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Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan
BSc in Computer Science

RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

March 2021, Tallinn/Gjilan

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 12.03.2021

Expert Team (ET) members:
- Prof. Dr. Peeter Normak

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):
- Naim Gashi, 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).*
- *Memoranda of understanding and cooperation agreements between University of Gjilan "Kadri Zeka" or the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and other institutions.*
- *CVs of the academic staff.*
- *Staff Publication List.*
- *Intellectual Property Guideline*
- *Guidelines for the Assessment of Academic Staff and the Subjects by Students and the Usage of such Results in the University "Kadri Zeka".*
- *Manual for Planning and Assessment of the Performance of the Academic Staff.*
- *University budgets for 2019 and 2020 and provisional budgets for 2021-2023.*
- *List of capital construction projects planned for 2020-2023.*
- *Regulation on the Work of the Publishing Council of the "Kadri Zeka" University, Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on Selection Procedures on Appointment and Promotion of Academic Staff.*
- *Regulation for Master Studies.*
- *Regulation on Personal Income and other Payments of the Academic Staff at the University "Kadri Zeka".*
- *Regulation on Functioning of the Advisory Board.*
- *Regulation on the Payment of Members of the Senate of the University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan.*

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- *Regulation on the Formation of Commissions for the Admission of New Students in UKZ.*
- *Regulation for the Master Program Local Governance and Democratic Society.*
- *Regulation on the Engagement of External Associates.*
- *Regulation on Rules and Procedures for General Elections in UKZ.*
- *Regulation on the Work of the Senate of the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences.*
- *Regulation on the Work of the Steering Committee of the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on Disciplinary Measures and Procedures for the Academic Staff and Students.*
- *Regulation for writing the bachelor's thesis.*
- *Regulation on the use of telephones (landline and mobile) at the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation for determining the amount of formal lunch-dinner expenses and representation expenses.*
- *Regulation on the internal organization and systematization of jobs.*
- *Regulation on personal income of administrative staff at the public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on elections at the University "Kadri Zeka"and the work of the Faculty Council dated 13.03.2015.*
- *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on supervision of the strategic plan.*
- *Regulation on student engagement in internships at the university.*
- *Regulation on the establishment and functioning of the Council for quality and evaluation supervision.*
- *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on Selection of the Academic Staff in "Kadri Zeka" University in Gjilan.*
- *Regulation on students elections in UKZ.*
- *Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ.*
- *Regulation on Internationalization.*
- *Regulation to Support the Mobility and other Activities of the Academic Staff of the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.*
- *Provisional Statute of Public University of Gjilan.*
- *Statute of the University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan.*

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- *Development Strategy for Internationalization and Action Plan 2020-2025.*
- *UKZ Strategic Plan 2017-2022 (revised in 2020).*
- *Key Performance Indicators at UKZ.*
- *Syllabi of the subjects.*
- *Regulations on bachelor studies at other faculties.*

Requested documents:
- *BSc study program "Computer Science."*
- *Master program "Control Systems and AI".*
- *Reviews of the study program Computer Science for two last years.*
- *Templates of the questionnaires for different stakeholder groups - graduates, students (both for assessing the administration as well as the academic staff and courses), employers, self-assessment of academic staff, deans' assessment of academic staff.*
- *List of the members of the Studies Committee of the faculty*
- *Minutes of the last two meetings of the Studies Committee*
- *Missing CV-s: Nevrije Ismaili, Xhevdet Thaqi.*
- *Missing syllabi of the master program: Mathematical Systems Theory, Theory and Methodology of Science with Applications, Practical Work*

Received documents:
- *CV-s: Nevrije Ismaili, Xhevdet Thaqi.*
- *Templates of the questionnaires for different stakeholder groups - graduates, students (both for assessing the administration as well as the academic staff and courses), employers, self-assessment of academic staff, deans' assessment of academic staff.*
- *Syllabi of the master program: Theory and Methodology of Science with Applications, Practical Work*
- *List of the members of the Studies Committee of the faculty*
- *Minutes of Teaching Council meetings of 27.11.2019, 12.02.2021, 10.03.2021*

Criteria used for program evaluation:
- *Standards and performance indicators for external quality assurance (Re/accreditation of bachelor and masters study programs) set in the Accreditation Manual.*

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1.2. Site visit schedule

12th of March

09.00 – 09.40   Meeting with the management of the university
1. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Artan Dërmaku – Dean
2. Prof. Ass. Dr. Ragmi Mustafa – Prodean
3. Blerta Dushica – Secretary of Academic Units

09.45 – 10.50   Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1. Computer Sciences/BSc
1. Prof. Ass. Dr. Lindita Nebiu Hyseni
2. Prof. Ass. Dr. Basri Ahmeti
3. Prof. Ass. Dr. Kastriot Dërmaku

10.55 – 12.00   Meeting with the heads of the study programme 2. Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence/MSc
1. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Artan Dërmaku
2. Prof. Ass. Dr. Ragmi Mustafa

12.00 – 12.40   Lunch break

12.40 – 13.20   Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
1. Fitore Malaj - Quality Office
2. Ass. Ph.D.C. Afërdita Ibrahimi - Quality Coordinator
3. Artan Dërmaku - Administrative staff

13.25 – 14.15   Meeting with teaching staff
1. Prof. Ass. Dr. Nysret Demaku
2. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Ekrem Halimi
3. PhD.C. Liridon Hoti

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4. PhD.C. Pajtim Rashiti
5. PhD.C. Selami Klaiqi
6. MSc Mentor Arifaj

14.20 – 15.00   Meeting with students
1. Donat Dalipi
2. Herolind Ymeri
3. Sara Keqmezi
4. Vlera Bllaca
5. Lorita Rahimi
6. Englantinë Avdyli

15.05 – 15.45   Meeting with graduates
1. Buen Bajrami,
2. Ermal Spahiu,
3. Arlind Kryeziu,
4. Donika Hyseni,

15.50 – 16.30   Meeting with employers of graduates
1. Frank Hantke - Hymeri Kleeman
2. Fejzulla Mustafa - RC Cola
3. Herolind Beqiri - Tech Vision
4. Enver Vokshi - Energy Design 2002
5. Hasan Mehmeti - Info Tech

16.35 – 16.45   Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts

16.45 – 16.55   Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program
1. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Artan Dërmaku - Dean
2. Prof. Ass. Dr. Ragmi Mustafa - Prodean

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

The University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan (UKZ, official name *Public University of Gjilan*) was established as a public university by the Decision of the Government of Kosovo No. 118/03 of 6 March 2013, which was approved by the Assembly of Kosovo on 30 May 2013. Provision of higher education in Gjilan goes back to 1958 when the Teacher Training Centre was established. In 2002, the Faculty of Education of University of Prishtina was established in Gjilan (based on the former Higher Pedagogical School). In 2010 the University of Prishtina established in Gjilan two other faculties: the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Law. In 2013, all these academic units have been merged to a new independent university.

The Assembly of Kosovo approved the Statue of UKZ on 10.12.2020.

UKZ has five faculties (Applied Sciences; Computer Science; Economy; Education; Law) and offers eight bachelor level (Preschool Education; Primary Education; General Law; Banking, Finance and Accounting; Management; Marketing; Computer Science; Educational Mathematics) and two master level (E-Government; Local Government and Democratic Society) study programs. Six new study programs are prepared: Teaching in Albanian Language and Literature (MA), Teaching and Curricula (MA), Systems Control and Artificial Intelligence (MSc), Management and Entrepreneurship (MSc), Legal-Criminal (MSc), EU Administration and Law (BSc).

UKZ has about 5000 students and 45 academic staff, of which two are masters of arts, 4 are assistants (PhD candidates) and the others have a PhD degree.

The UKZ campus in the centre of Gjilan consisting of two interconnected buildings.

UKZ has special quotas for the admission of students from small communities (Serbs, Turks, Roma) and from municipalities outside Kosovo (Serbia and North Macedonia). There are conditions for admitting students with special needs. The university admitted 801 students in 2020, including 76 students in the Faculty of Computer Science. The student-professor relation 21:1 should be rated as very good.

The Faculty of Computer Science is established on 01.10.2014 and has currently 10 regular academic staff. The faculty runs two study programs: Computer Science BA and E-Government (the latter jointly with the Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Law). There are 381 students on these study programs. Studies are conducted in Albanian.

The Computer Science BA study program was accredited from 1.10.2014 for two years and reaccredited from 1.10.2016 for four years. The study program had previously two specializations (modules):

- Software Engineering and Web Design (SEW)

- Informatics for Economy (IE)

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It was decided to replace the IE module by a module "Systems and Control Technology", and the study program submitted to accreditation already contains the latter.

UKZ has institutional accreditation from year 2017 and is currently in the process of re-accreditation.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

What follows are the comments on each standard, numbered according to the numbering of the standards in the *KAA Accreditation Manual*. There is a table at the end of each section that lists the compliance assessment for each standard.

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

1.1. The mission statement of the university does not specify any focus area of the university, stating only that the university aims to establish and support the highest standards in the field of teaching and learning, scientific research and artistic creativity. However, the *Strategic Plan* of the university for 2017-2022 states that the university "aims to profile itself mainly in education, computer science, applied science, social science". Additionally, the mission statement of the Faculty of Computer Science states that the faculty aims to:
   - promote the study of Computer Science based on European (Bologna process) programs and experience,
   - prepare students to innovate, create and use new technologies that support local, regional and national economy,
   - enable students to solve increasingly complex issues, to design and implement software packages and to improve information technologies.
   - provide internationally knowledge and research in systems analysis, design, and control.

   Thus, the study program is consistent with the profile of the university and with the mission of the Faculty.

1.2. The complete study program was not provided to the ET. SER discusses the compliance of the study program with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area on general aspects only (for example, involvement of stakeholders in the design of the study program). Consistence of competences of graduates is not addressed. However, during the meeting with employers of the graduates some significant recommendations

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concerning the content of the study program were made. This means that the proposals of the companies could be taken into account even more widely.

1.3. The overall didactic concept was in fact not explained in the SER. The staff explained during the meetings that although there is no subject devoted to research methods and methodology, these are discussed in different other subjects. For example, conceptual modeling in *Control Systems Analysis and Design* (although this was not mentioned in the course syllabus). The study program relies on four pillars – data bases, programming, computer networks, control systems. Students are offered design tasks and the subjects are covered with sufficient amount of textbooks

1.4. The academic processes are very well regulated. The main document stating the structure and administration is a thorough (85 pages) *Statute of the University*. There is a number of additional regulating documents like *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences*, *Regulation for writing the bachelor's thesis*, *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*, *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*, *Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*, *Regulation on student engagement in internships at the university*, *Regulation on Internationalization* etc. All these documents are made publicly available.

1.5. For ethical issues, the university has a separate regulation (*Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*). This document covers on its 13 pages all aspects of ethical conduct including prohibition of discrimination and harassment, plagiarism, conflict of interest, transparency and confidentiality etc. There are created bodies for the implementing the principles stated in this document: the Ethics Council and the Disciplinary Committee. Actions in cases of violation are stated in the *Regulation on disciplinary sanction and procedure for academic staff and students*.

1.6. According to the *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*, "At the end of each academic year, the Faculty shall organize a periodic review of the study programme and its teaching regulation". Concrete aspects are listed that should be reviewed.

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

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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. Carry out an analysis of the compliance of the intended learning outcomes with the requirements set in National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

2. Define explicitly the overarching didactic and scientific concept of the study program.

2.2. Quality management

2.1. Students assess the teachers at the end of each semester. The results are shared with the teaching staff. At the end of each academic year, the teachers provide a written report on all aspects of the teaching process, identifying issues and proposing solutions including control procedures for knowledge and results achieved. Then a review of the study program is composed, which determines "changes to be carried out in the study program and in its teaching regulation, in the implementation process, in the material and didactical basis, in academic staff, in the control procedures of students' assessments, and in the feedback process from students" (*Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*).

2.2. Quality assurance relies on three pillars: bodies, documents, instruments. The main documents regulating the evaluating processes and planning for improvement are *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the public university "Kadri Zeka"*

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Gjilan and *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*. The Quality Assurance Office coordinates the quality assessment of study programs. There is an internal quality assessment group as well as the quality and accreditation coordinator in each faculty. The duties and responsibilities of the faculty's quality coordinator are explicitly determined. The regulations mentioned above determine quality instruments and prescribe concrete duties of all parties involved.

2.3. The quality assurance processes at the university are unified and regulated on two levels: 1) the quality assurance and evaluation system, quality assurance mechanisms and instruments, quality assurance stakeholders and the duties and responsibilities of the parties involved in this process are defined in the *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* and 2) the basic priorities of the quality assurance and the way of its implementation are determined in the *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*. These documents regulate – among other aspects – also design and approval of new study programs, continuous review of study programs, external evaluation, evaluation of teaching process, etc.

2.4. It is commendable that quality issues are on a separate pop-up menu on the homepage of the university website. According to the *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* the periodic reviews should consider the following aspects: allocation of credits to respective disciplines or group-disciplines; teaching programs for specific subjects; constituent elements of disciplines and allocation of credits among them (lectures, seminars, assignments, projects, labs, etc.); the study program regulation; the necessary didactic basis for the implementation of the study program, identifying deficiencies and undertaking necessary measures for the successive year; literature used, deficiencies observed and measures undertaken to improve the situation; study program implementation in the respective academic year; control procedures of knowledge/exams and analysis of control outcomes; feedback from students. The review report must determine changes to be carried out in the study program and in its teaching regulation, in the implementation process, in the material and didactical basis, in academic staff, in the control procedures of students' assessments, and in the feedback process from students.

2.5. The SER lists (pages 32/33) a coherent and thorough set of activities for improving the quality of study programs. However, no evidences were given showing that the required standards have in reality been met and that the performance has improved. On some indicators, the numbers have even been decreased. For example, the average number of enrolled students was 99,5 in years 3013-2017, but 70,7 in 2018-2020. It should be mentioned that when meeting the students, they repeatedly expressed the wish that the number of students in the specialty would be higher.

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2.6. There are six questionnaires developed: 1) The Dean shall assess the academic staff; 2) Self-Assessment of Academic Staff; 3) Students shall assess the academic staff and courses; 4) Students shall assess the administration; 5) The employer shall assess the academic and administrative staff; 6) The graduates (Alumni). Every academic staff is assigned a score which is composed from three components: 1) students' assessment (30%), 2) self-assessment (30%), 3) dean's assessment (40%). Students' assessment for the teaching staff is internal and shared only with the teacher, with the Program Director and the Dean of the faculty as well as with the university's senior management. The evaluations are made publicly available. However, the latest data on students' assessment of academic staff and subjects on the university's web page are from 2018/2019 academic year. On the other hand, employers stated during the meeting that the university never asked for their feedback on the study program.

2.7. The procedure for further development of the study program is described under section 2.4 above. The University Management Digital Systems (SMU) has options for collecting data on students work load, student achievement etc. that allows to take immediate actions when necessary. There are regular meetings with the graduate, students and academic staff where aspects of professional development, employment *etc*. are discussed.

2.8. The *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* states that the review of study programs and the teaching regulation is conducted at the end of each academic year.

2.9. As described in 2.4, the study program regulation and implementation, as well as control procedures and analysis of control outcomes are reviewed every year.

	Compliance	
Standard	**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	
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	

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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. Identify the reasons for the declining popularity of the study program and take appropriate countermeasures.

2. Develop a procedure for collecting systematic feedback from the alumni and employers.

2.3. Academic staff

3.1. UKZ as a public university follows strictly all regulations concerning employment. Personal data of academic persons are presented in tabular form. The courses taught are listed in the SER.

3.2. Legal requirements set for teaching staff are met: according to the study program in SER, 10 lecturers (out of 15) have a PhD degree and are elected by open competition.

3.3. According to the CV-s submitted, the formal requirements concerning employment of academic staff by other institutions are met.

3.4. About 67% of all teachers have full-time employment, and consequently, they cover the big majority of courses.

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3.5. There are ten full-time lecturers on the study program who hold a PhD degree. Although the majority of teachers are listed among the teachers of *Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence* master program, the total amount of staff with a PhD is sufficient for both study programs.

3.6. According to the *Regulation to Support Mobility and other Activities of the Academic Staff of the University*, the university supports full-time academic staff for active participation in conferences and for scientific mobility. Depending on the amount of financial support requested (up to 1000€ or more than 1000€), the decision is made by the rector or by the Steering Council of UKZ. On the other hand, there are no opportunities for long-term (at least one semester) visits – sabbaticals – to the leading universities and research centers.

3.7. Concerning community services, several concrete activities were listed: development – with students' involvement – web sites for hospitals, primary and secondary schools, digitalization of bus stations etc. To determine the activities, the needs of the local municipality and the region are analyzed. Concerning students, they rated teachers positively in terms of their availability for consultations.

3.8. The university regulations foresee conducting academic staff yearly self-assessment and by the dean. Students assess the staff at the end of each semester. and by, as well as self-assessment. The evaluations are made publicly available. However, as it was mentioned under section 2.6, the latest data on students' assessment of academic staff and subjects on the university's web page are from 2018/2019 academic year.

3.9. Although the UKZ *Strategic Plan 2017-2022* (page 6) declares that "The essence of the Strategy can be included in five points: … 3. Improving the quality of teaching and learning …", no concrete strategies for improving teaching and quality of learning materials are proposed.

3.10. There are no retired full-time teachers – the average age of full-time teaching staff is about 44 years.

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 program under evaluation.	X	

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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. Find resources for long-term training of academic staff abroad.

2. Determine the quality indicators for evaluation the quality of learning materials and implement their usage in the holistic quality system on the university.

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2.4. Educational process content

4.1.   The study program is in transition where the module *Informatics for Economy* (IE) is replaced by the module *Systems and Control Technology* (SCT). This transition took into account the declining interest of students to take the IE module, and the increasing interest in technology related – including automation – topics. The learning outcomes are focused on ICT competences; development of generic and soft skills and competences are not explicitly stated. On the other hand, the fact that the learning outcomes stress the implementation/application of theoretical knowledge in solving real problems is commendable. However, there are few aspects that are either inadequate or at least questionable:

4.1.1.   Not all learning outcomes of the study program are applicable to all students. For example, *Understand and Implement of AI in Control Systems* is applicable only for those students who have taken the SCT module.

4.1.2.   No learning outcomes have been formulated for the modules.

4.1.3.   Although one of the stated learning outcomes is "Apply theoretical knowledge of information technology and implementation of software engineering and web design in solving real problems", the mechanism for achieving this remains unclear because: 1) the study program consists of a set of courses each focusing only on certain aspects. On the other hand, for solving real problems combined use of knowledge and skills from different knowledge areas are needed. Conducting one project of 6 ECTS is certainly not sufficient for that, especially if a student has chosen the SCT module and 2) the study program does not contain any internship. Therefore, a student may have no understanding of real work processes in the industry prior to the graduation.

4.1.4.   Similarly to 4.1.3, it is not clear how the achievement of learning outcome "Analyse and evaluate Algorithms complexity" will ensured.

4.1.5.   The subjects in the study program have in fact strong focus on theory. The share of theory is bigger than share of practice even in subjects that traditionally are considered as practical (for example, *Programming* I and *Programming* II). Moreover, development of skills for conducting a complete cycle of development – from the problem analysis to a testing of a working prototype – is not mentioned in the learning outcomes of the study program nor in any subject. The desire to have a larger share of practical work and internships (business experience, industry placement) was expressed by both alumni and employers. The importance of this was especially strongly

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emphasized by employers – according to their recommendations, the inclusion of an internship in the study program is an absolute necessity.

4.2. The study program covers a relatively broad field of information technology that is typical for undergraduate programs. It is claimed in the SER that the study program is designed in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. However, no correspondence or even a general discussion on the correspondence is presented. For example, National Qualifications Framework states that the graduates "are expected to exhibit independence in research and problem solving tasks. They must have the ability to collect and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to arrive at judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues." On the other hand, the study program does not have clearly stated scientific/applied research objective (cf. section 6.1).

4.3. There are listed 7 learning outcomes. These all are on ICT competences (cf. section 4.1). More emphasis could be placed on general competences in the learning outcomes. For example, it is claimed that the study program aims to develop also leadership skills. However, development of leadership skills is not mentioned in the learning outcomes of any subject.

4.4. The syllabi contain all the necessary components and were submitted in electronic form. They are detailed enough to get an adequate understanding on the content and other aspects of the subjects.

4.5. The language in which the study program will be offered is Albanian.

4.6. The student-teacher relationship seems to be a partnership. The students also highlighted the helpfulness and good availability of the teachers at the meeting with the expert.

4.7. The teaching methodology and assessment methods are described in detail in the syllabi. The students had no comments or objections on teaching methodology and assessment methods. Students are directed to do enough independent work - they say that it takes them an average of 25 hours a week to work independently.

4.8. Learning outcomes and other aspects of modules are described in the syllabi and are discussed already on the first class.

4.9. The grading system that is used in all Balkan countries is used. The grades are 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 where 5 marks failing and 6-10 are positive. The passing level is 50% as widely used in Europe.

4.10. Students who are not satisfied with the evaluation of their work have the right to submit a written complaint to the Dean. The procedures are described in the *Statute of UKZ*

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(article 109). One student described a personal case when she was not satisfied with the grade and was given a new opportunity.

4.11. There is no internship/practical placement in the study program.

4.12. Cooperation agreements are signed with several public and private institutions. On the other hand, as the study program does not have an internship module, the effectivity of these agreements is questionnable.

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 adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their	n.a.	

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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 KAA 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.	**n.a.**	
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. *To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)*	**X**	

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ET recommendations:

1. Revise the learning outcomes of the study program so that they are applicable to all graduates.

2. State the learning outcomes for both modules as well.

3. Make sure that the learning outcomes of the subjects cover the competences of level 6 of the National Qualifications Framework.

4. Add an internship as a mandatory subject to the study program.

2.5. Students

5.1. The admission procedure of new students is conducted according to the clauses set in *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences* and in accordance to the legal regulations established by MEST and KAA. For example, the complaints are handled by the Complaints Review Commission. Following the decision of the Complaints Review Commission, the Commission for admission of new student announces the final results.

5.2. The enrollment criteria are set in *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences*. The candidates must submit Diploma and High School certificates (originals) and the birth certificate.

5.3. One group of students consists of maximum 60 students for lectures and up to 30 for laboratory work. Students expressed satisfaction with the size of the study groups – during the Covid-19 pandemic, the size of the groups was about 15 students.

5.4. The communication of the student evaluation results is made through the Student Service System. The teacher is obliged to submit the exam report together with the student list and the physical copies of the applications downloaded from the university management system to the service officer within 48 hours after the end of the exam. However, according to students the expert met with, this was not always the case. If a student is not satisfied with their grade then they have the right to make a written complaint to the Dean within two days of their publication and request an evaluation through a commission.

5.5. The electronic University Management System retains all records for each student, including assessments, colloquium scores, final exam scores etc. The students are provided with the appropriate certificates (Grade Certificate, Diploma and Diploma Supplement).

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5.6. The exam from the same subject can be repeated up to 4 times (the 4th to a commission). At the student's request – in reasonable and justified cases – the dean may authorize the student to take the exam at a different time.

5.7. Completion rates for student registries are maintained for all courses and the program. However, these are not discussed neither in the Strategy of the university nor in the quality assurance regulation documents.

5.8. Clauses concerning academic plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) form a whole article in the *Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*. SMU contains an anti-plagiarism option. All diploma topics in UKZ are verified for anti-plagiarism. A procurement is going on for purchasing a more enhanced anti-plagiarism software.

5.9. The rights (including appeal procedures) and obligations of students are stated in the *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences* which is a publicly available document. Issues of non-academic conduct are regulated in the UKZ Statute.

5.10. The transfer of students between the faculties of the university is regulated in *Regulation on Basic Studies - Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences*. Transfer from other universities is possible only for those who have completed at least 50% (in ECTS) of studies in their home/sending university.

5.11. Academic staff are required to be available to students on a regular basis (at least 1 hour a week), for both academic and advisory purposes. Additional hours of consultations with academic staff may be organized. Consultations can be organized in individual or group form. As students explained, teachers are available via email 24/7.

	Compliance	
Standard	**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**	

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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**	

Compliance level: fully compliant.

ET recommendations: include students' completion rates in KPI's and update the quality assurance regulations with appropriate clauses.

2.6. Research

6.1. The study program does not have clearly stated scientific/applied research objective; research is not mentioned in no learning outcome of the study program. Neither is research mentioned in *Regulation on Basic Studies - Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences*.

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6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are specified in the work contract, in the *Statute of the University* and in the *Regulation on Selection Procedures on Appointment and Promotion of Academic Staff*. The performance in relation to these expectations is considered in the self-assessment reports.

6.3. Research activities are determined in the *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*. These are fully consistent with international standards and established norms. Research is one of the main scopes also in the document *Development Strategy for Internationalization and IRO Action Plan* 2020-2025.

6.4. The scope of research of the academic staff harmonizes only conditionally with the scope of the study program. There is hardly done any research in software engineering and web design or in systems and control technology.

6.5. The SER contained a thorough (11 pages) list of publications and attended conferences. However, about half of the publications and conferences were from 2016 and earlier. The research of academic staff is internationally visible (for example, in *Google Scholar, GS*). However, according to GS, there are no citations to the articles of about 50% of the full-time academic staff. This means that the scientific impact of several members of academic staff is essentially non-existent. The GS h-index for the remaining 50% was between 1 and 5. Moreover, research and development activities are very poorly described on the university website. During meetings with ET, teachers complained about the difficulties of cooperation with leading foreign universities, caused primarily by financial reasons.

6.6. Research is basically validated by scientific publications. No information was provided about technological transfer. This is not facilitated by the salary system either, as salaries are unified and do not depend on cooperation with companies. A Research Institute is planned, one of which task is supposed to be technological transfer.

6.7. According to the list of publications submitted, the majority of full-time teachers has published at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication per year for the past three years.

6.8. The regular academic staff within the Faculty publishes papers on behalf of the University.

6.9. No evidences ware provided that 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. On the other hand, teachers offer topics for diploma work very often according to their research interest.

6.10. The university has not yet established intellectual property policies.

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6.11. The prerequisites for student research are insufficient - the curriculum does not deal with research methods and methodology (research methods and methodology are not mentioned in any subject description). The students argued that laboratories should be better equipped so that proper research can be carried out.

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 6.9/6.8. 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	

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Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		**X**
Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.		**X**

Compliance level: partially compliant.

ET recommendations:

1. Decide on the research priorities of the Faculty of Computer Science and form the research groups accordingly.

2. Specify scientific/applied research objectives of the study program which harmonizes with the research priorities of the Faculty.

3. Develop and implement a motivation system that supports technological transfer and cooperation of academic staff with companies.

4. The university is recommended to establish an intellectual property ownership policy.

5. Update the study program either by adding a course in research methods and methodology, or adding topics of research methods and methodology to different existing courses.

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

7.1. For satisfying current needs, the university has enough premises, human resources and according to the SER, equipment as well. The University has two 25 lecture halls, 10 lecture cabinets, 4 computer labs, in total 1485 seats. There are 21 offices for administrative purposes and 110 computers in computer labs as well as other equipment. On the other hand, the university needs more premises and human resources for expanding its academic activities.

7.2. The study programs of the university do not have separate financial plans, the financial needs of the study program are covered by the central administration of the university.

7.3. As a public institution of higher education, University's financial sustainability is guaranteed by the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework for the next three years. The University is the owner of the space it uses.

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7.4. Considering the number of students (about 1500 active students in the whole university), the number and size of teaching classrooms is adequate. Should the university decide on a more practical approach to teaching and learning (which is highly recommended), the composition of laboratories and other physical space (smaller rooms for group work and space for socializing) should also be revised to allow, among other things, their more intensive use by students for independent tasks and research.

7.5. There are 180 places for reading in the Library, about 52 thousand copies of books and about 15 thousand book titles. The university has agreement with the Association of Electronic Libraries of Kosovo to access online digital libraries. The university itself admits that library services are insufficient, both in terms of the availability of educational literature and access to electronic databases. Wi-Fi is also unsatisfactory, which is why some students prefer to work somewhere else than in the library.

7.6. The facility possesses electrical stairs, elevators, emergency exits as well as the entire infrastructure which is needed for students with special needs.

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	

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

Compliance level: substantially compliant.

ET recommendations:

1. The speed of Wi-Fi should be increased, especially in the library.

2. Revise the library stock, setting the needs of study programs as the priority.

3. Prepare a detailed financial plan for the acquisitions required for the implementation of the study program.

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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The following recommendations need to be considered in relation to the program accreditation:

1. The main activities of the university are very well covered by regulatory documents. Much more problematic is the fact that the requirements set out in these documents are not always properly followed - in some cases the requirements are met formally. For example, the requirement of publishing at least one research paper a year is not always satisfied. Moreover, although it is stated in the UKZ Strategic Plan 2017-2022 (NB! Adopted four years ago) that "For a new and consolidating university, clarifying strategic objectives, specific objectives and actions to be taken to achieve those priorities is one of the most important actions" the **research priorities** of the faculty are still not agreed.

2. Conducting research and development projects was not discussed in the SER, almost not discussed on the university website and not reflected in the CVs of the academic staff. This shows that the role of research and development activities are largely underestimated in the activities of the university. In further forming of academic staff special attention should be paid to the following aspects:

   a. The intensity and quality of research and development activities depend on a great extent on the existing of a **leading researcher** who conducts high-level research and is able to create a research group on an important topic around him.

   b. For the quality and sustainability of the study program, it is important that academic staff conducts research in the area of the study program, and vice versa, that the **scope of the study program** harmonizes with the research scope of academic staff.

3. Significant development is only possible if the necessary resources are available. As public universities are financed from public funds, the state also has an important responsibility for the quality of university activities. IT is a priority for Kosovo, so funding for higher IT education must also be a priority. This includes development of the IT infrastructure, supporting research activities, study tours of academic staff and students, but also supporting companies, so they can conduct internships of students.

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Overall compliance:

Standard	Compliance level
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	Substantially compliant
Overall compliance	**Substantially compliant**

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the *Bachelor of Computer Science* study program offered by University of Gjilan is **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the *Accreditation Manual* and, therefore recommends to accredit the program for a duration of **five years** with 150 students to be enrolled on the study program.

Expert Team

Chair

	Peeter Normak	**23.03.2021**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

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