UNIVERSITETI "FEHMI AGANI" IN GJAKOVA
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

DATE June 15, 2021, PLACE Salzburg

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: May 26, 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Univ.-Prof. Dr.med. Wolfgang Patsch*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAAA*
- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Meeting*
- *Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Meeting*
- *Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Meeting*
- *Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Meeting*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report (SER)"Public Health (BSc), Universiteti"Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, Faculty of Medicine*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual, July 2018*
- *Syllabi*
- *Staff CVs*
- *Appendix*

    Requested Documents
    - *None*

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Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standard and performance indicators for external quality assurance, Re-accreditation of bachelor and masters study program, KAA Accreditation Manual*
- *ESG, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education area, (partially) 2015*

1.2. Site visit schedule

Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA)

Site Visit Program

Programme Accreditation Procedure at University of Gjakova

Date: 26th of May 2021

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Expert Team

- Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch
- Prof. Dr. Danica Zeleznik
- Ms. Delia Gologan

Coordinators of 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

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Site Visit Program

26th May

09.00 – 09.50	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) – Joint session*
09.55 – 10:40	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff – joint session
10:50 – 11:50	Meeting with the heads of the study programme
11:50 – 12:30	Lunch break
12:30 – 13.15	Meeting with teaching staff
13.20 – 14.00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
14:00 – 14:10	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
14:10 – 14:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

Nr.	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs			
1	Public Health/ BSc (Accreditation)	Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch	Haxhi Kamberi	Antigona Ukëhaxhaj	Hajrullah Latifi	
2	Health Management/ MA (Accreditation)	Prof. Dr. Danica Zeleznik Ms. Delia Gologan	Dardan Koqinaj	Artan Nimani	Faton Hoxha	

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Other information

Overall instructions for HEIs

1. Each meeting should be attended by maximum 6 persons;
2. The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc;
3. The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc;
4. The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution;
5. Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session;
6. Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.

Contacts of the participants from KAA:

Shkelzen Gerxhaliu – 044 836 831

Arianit Krasniqi – 045 499 951

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

The University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" (UFAGj) began work on October 1, 2013. The Faculty of Education started to offer Preschool and Primary programs, the Faculty of Medicine Nursing and Midwifery programs and the Faculty of Philology Albanian Language programs, and English Language and Literature programs. These programs were accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in April 2013.

The functional organization of the UFAGj is based on the University Statute and fulfils the relevant laws of Kosovo. The main governing body of the UFAGj is the Steering Council, which has the responsibility for an effective function of the university and for all decisions regarding financial issues (budget, staff and infrastructure). Appointments of members of the Steering Council are regulated by the Statute of UFAGj. The Senate is the highest academic body of the University and is responsible for general strategic issues related to research, studies, teaching, student' admission criteria, selection and promotion of academic staff, content of curricula and quality assurance and evaluation. The UFAGj Senate consists of 12 members. All, but on have the right to vote. The Chairman of the Senate is the Rector who is the main managing authority of the university. He is responsible for the effective and regular operation of the university and for its management according to the policies established by the Council. Currently, Vice-Rectors are appointed for Academic Affairs and Quality Increase, International Cooperation and Scientific Research and Budget, Finance and Infrastructure. The University grants scholarships and exemptions of semester payments, when students meet specific criteria. Quotas of students from neighbouring countries and minorities are admitted to study programs as well.

The Faculty of Medicine is one of the three current faculties and is managed by the Dean, Pro-Deans and program chiefs. In addition to the Dean, the Faculty also has an Professional Scientific Teaching Council (PSTC), where teaching and scientific issues are addressed. Proposals of the Faculty Council are forwarded to the Senate for approval. Student representatives are included in most decision making committees of the University.

The Faculty of Medicine offers currently BSc programs in Nursing and Midwifery, a BA program in Physiotherapy and applies now for a BSc program in Public Health for 80 students and a MA program in Health Management for 40 students.

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The Faculty of Medicine, acting in accordance with the Vision and Mission of UFAGj, has the following objectives:

- To develop skilled professional staff in line with the labor market and in service to the wider community;
- To establish agreements with other local, regional and international higher education institutions;
- To increase the participation in various local and international academic and infrastructure projects;
- To provide mobility for academic staff and students with relevant international institutions;
- To support scientific research;
- To build capacity of human and infrastructural resources;
- To internationalization its programs;
- To provide high quality assurance;
- To increase access to contemporary literature through academic platforms and literature

The selections and appointments of teachers and teaching assistants, their promotions and reelections require approval by the University Senate. The Faculty of Medicine has 4 associate professors, 3 assistant professors, 1 lecturer and 12 assistants. Other professors from the Faculty of Education of the University are also engaged in teaching in the medical field. In addition, the Faculty of Medicine has several part-time educators with academic degrees of Doctor of Science, doctor of Medicine, Bachelor or Master of Nursing and PhD candidates as well as 5 assistants in clinical practice.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission of this study program is to prepare health workers in Public Health, who develop the necessary professional theoretical, practical and scientific knowledge and skills to be able to work in the public or private sector, at home and abroad in compliance with contemporary standards in the field. Employees with a Public Health profile will work in health institutions, will be responsible in carrying out tasks and competencies individually but will also rely on

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multidisciplinary teamwork. The program was conceived to address the importance of constantly evolving public health in response to the needs of the population.

The stated objectives of the Public Health program are to:

- Prepare skilled professional staff to provide the knowledge, skills and health services needed to the community and the labor market;
- Expand different fields of study;
- Reach agreements with other local, regional and international higher education institutions;
- Increase participation in various local and international academic and infrastructural projects;
- Provide mobility for academic staff and students with relevant international institutions;
- Support scientific research work;
- Internationalize of our programs – providing modules in English;
- Ensure the highest level of quality,
- Promote health and healthy lifestyle;
- Promote ethics and adequate communication in patient-health professional and intercollegiate relations;
- Increase access to contemporary literature through academic platforms and literature

Some of these objectives are a bit vague, but were rectified during the virtual site visit.

The study program aims to prepare professionals capable of working in specific fields within health, research institutions and similar fields of medical activity.

The mission of the study program is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the Faculty of Medicine. The allocation of ECTs and their distribution between theoretical teaching and practical exercises is adequate. The SER is very detailed and provides interesting information, but not all information is needed and the presentation could be more concise. The appendix contains numerous copies of documents. The SER should have cross-references to these documents, to facilitate the review process. Overall, the adherence to most standards is credibly presented. However, the criteria of standard 1.3., to have an overarching research program, are not met.

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In the Faculty of Medicine, teachers use the SMU system throughout the teaching and assessment processes. This system allows for electronic depositions, but also for printing and depositing reports (students with previous grades, unfinished, rejected, completed, abstention, physical applications, statistical reports, commission applications etc.). Within the faculty the data are stored and preserved in electronic and printed form. Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) analyses are presented, but it is not clear whether or how the results of these analyses will be integrated into strategic planning.

Standard	compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	x	
Standard 1.2. 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	
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.		x
Standard 1.4. 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	
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	x	
Standard 1.6. 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	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Shorten the SER and try to make it more concise, but continue to describe the actions used to fulfil the respective standard, omit repetitive statements, cross-reference text passages to the appendix-numbers*
2. *Try to identify an overarching research target that could be used by the majority of program members*

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2.2. Quality management

The organizational structure of UFAGj includes a Quality Assurance office which was established by the Steering Council in 2019. A Quality Assurance Officer is part of the "Permanent Statute" and the "Regulation of Quality Assurance and Evaluation" of UFAGj. The Office for Quality Assurance is an independent structure under the umbrella of the "Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation" and reports to the Vice Rector for Learning. Duties of the Central Commission of Quality Assurance (CCQA) are to draft a guide to quality assurance and evaluation activities; to develop instruments for qualitative and quantitative evaluation; to draft and review evaluation and self-evaluation reports; to review self-assessment reports submitted for institutional and program accreditation; to review the recommendations of the KAA and send them to the academic units, to appoint members of working groups for the realization of the evaluations as needed; to lead the process of publishing evaluation reports and to coordinate institutional accreditation and program accreditation processes.

This section in the SER is detailed, but rather complex and describes convincingly numerous evaluations and surveys. Quality control activities are developed and described at the beginning of each academic year. All staff participates in yearly self-evaluation via an Electronic Quality Assessment System (EQUAS). In total, the content of 12 questionnaires targeting different groups is described. The office of Quality Assurance cooperates with the Central Commission of Quality Assurance and the Commission for Quality Assurance in Academic Units to evaluate questionnaires and reports and initiates the processes for quality improvement. Quality assurance covers all areas from planning, implementation and evaluation. Evaluation of the teaching staff is done twice per year. Evaluation criteria include students' evaluation (25%), intercollegiate evaluation (15%), assessment by Dean (15%), scientific publications and participation in conferences (25%) and contribution to university and contribution to community (20%). The questionnaire for inter-peer evaluations addresses elements such as peer cooperation, collegial communication, interpersonal relationships and intercollegiate ethical behaviour. Hence, it is not equal to the classical peer review, where teaching performance of colleagues and other interactions with students are evaluated. Furthermore, a special instrument has been developed to evaluate study programs. Summary statistics of most evaluations are publically available.

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Apart from these quality assessments, regular meetings are frequently held among leading teachers of study programs and with the Dean.

Compared to the current study programs administered by the Faculty of Medicine the overall increase of study programs will be substantial when the proposed programs will be accredited. Thus, one would also expect considerable adaptive changes in Quality Assurance. This issue has been insufficiently addressed.

Standard	compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participates in self-evaluations and cooperates 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
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	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	x	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	x	
Standard 2.7. 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	
Standard 2.8. 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	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	x	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *You may consider reducing the complexity of the presentation somewhat without losing information*
2. *Consider effects of increases in study programs on Quality Assurance staff and resources*

2.3. Academic staff

The majority of teachers have a track record in teaching and academic responsibilities. The code of ethics is mandatory for all departments of the UFAGj. The academic staff includes 4 associate and 6 assistant professors, 10 assistants (PhD candidates and masters), 2 lecturers and 2 clinical practice assistants. The majority of staff members obtained a PhD degree or are PhD candidates. Full- and part-time appointments meet KAA requirements To demonstrate the competence of teachers in their courses, it would have been very helpful, if a table would have been included in the SER that shows the name of the teacher, the course she/he is responsible for, her/his special discipline(s) and previous fields of lecturing and publications relevant to the course topic. Evaluations by students and the administration are adequately regulated, but peer-review in a strict sense is missing. The academic staff is advised to attend training courses and workshops to improve teaching strategies. Examples for teacher training are presented in the SER. Special assistance is given to teachers who require further development in their teaching performance. Apart from teaching, the staff is required to engage in the academic community and in community service. The meeting with representatives of the teaching staff was very positive and revealed their dedication and enthusiasm. However, an enhancement in the quality of learning material has not been sufficiently described. To address this problem, teachers may provide more concrete advice on online learning materials and subject-related platforms.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study	x	

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program under evaluation.		
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	x	
Standard 3.3. 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	
Standard 3.4. 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	
Standard 3.5. 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	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	x	
Standard 3.7. 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	
Standard 3.8. 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	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.		x
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers	x	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Continue to improve the standards for high quality teaching and high quality learning material*
2. *Select staff members who can take a lead to identify new online teaching resources*
3. *Develop a table showing the relationships among individual teachers, the course she/he is responsible for, her/his special discipline(s), previous fields of lecturing and publications, relevant for the course topic*

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2.4. Educational process content

According to the SER, the development of the curriculum was based on Public Health programs of the University Badi (Faculty of Health Sciences; Bachelor of Science "Public Health and Health Promotion"), Syracuse University ("Public Health") and Tirana University of Applied Sciences ("Public Health"). Even though these are not the first addresses in higher education, the curriculum design for the UFAGj program "Public Health" is, for the most part, well developed. Undergraduates of the program can be expected to work in health institutions such as Main Medicine Family Centres (MMFC) and Centres of Family Medicine (CFM), at regional institutes of public health throughout Kosovo and as border inspectors, food inspectors and inspectors at the municipal level.

The disciplines within the curriculum are presented in a logical flow and meet competences at the general level. The majority of syllabi provide essential information on contents of the courses, student work load, teaching formats and examinations, although the specific teaching methods and their interactions with learning could be more detailed. Learning objectives do not always distinguish among knowledge, skills and competences as suggested by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Distinctions between different types of skills and competences such as disciplinary, methodical-analytical and generic are seldom made.

Teaching strategies include several methods and are adequate to achieve the types of learning outcomes. Among student-centred teaching methods, problem-oriented learning (POL) could be more emphasized.

Based on statements in the SER, the student-teacher relationship will be of high quality. Teachers will take time for consultations with students and the relevance of learning outcomes will be discussed with students. During the practise stages, students have assigned tutors from the academic program staff, but more information should be given with respect to clinical practice. Such information could be provided in a table that shows the relationships of the different locations and clinical settings, the number of study groups and the number of students per group, the names of the responsible teachers, the time schedule and the respective learning objectives

Some discrepancies between the weights of evaluation components exist between the general statement in the SER and the individual courses described in the syllabi. Furthermore, the

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presentation of bibliographies is not state-of-the-art. Correct citations (for journals: all authors, title of the manuscript, journal name, publication year, volume and pages; for books: all authors of the respective book chapter, title of the chapter, editors of the book, year of publication, pages in the book, publishing company) should be used by all staff members.

The verification of student achievements in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions is solely based on internal evaluation and is insufficiently addressed.

The proposed number of students is 80. This is a large number for a new program which is, according to the SER, the first and only Public Health BSc program in Kosovo. A maximal number of 60 students would seem more appropriate.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. 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	
Standard 4.2. 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.	x	
Standard 4.3. 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. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	x	
Standard 4.4. 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. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.		x
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are	Not applicable	

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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.		
Standard 4.6. 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.	x	
Standard 4.7. 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.	x	
Standard 4.8. 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	
Standard 4.9. 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
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	x	
Standard 4.11. 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	
Standard 4.12. 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	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Whenever possible, use knowledge, skills and competences to classify learning outcomes and distinguish disciplinary, methodical analytical and generic skills and competences*

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2. *Continue to improve and update the lecture content according to new developments and continue to improve e-learning*
3. *Consider external experts or mechanisms who would help to judge the achievements of students*
4. *Provide more information on clinical practise, design a table that shows the relationships of the different locations and clinical settings, the number of study groups and the number of students per group, the names of the responsible teachers, the time schedule and the respective learning objectives*

2.5. Students

Candidates are considered eligible for the first year of Public Health studies, if they have a certified medical high school diploma, a high school diploma outside of Kosovo (verified by a MEST diploma from the Republic of Kosovo). Students have to undergo an admission exam that comprises several components. For ranking of candidates, high school success accounts for up to 40 points, while up to 60 points can be accumulated by the written exam. Admission rankings are done irrespective of the number of candidates, i.e, if there are fewer candidates than study places available. Quotas for students of neighbouring countries or minorities are considered. An interactive teaching/learning process is assured by obligatory lectures for all students and seminars, exercises and practical work for smaller groups of students. Assessments are described in detail in the syllabi and results of assessments are given in a timely manner. However, discrepancies between the SER and some individual courses, described in 4.2., require clarification. Student rights are publically available and include the right of academic appeal. The academic staff is committed to establishing strong student-teacher relationships.

Students are organized into student unions, chaired by a democratically elected student chair. She/he is a member of the Faculty of Medicine Council and presents the needs and concerns of students. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.

Thesis originality is assessed by the mentor and committee members and software is in place to check for plagiarism. All students have to comply with the Code of Ethics.

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Transfer of students between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs, fulfills the respective regulations. However, this point could be explained in detail to the students at the beginning of study programs.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. 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	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	x	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	x	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	x	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	x	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	x	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	x	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	x	
Standard 5.9. 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	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	x	
Standard 5.11. 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	

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Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Explain all important aspects of transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs at the beginning of study programs*

2.6. Research

As outlined before, there is no overarching research project in the program. Nevertheless, the teaching staff is involved in research activities, and research performance is considered in the evaluation of staff and represents a criterion for promotion. The institution organizes scientific meetings. The effort to increase research activities is also demonstrated by establishing national and international cooperation. Such activities are clearly important, but one needs to be cautious that they are fruitful and result in shared study programs, publications, exchange of students, teachers or scientists or transfer of methodology. Actually, the current number of cooperation-agreements seems to be very high and may require too much work in comparison to the benefit. Clear policies for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards were not found in the SER.

Whether the academic staff has a track record of research in the same topics as its teaching activity, was difficult to ascertain, as the teaching activities and research activities were not directly compared. As already mentioned in 2.3, a table showing the names and academic grades of the teachers, their course, their teaching experience in disciplines relevant for the program and their track record in research relevant for the program would be very helpful.

The research output was difficult to evaluate for some teachers. Citations were in some cases incomplete, as not all authors of the respective scientific contribution were named. Substantial differences exist in the research productivity of staff members. Several teachers failed during the last three years to reach an average of one publication per year, while other teachers were quite successful in publishing their study results. Manuscripts are published in scientific journals, but there is a large variability in the impact of the journals used. Students also are engaged in research. Policies for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students should be

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developed. Access to scientific publications for teachers and students is available via several publication platforms.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 6.1. 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
Standard 6.2. 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	
Standard 6.3. 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
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.		x
Standard 6.5. 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	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	x	
Standard 6.7. 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
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	x	
Standard 6.8. 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	
Standard 6.9. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students		x

Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities	x	

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Establish research projects that integrate the scientific activities of several disciplines (present in the study program) to develop an overarching scientific strategy*
2. *Correct citations (for journals: all authors, title of the manuscript, journal name, publication year, volume and pages; for books: all authors of the respective book chapter, title of the chapter, editors of the book, year of publication, pages in the book, publishing company) should be used by all staff members*
3. *Develop international collaborations in science and strengthen the local scientific connections (clinical and epidemiological research)*
4. *Create a Faculty Research home page identifying research directions and highlight important research articles authored by staff members as well as national or international research articles with relevance for the program*
5. *Apply for projects to get funding for databases that facilitate research*
6. *Develop policies for intellectual property rights and procedures for commercialization of ideas and discoveries by staff and students*
7. *Design a table showing names and academic grades of the teacher, their teaching experience in disciplines relevant for the program and their track record in research relevant for the program*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

UFAGj, Faculty of Medicine provides premises, equipment and human resources and fulfills the necessary standards to ensure long-term implementation of the BSc study program of Public Health. The financial plan of the Medical Faculty is annually prepared and longer-term projections are made to ensure the sustainability of the study program. The number of students is planned accordingly. An e-lab with IT equipment dedicated to e-learning and distance learning is available. The libraries of UFAGj and the City have sufficient stock of the literature, mainly in English, but also in Albanian and other languages, with titles covering more than 50% of the subjects of the study program. The libraries have also

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adjacent reading rooms with the capacity for more than 10% of the students in the study program. In addition, UFAGj has adapted specific laboratories for the study program as well as an Electronic Student Management system and servers for personnel, finance, accounting and IT. People with disabilities have access. A considerable improvement can be expected from the development of a new Campus in the near future.

Standard	*Compliance*	
	Yes	**No**
Standard 7.1. 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	
Standard 7.2. 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	
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate 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; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula	x	
Standard 7.4. 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	
Standard 7.5. 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	x	

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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.		
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs	x	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The Panel would like to thank the program development team for their hospitality and engagement with the Panel during the virtual site visit. It is evident that staff and students have a strong interest to further develop and improve the study program. The Accreditation Panel came to the following conclusions:

1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
2. Quality management	Substantially compliant
3. Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
4. Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
5. Students	Fully compliant
6. Research	Partially compliant
7. Infrastructure and resources	Fully compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

The overall compliance is assessed by the experts at the level of **Substantially compliant.**
The following recommendations need to be considered in relation to the programs accreditation:

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1. *Shorten the SER and try to make it more concise, but continue to describe the actions used to fulfil the respective standard, omit repetitive statements, cross-reference text passages to the appendix-numbers*

2. *Identify an overarching research target that could be used by the majority of program members.*

3. *You may consider reducing the complexity of the Quality Assurance presentation somewhat without losing information*

4. *Consider effects of increases in study programs on Quality Assurance staff and resources*

5. *Continue to improve the standards for high quality teaching and high quality learning material*

6. *Select staff members who can take a lead to identify new online teaching resources*

7. *Develop a table showing the relationships among individual teachers, the course she/he is responsible for, her/his special discipline(s), previous fields of lecturing and publications, relevant for the course topic*

8. *Whenever possible, use knowledge, skills and competences to classify learning outcomes and distinguish disciplinary, methodical analytical and generic skills and competences*

9. *Continue to improve and update the lecture content according to new developments and continue to improve e-learning*

10. *Consider external experts or mechanisms who would help to judge the achievements of students*

11. *Provide more information on clinical practise, design a table that shows the relationships of the different locations and clinical settings, the number of study groups and the number of students per group, the names of the responsible teachers, the time schedule and the respective learning objectives*

12. *Explain all important aspects of transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs at the beginning of study programs*

13. *Correct citations (for journals: all authors, title of the manuscript, journal name, publication year, volume and pages; for books: all authors of the respective book chapter, title of the chapter, editors of the book, year of publication, pages in the book, publishing company) should be used by all staff members*

14. *Develop international collaborations in science and strengthen the local scientific connections (clinical and epidemiological research)*

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15. *Create a Faculty Research home page identifying research directions and highlight important research articles authored by staff members as well as national or international research articles with relevance for the program*
16. *Apply for projects to get funding for databases that facilitate research*
17. *Develop policies for intellectual property rights and procedures for commercialization of ideas and discoveries by staff and students*

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program " *BSc* in *Public Health* " offered by *Universiteti "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, Faculty of Medicine* 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)*

None

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Expert Team

Chair

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

Member

Univ.-Prof. Dr.med.Dr.h.c. Wolfgang Patsch   June 15, 2021

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

Member

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

Member

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

Member

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

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Kosovo Accreditation Agency

Expert Team

Chair

| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

Univ.-Prof. Dr.med.Dr.h.c. Wolfgang Patsch   June 15, 2021

| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

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