—but not necessarily to the subject being taught. One feels sorry for a student of the compulsory subject 'Integrated Language Skills I' who sees that the grades are derived from 'Attendance & Assignments, Mid-Term test, End-Term test; Final exam,' but for whom no percentages for these activities are given. Conversely, the 'Academic Writing' course confusingly attributes the percentage of grades in the following manner: 'Attendance, 10/ Participation, 12/ Homework, 22/ Mid-Semester Paper, 18/ Final exam, 38.' The precision of these percentages simply tests whether or not the student can use grade-generation software to estimate his or her grade.

It is appropriate for multiple staff to have different assessment methodologies, and to weight them accordingly. Yet the variability here seems also to reveal a larger lack of communication in the department. The staff responsible for the program noted that each instructor prepared the materials for his or her course, but that there does not appear to

have been an overarching program review or discussion. This results in strange inconsistencies, such that the course ‘English for Academic Purposes I’ suggests that students will be ‘B2’ of the CEFR, but an earlier course (‘English for Special Purposes II’) lists as an ‘expected result’— ‘Achieve level C1,’ which is a higher level of ability. The even earlier course ‘English Morphology’ lists as an ‘expected result’—‘speak and write standard English fluently.’

It is both too easy and too cynical to take these relatively minor examples of inconsistency as representing a disorderly program. Rather—and perhaps more helpfully—the external reviewer would simply like to suggest that these inconsistencies are the result of not talking enough within the staff and students of the program. It would therefore be the strong recommendation of the reviewer to schedule at least one meeting per term, and preferably two, just among the teaching staff of the English Language and Literature program, in order to compare standards, discuss appropriate teaching and assessment methodologies and, where appropriate, to discuss curricular modification and change.

Recommendation: schedule at least one meeting per term, and preferably two, just among the teaching staff of the English Language and Literature program, in order to compare standards, discuss appropriate teaching and assessment methodologies and, where appropriate, to discuss curricular modification and change.

1. Academic Programs and Student Management

- Does the academic program correspond to the institution’s mission statement and principles of operation?

It does. The basic program is consistent with the principles of curricular design and academic offering appropriate to higher education, particularly in the comparable Balkan region.

- Are the program’s quality, range and academic aims appropriate to the academic degree?

They are. This is a carefully balanced and well-structured program that would provide a successful student opportunities to learn a useful base of English either for professional, commercial, or further academic purposes. Students are generally given a choice of differing elective courses, often one focusing on a linguistic or methodological element, and one leaning more towards a cultural topic. These allow for self selecting specialization within the degree, which is an important principle in contemporary curricular design.

The program has been well structured, in the sense that there is an intelligent increase in difficulty, and a steady progression of language skills. There are also no obviously ‘out of place’ course offerings, which often indicate that staff members are merely teaching their hobby-horse subjects. The offerings here are reasonable, and are consistent with similar programs in comparable universities.

There are three structural recommendations that the external reviewer would like to make, with justifications for them:

In year one, there is a mandatory course in a foreign language (German I and German II). This offering makes no provision for students who may not want to learn German or, perhaps more importantly, it makes no provision for students who already know German. It is suggested that at least some other language offering be permitted for students who either do not care to learn German, or who already can speak it.

Similarly, in year one, there are two mandatory courses ‘Albanian Language I’ and ‘Albanian Language II.’ These, it was explained, are not Albanian as a second or foreign language, but are intended to provide native-speaking students with a linguistic study of their own language. This is fine, and pedagogically sound, but it neglects the possibility of students of other native languages than Albanian enrolling in this program. There is a possibility that students will enroll whose native languages are Bosnian, or Turkish, or Serbian. It would be good to have some provision available for them.

Third, there is one notable error in curricular development here: in year two, semester five, the students are permitted to choose one elective, and the choices are ‘Children’s Literature,’ ‘Theory of Translation,’ and ‘English-Albanian Translation.’ It seems a shame to make those students interested in the subject or profession of translation to choose between ‘Theory of Translation’ and ‘English-Albanian Translation,’ particularly when there is a clear modular connection in semester six with the offering ‘Albanian-English Translation.’ The external reviewer would suggest changing the offering ‘World Literature’ from semester seven (as it is essentially a ‘great books’ course, and can be tailored for a higher or lower linguistic intensity), moving that course to semester five, not moving ‘Theory of Translation’ and moving ‘English-Albanian Translation’ to semester seven. This would allow a student to take ‘Theory of Translation,’ ‘Albanian-English Translation,’ and ‘English-Albanian Translation’ in an unbroken and coherent succession.

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

The answer to this is generally yes, with the reservation made (above) that there does not seem to be an ideal amount of internal discussion among the staff of the program—or, perhaps it would be more fair to note that there does not seem to be clear formal discussion of assessment, methodology, syllabus structure, and curricular design in the program.

As mentioned in the previous section, however, there is a clear structure to this proposal, and it balances practical language skills courses with more abstracted questions of syntax and morphology, as well as including historical and cultural instruction, and encompassing a literary element. The obvious care and good practice that went into

creating this program reemphasize the absolute need to solidify permanent, expert instructors, and not rely upon the patience and goodwill of ‘PhD candidates.’

- Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?

It does, although it is notable as a four-year, 240 ECTS program, which contrasts to a certain extent with other regional programs that are three-year, 180 ECTS programs. There is no reason why this should be modified, particularly in that one of the major challenges for regional higher education in the languages lies in building linguistic competence. The additional year—semesters seven and eight—does not include specific language skills courses, but in a sense any competent student who has reached this year should have sufficient language skills to make good progress in subject classes, and not rely entirely upon skills courses.

A successful graduate of this program should, *mutatis mutandis*, expect to be at the same basic level as any other graduate of an English B.A. program, especially those aimed at non-native speakers.

- 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, with qualifications. As mentioned above, there are solid opportunities for self selecting specialization within the elective courses. There are courses that are clearly professionally oriented (‘Institutional Management’), whilst others are more cultural or are based on fulfilling student curiosity (‘Children’s Literature’).

If, as the representatives of staff responsible for the program asserted, there are a small group of ‘PhD candidate’ staff members who are about to defend their PhD theses, it would be ideal to utilize their new experiences and enthusiasm to build new and deeper elective offerings as well.

More generally, however, this program seems very much to be an in-person education. While it appears that individual staff members use online resources and electronic systems where they (the teachers) are comfortable with them, it is unclear that this is a policy for the program. Given the vast wealth of available material in English, or representing Anglophone culture, online, it would be advisable to develop and extend electronic elements of the courses.

- Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and justified?

Yes. UPZ is to be commended for eschewing the regional habit of simply calculating all credits at five or six, and playing mathematical games with statistics. The program in English Language and Literature has varied credits, which seem largely consistent with the general principles of ECTS calculations.

- Is the workload required for the academic program manageable for students?

Yes. There are individual courses that seem overly ambitious ('Victorian Literature' includes multiple novels of over 500 pages in one semester), but in general the workload is appropriate and manageable.

In discussion, the students involved varied widely in the amount of time they estimated they spent on their work at home, but none expressed the belief that the work was excessive. This may be a reflection of the high-level abilities of those students chosen to speak with the team—it was not clear to the team how the student collocutors were selected—but the workload certainly does not seem unusual or oppressive. They do seem, within basic parameters, coherent with those accepted for the ECTS calculations.

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

This is difficult to establish without observing teaching, which the team did not do. There are formal irregularities in the English Language and Literature proposal that have been mentioned above, such that staff of three different classes estimate their student language level to be B2, C1, and fluent—but not in that order. These differences would likely be harmonized and clarified if the proposed discussion meetings were scheduled for the program's academic staff.

In a more general sense, the course offerings are nicely balanced to build linguistic competence alongside professional interests and skills. As noted above, it would be beneficial to try to develop electronic resource use, but this also requires individual staff members to identify where such developments might work within their syllabi. This is an initiative in which the cooperation of the library may be necessary, although it must be acknowledged that the library does not inspire confidence that it is at the forefront of electronic resources access and acquisition.

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

The overlap of academic content is, with a few exceptions, clear and reasonable. As noted previously, it would be good to align the 'translation' elective courses to make them available as a consecutive module. There is little unintentional overlap of subject matter, although there is the entirely expected reliance early in the program on continued subject study ('Integrated Language Skills I' leads to 'Integrated Language Skills II,' and there must of necessity be some overlap, but this is minor).

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

This is a problem. It is not clear that there are any exclusionary admissions principles, which leads inevitably to a highly varied entrance level ability. This is again one of the reasons why admission must be strictly capped, in order to make certain that at least

minimum standards of ability are maintained. It is distressing for students of low level to be admitted to programs they cannot comprehend, just as it is disheartening for high ability students to be continually hampered by the slow and the unready. Accordingly, it will be a recommendation of this report that for this program an entrance test be established, setting the minimum at a level not lower than A2 (CEFR), and preferring B1 or higher.

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

In general, yes. As noted above, this could be complicated by 1) excessive admissions, or 2) slow progress or defection of 'PhD Candidate' staff members.

Recommendations:

- Offer at least one 'foreign language' offering for students who do not wish to pursue German.
- Offer provisional courses for non-native Albanian speakers to study their own languages in year one.
- Shift the translation courses, to enable the three translation electives to be chosen in a sequence.
- Develop and increase the use and frequency of electronic resources as embedded in the classroom practice and at-home study.
- Create and apply a binding entrance level examination, setting a minimum ability level of A2 (CEFR), and preferring those at B1 or higher levels.

2. Staff

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

It should be noted that the current academic staff appear highly committed to the institution and the program. To give just one example, Sermin Tertulla was noted by Prof. Petzold as having attended an accreditation meeting with him in 2014; Dr. Tertulla was also present for this site visit. Such commitment is a good sign of institutional and program loyalty.

Yet, as has been noted above, staffing remains a problem for this program. Although it meets the basic requirements of KAA, it should also be remembered that Prof. Petzold specifically warned that staffing had to be made a serious priority of this program. It is not clear that this has happened. There is still a heavy reliance upon these people who exist in a phantom category of being 'PhD Candidates.' It was also observed in the meeting that numerous of the staff members cover six different subjects per year, making a potential defection, retirement, or staff illness or incapacity an almost irrecoverable blow for the program, at least in the short term. To exemplify this, we note simply that two

individuals who do not even appear on the official staff list provided by KAA (Sazan Kryeziu and Osman Buleshkaj) cover, between them, fourteen courses in this curriculum.

It is imperative that UPZ becomes serious about hiring, and retaining, academic staff for this program, as previous recommendations in both this report, and that of Prof. Petzold in 2014, noted.

- 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?

The academic staff have demonstrated ability and program loyalty. There has been progress in advancing to academic title. As noted repeatedly in this report, it is desirable to reduce the reliance upon people trying to finish their PhD theses. Yet there is nothing in the basic profiles of the staff, as currently contracted, that suggests inadequacy or incapability.

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?

This is a difficulty. As noted in the general remarks at the beginning of this report, the team is dissatisfied with the research situation of UPZ. Notably, when the team requested the Research Strategy, the University sent the wrong document. At present, the team does not even have any conviction that the promised Research Strategy actually exists.

It is also an area of concern to us that the staff are completely unaware of how to apply for research funding, and that sabbatical leave is something that has the allure of the rumored and the unknown.

The staff are, by all indicators, trying desperately hard to maintain a research profile by using contacts previously established on a personal level, or by attending regional conferences (apparently, often out of their own pockets). This indicates that UPZ has a dedicated staff that needs research assistance.

The external reviewer for this specific program must also acknowledge that the library did not seem entirely adequate for the support of this program, nor of the research hopes of the staff. This is not to denigrate the institution or the library. Resources are difficult to obtain, and are expensive. Yet the available resources in the library were largely irregular volumes unclearly associated with the reading lists in the syllabi, or else were inexpensive paperback copies without scholarly apparatus.

Without trying to overthrow the entire structure of UPZ, it is important to request that the University management clarify and publicize the research support that the institution offers. This would apply to both conference attendance and sabbatical leave; other

relevant considerations would be research collaboration with other institutions, library acquisitions support; and subject-specific database identification.

- Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?

They seem not to be. It is admittedly difficult to engage undergraduate language students in extensive research projects in combination with their teachers. They do have a ‘practicum’ element of the degree program, which requires them to do observed teaching. This is good practice, and should continue to be supported. Yet it must be acknowledged that when the staff do not have clear research opportunities or policies, it is almost impossible for them to establish student research projects. Accordingly, in regards to research, it will be the recommendation of the external reviewer that the English Language and Literature program make their own identifications of potential partner instructors or institutions, and to attempt to develop subject specific collaborative efforts based either on research or simply student mobility.

Recommendations:

- UPZ must clarify the research support it offers and how staff may apply for it. The institution must also clarify and publicize the policy for sabbatical leave.
- The library, in cooperation with the English Language and Literature staff, should carefully examine the physical holdings and electronic access available to staff and students, and identify how best to maximize future investments to benefit student and staff research.
- English Language and Literature program staff should identify local or regional partners—individuals or institutions—with whom to build practical and realizable arrangements for collaborative research, or simply student mobility opportunities.

4. Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

- Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?

It seems to have, at least in support of this program. Language programs are far less costly than programs in the hard sciences, which may require computer labs, chemical labs, or supercomputers.

As noted above, the SER offers financial resource projections for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 (see SER, specifically p. 286). These tables indicate resource expectations from the Government of Kosovo of 2,484, 386 Euros for 2017; 3,377,000 Euros for 2018; and 3,377,000 Euros for 2019. For each of these years, there is only an expectation of 10,000 Euros of self-generated income. Although it is normal for a state university to derive a substantial portion of its income from state subsidy, this report notes that diversification of income should be a significant priority of the Rectorate.

- Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialized infrastructure for the

requirements of the program?

For the reasons outlined immediately above (no need for expensive chemical or physical laboratories), the University is well positioned to offer the BA program in English Language and Literature. The classrooms and amphitheaters are adequate to purpose, and the computer and projection technology seems suitable. Attention should be called, however, to the need for improving the library holdings for this specific program, to include scholarly editions of the major texts currently in the reading lists.

Recommendation:

- The Rectorate must *immediately* take action to identify ways of diversifying revenue, as a top priority.

5. Quality Management

- Are the institution's programs assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?

Both students and staff confirmed several internal quality assurance mechanisms, most notably anonymous student questionnaires to provide feedback for instructors. When the students were asked if complaints in these feedback forms had produced results, they were able to indicate an instance when their complaints through the questionnaires resulted (they felt) in a change of teacher. More generally, the external reviewer would suggest program specific quality assurance mechanisms. These would include: meetings once or twice a term to bring together English program staff; peer teaching observation (formal or informal); and peer grading or cross-grading of random samples of work.

Recommendation:

- Establish several program specific quality assurance mechanisms in the English program, to include peer teaching observation, peer grading or cross-grading, and regular staff meetings for curriculum design and assessment discussions.

As this program offers a substantial education in the subject, with useful opportunities for specialization, it is the recommendation of the expert team that the B.A. program in *English Language and Literature* be reaccredited for a period of three years.

B.A., Albanian Language and Literature

The team must here underline that this evaluation report refers to the Self Evaluation Report, English version, provided by the University of Prizren “Ukshin Hoti”. During the Site Visit, Prof. Shehri realized that the English version is quite different from the Albanian one provided by the same institution. According to the regulations of the KAA office, the English language version of the Self Evaluation Report is the one to be taken in consideration.

1. Academic Programs and Student Management

In terms of the assessment of the correspondence between the academic program and the institution’s mission statement, generally speaking, they seem in compliance with one

another and with the European Framework of Education and Teaching process. The principles intended by the Bologna process match the academic program of the Bachelor Degree of Albanian Language and Literature studies, but there are various problems identified that relate to the areas identified in the KAA guidelines.

The academic program highlights the idea of fostering student performance not only during the university years, but this field of study will also strongly influence the student's future performance as a vital part of social and public life. Broadly speaking, the overall image of this program relies on a dominant didactic concept that has been communicated by the teaching staff, but is not so clearly stated in some subject programs (*Ancient literature* – p. 157; *Romance, The history of Albanian literature I* – p. 158; *Romance, The history of Albanian literature II* – p. 166; *Contemporary Albanian Literature 2* – p. 192 etc.). There are some distinct mistakes in the program, which mainly confuse its structural design rather than its overarching didactic concept; this latter undoubtedly needs to be adopted by the academic staff.

The structure of the program of the academic degree allows the latter to correspond to international standards, taking into consideration the principles intended by the Bologna process and the allocation of ECTS appropriately and comprehensibly during the first (Bachelor) Cycle of studies. This correspondence of academic degrees to international standards is also based on the experience of other nearby universities, such as the University of Prishtina, the University of Tirana, the State University of Tetova, Croatia etc. In particular, it resembles the model of a four year program in Albanian Language and Literature similar to that of the University of Prishtina. The division of the student's contact hours during the education and teaching process is divided almost equally.

Regarding the facilities, during the site visit the expert team had the opportunity to view the relative resources in Albanian Language and Literature available in the UPZ library. It was noticed that a considerable part of the books and literature related to the subjects taught in this degree were not in the library of the institution, and some of them did not have enough copies for the huge number of students enrolled to this program.

Recommendation:

- The library resources regarding the B.A. program for Albanian language and literature must be seriously reviewed, in consultation with the relevant academic staff.

The credit allocation is appropriate and the number of credits for each particular subject is justifiably distributed.

The admission criteria are no longer a problematic issue, as was mentioned in the previous report. The students now take a test before starting their university studies, to measure their high school knowledge. In the previous report it was suggested that only 50 students be admitted per year in the Albanian Language and Literature study program. But the number of the students enrolled year after year increased drastically: 84 in 2014-15; 168 in 2015-16 and 131 in 2016-17. **So, the ratio of academic staff to students it is not appropriate.**

Recommendation:

- It is essential that this program not be over-enrolled.

Here follows an overview of each particular subject and of the curriculum composition:

1. The subject *Introduction to the Science of Literature* – half of the literature has nothing to do with the subject.
2. The subject *The folks of Literature* (here the titles are used as they appear in the Self Evaluation Report – but a bad translation appears in the greatest part of the document) – one of the books is not related to the subject and the other two are very ancient (1955, 1971).
3. The subject *Kulture dhe qyteterim* – has no course description and no literature. The same situation is true for the course *Histori arti*.
4. In regard to the subject *Classics (Albanian Renaissance)* – a considerable part of the literature is inappropriate and lacks the most important books related to the subject. Similar problems are found in the following subjects: *The theory of literature; Phonetics; Ancient literature; Romance – The history of the Albanian Literature I; Albanian Philology; Romance – The history of the Albanian Literature II; Arberesh Folklore; Psychology; Modern Albanian literature I; The comparative of literature; Dialectology; General linguistic; Modern Albanian Literature II; Literary critic; Contemporary Albanian literature; Balkan Linguistic; Public speaking and communication skills*.
5. Some subjects partially repeat their content, while some other courses present totally other subject matter in the curricula: *Albanian novel; Albanian poetry and drama; Arberesh Folks; The culture of the Albanian Language; Albanian language orthography*, etc. In the meeting the team had with the students of Albanian Language and Literature, during the site visit, they mentioned the same problem.

2. Research and International Cooperation

The Faculty of Philology, and the Department of Albanian Language and Literature, had been previously engaged and totally concentrated upon the construction and reconstruction of the programs and courses structures. Now a top priority should be considered the subject of a research work policy and international cooperation. The Department should seriously think of a concrete involvement of the teaching staff by developing a research strategy. **The current involvement of the teaching staff and students in research activities, and the feedback it provides for course content, is not satisfactory.**

Recommendation:

- Immediately formulate a structured and clear research policy specific to the Department of Albanian Language and Literature.

3. Staff

The low number of academic staff involved in this study program is a critical point. From the 12 members who teach in the B.A. program in Albanian Language and Literature, 4 of them are specialized in other fields, such as Education Science, English, History, and Philosophy. The other members, according to the curriculum data, **have to teach a very large number of subjects, sometimes not related to each other:** Flamur Shala – 9 subjects; Vjollca Dibra – 9 subjects; Shkelqim Mulaku - 7 subjects; Teuta Kafexholli - 5 subjects, and Asllan Hamiti, who is a part-time staff member, 9 subjects.

Recommendation:

- Competent, committed full-time staff need to be recruited to enable the long-term stability of this degree.

4. Finance and Infrastructure/ Space and Equipment/ Facilities

The considerable amount of material in the Albanian Language is not enough to meet student and staff demands. It is seen as an indispensable requirement for the education system that online libraries provide accessible resources not only for the academic staff but also, and particularly, for students.

According to the financial data reported in the Budget Plan 2017-2019, the number of the full time staff can increase from 139 (current staff) to 150 (in 2018-19). That is quite insufficient for the progress of the Albanian Language and Literature Department unless, hopefully, 30 % of the future staff will be enrolled in this department.

5. Overall conclusions

Coming to the point of conclusion of the report evaluation, it is crucial to consider some of the problematic issues previously stated as adjustable in due time, before the upcoming academic year starts. Undoubtedly, the other part of the abovementioned problematic matters will require considerable attention for a longer period of time.

Provided that an immediate course of actions be set up to establish a greater number of permanent full-time staff, and to guarantee further qualifications of the teaching staff, it is the recommendation of the expert team that the B.A. program in **Albanian Language and Literature** be reaccredited for a period of two years.

MSc., Accounting and Auditing

1. Academic Programs and Student Management

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, this program aims to develop the students' knowledge of accounting and auditing, with an emphasis on knowledge that is practical. Another of its goals is to develop such skills in the field of accounting and auditing that will help the companies employing the program's graduates to be competitive on the global market.

Even without an in-depth analysis of the labor market needs we can assume that such a profile of graduates is needed by the businesses in the Prizren area. The emphasis in the program's mission on the global markets is reflected in the curriculum; according to the faculty members, many courses include the international dimension and expected

learning outcomes include such things as the ability of the students to prepare financial reports in accordance with international financial reporting standards, for example.

During our visit, the students pointed out that this is the only such masters program in the region. It also allows those students that have chosen a specialization in accounting in their bachelor studies at University of Prizren to continue with their studies on the master's level. Taking all this into account, the program seems to correspond to the mission statement of the institution that focuses on graduates who can compete on the domestic and international labor market.

The curriculum seems appropriate for a master's program in accounting and auditing and was modeled on similar programs at the University of Vienna and the University of Luxembourg. The strength of this program is also a strong connection to the Association of Certified Accountants and Auditors of Kosovo (SCAAK), a certification program for accountants and auditors. The head of this master's program is a member of SCAAK and has forged a strong connection with it. Not only are all of the latest changes introduced by the SCAAK also included in the material that is being taught at the University; the agreement with SCAAK also gives the students an opportunity to have the courses they take at University of Prizren counted towards getting the SCAAK's certificate.

The academic content of various parts of the curriculum does not seem to overlap. A concern could be the extent to which the content overlaps between the third year of bachelor studies in the Business Administration program - for those students specializing in accounting – and this master's program. However, there is no evidence that this presents a problem. The material covered at the master's level seems to be advanced enough.

The sequence of the courses seems logical. In their third semester, the students listen to Methodology of Scientific Research and a course on the use of statistical software, which should help them with the work on their master's thesis in the last semester. The allocation of ECTS seems appropriate.

It is difficult to comment on the teaching methods used since the syllabi lists the same for all of the courses (“lectures, exercises, interactive approach, consultations, ...”). The same situation holds for information on “the ratio between theoretical and practical study”, which seems to be 2:0 for quite a number of courses - and no proper explanation was given what this actually means. There is other evidence that more effort should be put into the development of the syllabus. In the case of most courses, learning outcomes should be more precise and defined in greater detail, for example. We can only repeat the recommendation of external experts from the 2014 report, that the course descriptions should be formulated more precisely. This would then also give justice to some of the faculty members that use problem-based learning and work on cases, for example.

Recommendation:

- Syllabi should be less general, more detailed (especially concerning learning outcomes) and should reflect the actual teaching practices used in the classroom.

2. Academic Staff

10 faculty members are teaching in this program, all of whom have a PhD and all of whom are employed by University of Prizren on a full-time basis. The Self-Evaluation Report states that up to 60 students can enroll in this program. This number has increased since 2014 when the program was first offered, up to 98 students in 2016. Even with such a number of students, the student-faculty ratio is appropriate. According to the faculty members responsible for the program, there are no plans to increase the number of students even further.

Some of the courses taught in this program are also being offered as a part of the master's in Business Administration. According to the curriculum, they are also being taught by the same people. However, during the site visit it was made clear that the students of both master's are not being merged into one large class but that the courses are taught separately.

The three faculty members that are designated for this program have the academic qualifications appropriate for the position. Two of them have also been recently active in attending conferences, including international ones, and publishing.

Concerning teaching qualifications of the academic staff, this cannot be easily judged based on CVs. We can assume that being in similar positions during recent years has contributed to developing teaching skills. However, based on the site visit and talks with the faculty members, there seems to be no systematic support for their efforts in developing these skills. The only feedback on the quality of their teaching that the academic staff seems to get are the students' evaluations at the end of each course (and even here there is no evidence that something is being done if a faculty member gets unfavorable feedback and does not react to it himself).

Recommendation:

- Offer the teaching staff an opportunity to develop their teaching skills, for example through attending relevant workshops.

3. Research

Research and internationalization is an issue discussed at the institutional level, in the general remarks at the start of this report. In the 2014 report of the external experts

evaluating the program, it was mentioned that a new research institute will be established in the field of accounting and auditing. However, at the time of this site visit there was no evidence of such an institute or activities that would lead to it.

4. Student Admission and Assistance

Only full time students are admitted to this program. The study fee is 300 EUR per semester, which seems relatively high, given that the average wage in Kosovo is around 250 EUR.

According to the program representatives, most of the students that enroll in this program have attended bachelor studies with a specialization in accounting and auditing in their last year. These students should have enough background knowledge to be able to follow this highly specialized master's program. However, this program admits all students with a bachelor in economics, law, social sciences, technical sciences and applied sciences, according to the Self-Evaluation Report (pp. 203). It is doubtful that the students with a bachelor outside of economics or business studies will have enough basic knowledge and competencies in accounting. No qualifying exams in accounting are in place to assure the common grounds on which the students' knowledge can then be built. The argument was presented to us that the number of students with a background different from economics who want to enroll is small; and that a number of students much larger than the places offered apply for this program, so it is possible to choose the qualified ones. However, given that the enrolment has increased by over 60% since 2014, there is a fear that students without an appropriate background will be admitted, which might lead to a decrease in the quality of the program. The external experts in the previous evaluation report also raised this issue. They have advised the accreditation of this program under the condition that access is open to bachelor graduates from economics bachelor programs only, with solid basic knowledge and competencies in accounting. We agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation:

- Change the admission criteria in such a way that only those students with a solid basic knowledge and competencies in accounting will be admitted.

5. Student Assessment

Assessment methods as listed in the syllabi are the same for all of the courses, saying that the evaluation of students will be based on attendance, commitment to their written work, and how successful the student is in tests and the final exam. It would be expected that the assessment methods will differ between the courses, matching the learning outcomes of each, for example.

Recommendation:

- Develop assessment methods for each course that reflect the student learning outcomes.

It is the recommendation of the expert team that the MSc. program in **Accounting and Auditing** be reaccredited for a period of three years.

MSc., Business Administration

1. Academic Programs and Student Management

The program corresponds to the mission statement of the University and aims at students who want to develop their managerial skills and attain knowledge that the companies need to be competitive on the domestic and international markets. An element that was mentioned several times during the site visit is the importance of the agricultural sector for the economy in the Prizren area (around half of the businesses in this area are supposed to be connected to agriculture). Part of the curriculum reflects this; two courses with an emphasis on agriculture are included (Risk Management in Agriculture; Agro-Nutritional Products' Quality Management) and since a part of the output of this sector is exported, international topics are included. The curriculum seems appropriate for such a program and corresponds to international standards since it covers separate areas of a manager's work and the internationalization of the companies. However, there are two issues that need attention. First, human resources play an important role in the

management of the company and they are currently not included in the curriculum. The faculty members responsible for the program have used an argument that HR is covered in the bachelor program in Business Administration; however, since it is not the case that only students with such a background are admitted to the master's program, this argument does not hold. Secondly, Managerial Economics is currently an elective course. Since such a course contributes to knowledge that all of the students of such a program need, this course should be an obligatory one. When deciding on which of the courses to move then to elective status, consider that courses like Agro-Nutritional Products' Quality Management are quite specialized and would be a good candidates to be elective.

Recommendation:

- Managerial Economics should be moved to the part of the curriculum obligatory for all students.
- Consider including a course on Human resources in the curriculum.

There does not seem to be an overlap between the various parts of the curriculum. The program has 120 ECTS credits and their allocation seems appropriate.

Similar to the comments on the masters program in Accounting and Auditing, it is difficult to comment on the teaching methods used since the syllabi lists the same for all of the courses (“lectures, exercises, interactive approach, consultations, ...”). More effort should be put into the development of the syllabus. In the case of some courses, learning outcomes should be more precise and defined in greater detail.

Recommendation:

- Syllabi should be less general, more detailed and should reflect the actual teaching practices used in the classroom.

There is some evidence of the use of teaching methods that develop management skills and knowledge of the students and that also bring practice to the classroom; but given the nature of this program, a greater use of case studies and problem-based approach is advisable. The admission criteria are appropriate.

2. Academic Staff

All of the faculty members involved in teaching this program are employed full-time and have a PhD. The ratio of academic staff to students is appropriate. However, the number of students enrolled in this program is increasing, from 84 in academic year 2014/2015 up to 116 in 2016/2017. It seems that the school follows its original plans to recruit 120 students to this program, in spite of the recommendation of the external experts (at the time of the accreditation of this program in 2014) that the enrolment be kept to a maximum of 80 students. On the basis of the site visit, we can conclude that additional

students that could not find jobs at the time were being allowed to join the program. However, the master's programs should not be there to solve labor market issues but to provide an education of a certain quality.

Recommendation:

- Enrolment should be limited to 80 students.

Out of the three faculty members who are designated for this program and should contribute to its development, one seems an odd choice. With a PhD in technological sciences and a list of publications that correspond only to that research area it is difficult to contribute in a relevant way to a program in business administration. In addition to this, the individual noted is not responsible for any of the courses taught in this program, according to the curriculum that is presented in the Self-Evaluation Report.

Recommendation:

- All three faculty members that are responsible for the program should have background that is relevant to the area of business administration.

There is another issue of the qualifications of the academic staff that should be appropriate for this program. It is connected to an Investment Management course which is being taught by a faculty member with a PhD in Food Technology and a list of publications that has nothing to do with business or economics. This should be done by someone with a more appropriate background.

Recommendation:

- Investment Management course must be taught by a faculty member with an appropriate research and teaching background.

3. Research

Research and internationalization is an issue discussed at the institutional level, in the 'general remarks' beginning this report.

4. Student Assessment

Similar to the comments on the master's program in Accounting and Auditing, assessment methods as listed in the syllabi are the same for all of the courses. It would be expected that the assessment methods will differ between the courses, matching the learning outcomes of each, for example.

Recommendation:

- Develop assessment methods for each course that reflect the student learning outcomes.

It is the recommendation of the expert team that the MSc. program in **Business Administration** be reaccredited for a period of two years. The enrolment should be kept to 80 students.

Addendum Regarding the Institutional Comments Submitted in Reply to the Preliminary Report

The Expert Team would like to thank UPZ for carefully reading and commenting at length about the preliminary draft of this report. It is our hope and intention that the report be both accurate and helpful.

In reply, we have silently corrected our error in describing the program in Business Administration as an MA program, instead of an MSc program.

There have been no other formal changes to this report.

It has occurred to Dr. Shehri and Dr. Goodspeed, however, that their comments regarding staffing in the Albanian Language and Literature program and the English Language and Literature program may perhaps be desirably elucidated. As both experts noted, staffing for these programs remains improvable, and representatives of both programs asserted that this is a recognized priority for both programs. Both programs, the experts felt, met the minimum staff requirements of the KAA standards.

It may, however, be additionally inquired why the Expert Team has made the time recommendations that they have, given their expressed concerns about current staffing. The answer is simple: both programs meet the minimum requirements for delivering the instruction and maintaining quality, yet more should be done in the long-term. Dr. Shehri and Dr. Goodspeed estimated, for each program, that the time period recommended would be adequate for identifying and hiring the appropriate people. It is their conviction that putting time pressure upon this—or any—institution in this position would result in the immediate hiring of inappropriate, or inappropriately-skilled, staff. Such emergency hiring can do decades of damage to an academic program, as people once hired are often difficult to remove, provided they meet minimum standards. It would therefore be the recommendation of this Expert Team that all the recommended accreditation periods be approved, as we believe the programs can be delivered immediately and now with the current staff, but can be optimized by the proper and careful hiring of the best, most appropriate candidates. That process will almost certainly take more than one brief year, and thus the recommendations are made with great seriousness.

The approach of this team has been consistent across the evaluated programs. Our first concern was to establish whether or not these programs meet KAA minimum standards; we find that they do. Secondly, we sought to establish whether or not the programs could run, ensuring quality, with current resources—physical, technical, and personal—if there were no changes to the present state; we find that they could. Finally, we have then tried to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses, potentialities and concerns, that should inform the institution’s development of these programs over the recommended periods of accreditation. This attempt at comprehensivity is why this report comes in at nearly 40 pages, instead of a mere 20-25. We believe that UPZ will recognize their institution in this report and will feel that it has been accurately described. It is our hope that the report, and the discussions during the site visit, will help the institution to develop these programs to provide ever greater opportunities to students and the teaching staff engaged thereon.