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***“KADRI ZEKA” UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE***

E-GOVERNANCE

MASTER PROGRAM

RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

June 2021

Faculty of Computer Science, University “Kadri Zeka”, Gjilan



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
Context	3
Site visit schedule	5
A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation	8
PROGRAM EVALUATION	9
Mission, objectives and administration	9
Quality management	11
Academic staff	13
Educational process content	18
Students	22
Research	25
Infrastructure and resources	29
OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET	32
APPENDICES (if available)	34



Republika e Kosovës
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 18th May 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Dr. Josip Balen*
- *Ms. Laura Palac (student expert)*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self evaluation report*
- *Cooperation agreements with the industry, academic and public institutions (72)*
- *CVs of the academic staff from the three institutions (FCS, FL and FE)*
- *List of Academic Staff publication and Monographies*
- *Guideline and Agreement template for Intellectual Property rights*
- *GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND THE SUBJECTS*
- *MANUAL FOR PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF*
- *PCF Budget Plan-Shtator-2020*
- *Projektet Kapitale ne UKZ*
- *PROVISIONAL STATUTE- UKZ*
- *Statute of UKZ-approved by the Assembly of Kosovo*
- *DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION*
- *International Cooperation Strategy*
- *Strategic Plan -UKZ*
- *Courses Syllabuses*
- *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*



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

- *Regulation for Master Studies*
- *Regulation on Personal Income and other Payments of the Academic Staff at the UKZ*
- *Regulation on Establishment and Functioning Principles of the Advisory Board of the University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan*
- *Regulation to Support Mobility and other Activities of the Academic Staff of the UKZ*
- *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 Procedures for the Engagement of the External Associates at the UKZ*
- *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 Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Law*
- *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Education*
- *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Economics*
- *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 on the use of telephones (landline and mobile) at the UKZ 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 UKZ Gjilan*
- *Regulation on elections at the UKZ and the work of the Faculty Council 13.03.2015*
- *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public UKZ Gjilan*
- *Regulation - Commission for the supervision of implementation of the strategic plan of the public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*
- *Regulation on student engagement in internships at administration of the UKZ Gjilan*
- *Regulation on the establishment and functioning of the Council for quality and evaluation supervision*
- *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the UKZ ' Gjilan*
- *KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AT UKZ*
- *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*

4



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

- *Regulation-on-Internationalization*
- *Regulation-on-Selection-of-the-Academic-Staff-in-“Kadri-Zeka”-University-in-Gjilan-1*
- *REGULATION-TO-SUPPORT-MOBILITY-AND-OTHER-ACTIVITIES-OF-THE-ACADEMIC-STAFF-OF-THE-UNIVERSITY-“KADRI-ZEKA”-GJILAN*
- *STANDARDS ON INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE IN*
- *Standards-on-internal-quality-assurance-in-the-University-“Kadri-Zeka”-Gjilan-1*
- *Clarifications on the ownership of the Public University-merged*
- *Digital platforms for teaching ukz-platforma.net and e-learning through moodle*
- *Financial plan in the study program or the Faculty level for the next three years*
- *Lists of participants at several trainings and round tables*
- *Procedures for handling complaints by students*
- *Regulation-on-Selection-of-the-Academic-Staff-in-“Kadri-Zeka”-University-in-Gjilan-1*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, July 2018*

1.2. Site visit schedule

Expert Team

- Prof. Dr. Josip Balen - Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, Osijek, Croatia
- Ms. Laura Palac - Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing (FER)

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

5



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Kosovo Accreditation Agency

Site Visit Program

Meeting with the management of the Faculty	
Time	Participants in the meeting
09.00 – 09.40	Dean: Prof.Asoc. Dr. Artan Dermaku Vice dean: Prof. Ass. Dr. Ragmi Mustafa Coordinator: Prof.Ass. Dr. Kastriot Dermaku
Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	
Time	Participants in the meeting
09.45 – 10.30	Prof.Asoc. Dr. Xhevdet Thaqi - Vice Rector for Teaching, Research and Student affairs Fitore Malaj – Quality Office Aferdita Ibrahimji- Quality Coordinator Labinota Ramadani - Administrative Staff
Meeting with the heads of the study programme	
Time	Participants in the meeting
10.35 – 11.35	Prof. Ass. Dr. Nysret Demaku Prof. Ass. Dr. Refik Kryeziu
Meeting with teaching staff	
Time	Participants in the meeting
12.10 – 12:50	Prof.Asoc. Dr. Sadik Haxhiu Prof.Asoc. Dr. Xhevat Sopi Prof.Ass. Dr. Lindita Nebihu Hyseni Prof.Ass. Dr. Arben Sahiti Prof.Asoc. Dr.Urtak Hamiti Prof.Asoc. Dr. Naim Mustafa



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
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Meeting with students	
Time	Participants in the meeting
12.55 – 13.35	Elita Bardhi - student Myhedin Zylfija - student Enisa Sylejmani - student Dardan Gjoshi - student Tansel Sherifi - student
Meeting with graduates	
Time	Participants in the meeting
13.40 – 14.20	Dren Thaqi -graduate Buen Bajrami -graduate Hekuran Kadolli -graduate Florentina Kryeziu -graduate
Meeting with employers of graduates	
Time	Participants in the meeting
14.25 – 15.05	Fjolla Ukshini – Kosovo Bar Association Bardhyl Sylja – General Director Public Administration Kujtim Gashi - Information Society Agency /MIA
Internal Meeting of KAA	
Time	Participants in the meeting
15.05 – 15.15	Only KAA staff
Closing meeting with the management of the Faculty and program	
Time	Participants in the meeting
15:15 – 15:25	Dean: Prof.Asoc. Dr. Artan Dermaku Vice dean: Prof. Ass. Dr. Ragmi Mustafa Coordinator: Prof.Ass. Dr. Kastriot Dermaku



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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

The public University of "Kadri Zeka" (hereinafter the University or UKZ) currently consists of the five following faculties: Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Applied Sciences and Faculty of Computer Science, and one organizational unit: the University Library. In total ten study programs are available at the faculties of which eight are bachelor level programs and two are master level programs. The organization of decision-making structures in academic matters is done in accordance with the Statute of the University. The Steering Council takes decisions on the opening and closing of study programs and academic units. All academic matters are decided upon by the University Senate, chaired by the Rector. The members of the Senate are elected by the academic units of the University, by the administration and by the Student Parliament. The Faculty Council leads and makes decisions on all academic matters of the faculties. The Dean is the chief manager of the Faculty and he represents the Faculty to the UKZ Senate.

The Faculty of Computer Science (hereinafter the Faculty or FCS) was established in 2014. It offers two study programs, one bachelor study program in Computer Science and one master study program in E-Governance. The goal is to provide to students the basic and advanced knowledge of technological challenges in the field of computer science and its application in the IT industry. In total 381 students are currently enrolled in both study programs and 11 academic staff are employed of which nine hold a PhD title and two are assistants. The interdisciplinary master study program in E-Governance is a result of cooperation with the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics of UKZ with the goal to educate experts in the field of e-government who are able to use applied information and computer technology at various levels of administration, both public and private. The mission of the master study program in E-Governance is to train students to design, develop, and improve government systems. It is also focused on the implementation of e-government components at all levels of public and state administration. It will support the implementation of IT in various services of all levels of government which will greatly contribute to their modernization. In addition to IT-related knowledge and skills, the program also includes an overview of the administrative and legal aspects of e-government.



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to the self evaluation report, the mission of the Faculty of Computer Science is to prepare students for innovation, creation and usage of new technologies that will benefit the local and national economy, enable students to solve complex problems, to design and implement software packages and improve information technologies. Also, the Faculty strives to provide international knowledge and research in systems analysis, design, and control and to train young people to be part of a virtual and global society. Experts believe that the mission of the E-Governance study program is in line with the overall mission of the Faculty and the University. In general, the study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept but it needs improvements that are discussed in other sections.

The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework, as well as the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and during the study program design, similar programs at European Universities, such as Tallinn University in Estonia and Koblenz-Landau University in Germany were taken into consideration. Furthermore, according to the faculty management, the master study program was designed with inputs collected from local and national experts who are employed in the governmental bodies in Gjilan and at the national level and also from the experts directly involved in the industry who are also members of the university Industry board. However, none of the industry representatives who attended the meeting were members of the board, and some did not even know it existed, but they were satisfied with the proposed study program and considered it useful and up to date. Experts recommend the cooperation with external collaborators to be improved.

The FCS has formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues and these are made publicly available to all staff and students in Albanian. However, some of them were published more than several years ago and have not been reviewed since then. According to HEIs management, all of the policies and regulations are available in English too, but experts could not find the English versions on the Faculty website. Experts believe that the Faculty should continue to develop the English version of the official website and to publish all regulations and policies in English, as well.



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

Furthermore, it is recommended to review all formal documents at least once every two years. After the meetings with the management, heads of the study program and teachers, experts gained an impression that the staff and students comply with all internal regulations.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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. *Development strategy should be improved, translated to English, with targets that are not below a specific number (rather above).*

10



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

2. *UKZ strategic plan should be completely revised, improved in shape, format and content and prepared according to the Strategic Plans templates from other well known Universities.*
3. *Continue improving the English version of FCS official website and make all formal policies, guidelines and internal regulations publicly available in English.*
4. *Review policies and regulations at least once every two years.*

2.2. Quality management

Quality assurance process at the University level is managed by the Committee for Quality Assurance consisting of one representative member from each academic unit and one student. At the Faculty level the quality coordinator in collaboration with the management of the FCS, plans and monitors the full quality assurance process related to the academic staff, students, study programs, evaluation process, scientific work and the documentation. The current quality assurance processes ensure that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance. However, the overall quality assurance process is based on a big number of regulations, standards and guidelines and it is necessary to ensure their enforcement and regulatory compliance, as well as to monitor the performance and improve them regularly according to the collected results.

At the time of writing the self evaluation report the main mechanism for the study program quality evaluation was a survey provided to students at the end of each semester and the obtained results are taken into account for further study program development. However not all important aspects are considered such as academic success and employment of graduates, and therefore it should be extended. During the meetings with the management and the quality assurance representatives it was mentioned that new surveys have been recently implemented such as surveys for academic staff and employers. During the meeting with graduates it was confirmed that they have not participated in any type of evaluation and the recommendation is to involve in the evaluation process all stakeholders that participate directly or indirectly in the study program implementation. Furthermore, it is necessary to analyze the collected information and take appropriate measures based on the results in order to increase the quality of the study program and the Faculty.

11



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

FCS reviews the quality of all study programs and is very agile when it comes to the implementation of new study programs according to the labour market demands and new trends. Regarding the E-Governance master study program, since it was started in 2017 the first report on the overall quality of the study program is the self evaluation report for this re-accreditation process. Therefore, in the future it is recommended to periodically create reports on the overall quality of the study program (e.g. at least every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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	
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



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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. *Ensure the enforcement, regulatory compliance and quality assurance of a high number of regulations, standards and guidelines at the University and the Faculty levels.*
2. *The communication with all stakeholders included into the study program should be improved and structured.*
3. *Introduce surveys in order to gather feedback from all stakeholders involved in the study program implementation such as teaching and administrative staff, graduates/alumni, employers, local community and government.*
4. *Review all documents older than two years and improve them according to the gathered data and current trends.*
5. *Improve the quality of courses' syllabuses (specially learning outcomes and the literature) and make them uniform across the whole study program and the institution.*
6. *Periodically create reports on the overall quality of the study program.*

2.3. Academic staff

Academic staff included in the E-Governance master study program come from the three following UKZ institutions: Faculty of Computer Science, Faculty of Economy and Faculty of Law, and include in total 13 full time academic staff and 4 part-time academic staff. Therefore, more than 75% of the academic staff included in the study program are full time employees and they account for more than of required 50% of the classes of the study program. Furthermore, 11 full time academic staff holds a PhD title and the standards that for



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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, are satisfied.

The academic staff at all three institutions is qualified with the scientific titles and academic degrees, and complies with the legal requirements regarding the teaching positions under Administrative Order No.15/2018 Accreditation of Educational Institutions High Republic of Kosovo, dated 28.09.2018. The selection and promotion of academic staff to the respective academic title is conducted according to the Regulation on Selection of the Academic Staff in “Kadri Zeka” University in Gjilan. At the meeting with the academic staff it was confirmed that the employment procedure was conducted according to the Law on Labor and that the documentation included the full position descriptions and conditions of employment. Furthermore, the academic staff stated that they do not have another teaching position outside the University.

The self evaluation report is missing the data regarding full time and part time academic staff qualifications, workload and other activities, presented in tabular form. Moreover, the academic staff profiles and CVs are not available on the official web page of the study program. From the attached CVs to the self evaluation report it can be concluded that the qualifications and experience of the part of the academic staff for the proposed study program is satisfied. However, none of the academic staff giving courses related to e-governance does not have an experience, obtained degree or even publications from the e-governance field. This is the major issue with the proposed study program, and therefore all three institutions must work on the employment of the academic staff with a degree (MSc or PhD) or an experience from the e-governance field. Meanwhile, it is highly recommended to hire a part time academic staff with the competencies from the e-governance field and to improve the competencies of the current academic staff in the field by organizing various lectures/workshops/trainings that have possibility to obtain a certificate, by working on projects and by publishing scientific and professional papers in the field. Furthermore, is it recommended to continuously organize invited lectures with the speakers who are employed and work in the governmental and local bodies or in the industry in the e-governance field (eg. who are working on the implementation of the eKosova platform).



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

One of the other big issues regarding the academic staff is that there is no responsible body within the University or defined strategy for the academic staff professional development. Furthermore, as stated in the self evaluation report, FCS cannot financially support the academic staff professional development process due to the absence of an appropriate budget. During the meetings with the quality assurance representatives and academic staff it was stated that occasionally there are opportunities for the academic staff professional development but the participation of the FCS academic staff is not mandatory or encouraged by the institution so the attendance of the academic staff involved in the study program has been. Therefore, is it necessary to implement a strategic approach to the academic staff development process that should be based on the current situation, future needs and the development plans collected from the academic staff. It is necessary to organize various trainings during the year for improvement of academic and scientific skills of the academic staff, as well as to encourage them to participate in those activities and allocate credits to it, if needed.

The responsibilities of all academic staff are governed by the policy of UKZ and the Faculty, and besides teaching also include other engagements such as mandatory student consultations, student assessment and mentoring, research activities, participation in the structure of the University and the Faculty, grant applications and community service. Several examples regarding the community service were provided during the meetings and the recommendation is to continue and in general improve the community service of all academic staff at the institution.

The academic staff evaluation is conducted anonymously by students in the form of a questionnaire at the end of each semester, supervised by the Quality Assurance Commission. From the obtained results the final report listing all the elements that the questionnaire contained and the conclusions reached, is created. Each academic staff member will electronically receive the individual results and in a case of a negative assessment the management of the Faculty in cooperation with the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs will take specific measures which should lead to an improvement of the quality of professor. Furthermore, the assessment results are taken for the purposes of promotion and contract renewal.



Republika e Kosovës
 Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

The UKZ strategic plan 2017-2022, as well as various regulations and standards for the quality assurance only partially mention the improvement of the teaching strategies and the quality of learning materials. Therefore, improvement of the teaching and assessment methods must be included into the strategies for quality enhancement and the University strategic plans, as well as the continuous improvement in the content and quality of learning materials.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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	
Standard 3.2. The academic 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 academic staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		X



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all academic 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. *Employ academic staff (full time and/or part time) with a degree (MSc or PhD) or an experience from the e-governance field.*
2. *Implement a strategic approach to the academic staff development process with a special attention given to the e-governance field.*
3. *Allocate funds for academic staff professional development and scientific activities.*
4. *Organize lectures/workshops/trainings and other activities for additional professional development of the academic staff based on the needs and collected data.*
5. *Improve the competencies of the current academic staff in the e-governance field by working on projects and by publishing scientific and professional papers in the field.*
6. *The academic staff profiles and CVs must be uniform and available on the official faculty web page.*
7. *Create scientific profiles on the online scientific platforms in order to improve the scientific visibility of the institution (such as IEEE, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, etc..).*
8. *Include improvement of the teaching and assessment methods as well as the quality of learning materials into strategic and quality enhancement plans.*



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

2.4. Educational process content

The main goal of the E-Governance master study program is to train students to design, develop, and improve government systems. It is also focused on the implementation of e-government components at all levels of public and state administration. Furthermore, it supports the implementation of IT in various services at all levels of government which will greatly contribute to their modernization. In addition to IT-related knowledge and skills, the program also includes an overview of the administrative and legal aspects of an e-government. Experts believe that this is a unique study program, useful for the modernization of society, services of all levels of government and the economy of Kosovo. Furthermore, the study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

The management requested the enrollment quota for the study program to be 50 students per year and experts based on the available infrastructure and overall resources believe that the proposed quota is satisfactory. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and learning outcomes on the study program level meet the determination of the general and specific competencies. The courses within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which are explained and discussed with students in the beginning of each semester (at the first class of each course). Course syllabuses contain student assessment mechanisms which are also clearly communicated to students at the beginning of every course. The expert team noted that part of the study program courses do not have well-defined learning outcomes or that the learning outcomes are not adequate for the master degree study program (e.g. Information Management System, Security from Cybercrime, etc.). Therefore, the expert team recommends reviewing all the learning outcomes on all courses and improving them to become more adequate for the master level study program. Furthermore, learning outcomes of the courses should be in line with the study program learning outcomes and also uniform across all courses in the study program. Moreover, it was noticed in syllabuses that several courses have inadequate course description and objectives (eg. Database for e-Governance, Principals of Information Systems, etc.), and therefore all courses descriptions and objectives must be reviewed and improved. Last but not the least, it was also noticed that at several courses a part of the basic and additional literature is outdated, as well as that some of the literature is missing crucial publishing information. Therefore, it is necessary to review all the



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

basic and additional literature, remove the old and inadequate and add new literature in the courses descriptions (syllabuses).

The E-Governance study program is offered in Albanian. According to the self evaluation report, due to the specificity of the computer science and E-Governance fields students are expected to have advanced knowledge of English language and also the plan is to set English language as compulsory during lectures for at least two courses in the study program. According to the faculty management neither academic staff nor students have a high level of English language knowledge. Therefore, experts recommend the introduction of English language as a new elective course and organization of trainings for the academic staff to ensure that students and academic staff foreign language skills are adequate for organizing education in English language. Furthermore, since the academic staff is missing knowledge and experience from the e-governance field is it recommended to continuously organize invited lectures and workshops with speakers who are employed and work in the governmental and local bodies or in the industry in the e-governance field (eg. who are working on the implementation of the ekosova platform and similar activities).

Based on the feedback gathered from students and graduates and the submitted documentation it can be concluded that the study program is student oriented and enables student advancement in the field. It is also important to note that students can rate their professors and the quality of given courses through surveys at the end of each semester and that they are informed about the result through reports published on the Faculty website. Various teaching methods are used to achieve learning outcomes such as lectures, laboratory exercises, projects, flipped classrooms, problem-based learning, etc. and in general they satisfy study program goals. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively in accordance with learning outcomes and communicated clearly to the students at the beginning of the courses. If a student disagrees with the assessment, he/she has the right to file a written complaint to the Dean or to the Complaints Commission. According to the self evaluation report, in case the student achievements are inadequate or inconsistently assessed, the Faculty takes appropriate measures, such as providing additional classes.

Students have an option to go for an internship in the second year of the master study, but the curriculum of the study program does not contain mandatory internships or internships related to master thesis. The explanation from the faculty management is that the majority of

19



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

the students enrolled at the masters program are already employed. However, the internship is an important part of the educational process and the students and graduates agree that it would be useful for them. Furthermore, due to the special nature of the study program related to a specific field of e-governance, a real world practice and experience would be very useful for students, as well it would prepare them much better for the work on their first real job. Moreover, FCS has already signed cooperation agreements with local companies and governmental bodies, and therefore the expert team recommends including the mandatory internship as a part of the study program. During the meetings it was explained that the courses Research project*, Research project** and Research project*** are providing the practical research knowledge for the students, however the syllabus of the course was not provided and the major results of this course is to prepare students for the master thesis. Therefore, it is recommended to update the courses to include the mandatory internship and research in the real world environment.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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	

20



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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 studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.		X
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		X



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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.		
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. *Review all learning outcomes, improve them to become adequate for the master level study program, as well as make them more uniform across all courses in the study program.*
2. *Remove old and inadequate basic and additional literature in the courses' syllabuses and add new one.*
3. *Improve significantly the description and objectives of specific courses.*
4. *Update the courses Research project *, **, *** to include the mandatory internship and research in the real world environment.*
5. *Consider introducing more elective courses (eg. English language).*
6. *Organize English language training for the academic staff.*
7. *Continuously organize invited lectures with speakers coming from the e-governance field.*

2.5. Students

The admission criteria are clearly defined and published in newspapers and on the Faculty website, and these criteria fairly apply to all students. In order to enroll in the Master study of E-Governance, a student must have a bachelor's degree or other equivalent document of study and pass the entrance exam organized by the Faculty. Part of the student enrollment quota is



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

reserved for minorities and students with special needs, according to the self evaluation report.

The maximum number of students per group in the study program for laboratory exercises is 25, while the maximum number of students in lectures is usually between 30 and 50. Experts believe that this distribution of students by groups is satisfactory and that it enables an efficient and interactive teaching and learning process. The Faculty uses the electronic platform Student Service system (SMU) to inform students about the results of assessments. In addition to SMU, Moodle and T-EDU platforms are also available to students, through which they can see the schedule of lectures, exams, access the official literature on a particular course, etc. Students' knowledge is evaluated through exams, lecture activities, projects, etc., and all results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record through the University Management System (UMS). Assessment and other performance feedback is provided to students in a timely manner and is accompanied by assistance mechanisms, if needed. Furthermore, the Faculty monitors and analyzes the pass rate and grades in all courses through the system. Based on the given screenshots and the provided description experts believe that the quality of all available platforms is satisfied. It should also be noted that the Faculty adapts to students with disabilities by providing the opportunity to take an exam in an adjusted way. Unfortunately, according to the management of the Faculty, the infrastructure is not completely adequate for students with disabilities and the experts are aware that it requires big investments and that so far only one student with disabilities was studying at the Faculty, and it was stated that he/she had help from all academic staff and other students.

The sanction of plagiarism is done by referring to the *Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*, respectively Article 17, according to which plagiarism means the act of appropriating or copying an idea, result, written work or any other form in whole or in a part, without indicating the source used. All reports to the Ethics Council (elected by the University Senate), the Disciplinary Commission, or the ad-hoc commission (appointed by the Rector of UKZ) are reviewed and relevant decisions are made in accordance with the UKZ Statute and UKZ regulations. According to the self evaluation report and the information received from the academic staff and the management, plagiarism checking software is available to teachers through the SMU system and it is mandatory that all diploma theses are verified for anti-plagiarism. However, experts recommend the faculty management to further improve the

23



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

plagiarism check methodology by verifying all work submitted by students and by having more academic staff at exams with a higher number of students. Students have the right to complain about the quality of the teaching process or the University infrastructure (UKZ Provisional Statute, Article 127). The complaints review hearing is usually held as soon as possible but no later than 30 days when the complaint is addressed to the Complaints Commission.

According to the quality assurance representatives, all regulations and policies are available in Albanian and English and published on the Faculty website, but experts could not find the English version of the documents. Experts believe that the Faculty should continue to develop the English version of the FCS official website and to publish all regulations and policies in English. Student transfer is carried out in accordance with the *Statute of UKZ*, Regulations of bachelor/master studies and guidelines for ECTS. Students and graduates did not have any complaints regarding the academic staff availability for consultation and other activities.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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 are 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	



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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

Recommendations:

1. *Improve the plagiarism check methodology.*
2. *Publish English version of all regulations and policies on the Faculty website.*

2.6. Research

Study program learning outcomes and goals do not include research objectives, as well as the learning outcomes of the courses. Since the E-Governance study program is the master level program research objectives should be included, as well as the state-of-the-art research results and technologies. During the meetings it was explained that the course Research project is providing practical research knowledge for the students and that the major goal of this course



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

is to prepare students for the master thesis. However, the syllabus for the course was not provided.

Regulations, expectations and obligations for academic staff involvement in research activities are clearly specified in the *Statute of UKZ* and the document *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* that has been recently published. Furthermore, it is regulated that each member of the academic staff will be evaluated once a year for his/her contribution to the research activity and that this evaluation will be the basis for academic advancement at the University. An example of good practice is that the Financial provisions defined in the Regulation document motivate academic staff to submit project applications and award them in the case of publishing a scientific paper indexed in quality scientific databases. Since the Regulation has been recently approved only one member of the FCS academic staff had an opportunity to use the financial stimulation. Therefore, other academic staff members must be encouraged to use available funds and the statistics and regular analysis of the usage must be conducted. Moreover, clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as a high quality research and they are consistent with international standards and established norms.

The research of the academic staff is validated only through scientific publications. According to the submitted list of publications and conducted research on the online scientific databases, the quality and the quantity is satisfied and academic staff has published at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication per year for the past three years under the name of the University and FCS. However, a low number of citations per academic staff is causing a low international visibility of the scientific work, as well as the low number of publications in top journals from the first and second quartile, and this should be improved. Although the research of the academic staff is connected quite well with the topics they teach there was no evidence or an example that they are encouraged to include the recent scientific findings and results in the teaching content. This should be improved dramatically since the students at the master study should acquire the latest knowledge. Several examples of engaging students in project and community work were presented during the meeting with the academic staff and this should be continued and further improved.

According to the self evaluation report and the official web page, the University has participated in 26 projects since its establishment but it is not clear how many are still active

26



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

and are connected to FCS and/or the study program. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the number of scientific and professional projects, specially connected to the study program and three institutions included in the study program delivery. It is mentioned in the self evaluation report that the University plans to establish an office for projects and office for scientific research during 2021 and it is highly recommended to conduct this initiative as soon as possible. The main purpose of the offices should be administrative and operative support to the academic staff in project preparation, application and implementation. It should result in a higher number of scientific and professional projects, and consequently in a higher number of publications and increased institution visibility.

Technological transfer is not regulated and not supported at either the Faculty or University level. Furthermore, intellectual property rights are barely mentioned in the *Regulation on the Code of Ethics* and *The Regulation on Projects* within FCS. The University plans to establish the Regulation on Intellectual Property by the end of the 2022 and this is too long a period for the development of one new regulation. Therefore, it is recommended to develop and implement a policy and regulation on intellectual property ownership and technology transfer as soon as possible.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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 academic 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	



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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. (1) 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: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Include research objectives in the study program learning outcomes and goals.*
2. *Encourage academic staff members to use available financial stimulations for scientific publications and project applications.*

28



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

3. *Improve project activity at FCS by submitting more project applications.*
4. *Increase the number of papers published in high quality journals from the first and second quartile.*
5. *Establish offices for projects and for scientific research.*
6. *Validate research through scientific and applied research publications, projects, technological transfer, patents, scientific parks and other relevant structures.*
7. *Encourage academic staff to include the recent scientific findings and results in the teaching content.*
8. *Develop and implement a policy and regulation on intellectual property ownership and technology transfer.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The University operates within a campus where all faculties are concentrated and the space is owned by the University. In the self evaluation report it is mentioned that the current space does not meet all the needs for the dynamic development of UKZ and that the Municipality of Gjilan and the Government of Kosovo are finding a solution for a new university campus. However, during the meetings it was clearly stated that there are no issues regarding the space and infrastructure for the delivery of the E-Governance master study program. Meanwhile, as a part of cooperation agreements with other institutions the space usage is also added and it will be used in a case of necessity. All proofs are provided in the additionally submitted documentation.

A financial plan at the level of the study program for the minimum next three years was developed on request with predicted basic incomes and expenses (in the additionally submitted document *Budget for 2021 and estimates for years 2022 and 2023*). The plan demonstrates the sustainability of the study program. Since the main source of revenue comes from the government grants it is recommended to find other revenue sources (eg. projects) that could increase the FCS budget. In quantitative terms the FCS has adequate premises, human resources and equipment for the delivery of the E-Governance study program. Considering the number of students enrolled in the study program (maksimum 50 per year), the number and size of lecture halls and IT cabinets is adequate. Furthermore, they are also equipped with the electronic equipment such as projectors, computers, laboratory equipment, etc., relevant for the study program. From the video presentation it can be seen that the

29



Republika e Kosovës
 Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

quality of the premises, infrastructure and equipment at UKZ is satisfying and enables organization of the teaching process and basic research work.

At UKZ there is one main library for the students from all five institutions that has been recently renovated and expanded additionally by 300 m². The literature in the library is available in several languages and the main ones are Albanian, English and Serbian. The library contains approximately 52 thousand copies of books with 15 thousand book titles and a big number of scientific journals in Albanian and English. Furthermore, UKZ students also have access to the Francophone University Library, which provides access to approximately 800,000 books. However, no information on the book funds for the E-Governance study program was provided. In the past three years, the library has received funds and new titles were purchased. The capacity of the Library study hall is 180 places divided into two types of reading rooms, an open type which can be used by all students and smaller halls with a limited number of seats, which serve for master students and academic staff. From the submitted video it can be seen that the library space is modern and suitable for students.

The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to program implementation partially meet the requirements of students with special needs. During the meeting with the management it was mentioned that so far only one student with special needs was studying at FCS and that although the infrastructure partially meets the requirements he/she had help from all academic staff and students and was capable to study without any specific restrictions.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
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	



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	
<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	
<p>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</p>		X



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Find another revenue sources (eg. projects) that could increase the FCS budget.*
2. *Digitize the library by adding computers available for students and online services.*
3. *Continue allocating the funds to the library and renew the library fund every year (with a special attention given to the study program needs).*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Based on the research of the extensive documentation submitted and an online visit to the Faculty of Computer Science at University “Kadri Zeka”, Gjilan that was professionally organized, the expert committee for the re-accreditation process prepared this report based on the defined Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA (July 2018) and gave an overview of the current situation.

University “Kadri Zeka” is a public institution that has an important role for the local higher education landscape in the city and municipality of Gjilan District located in southeast Kosovo. The teaching and administrative processes at the University and the Faculty are satisfying and in general adjusted to the needs of students. The proposed master study program in E-Governance offered by the Faculty of Computer Science is a unique study program organized in cooperation with the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics of UKZ, useful for the modernization of society, services of all levels of government and the economy of Kosovo. However, there are several improvements that are necessary in order to further improve the quality of the proposed master study program:

- The official documentation regarding the formal policies, guidelines and regulations should be reviewed, improved according to the current needs, trends and recommendations from this report, translated to English language and available on the official Faculty /University web page.
- The overall quality assurance process is based on a big number of regulations, standards and guidelines, and therefore it is necessary to ensure their enforcement and



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

regulatory compliance, as well as to periodically create reports on the quality of all components of the study program.

- English version of the Faculty and the study program web pages must be available, filled in with all the necessary data regarding the studies, students, academic staff, research work, projects, mobility, etc. and regularly updated.
- It is necessary to have continuous communication with all stakeholders included in the study program, as well as based on collected data obtained from the surveys provided to them, make a detailed analysis and constantly improve the study program.
- Review all syllabuses and improve their quality with a special attention given to the learning outcomes, basic and additional literature, course description and objectives. Learning outcomes must be adequate for the master level study program and uniform across all courses in the study program.
- Improve the scientific and project activity and the national and international institution visibility by encouraging academic staff members to use available financial stimulations for scientific publications and project applications that should result in an increased number of project applications and papers published in high quality journals. Furthermore, an establishment of the offices for projects and for scientific research should also help in reaching this goal. Research work should be validated also through technological transfers and patents that should be regulated by the development of a new policy.
- Further improve the master study organization and the program by including research objectives and recent scientific findings and results in the courses content and by introducing the mandatory internship and more elective courses.
- One of the major issues of the proposed study program is that none of the academic staff giving courses related to e-governance does not have an experience, obtained degree or even publications from the e-governance field. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct several activities that would help to overcome this problem such as to employ new academic staff (full time and/or part time) with a degree (MSc or PhD) or an experience from the e-governance field, allocate funds and implement a strategic approach to the academic staff development process with a special attention given to the e-governance field, work on projects and publish scientific and professional papers in the e-governance field, continuously organize invited lectures with the speakers coming from the field, etc. Due to this issue the study program will be accredited for a duration of three years.

33



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

Considering the documentation provided and discussions with the program development team, the experts gave the following compliance level:

Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
Quality management	Substantially compliant
Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
Students	Fully compliant
Research	Substantially compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the master study program in E-Governance offered by the Faculty of Computer Science at University “Kadri Zeka”, Gjilan is Substantially compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of three years with a number of maximum 50 students to be enrolled in the program.

4. APPENDICES (if available)

None



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

Expert Team

Member


Signature Josip Balen 11.06.2021.

Member (Student)


Signature Laura Palac 11.06.2021.