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***UNIVERSITY “FEHMI AGANI” IN GJAKOVA
NURSING BSc PROGRAMME***

(REACCREDITATION)

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

11th March 2021, Gjakova,



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 11th March 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

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- *Ms. Delia Gologan – University of Bucharest*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA*
- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*
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- *Ilijane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report*
- *Meeting with the Management of Faculty and extensive discussion between the responsibility persons of program and the expert team, and representatives of KAA (online site visit according to the site visit schedule from point 1.2)*
- *List of attendees*
- *A presentation film on premises and equipment submitted by the faculty*
- *The webpage of the*
- *Data collected during the site visit.*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *The KAA (re)accreditation manual – main criteria for evaluation of the status-quo; While for the recommendations made by the external team, two sources were used:*
- *The ESG in QA of HE;*
- *The international recommendations and practices.*



1.2. Site visit schedule

11th March

09.00 – 09.40 Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (*no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion*)

09.45 – 10:45 Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1: Nursing/ BSc

10:50 – 11:50 Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1: Physiotherapy/ BA Professional

11:50 – 12:30 Lunch break

13.15 – 13:10 Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff

13.15 – 14.00 Meeting with teaching staff

14.05 – 14.35 Meeting with students

14:40 – 15:20 Meeting with graduates

15:25 – 16:05 Meeting with employers of graduates

16:05 – 16:15 Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts

16:15 – 16:25 Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

Expert team (ET) was involved in a discussion with the management of the institution, the head of the study programme, quality assurance representatives and administrative staff, teaching staff, students, graduates, and employers of graduates. Due to the international pandemic situation, the evaluation took place online, but the expert team consider that this has not hindered the quality of the evaluation process. The discussions were productive and helped the expert team to clarify some aspects from the SER.

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

The Faculty of Medicine at UFAGJ was initially a separate department from the University of Prishtina with the departments of Nursing and Midwifery since the academic year 2011/2012. The Faculty of Medicine within University of Prishtina (UP) continued to enroll students until 2013 and after the establishment of the University "Fehmi Agani" started with the departments:



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Midwifery and Nursing. The design of objectives and curricula was carried out based on the experience of public nursing schools in Kosovo but is also based on the experience of the University of Ljubljana [p.52].

These programs were initially accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) for 2020. [p.9]. This year, the UFAGJ filed a nursing program for re-accreditation.

The site visit and review included meetings with members of the University's management team, individuals responsible for designing particular study programs, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers.

This report has been compiled in response to all of the information presented to the ET during the meeting and in materials provided subsequently on request. The ET would like to mention that the evaluation was done by comparing the current situation of the programme with the KAA standards, but also considering the request submitted by the heads of the programme to increase the number of students in the first year by three times, thus the ET checked whether the current infrastructure, financial and human resources can support an increase the dimension of the programme by three times.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

Mission of the institution [p.7] The University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova is committed to creating knowledge through contemporary teaching and research methods, fostering student enthusiasm and promoting academic integrity. The University offers academic and research experiences by collaborating with the community and contributes to the social and economic development of the country and the region, through unique and quality study programs.

Mission of the programme [p.10] "The profile and program of studies aims to prepare capable professionals to work in various specific fields within health institutions, research institutions and similar fields of medical activity."

The study program Bsc Nursing is based on the provision of knowledge, practice of professional / scientific skills; assessment of the offered knowledge, both practical and theoretical; designing, discussing, presenting, implementing, completing and writing research projects; providing knowledge expansion alongside the student's affinity and his / her needs. All this focuses on improving and strengthening the health system and the use of WHO global standards for health education. Nursing study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.



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The program enables the advancement of knowledge and creative and scientific ideas in the field of Nursing in accordance with European Direktive 2005/36/ES and 2013/55/EU.

The University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova guarantees the availability of the teaching, administrative and technical personnel needed to meet the goals and requirements of the study program. The essence of didactic and research concepts is to develop nursing competencies in students using a student-centred approach. In the program various didactic methods are used, which were mentioned during the online discussions. Various teaching methods are used that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem solving and creative and critical thinking. The mission does not have a sufficiently evident Research concept of the programme. Students are exposed to scientific discoveries during the courses and the teachers encourage them to participate in research activities - especially in the form of diploma theses, based on review of scientific studies. But this practice could be extended to the day-to-day work of the students within the programme once access to international journals and databases will be ensured. Now it must be quite difficult for students to prepare a good final thesis since it is one of their first occasions when they do a review of scientific studies and these are provided almost entirely by their teachers from personal sources (e.g. personal accounts for electronic library and international databases that they have access to due to their status as PhD students in other universities abroad).

Procedural and academic issues in the UFAGJ are regulated by formal policies, guidelines, and regulations. All regulations and guidelines relating to procedural or academic matters in the UFAGJ are available for all staff and students on the internal platform the UFAGJ is using. All participants in the visit are familiar with this and according to their statements, they are all considered. However, there is no clear procedure to monitor that the academic community follows them – with the exception of the Code of Ethics and the academic attendance.

Teachers, associates, staff and students are obliged to comply with the provisions of the Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct on the basis of ethical principles of the Code. Online discussions revealed that the members of the academic community were aware of their responsibilities derived from them and that there is an Ethical Committee who follows that they respect the code. However no reported misconduct was mentioned. We encourage the university and faculty management to intensify their efforts towards supporting the acknowledgement of the Ethical Code and the reporting of the eventual misconducts (e.g. corruption, abuses etc.).



The programme learning outcomes, content and teaching methods are designed on the basis of Kosovo Qualification Framework and modelled on the good practice of similar programmes abroad. The ET believes that the Mission Statement is satisfactory and acceptable. The study program mission is following the overall mission statement of the institution. However, the goal of UFAGJ to include 180 students a year in the program is impossible given the conditions of education (the faculty can't prove that they can provide enough places available for education in a clinical environment and the auditoriums and have only 50 to 100 seats [SER, p.112]). ET suggests KAA the maximum number of students admitted per year is 60. Admission tests, qualifications and admission procedures are adequate. The academic degree of "Bachelor in Nursing" is awarded after successful completion of the program.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Cooperation with Nursing programs in the Middle- or Western Europa*
2. *Better highlight the research concept of the study programme;*
3. *Encouraging research activities of the teaching staff and including the students in these research activities throughout their entire study programme.*
4. *Intensify efforts for the academic community to acknowledge and follow the principles of the Ethical Code, including the reporting of the eventual misconducts for the constant improvement of the entire atmosphere within the university.*

2.2 Quality management

UFAGJ has a university level Office of Quality Assurance (QA) for which a Vicerector is responsible, while each faculty also has a QA committee. This is also the case for the faculty of Medicine which organises the Nursing BSc programme under review. The Faculty level committee comprises of 5 persons, out of which one is a student.

This organizational structure and the declaration of those present at the online discussions indicated that QA benefits the support of all members of the academic community (as well as management). They describe the QA procedures as instruments to develop 'the programmes, the teaching and learning process, research, professional and administrative work' [p. 35].

In the Nursing BSc programme, all staff participate in self-evaluations, but the QA processes seem to be still rather new and not yet embedded in the everyday life. Exception the procedure for reporting attendance which is done daily by signing a presence list.



Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning process, but the university should make sure it does not hinder with the academic and research activity, but rather help it. For example, the SER mentions many types of meetings as part of the QA system, but it is difficult to believe that academic staff members have time for all of those. Rather than imposing processes that no one can keep up with, it is preferable to keep the system as simple as possible in order to reach the desired outcome: the constant preoccupation of everyone to get better at what they do everyday.

The QA procedures described during the online interviews covered most of the aspect of program delivery, less about program planning and services and resources provided by the institution. The participants mentioned that during the students assessment of the educational process they formulated recommendations that were taken into consideration by the university – e.g. the need for foreign language classes. However, there was no survey mentioned referring to the infrastructure and resources of the university, nor about the student workload, academic success (exception: employment rate). The SER mentions such procedures on page 36. This could mean that either they are not yet implemented just planned, or not all of the members of the academic community are aware of these instruments. More effort could be done to make this become a reality.

Moreover, there is no QA survey for employers or alumni (graduates).

A great part of the complex system of evaluating academic staff refers to their research activity though most of their daily activity revolves around teaching, offering consultations to students, coordinating their final thesis (10-15 students/each academic staff member). More support could be offered to academic staff to have time and the appropriate resources for research before asking them to perform in this area.

QA processes offers an overall image about the programme but one could not say that they are focused on learning outcomes. Clinical practical stages seemed to be more oriented towards monitoring the development of skills, but the teaching and evaluation process does not seem to be adapted to verifying skills and competences.

As stated in the SER and confirmed in the online interviews, the results of the internal QA procedures are used as bases for discussion to improve the situation (e.g. individual discussions with teachers to identify training opportunities to improve the teaching experience in the class).

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Popularize the QA procedures to all the members of the academic community;*



2. *Evaluate periodically the efficiency and efficacy of the QA system to constantly improve it – e.g. consider simplifying it so that it is easier to implement;*
3. *Consider involving employers and graduates in feedback procedures on the quality of the study programmes as well as collecting information about the student workload and skills developed during the programme.*
4. *In the future, consider protecting the data collected by the QA office and committees as well as ensuring the protection of personal data.*
5. *Consider discussing the course / programme evaluation results with the students. This will increase their engagement with the programme and the QA system.*
6. *When publishing the summary of the evaluation, consider **highlighting the changes or measures that the university is going to take to improve the current situation.***

2.3 Academic staff

The selection of academic staff is done in a transparent way, based on the public tender, which is published by the UFAGJ Senate. It was clearly indicated in the self-evaluation report in a table (according to standards of KAA accreditation manual) the name of academic staff, full time or part-time contract, academic title, qualifications, duration of contract and labour load. These all fulfil the standard specified by KAA accreditation manual and the needs of the programme at its current dimensions.

The Faculty of Medicine, with a regular contract, counts 5 professors with the calls Prof. Assoc. Dr., 3 professors with the calls Prof. Ass. Dr., 1 lecturer, 7 assistants, while there are other professors from UFAGJ (Faculty of Education) who are engaged in the progress of teaching. Also, the Faculty of Medicine engages professors (Part Time) with academic degrees Doctor of Science, Doctor of Medicine, and registered doctoral students as well as 10 Assistants of Clinical Practice. However, since the heads of the program and the faculty and university management intend to increase the dimensions of this program, hiring more teachers is necessary. The planned budget envisioned the hiring of 20 new employees in the Medical Faculty by 2025 (SER, p. 145) but a triple number of students in the first year would require more than a + 5 employees in the autumn of 2021 so the process of hiring new teachers has to intensify in order to respond to the needs of the programme.

The staff engaged in the program of Nursing is listed in the course curriculum. Overall, the teaching staff clearly is competent, and the number of teachers is sufficient for now, but continued education of teaching members will be essential to adapt more modern teaching that



enhances the learning effects. In our understanding the existing staff seems to be qualified for running the existing programmes, especially with regard to the teaching aspects. It should be pointed out, though, that research activity is vastly underdeveloped amongst the academic staff now and this shortcoming should be in focus of improvement efforts.

From the table in the SER and from the conversations with the head of the program BSc Nursing we learned about candidates, either employed or collaborating in the program. The staff is highly academic. The academic staff are qualified with a master's or Doctor's degree in science. PHD candidates are also included in the program.

The staff is competent and professional. The program also includes younger teachers with higher education, which is good. Referring to the organogram of the full-time staff there are seven Doctors of Science (Doctor of Medicine), seven PhD candidates (of which 3 are nurses), two master's in nursing sciences (nurses).

The academic staff of the UFAGJ is declared in KAA, in accordance with the criteria set out by the KAA in terms of teaching positions. The full-time nursing staff program include three PhD candidates and two MSc in Nursing Sciences. Also, the criterion has been strictly respected that for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program to be employed full time at least one professor with the title of Doctor of Science. The teaching staff clearly is competent, and the number of teachers is sufficient for the current number of students. Most of them are also working in clinics, which is good.

However, it is not clear whether the faculty management monitors the workload of its teachers since more of them are having several roles: they practice as Nurses in clinics, are PhD candidates, teach one or more programmes, coordinate final thesis, offer consultancy hours to students and engage in activities within the community, while being requested to perform in the research field. An impact evaluation of what would mean for each of them to take up to three times more students in the first year is needed.

All teachers have the opportunity for additional education and the acquisition of additional knowledge and skills – several trainings in teaching strategies were mentioned during the online visit. Management also supports its teachers in doctoral studies and the ET salutes this practice.

Full-time teachers join the academic community. It would be good for teachers to write books or scripts for students as well but for this they need the support of the university (less workload, financial incentives, access to specific infrastructure). The teachers are available to students



via email every day and at agreed hours. This was also confirmed by the students in the interview.

Even though, there was not much said about the responsibilities linked to getting involved in the community, most of the academic staff work in the clinics thus providing services to the community and its public health.

There are still no clear targets regarding the research activity of the academic staff even though both the management and the academic staff representatives stated – during the online discussions - their commitment to improving the research activity of the nursing field.

The academic staff is periodically evaluated through a complex system of evaluation (described in section 2 of this report). The results of the assessments are not publicly available to teachers but only some summarised reports are said to be published within the intranet platform used.

Teachers take care of the teaching quality strategy and regularly update their curricula, including contemporary literature. Moreover, during the online discussions, training opportunities offered to the academic staff members were mentioned.

UFAGJ adheres to criteria and standards imposed by the law. In the discussion, they say they don't have teachers retired at age limit.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Increase employment of academically educated higher education teachers in the field of nursing.*
- 2. Education of teachers should have a high priority.*
- 3. Encourage teachers to continue to write books and scripts for students in Albanian.*
- 4. Financially support teachers involved in doctoral studies.*
- 5. Monitor the workload of the teachers and degrevate some of some of their responsibilities so they can focus more on research.*

2.4 Educational process content

The curriculums fulfil all standards presented in the KAA accreditation manual (standard 4.1). The program has analytical syllabuses according to standards. As it seems, the quality, range



and academic aims of the curriculum are – generally – appropriate to the academic degrees awarded, and they correspond with the international standards. The study program is comprised of 6 semesters over 3 years of full-time studies (180 ECTS). One (1) ECTS is equivalent to thirty (30) hours of studies. All courses are graded by ECTS values. The allocation of ECTS is appropriate and justified and the assessment/examination methods are adequate. Elective courses are evaluated with 3 ECTS.

The individual components of the program are combined in the best way to achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning. The curriculum structure leaves room for independent study, reflections and analysis, and the workload seems to be well manageable by students. Curriculum is comprehensibly written. Learning outcomes and core competences are logically connected to aim of the program which complies to the National Qualifications Framework and Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA. This is confirmed by the large number of graduates who find a job almost immediately after the graduation both in Kosovo and abroad. As it is a common practice in the European space, the graduates of this programme have to undergo an internship and then pass the exam of the professional body before receiving the right to practice.

The first level study programme of Nursing is a programme where a basic profile of nursing givers is moulded. The latter is designed according to the needs of the modern society, it connects theory and practice. It gives students the option of selecting courses in their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd study year. It also provides theoretical and practical knowledge. Program in Nursing consists of several mandatory and elective courses, which are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning. Quality Office ensures that knowledge, skills, and competences are correct, objective, valid, reliable, practical, transparent and effective. The curriculum of this profile provides the logical flow of disciplines, and the continuity in the possession of knowledge, skills, competences, whether general or specific, in accordance with the EU Directive.

The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at the following:

1. the discipline's objectives,
2. the basic thematic content, learning outcomes,
3. the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities,



4. students' assessment system,
5. bibliography

The program is in Albanian language.

The students praised their relationship with their teachers. Learning outcomes are presented to the students in the beginning of the year and check them with exams and tutorials. Clinical training is an important part in obtaining professional competences, and clinical training is taking place directly in the clinical environment under mentorship of mentors in the educational institution. Faculty coordinators are included in clinical training (teachers/assistants). The learning outcomes of the clinical stages are mentioned within the handbook of the students where their teachers/clinical mentors register their progress through the three years of clinical practice. However, the discussions revealed there are no minimal standards set by this handbook – for e.g. a minimal number of blood collection exercises per student. This indicates that this teaching strategy might not guarantee the reaching of learning outcomes (in terms of competences and abilities) for each student.

The head of the first-cycle study program of Nursing stated that they do not have any students with special needs in the program, however the teaching strategies used should address all the learning needs of the current students (each having different learning styles – some can be more visual, while others could prefer independent study). ET wonders how they could meet these requirements with such many enrolled students.

Student assessment mechanisms are conducted according to course syllabuses and Regulation of BSc Nursing study at the Faculty of medicine. The assessment system ensures a fair, transparent evaluation of students' knowledge and skills. This program is appropriate for different forms of learning and it is communicated to students at the beginning of courses.

In the interview students say that they are satisfied with the assessment mechanisms and that the assessment methods are presented to them at the beginning of the lectures and that they include an appeal procedure. However, extra attention should be given to ensuring that the assessment mechanisms are appropriate for checking the progress of students in their journey towards the learning outcomes.

The Regulation of Nursing study at the Faculty of medicine clearly describes the mechanism for appropriate, valid and reliable process for verifying standards of student achievement. This mechanism of evaluation is consistent over time (as said by those responsible for the study



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program at our meeting) but their comparability between courses offered within the program is not checked. Moreover, in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions should be tested by the QA structures, as they state in SER (p.52) with the University of Ljubljana.

No specific reference to what is done in case of any inconsistency in assessment of student achievement was mentioned.

The syllabuses describe the responsibilities of academic staff and students to ensure that learning outcomes are understood by students. The courses are presented in ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training (25 ECTS/ 750 hours) organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages are monitored by mentors selected among the academic staff in the study program. Clinical training is taking place directly in the clinical environment under mentorship of mentors in the educational institution. Faculty coordinators are included in clinical training (teachers/assistants). Educational institutions, where clinical training takes place, are conforming to the criteria of Ministry of Health Kosovo. Clinical training is an important part of obtaining professional competencies, so enough places to teach students in a clinical environment and a sufficient number of mentors are crucial. According to those responsible for the implementation of the program, the study groups consist of 5-8 students, which corresponds to teaching in the laboratory at the college. For practical lessons, which include interaction with patients, individual work is required for students with an individual mentor. Such teaching can ensure effective teaching and learning.

For the realization of clinical practice, the Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, cooperates with all Institutions in Family Medicine Centres, Mental Health Centre, Occupational Medicine Institutions, Regional Institute of Public Health), in particular with the Main Centre and Family Medicine Centres in Gjakova, General Hospital "Isa Grezda"; University Clinical Centre of Kosovo in Prishtina. Students can also do practical work abroad, which is realized through cooperation agreements with relevant institutions (student exchange), during an epidemic COVID -19 of course, exchanges are not allowed.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

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- 1. Before students go to clinical training, they must complete the practical part of the study obligations in the laboratories at Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, in small groups (8 students).*
- 2. Individual mentoring in a clinical setting is required to ensure the quality of knowledge – thus quality procedures regarding the practical/clinical training should be developed and implemented.*
- 3. The selection process for students should be more rigorous to ensure better academic achievements in the future.*

2.5 Students

The Nursing BSc programme has a clear admission procedure which is formally adopted by the Senate of the university (SER, p.110). A commission is trusted to ensure the application of this procedure. The admission procedure requires all enrolled students to possess a highschool graduation diploma or equivalent document (SER, p.110), thus respecting the MEST requirements.

The head of the programme requires the right to enrol 180 students in the first year and promises to organise small study groups that will ensure both the quality of the teaching process, and the protective measures against COVID-19 (as long as this will be necessary). For example, for the practical stages the head of the programme organizes students in small groups of 6-8. This is ok, but could be even more reduced to ensure the quality of the learning process as well as the rights of the patients with whom the group of students interact. However, these small group could raise issues of insufficient mentors to coordinate the practical stages of the enrolled students in the clinics and hospitals. Close monitorization of the number of contractual mentors and their activity during the practical stages is necessary.

The results obtained by the students throughout their studies within this program are certified by the academic record. Results in the practical stages are noted down constantly in the booklet for the practical stages that each student receives upon enrolment and uses until the graduation to certify their practical exercise. The information in these booklets is periodically back-uped in the official records of the programme. However it is not clear whether records for all courses are included among quality indicators.

The SER mentions that flexible treatment - with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations - is granted to students in special situations. However there is no explanation or details regarding what type of flexibility is ensured.



To ensure that the final thesis of students is original a software is used. However, there are no procedures to ensure that all the work of the students are original. Moreover, students did not seem aware about the Code of Ethics and Ethical conduct and could be supported to develop the trust to report the ethical misconducts they witness.

Student rights and obligations where known among the academic community and the include the right to appeal – that means rejecting a grade if the student does not agree with it or to organize themselves in student unions. To solve such appeals, the dean names an Evaluation Committee with three members.

Students also have the right to benefit from consultation from their teachers and thus the academic staff is obliged to organize 2 hours of consultations per week for the students.

Students are represented in several decision making and consulting structures of the university and faculty and in most of them the student-members have a voting right. Students declared that they are aware of the decisions of the Senate or the Faculty Council due to the activity of the student representatives and the fact that these structures publish their decision on the internal platform they use within the university. Students seem to have the power to influence decisions of the faculty/university through the periodical evaluations of their teachers and their programme – e.g. the introduction of language studies at the request of students.

Students manifested overall satisfaction with the programme and appreciated the teaching in small groups. However, it is not clear if this practice could continue if the number of students tripled.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Motivate teachers to offer feedback to students on their performance regarding the achievement of their learning outcomes.
2. Detail the type of flexible treatment for students in special situation – especially needed for students with COVID-19.
3. Encourage both students and teachers to report the ethical misconducts they witness.
4. Gradually reduce the study groups to maximum 4 students for the clinical stages (taking the necessary measures: hiring more mentors, improving the scheduling of the practical stages etc.);

2.6 Research



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The development of research activities in the Nursing Program follows the objectives set out in the Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova strategic plan and is based on academic competence, infrastructure, and internal and external co-operation.

The expectations of the involvement of College Academic staff in research and academic activities for Nursing BSc program are clearly specified to the academic staff who were all aware of them. According to the regulation for scientific research activity, the academic staff of the university is obliged to do scientific research and research work in accordance with their professional skills and obligations arising from the strategic documents of the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova. Each member of the academic staff is evaluated once a year for his contribution to the scientific activity. However, it was not clear how are they considered in the performance evaluation and promotion criteria. A list of publications is presented, but they cannot be found in the field of nursing.

The research activity within the college is still in its beginning years so it is normal for the results to be just starting to show-up. The ET feels that this is also generated by the situation in Kosovo and, to be frank, in the region so we perfectly understand and encourage the college to be patient until the research results will show-up.

Teaching staff mentioned that they include, in their teaching, information about their research and scientific activities that are relevant to the courses they teach, along with other relevant field research developments, however this seemed more like an individual attempt rather than an institutional formal effort.

The Nursing program has defined strategic objectives in the field of research, for each teacher in accordance with the institutional strategy. Sufficient financial, logistical and human resources are allocated to achieve the proposed research objectives within the faculty and in line with institutional strategies. Nursing program staff also engage in research as a necessity for their re-election and advancement, by presenting at local and international conferences and congresses, and publishing their findings in scientific journals indexed with impact factors. Some research is also published as part of a doctoral study that some teachers are completing.

Research is validated through scientific and applied research publications.

Publication in scientific journals depends on each individual and research area. Some have more publications, others less. The publication of nursing care has been increasing in recent years, which is a good thing.

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When publishing, academic staff cite the name of Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova.

Teachers are encouraged to provide research-related information to both students and staff, however the proportion in which this becomes reality seemed to be linked to individual efforts rather than institutional procedures.

Students were aware of what plagiarism is and which is the correct way to cite a publication referenced within their papers since they learn this during the Research Methodology class.

Research by students is essential for their development and use of evidence based practical methods. There is also little information about student exchange with other universities. Most student participation is presented in the ERASMUS + program, but the field of nursing is not clearly traceable.

Compliance level: **Substantially compliant**

ET recommendations:

- 1. Increase the involvement of staff and students in nursing research activities.*
- 2. The results of research done as part of the diploma work should be published at scientific conferences and symposia.*

2.7 Infrastructure and resources

"Fehmi Agani" University in Gjakova has a 1740m² building dedicated to the Faculty of Medicine within which the Nursing programme is organized. Moreover, a second campus will be built in the future years (the construction began this year). In assessing the infrastructure and resources allocated to the program the expert team considered both the current situation and the potential future development of the programme as the head of the programme requested a significant increase of the number of students enrolled in the first year (180 compared with 60 students currently enrolled).

Currently there are 5 laboratories for the Nursing program with dimensions between 26 and 42 m² as well as offices for the full staff. It is not clear how many hours are they available for the nursing programme in the case they are shared with the other programmes of the faculty of Medicine (in order to be able to calculate if tripling the number of study groups could be done).



The long-term implementation of the study program is ensured by the faculty and university management through allocation of resources – financial and non-financial, as well as the commitment to support the development of the programme. The financial resources of the program include budget from the ministry, tuition fees and other fees paid by students, services provided by the university, projects (including European funded project) and donations/gifts. The planned budget (SER, p. 145) includes an increase of employees (20 more employees up to 2025) that would be necessary for the envisioned growth of the programme. It is not clear whether they would all be teachers or mentors or administrative staff.

All buildings of the university are covered by wifi.

UFAGJ has a library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own stock of books according to the disciplines included in the curricula. The university signed agreements with the City Library and the National Library to enlarge the access of its academic community to both printed and electronic resources. However, few teachers and students were currently using the international journals – this being more an individual effort than an institutional practice. When more electronic resources will be available the faculty should consider enlarging the number of computers available in the library.

For the day- to-day activity the university uses an internal platform (USM) and the UGJFA official electronic email.

The current resources seem appropriate for the current dimension of the study groups though many are shared with the other programmes of the faculty of medicine which intends to also open new programmes. However, a potential increase in students will need a continuous development of all the infrastructure: more offices for more teachers, more laboratories for practical stages, more contracts with clinical mentors. Though both the faculty and the university management are committed to the plan of developing this program, there was no proof provided regarding the capacity to triple the number of students enrolled in the first year.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Discuss the possibility of obtaining access to international journals and databases (e.g. EBSCO, JSTORE etc.) in cooperation with other national or international universities. Than consider ensuring distance - access for both students and teachers to these resources, encouraging all of them to use them in day-to-day activity.*
- 2. Continue the efforts of ensuring the access to all university spaces for students with special needs, especially in the new campus.*
- 3. Increase the efforts of increasing the number of clinical mentors.*



3 OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Overall the study program BSc of Nursing gained in quality since the last evaluation procedure. Especially the e-learning capacity was substantially increased and proved to be very efficient. However, there is space for improvement. The detailed descriptions and background for the specific ET recommendations listed are given in the above sections.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program *Nursing BSc* offered by Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova 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 *60* students to be enrolled in the program.

4 APPENDICES (*if available*) – not the case

Expert Team

Chair

Prof. dr. Danica Železnik

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member

Mrs. Delia Gologan

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)