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UNIVERSITY "Ukshin Hoti" Prizren

PROGRAM: Primary Education

PROGRAM REACCREDITATION

FINAL REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

May, 2021, Online visit



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 11th of May 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Ass. prof. dr. Janez Vogrinc, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Slovenia*
- *Juraj Bogat, student expert*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation
- Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Documents prepared by University "Ukshin Hoti" Prizren, Faculty of Education
- Information obtained during the online meetings;
- Web-site;
- Supplementary documents requested by the ET;
- Video presenting the campus/infrastructure of the faculty

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- KAA Accreditation Manual (as of 11.07.2018);
- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance;



- The Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (revised in 2018)
- Benchmarking of HEIs in Kosovo;
- References for articles published about Kosovo Higher Education Institutions

1.2. Site visit schedule

09:30 – 10:10	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (<i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i>)
10:15 – 10:55	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
11:00 – 12:00	Meeting with the heads of the study programme
12:00 – 12:40	Lunch break
12:40 – 13:20	Meeting with teaching staff
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with students
14:10 – 14:50	Meeting with graduates
14:55 – 15:35	Meeting with employers of graduates
15:40 – 15:50	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
15:50 – 16:00	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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1.1. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

The University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren (University) was established in 2009 as the second public university in Kosovo. It inherits the experience of the former Pedagogical High School, a branch of the University of Pristina, which operated since 1961. University started with the first generation of students in the academic year 2010/11. According to the self-evaluation report, the University now has about 4 thousand students in six faculties. It offers 21 study programs at two levels (Bachelor and Master), mostly in Albanian language, but some programs also in Turkish and Bosnian. The linguistic diversity of the study programs makes the University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren unique compared to other universities in Kosovo.

The Faculty of Education is part of the University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren since 2010/2011 and offers pre-school programs (Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian) (BA) and Primary Program (Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian) (BA).

The number of students enrolled in the Faculty of Education in the academic year 2020-2021 is 938. The primary education program is designed for 4 years or 8 semesters, which corresponds to 240 credits (ECTS). Each year 100 new students are enrolled. This program enables students to gain knowledge in the field of teaching and learning in elementary education. The program has a well-defined concept expressed in the proportion of didactic subjects as part of the program in 22 weeks of compulsory practical teaching. During the professional practice, students link and enrich the knowledge they gain in the faculty with the practical experience under the guidance of their mentor teachers.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission statement of the study program is consistent with the overall mission statement of the institution and relevant academic and professional advice is taken into account in defining the intended learning outcomes, which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework. The mission of the University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren is to be a competitive academic institution focused



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on providing quality education by conducting scientific research and contributing to innovation, in accordance with the needs of the labor market and the community in which it operates locally, nationally and beyond. The Faculty of Education certainly promotes quality teaching, it also meets the needs of the local labor market (graduates are well employed in schools in Prizren and in the region), but some weaknesses can be identified in the research work of the academic staff and also in international cooperation.

The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept, but with some important weaknesses. Certain content that is important for prospective primary school teachers (e.g., developmental psychology) is missing or only moderately represented in the program, while certain content is only included in the electives (e.g., classroom management). There should be more courses that combine the content knowledge of the subject with the methodology of the subject; the methodology of a particular subject should also become a more important research topic for faculty academic staff. Assessment mechanisms in certain courses include not only knowledge and skill assessment, but also student attendance.

There are formal policies, guidelines, and regulations that address recurring procedural or academic issues, and they are made publicly available to all staff and students.

The rules governing ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities are in fact defined in the Code of Ethics, with primary responsibility for the subject being taught and a commitment to developing and improving their competence for scientific research. The University has the Code of Ethics adopted by Governing Council in 2016. The expert team would like to emphasize that an integral part of research ethics is also the question of which journals researchers publish the results of their research in. It is important that they do not publish their results in journals that are on the list of so-called predatory journals.

Policies, regulations, job descriptions, and statements of responsibility that relate to the management and conduct of the program are defined in the University Statute, the Quality Management Regulation, the Strategic Plan, etc. It is expected that they will be reviewed at least every two years and adapted to changing circumstances as necessary.

The expert team did not receive any answers related to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), so we assume that the institution is not regulated by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the level of the study program.



It is evident that systems are in place to centrally record and analyse course completion, progression, graduation rates, and program evaluations, with summaries and comparative data automatically distributed to senior administrators and relevant committees at least annually.

Statistical data on indicators, including grade distribution, course completion, and graduation rates, are maintained in an accessible central database and are regularly reviewed and reported in periodic program reports.

The concept of promoting equal opportunities for students in special circumstances, such as students with health impairments, students with children, students with an immigrant background, and/or students from educationally disadvantaged families, is implemented at the program level. Also during the interview with the Dean it became clear that the issue related to students with special needs is an important issue for the Faculty of Education and that the Faculty of Education is a leading unit within the University in Prizren on this issue.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X (1 of the 2)	
<i>Standard 1.2.</i> Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
<i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.		X (1 of the 2)
<i>Standard 1.4.</i> There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	



<i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X (1 of the 2)	
<i>Standard 1.6.</i> All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	X	

Comment: out of 6 listed standards (and, therefore, 12 maximum points), there are 9 points reached which is 75%. Thus, it is level substantially compliant.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The institution should consider setting the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the level of the study program and regulate the program through these measures.*
2. *The course assessment procedures should not include student attendance in courses, only assessment of knowledge and skills. Attendance may be a condition that must be met in order to earn the right to take an exam and must be specified in the syllabi.*
3. *The curriculum needs evaluation of what content must be compulsory and what content/courses can be electives.*
4. *There should be more courses that integrate subject content with subject methodology to improve the pedagogical knowledge and skills of students.*
5. *The methodology of a subject should also become a more important research topic for the academic staff of the faculty.*
6. *An integral part of research ethics is also the question of which journals researchers publish the results of their research in. For this reason, it is important to develop measures at the institutional level to ensure that academic staff do not publish their work in journals that are on the list of so-called predatory journals.*



2.2. Quality management

The Statute of "Ukshin Hoti" University of Prizren has adopted a regulation on quality assurance, which aims to define mechanisms, standards and procedures for quality assurance and to evaluate the work and study programs of the University at all levels. The Quality Assurance Office and Central Committee for Quality Assurance have been established at the University. Each faculty also has a Quality Assurance Commission. The quality assurance committee at the faculty level consists of: the quality assurance coordinator at the faculty level, a professor, an assistant professor, a faculty secretary and a student representative. During the interview with the quality assurance officers, the expert team learned that all members of this commission are full-time academic staff (except the faculty secretary) and are not released from other work obligations because of their involvement in the self-evaluation process.

Based on the Quality Assurance Regulation, the Commission develops an action plan for the most effective implementation of the quality standards at the level of the degree programs. The Quality Commission organizes and plans the process of teaching and evaluating academic staff and other study program services using appropriate assessment tools. They have developed: Questionnaire for evaluation by graduate students, Questionnaire for evaluation by academic staff, Questionnaire for Dean's Performance Evaluation, Questionnaire for subject and teacher evaluation by students, Questionnaire for employers (Industrial Advisory Boards), Questionnaire for inter-collegial evaluation, Questionnaire for teacher self-assessment, Questionnaire, for evaluation by administration staff, Assessment report on university contribution and contribution to society, Assessment Report by the Dean, Intercollegiate classroom observation form, Evaluation report for scientific publications and conference attendance. Some data collection instruments should be modified to make it clearer what is actually being assessed. E.g., in the instrument Assessment report by the dean it is not clear how ethical behavior toward students and colleagues is actually being measured. The same is true for the Questionnaire for inter-collegial evaluation: it is not clear how exactly you are measuring and what kind of criteria you are using to assess collegial cooperation, collegial communication, interpersonal relationships, and ethical collegial behavior.

The assessments are carried out continuously, mainly at the end of each semester, i.e. twice a year. After analyzing the data, a report is prepared on the performance of the academic unit as a whole, recommending steps for continuous improvement of the teaching process and quality enhancement; the results are also transparent and accessible.

All academic staff participate in the self-evaluation process and collaborate in the reporting and improvement processes in their respective areas. At the end of each semester, each staff member completes the self-evaluation questionnaire. In addition, during meetings with other



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colleagues, staff members complete the Peer Review Scale, which relates to the exchange of experiences and the review of didactic and methodological aspects. The data provided by staff through self-evaluation, along with the data collected from the student evaluation for staff and the dean's evaluation for staff, is compiled into a report that is posted on the University website. From the self-evaluation report, it is clear that the academic staff evaluation process is based on the criteria derived from student evaluation, peer evaluation, dean evaluation, research activity (scientific publications and conference attendance), contribution to the university, and contribution to society. From the interviews it became clear that these criteria should be more specific as it is not clear now what an academic staff member needs to do to achieve the maximum percentage for each criterion.

During the interview with the students, it was confirmed that they are familiar with the quality assurance system developed at the university and faculty level. However, the student who is a representative of the students in the Quality Assurance Commission could not recall any idea given by the students to enhance the quality in the delivery of the study program.

Industrial Advisory Boards units have been established within each academic unit and the members of Industrial Advisory Board are also involved in the process of quality assurance in the Faculty of Education. The University has established the Career and Alumni Center unit which focuses on bridging the gap between academic work and the labor market through student support, guidance and career development i.e. graduate professional development and access to the labor market.

During the interview with graduate employers, it was confirmed that they are involved in the quality assurance process. The expert team would like to emphasize that the questionnaire for graduates should be modified for employers of graduates of the Faculty of Education.

Evaluation processes and improvement planning are integrated into the normal planning processes. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are produced at regular intervals for consideration within the institution and highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the program. A comprehensive reassessment of the program is carried out regularly, but further significant changes have only been made based on the recommendations of the program reaccreditation expert team.

Quality assurance processes ensure that both the required standards are met and that continuous improvement in performance takes place. The results of the internal quality assurance system

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are taken into account in the further development of the study program. These include evaluation results, analyzes of student workload, student success and graduate employment. However, the results of these evaluations are only publicly available as a general report and it is very difficult to obtain specific information from this report.

During the interviews, the expert team did not receive any information about the self-evaluation procedures of the quality assurance system itself. From the interviews it appears that the quality assurance system is not regularly improved as the expert team did not receive any information about changes in the quality assurance system based on the feedback from teachers, students, employers.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X (1 out of 2)	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	



<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.		X (1 out of 2)

Comment: out of 9 listed standards (and, therefore, 18 maximum points), there are 14 points reached which is slightly less than 78%. Thus, it is level substantially compliant.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET Recommendations:

- 1. Establish a system for self-evaluation of quality assurance procedures in the faculty. A system that allows for continuous adjustment of quality assurance procedures towards greater staff satisfaction with the system and its greater impact on the quality of delivery of the program of study.*
- 2. Develop more detailed criteria for each area of academic staff performance evaluation and inform academic staff of these criteria. The criteria must be designed to distinguish between different quality work or activities.*



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- 4. Better support of the Quality Assurance Office in such a way that you increase the number of administrative staff in this office or that the members of this office are relieved of other work obligations.*
- 5. Develop a Questionnaire for employers of graduates that is more appropriate for employers of graduate students in the Faculty of Education.*
- 6. Modify some data collection instruments (especially Questionnaire for inter-collegial evaluation) to make it clear what kind of criteria are behind each standard.*
- 7. Ensure that students are more actively involved in the process of quality assurance and that they contribute more ideas to improve the study program.*



2.3. Academic staff

There are 14 full-time and 10 part-time academic staff in the Faculty of Education. During the interview with teaching staff it was confirmed that new academic staff are provided with full position descriptions and terms and conditions of employment, as well as information on rights and responsibilities. Teaching staff meet the legal requirements for permanent employment. The full-time and part-time academic staff structure is adequate, 58% of academic staff are full-time and they make up more than 50% of the classes in the program. For each student group and for every 60 ECTS, the university has employed at least one full-time member of staff with a PhD. Nevertheless, the expert team suggests that the University in Prizren should employ more full-time academic staff at the Faculty of Education, as full-time staff is a guarantee for the sustainable development of the study program and the institution, especially because the number of enrolled students at the Faculty of Education is very high. Of particular concern is the fact that the Faculty of Education has only 3 full-time assistants.

At the moment it seems that the Faculty of Education in Prizren is very dependent on teaching staff from other universities in Kosovo, especially from the University in Prishtina.

The expert team would like to emphasize that it is very important, especially for the Faculty of Education, that all academic staff have appropriate pedagogical education and that they teach subjects for which they have appropriate basic education. The bibliography of academic staff shows that the Faculty of Education has recruited some academic staff without credentials from the field of teaching and they are in subjects where they teach students how to teach a particular subject, so called methodology of a subject. During the interview with academic staff, the expert team learned from a teacher with no pedagogical background that he had conversations with more experienced teacher about how to teach at the beginning of his career. The expert team would expect a more systematic approach to be organized at the Faculty of Education, e.g. in-service training for academic staff without pedagogical background.

Academic staff cover no more than two teaching assignments (one full-time and one part-time) within an academic year. Some opportunities are provided for additional professional development for teaching staff. However, the expert team would expect more in-service training programs especially from the field of methodology of a particular subject and conducting empirical research and presenting the results.



Academic staff keep a portfolio with evidence of their professional development and also a plan for future activities (for example, someone is working on an article). However, there is a lack of information about professional development needs and strategies for improvement.

Teachers who retire at the age limit or for other reasons lose full-time teachers status and are considered part-time teachers. Duties of all academic staff, especially full-time teachers, include involvement in the academic community, availability for consultation with students, and service to the community. During the interview, students confirmed that they have enough opportunities to communicate with academic staff by mail or through regular office hours.

Evaluation of academic staff is conducted regularly through self-evaluation, student, peer, and supervisor evaluations and occurs twice a year on a formal basis. Evaluations are conducted in the following forms: Students Evaluate teaching staff (20%); Research Activity (20%), Evaluation of Contribution to Institution and Community (20%), Peer Evaluation (20%), and Dean's Evaluation (20%). However, as the expert team mentioned in Standard 2.2 Quality Management, the interviews with Quality Assurance Office and the academic staff did not provide us with specific information about what an academic staff member must do to achieve the maximum percentage for each criterion. These criteria should be more specific and academic staff should be better informed about them.

The results of the evaluation are made publicly available but only as a general report and it is very difficult to get specific information from this report, especially about individual academic members.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 3.1.</i> Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment.	X	
<i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	



<i>Standard 3.3.</i> Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	X	
<i>Standard 3.4.</i> At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
<i>Standard 3.5.</i> For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
<i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		X (1 out of 2)
<i>Standard 3.7.</i> The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
<i>Standard 3.8.</i> Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 3.10.</i> Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	X	

Comment: out of 10 listed standards (and, therefore, 20 maximum points), there are 17 points reached which is 85%. Thus, it is level substantially compliant.



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Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET Recommendations:

- 1. Depending on the number of students enrolled, it would be advisable to hire more academic staff in the Faculty of Education or reduce the number of students enrolled.*
- 2. Special care should be taken to ensure that new academic staff have appropriate pedagogical education and are academically engaged in the didactics/teaching of an individual subject. If they have not acquired the relevant pedagogical education in their undergraduate level, they should acquire it in in-service training programs.*
- 3. Develop more detailed criteria for evaluating academic staff and inform faculty members of these criteria.*
- 4. Develop more training programs for academic staff that would address their needs for professional development (e.g., especially from the area of methodology of a particular subject and how to conduct empirical research and present the results).*



2.4. Educational process content

The primary education program is designed to last 4 years or 8 semesters, which is equivalent to 240 credits (ECTS). The curriculum of the program is designed on the basis of compulsory and elective subjects. Included in this program are academic disciplines that are directly applied in the work with students and other disciplines that prepare students for teaching methodology and for the current progress of the educational process. The Primary education program provides the competencies and knowledge applied to students through courses in communication, mathematics, pedagogy, psychology, social sciences, natural sciences, teaching and learning didactics, pedagogical practice, IT skills, etc., in building their professional careers in primary education program, in building an inclusive society with values of democratic citizenship.

The program of study is guided by the qualification objectives. These include subject and generic aspects, as well as the acquisition of subject, methodological and generic skills and competences.

The study program is in line with the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. According to the program of study, each subject teacher designs the syllabus, which includes the subject description, expected learning outcomes, student contribution and load, teaching methodology, assessment methods, literature, detailed learning plan for a semester, and academic guidelines and student rules of conduct. In this program, one credit is equivalent to approximately 25 hours of total student effort, including participation in lectures, exercises, participation in seminars, research papers, home and library study, internships, and individual study.

The learning outcomes are: Creating a prior experience through professional practice, through the teaching and learning process; Managing successful classrooms; Taking an active role in improving the quality of student learning in primary schools; Creating a positive classroom climate and organizing the process of learning in a variety of ways; Building professional relationships with teachers, principals, and parents; Linking theoretical information to practical work with students in schools and children of relevant group ages; Applying inclusive principles in the educational process; Practicing the teaching profession based on contemporary teaching principles, etc.



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All syllabi are analytical and include the objectives of the subject, the basic thematic content, distributed over 15 weeks of the semester, clearly indicating the basic objectives of the subject, their content, methods and forms of assessment, learning outcomes, student load, teaching methodology, applied seminars and activities, basic and secondary literature. During the interview with students it was confirmed that they are familiar with the syllabi - the academic staff informs them at the beginning of each semester about the content of the subject, competences, assessment methods, etc.

Within the curriculum different disciplines are offered, but not always in a logical flow and in certain parts the program does not correspond to the compatibility with the courses and curricula offered in the EHEA. The expert team would like to emphasize that the structure of the program should be improved. There are some elective courses (Classroom Management and Discipline, Developmental Psychology, Assessment in Education, Fine Arts, Dramatization and puppet shows...) or content within the courses that should be considered mandatory for every student. The arrangement of each course by year is also not entirely logical. For example, within the program there are electives in art and Fine Arts, and later all students have a compulsory course Methodology of Figurative Art. How are students supposed to learn how to teach art if they have not studied art before? The expert team would like to emphasize that psychology is very poorly represented in the current program, although this discipline is very important for understanding child development.

In some subjects (like Albanian) the expert team misses a methodological part - how to teach these subjects. There are 25 ECTS for Albanian language (including the subject Children literature) and only 6 ECTS for the subject of Albanian with methodology. The expert team would like to emphasize that the methodological part of each course is very poorly represented. However, it is not enough that the number of ECTS for the methodological part is simply increased, it is also important that the teachers and assistants of these courses have appropriate education, research activity and references from this field.

In the Faculty of Education - Primary Education program - the learning process is organized in Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian languages. The expert team proposes to develop some courses in English language, as this will increase the number of students and staff coming to the Faculty of Education in the framework of mobility. The expert team also suggests better support and encouragement for students of the Faculty of Education to study abroad, as well as better guidance (e.g. presentation of comparable programs from abroad to your students) in this area.

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Learning is organized in the form of theoretical lectures, seminars, individual consultations, group and pair work, implementation of contemporary teaching and learning methods, such as problem-based learning, analysis of various materials, stimulation of critical thinking, research work, practical work in the laboratory. During the interview, students explained that they have the opportunity to choose elective courses, but if the group chooses an elective course, all students must take the same course unless half of the group would choose one course and the other half would choose another.

Assessment methods are structured consistently across the curricula. However, in the area of knowledge and skills assessment, the curricula show a pattern (not in all, but in many courses) indicating that not only knowledge and skills, but also a student's attendance and participation in the course contribute - the amount is defined differently in each curriculum - from 5% to 10% to the student's final grade, with the consequence that checking the student's performance in terms of knowledge and skills does not guarantee validity.

To facilitate practical training, the Faculty of Education enters into collaborative agreements with schools. Practical learning in schools is expanded: In the first year of study - 3 weeks; in the second year of study - 5 weeks; in the third year of study - 6 weeks; and in the fourth year of study - 8 weeks. During the pedagogical practice (practical learning) students are supervised by the mentor teacher of the school and the mentor from the Faculty of Education. After students complete their pedagogical practice, they turn in their reflection journals and the portfolio created during the pedagogical practice to their mentor. The intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that these learning outcomes and the strategies for developing this learning are understood by the student.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 4.1.</i> The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	



<p><i>Standard 4.2.</i> The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>X (1 of 2)</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.3.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA.</p>		<p>X (1 of 2)</p>
<p><i>Standard 4.4.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.5.</i> If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.6.</i> The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.7.</i> Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.</p>	<p>X (1 out of 2)</p>	



<i>Standard 4.8.</i> Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 4.9.</i> Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.		X (1 out of 2)
<i>Standard 4.10.</i> Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	X	
<i>Standard 4.11.</i> If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	X	
<i>Standard 4.12.</i> In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.	X	

Comment: out of 12 listed standards (and, therefore, 24 maximum points), there are 19 points reached which is slightly less than 79%. Thus, it is level **substantially compliant**.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The content and course structure of the program should be improved. There are some elective subjects or contents within the courses which should be considered to be compulsory for every student.*
- 2. Within the program, a more significant portion should have courses on the methodology of a particular subject. Academic staff involved in teaching methodology of a particular subject should have research activities from that field and appropriate references.*



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3. *Offer English language courses and study programs in English for students from abroad and motivate students of the Faculty Education University in Prizren to use the opportunities of student mobility.*
4. *The final grade of each course should not include the attendance of students in the courses, but only the assessment of knowledge and skills. Student attendance in a particular course according to the criteria that should be specified in a syllabus of a particular course could be a condition that must be met in order to take a final exam.*



2.5. Students

Enrolment procedure of the new students seems to be clear, straightforward and it gives equal opportunity for all potential students who apply. It is mentioned in the SER that the enrolment quota is determined by the MEST (p. 44.), and the exact number is 100 (p. 15). However, some other graphs in the SER (p. 43) are in great disagreement with the exact enrolment quota; the number of enrolled students varies from 349 in the academic year 2016./2017. to 99 in 2019/2020, and finally to 152 in 2020/2021.

Literature, conditions for passing a course, as well as final grade structure are presented in detail in the syllabus for each course conducted at the studies and they are also presented by the professors themselves. A lot of the emphasis is put on the activity during lectures and seminars which indubitably adds to student professional development, and especially a lot of attention is given to practical work which is absolutely necessary for students of primary education. Communication between students and professors, and vice versa, is effective and prompt, be it in regard to the test results, homework and seminars feedback, practical work, master's thesis mentorship (diploma project), additional inquiries about the course materials and matters or even the extracurricular activities. All of the basic student rights seem to be met. Since the student results and grades are stored in digital form, they provide a great database for further statistical analysis.

Furthermore, students seem to be included on almost all levels of management of the Faculty and the Department which is commendable and they also have their own representative body which is allegedly quite active. Unfortunately, as it is already mentioned in previous standards, it seems that the student representatives took a rather passive role in their duties within management domain. That is absolutely within their rights, but it might be more beneficial for current and future students if they took a more proactive and constructive role.

The expert team was really glad to hear about the acquisition of plagiarism detection software at the entire university level which will indubitably add to the quality of the studies and especially its research aspect.

The students and graduates that the expert team met seem to be well adjusted in their respected lines of study or work and they seem to be carrying on and spreading the values implemented throughout their studies. They are truly satisfied with their studies and the attention they get



from their professors. However, all of the graduates finished their studies 2020. and the expert team could not gather a more diverse insight from them. In the spirit of good practice and in order to make a more profound assessment, the expert team advises, for the future reaccreditation process, that the Faculty and/or the Department ensure graduates from different years of graduation and preferably one or two graduates who finished their studies 5 years ago or more.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
<i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
<i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
<i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
<i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
<i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
<i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	



<i>Standard 5.9.</i> Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
<i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 5.11.</i> Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

Comment: out of 11 listed standards (and, therefore, 22 maximum points), there are 21 points reached which is roughly 95%. Thus, it is level **fully compliant**.

Compliance level: fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- As mentioned in the previous standards, in order to popularise student exchange programs, the Department should increase its efforts in foreign language acquisition for its students and also offer more lectures in English/German or some other world language in order to attract foreign students*



2.6. Research

In the University Statute, special provisions are dedicated to academic research by academic staff and research associates. Also within the Faculty of Education the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 has been elaborated, where one of the strategic priorities is the development of scientific research work. Within this strategic priority, the Faculty of Education has defined the following strategic objectives:

- Encourage academic staff to continuous professional and scientific development;
- Establish a planning system for research and scientific work;
- Initiating and leading collaboration on scientific projects and participation in conferences;
- participation in international projects.

With regard to the specific objectives and activities presented, the expert team would like to emphasize that the research objectives are very general and there are also no clearly specified indicators and benchmarks for the research development plan of an academic staff member.

The strategic plan had envisaged the establishment of an Institute for Scientific Research in the Faculty of Education. During the interview with the Dean, the expert team received information that this institute has still not been established.

From the biographies of the academic staff, the expert team can conclude that there is a wide range of research activities and credentials of the staff. Some academic staff have a good track record of research. However, it is also apparent that not all academic staff have an average of at least one academic research publication per year. Not all academic staff have a proven track record of research achievements in the same subjects as their teaching. If someone teaches subjects in which students also learn how to teach a subject (methodology of that subject), it is expected that a teacher or teaching assistant will also have references in the didactics (methodology) of a single subject. The expert team would like to particularly emphasize that academic staff of the Faculty of Education should also be active in research on the subject didactics/teaching of a single subject (e.g. teaching natural sciences, mathematics, Albanian, etc.). During the interview with the Dean, the expert team was told that the Faculty is aware of the lack of references from the field of teaching of a particular subject and that they will cooperate with the University Prishtina Faculty for Education on this issue. The University of Prishtina will organize training programs for teachers and assistants of the University in Prizren involved in subject didactics.

In this context, the expert team proposes to increase financial and especially human resources to improve the research activities of academic staff at the Faculty of Education. Better support



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and encouragement for academic staff (especially junior academic staff) to develop research collaborations with colleagues in other institutions and in the international community.

Some faculty members have published their work in international journals that are now on the list of predatory journals (e.g., European Academic Research, European Journal of Educational Research). Faculty need to establish strict rules for journals that are appropriate for publication by academic staff, are of sufficient quality, and should not be on the Predatory Journals list. During the interview with the Dean, the expert team was told that they are aware of this and are working on this problem. The Dean also stated that an article published in a journal from the list of predatory journals can not be considered as a reference for promotion.

Expectations for teaching staff participation in research and scholarly activities are established, but performance against these expectations is not adequately addressed in the criteria for staff evaluation and promotion. Publication of scientific research is mandatory for performance evaluation of academic staff. The self-evaluation report shows that the evaluation process of academic staff is also based on the criteria resulting from the research activity (this criterion represents 20% of the total evaluation). However, these criteria should be more specific as it is not clear what an academic staff member needs to do now to achieve the maximum percentage for each criterion. During the interview with the dean, the expert team was told that an academic staff member can meet 10% of the criteria in research activity if he or she gives a presentation at a conference and another 10% for publications in international journals. However, the teaching staff explained that only publications in international journals are relevant for this criterion. Articles published in scientific journals indexed on the Web of Science (WoS) platform can be rewarded with a monetary value of 1,200 EUR and on the Scopus platform with a monetary value of 700 EUR.

Full-time academic staff publish under the name of the institution to which they belong as full-time staff. However, there is some ambiguity about the name under which part-time academic staff publish, especially academic staff belonging to other universities, such as the University in Prishtina. This is also one of the reasons why the University in Prizren Faculty of Education should increase the number of full-time academic staff.

There are intellectual property policies and clear procedures for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. Academic staff are encouraged to provide information about their research and scholarly activities relevant to the courses they teach, along with other significant research developments in the field. During the interviews with students, the expert team was told that students are aware of the research activities of academic staff and that at least some students are involved in research projects.

During the interview, the expert team learned that international conferences are usually organized at the university level and academic staff from the Faculty of Education participate in the conferences with their contributions. However, it seems that the Faculty of Education

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does not organize academic conferences independently, nor are conferences organized at university level at the initiative of the Faculty of Education. The international interdisciplinary conference "Comparative Studies in Modern Society" was organized in March 2021 at the University in Prizren, but under the section Education and Sport, where the expert team would expect speakers from the Faculty of Education, only one speaker can be found from the University of Prizren and he is not involved in the Primary teacher program.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.		X (1 out of 2)
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.		X (1 out of 2)
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X (1 out of 2)	



<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 6.7.</i> Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.		X
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 6.9.</i> Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	X	
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
<i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	

Comment: out of 11 listed standards (and, therefore, 22 maximum points), there are 13 points reached which is 59%. Thus, it is level **partially compliant**.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET Recommendations:

- 1. Establish and Institute for Scientific Research at the Faculty of Education.*



2. *Design more concrete research objectives with clearly specified indicators and benchmarks for an academic staff's research development that are known to academic staff and help them to promote their research work.*
3. *Increase financial and human resources to achieve the research goals of the Faculty of Education.*
4. *Provide better support for academic staff (especially junior academic staff) to develop research collaborations with colleagues in other institutions and in the international community, especially in the field of special didactic / methodology of certain subject.*
5. *The Faculty of Education should be the initiator and organize scientific meetings, symposia, conferences, round tables from the field of education.*
6. *Research on teaching of a particular subject (subject didactics) should be a priority topic for academic staff at the Faculty of Education.*
7. *Increase the number of scientific publications published by the academic staff.*
8. *Define strict rules for journals that are suitable for publication by academic staff, are of sufficient quality and should not be on the list of predatory journals.*
9. *Work on research culture at the college level.*



2.7. Infrastructure and resources

A single faculty building provides space for classrooms, laboratories, professor offices, faculty management, administration, library, and students. Classrooms and general faculty interior (as seen in the YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5eEydOi9ck>) seems to be pleasant, modern, and adequate for teaching. All of the classrooms are equipped with digital video projector and a blackboards, and there seems to be more than enough seating places for all students in all of the classrooms shown in the video. Both students and professors use projectors to give their lectures and discussions an additional, visual, dimension which adds to the quality of the program. Laboratories and specialised classrooms seem to be full of various didactic and specialised equipment which is extremely useful for students and future teachers.

Library seems to be scarce with working space for students since there was a need to erect tall wooden barriers around the working area. Barriers like that usually cause another type of problems which are, for example, insufficient amounts of light which can damage or further damage students' eyesight. However, there seems to be enough of natural and artificial light in the entire working area in the library. The problem that arises and which is seen in the video is that the working areas in the library are cluttered with (probably unsorted) literature. It is not possible to see in the video if the library has some kind of depot where the sorting of literature can be conducted without disturbing the general working area. On the other hand, the expert team received an information that the library has group study spaces, which is another greatly commendable fact.

The SER (RVV) mentions one of the strategic objectives as "Improving access to professional literature in the database"(p. 59.), a statement which is very vague and general in its nature. The expert team is aware of the fact that neither the Department nor the Faculty is in charge of their finances and therefore cannot acquire access to databases and/or journals by its own volition. Thus, the expert team strongly suggests putting more effort into stating the need for such access to the University and the instances that allocate finances. Access to international journals and databases is needed in order to produce relevant and up-to-date research for both the teaching staff and the students.

Infrastructure is somewhat adapted to the students with special needs, but it seems not all of their needs are properly addressed. As seen in the video, the building itself has a ramp for people who use wheelchairs, but it is unclear from the rest of the video if all other premises in

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the building are wheelchair accessible. Since one of the basic principles at the faculty is inclusion, it is somewhat strange not to properly address the needs of people with extremities disorder. As for other type of people with special needs, where their extremities are not affected, one of the solutions that arises, as seen in practice at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, is to provide personal assistants to students with needs. Assistant is usually another student of the same faculty who helps and guides or navigates a student with special needs around the faculty premises. The assistant engages in that kind of activity as a way of working out (instead of paying) some or all of his or her scholarship fee, and as well as out of empathic and altruistic reasons. The benefits of implementing this or similar kind of assistance are enormous for all parties included - the Faculty, the person with special needs and the student assistant.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE	
	YES	NO
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X (1 out of 2)	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution demonstrates with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;	X	



d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.		
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
<i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	X	
<i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.		X

Comment: out of 6 listed standards (and, therefore, 12 maximum points), there are 9 points reached which is 75%. Thus, it is level substantially compliant.

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1) Active effort needs to be put towards obtaining access to international journals and databases



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2) Properly addressing the needs of people with special needs

3) Free the working space in the library for it is designed and made for student and professor research/studying activities



3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The overall compliance level for 7 standards for the study program PRIMARY EDUCATION delivered by the University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren, Faculty of Education, corresponds to the following: 1 fully compliant, 5 substantially compliant, and 1 partially compliant standards. The expert team would like to note that the process of re-accreditation of the study program was carried out under the conditions of externalities of COVID -19 and the Faculty of Education has emphasized the difficulties and consequences of this process. The process of evaluation went without technical problems. Nevertheless, the expert team would like to point out that the Faculty of Education did a relatively poor job of organizing the participants of the various groups with whom the expert team had the opportunity to speak. The group of graduates deserves special mention, as all graduates completed their studies in 2020 and only one was employed in practice. All the others were continuing their master's studies. Therefore, it was impossible to get an opinion from them about how someone in practice views the study and what should be changed in the program to better educate graduates according to the different needs of practice. Another problem was the group of employers - the expert team had the opportunity to discuss with only two employers. In particular, the expert team finds it problematic that there was no principal in this discussion who would give his/her opinion about the graduates of the Faculty of Education.

The expert team also points out that the Faculty of Education has inadequately prepared the documentation required as part of the reaccreditation of the study program. The self-evaluation report was written very critically, but at the same time many documents were missing and had to be requested. In order to achieve a clearer and more consistent presentation of the SER, the expert team advises that a form of the future SER be changed to address each standard from the Accreditation Manual directly. While free text is also welcomed, it is usually beneficial for all parties to address the standards directly, one by one.

The students seem to be truly satisfied with the treatment at the department, be it with the relationship to the professors, the administration, the practical work or the administration. A large number of elective courses enables them to tailor their academic experience according to their interests, but some interventions in the syllabi need to be made, as mentioned in the earlier chapters. Issues of gender (in)equality are not properly addressed as the vast majority of students appear to be female. While that kind of extremity is less common, Faculty should



still advocate for true equality and make more efforts to attract more male students. More importantly, Faculty should take the necessary steps into making its premises more accessible and welcoming to students with special needs. Employability of students does not seem to be a problem as the labour market still has a need for primary school teachers.

The Faculty of Education should recruit more academic staff with appropriate pedagogical education and they should be academically engaged in the didactics/teaching of an individual subject. Research on the teaching of a particular subject (subject didactics) should be a priority research topic for academic staff in the Faculty of Education. There should be more courses that integrate subject content with subject methodology to improve students' pedagogical knowledge and skills. The study program needs evaluation of which courses have the contents that must be compulsory and which contents/courses could be electives. Since the quality of the study program depends heavily on the quality of the research work of the academic staff (recorded in their scientific publications), the expert team suggests that the Faculty of Education should reduce the number of students enrolled in this study program until it recruits new academic staff with pedagogical background and good scientific publications.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
<i>1. Mission, objectives and administration</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>2. Quality management</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>3. Academic staff</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>4. Educational process content</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>5. Students</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
<i>6. Research</i>	<i>Partially compliant</i>
<i>7. Infrastructure and resources</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Overall compliance</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>



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In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program ***Primary Education*** offered by university “**Ukshin Hoti**” Prizren is ***Substantially compliant*** with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends ***to accredit*** the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **70** students to be enrolled in the program.



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Expert Team

Chair

	Janez Vogrinc	1. 6. 2021
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Juraj Bogat	1. 6. 2021
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)