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“HAXI ZEKA” UNIVERSITY IN PEJA
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

April, Zagreb/Paris



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: March 18, 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Sanja Kalambura, University of Applied Science Velika Gorica
- Mr. Domagoj Vugic, Student Expert

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Naim Gasshi

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Evaluation programme report “Environmental Management” Self-evaluation report, Accreditation, Peje 2021.*
- *Syllabuses*
- *Staff CV (full time and part time)*
- *Accreditation manual*
- *Training manual*
- *KAA Manual Annex 4.4.*
- *Regulation of Quality assessment at “Haxi Zeka” in Peje*
- *Regulation for post graduate studies (master)*
- *Regulation of the use equipment and monitoring of the working hours of academic staff*
- *UHZ Statute*
- *UHZ Internal Regulations 2018*
- *Manual on measuring indicators on programs performance*
- *Bachelor Studies Regulation*
- *Manual on the Determination of Measuring Indicators*
- *Regulation of Master Studies*
- *Administrative Instructions from MEST*
- *Quality Internal Regulations*



- *Tutorial and peer to peer systems*
- *Code of Administrative Staff*
- *Code of Ethics of the UHZ, the administrative staff and students*
- *Administrative Instructions*
- *Regulation on the Electronic System for the registration of the lectures and exercises by professors*
- *Regulation on Quality Assessment and Assurance*
- *Quality Assurance Manual*
- *Regulation on the Systematization of workplaces*
- *Quality Assurance Strategy of “Haxhi Zeka” University*
- *UHZ Strategic Development Plan*
- *Academic Staff Evaluation and Performance Handbook*
- *Quality Assurance Strategy*
- *Regulation on the Evaluation Procedure for the Selection and Promotion of Academic staff*
- *Internship Manual*
- *Etc.*

Requested documents:

- *Accreditation report for first (initial) accreditation EM program*
- *Example of the accreditation report*
- *Manual on the Determination of Measuring Indicators (link is not active)*
- *Tutorial procedure*
- *Peer to peer procedure*
- *Bachelor EM program and courses*
- *Learning outcomes for study program*
- *Quality Politics*
- *Questionnaire - Dean the Teacher*
- *Questionnaire - Academic Staff Self-Assessment*
- *Questionnaire - Student Teacher*
- *Questionnaire - Student Administration*
- *Questionnaire - Employer*
- *Evaluation results for all questionnaires above*
- *Proposed recommendation for all questionnaires above*



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- *Questionnaire - Graduates (Alumni).*
- *Photo or movie documentation for Laboratory, classroom, library*
- *Library description – number of books for EM program*
- *Financial plan regarding new Master program.*

Additionally, Received documents:

- *Manual on the Determination of Measuring Indicators*
- *Learning outcomes for study program*
- *Bachelor EM program and courses*
- *Questionnaire - Dean the Teacher*
- *Questionnaire - Academic Staff Self-Assessment*
- *Questionnaire - Student Teacher*
- *Questionnaire - Student Administration*
- *Questionnaire - Employer*
- *Evaluation results for all questionnaires above*
- *Proposed recommendation for all questionnaires above*
- *Photo or movie documentation for Laboratory, classroom, library*
- *Financial plan regarding new Master program.*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, July 2018*
- *Criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability*



1.2. Site visit schedule

Date: 18th of March 2021

Expert Team

- Prof. Dr. Sanja Kalambura, University of Applied Science Velika Gorica
- Mr. Domagoj Vugic, Student Expert

Coordinators of KAA

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

Site Visit Program

09.00 – 09.40 Meeting with the management of the institution

1. Prof. Asoc. Adem Dreshaj, Dean of MTHM
2. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Bedri Millaku, Vice Dean for Teaching MTHM
3. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Mimoza Hyseni Spahiu, UHZ board member
4. MSc. Besa Baloku (Secretary of MTHM)

09.45 – 10:50 Meeting with the heads of the study programme

1. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Mimza Hyseni Spahiu, head of program (Environmental Management)
2. Prof. Ass. Dr. Albona Shala, head of program (Environmental Management)



10:55 – 11:35 Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff

1. Prof. Ass. Dr. Albona Shala Abazi, Member of Quality and Evaluation Management Council
2. Dr. sc. Thelleza Latifi, Quality Coordinator
3. Dr. sc. Merita Dauti, Member of the study commission
4. MSc. Perparim Blakaj, Officer for student affairs (Master)
5. MSc. Besa Baloku (Secretary of MTHM)

11:35 – 12:30 Lunch break

12:30 – 13:20 Meeting with the teaching staff

1. Prof. Dr. Afrim Selimaj, Professor UHZ
2. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Sabiha Shala, Professor UHZ
3. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Ilir Morina, Professor UHZ
4. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Ferdije Zhuzhi, Professor at the University of Pristina
5. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Ferim Gashi, Professor at the University of Pristina
6. Phd. Besfort Ahmeti, Teaching Assistant UHZ

13:25 – 13:55 Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders

1. Afrim Berisha, Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency
2. Agron Shala, Hidrometeorological Institute, Ministry of Environment, of Pristina
3. Ilirjana Kastrati, NGO Environmental Association (Era) of Peja
4. Alferd Tahirsylaj, Waste regional Company Ambineti
5. Mentor Bojku, NGO Outdoor Kosova

14:00 – 14.10 Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA

14:10 – 14.20 Closing meeting with the management of the institution

Nr.	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs	
1	Environmental Management /MSc (Accreditation)	Prof. Dr. Sanja Kalambura Mr. Domagoj Vugic student	Mimoza Hyseni	Albona Shala



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

“Haxhi Zeka” University in Peja is organised as separate institution from the University of Prishtina since 2012. In that year Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) provide first evaluation and accreditation process as a University under establishment. “Haxhi Zeka” is in this moment independent and modern University due to the characteristics of study programs, the need for qualified staff, labour market requirements specific to the Peja region as well as the development of the region and society in general.

The Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment (FTHEM) of the Public University "Haxhi Zeka" Peja, is the holder of basic and other studies stipulated by the Law on Higher Education and the Statute of UHZ.

FTHEM Faculty in this moment has two ongoing programs:

- Management of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Program, Bsc, 180 ECTS, accredited until 30.09. 2022.
- Management of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Program, Bsc, 180 ECTS- Bosnian language accredited by 30.09.2022.

In 2021 the FTHEM Faculty apply for the first time with the current Master's Degree Program in Environmental Management, studies lasting two (2) years and one hundred and twenty (120) ECTS credits.

The University consists of five academic units. The academic unit operates within the institutional framework of the university providing higher education programs, research or artistic creativity. The academic unit is led by the Dean, assisted by two Vice Deans, the Vice Dean for Teaching and the Vice Dean for Financial Affairs. These two Vice-Deans are elected by the Faculty Council on the proposal of the Dean. Also, the council consists: all professors and assistants, one non-academic faculty member and one student representative. On the FTHEM Faculty consist Study Committee, the Appeals Committee, and Disciplinary Committee. The Study Committee is an advisory body to the Faculty Council which is established for each interdisciplinary and joint study program for the academic unit. Study Committee is in charge for drafting proposals for new study programs.

According to the self-evaluation report the mission of the Faculty is to provide quality studies in the fields of tourism management, hospitality and environment in order to prepare capable professional and scientific staff, ready to be successful managers who will contribute to developing the society as a continuation of positive academic traditions.



The special mission of the Faculty is to train students in scientific research and vocational training. The faculty aims to play a leading role in the development of education related to reforming tourism management, hospitality management, environmental protection, local tourism product development and managing strategic tourism development projects, scientific and professional training in the management and development of each product, tourism and hotel management and environmental management at home and abroad.

The main objectives of the study program are:

- To prepare staff capable of managing various environmental problems caused by anthropogenic and other factors
- Identification, research and evaluation of environmental problems
- Development and implementation of national and international environmental policies and legislation
- Providing research-focused development in one or more physical, chemical and biological aspects of the environment; comparing, implementing, and managing short-term and long-term solutions to environmental problems.
- To develop advanced multidisciplinary education in the natural, social and human sciences, which will contribute to understanding and solving environmental problems
- To develop analytical, functional criticism and ability to find solutions to areas related to environmental problems.

From the Self-evaluation report (SER), the strives for achieving these objectives are defined by some of the measures and facts:

- Advancement of teaching at all levels
- Further development of curricula, teaching methodology, modern literature, etc.
- High staff motivation
- High management motivation
- Intensive engagement in research
- Continuous training of academic staff
- Improvement of infrastructure
- Good local and employee collaboration
- Equal opportunities for all students
- Tremendous potential of natural resources in Peja region



- Development of quality assurance management
- Good procedures for monitoring, controlling and modernizing study programs.

These measures/facts are considered to be a crucial in transformation into a leading centre for the advancement of knowledge, and education in the field of environmental management in the region as well as achieving full participation in the regional and international community in the field of higher education.

Since we did not have opportunity to visit University due COVID -19 restrictions we can confirm from materials and movie that are satisfactory, equipped teaching rooms and laboratories.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

1. Very Good connection with the local and business community
2. Good opportunity for quality practices implementation
3. Organizational structure is still young and open to improvement
4. Clear mission of the program
5. Big motivation of professors and management for study program
6. Infrastructure is satisfactory: teaching rooms, library, web site, SEMS platform and campus.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

1. Internationalization aspects are not yet sufficiently developed
2. Practical experience in several laboratories is not yet well established
3. The transfer of knowledge and technology needs to be improved
4. The lack of infrastructure, teaching staff and trainings for academic staff
5. Lack of funding for academic staff education and research
6. Possible problems for students enrolment since unemployment in Kosovo is high.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE:



1. Collection and analysis of quality data at all levels at University
2. Great integration into the local community
3. The proposed study program is created for the needs of society
4. University is focused to the creation of first program in this field in Kosovo
5. Applicability of the study program for English language
6. Good atmosphere and motivated staff ready to learn and teach.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The Environmental Management Program at the Faculty of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Management is created to continue the academic tradition in the fields of environmental management what is completely connected with mission of the institution.

In the process of creating the study program University take in count suggestions from local authorities: officials of Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, Hydrometeorological Institute, Department of Environment within MESP, Municipality of Peja, Municipality of Istog, NGO ERA and incorporated suggestions in the design of the program what is also confirmed by representatives on external stakeholders meeting. All program is designed to be in line with the skills and competencies with Level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

Regarding the well-defined overarching didactic and research concept for EM program this expert team gets the impression that objectives are set very ambitious but there is a place for improvement, especially in the field of creating the subjects which will develop more general competencies for the students in the field of environmental management.

All necessary policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues are publicly available to all staff and students, but it will be helpful that are also on English language. It is important to implement all of these listed in SER.

The University has a Code of Ethics of the UHZ, the academic, administrative staff and students. There is a well done prescribe approach to academic integrity and ethics, and the documentation addresses important topics. Management has defined integrity and ethics as a matter of policy. However, plagiarism detection software is not currently used.



This expert team is not able to confirm with yes or no standard 1.6. since in this phase we are in accreditation process of EM study program. But, based on the regulation on the Quality Assessment and Assurance System, the Quality Management Council, internal evaluations it is obvious that is strong will for this.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X	
Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	n.a.	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The program mission needs better definition of the intended learning outcomes at the descriptive levels of the European Framework of Qualification. It needs to be seen in*



all your publications.

- 2. The study program should strive for a fundamental revision of the SWOT analysis since strengths and weakness are not in balance and also threats are sometimes actually weakness. From that point we can clearly see what we can change in the future.*
- 3. Our proposal is that you focus yourself to be a leader in the region with attractive and best applying a coherent concept of student- cantered teaching and learning.*
- 4. Integration of modern teaching practices and research at the program level, especially integration of e-learning and online teaching and learning at all levels of the teaching concept and the entire curriculum in a differentiated way.*
- 5. The didactic concept should take into account all relevant stages and elements of the teaching and learning process.*

2.2. Quality management

There is a good quality practice on the University” Haxhi Zeka” since its establishment. In 2016. Quality Assurance Strategy is adopted and revised in 2019. In addition, the University “Haxhi Zeka” has approved the Regulation on quality assurance and quality assessment system, operationalized the University Quality Assurance Office and also established the Quality Management and Evaluation Council.

The procedure is clear and transparent and after the periodical evaluation Rector seek implementation by the managing authorities at the University level, and at the level of the academic units according to the time frame proposed by the Council.

Reports are compiled on the basis of evaluations from the various areas and mainly designed for improvement purposes. Usually reports produced by student questionnaires are analysed in the light of comments or low scores received by academic staff in order to take the necessary measures for improvement.

As already recognised in the self-report, the university has recognised that there is room for improvement in the area of digitalization of the evaluation system and electronic system of registration lectures. The experts can confirm this by stating that the university develop on line evaluation systems but did not receive any documents which will give more detail according



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improvements. For this reason, efforts should be further intensified to involve more Quality Management and Evaluation Council in operational activities. It is necessary to ensure PDCA cycle Plan, Do, Check, Act. The part Act seems to be missing in this cycle. From the available documents and the discussions on site, it is clear to the experts that the data collected will also be used for continuous development but it has to be show somehow.

Alumni are very important part of Quality Assessment, especially when you want to set new study program. For example, in alumni network you could conduct corresponding institutionalised surveys and implement results to improve all quality aspects.

The University performs evaluation activities on an ongoing basis in areas such as: Assessment of the quality of teaching, Evaluation of management measures at all organizational levels, Evaluation of study programs and study organisations, Assessment of teachers work, scientific and artistic work. For all listed quality assurance processes University using instruments like: Questionnaire Dean to teacher, Questionnaire Academic Staff Self-Assessment, Questionnaire Student-Teacher, Questionnaire Student Administration, Questionnaire Employer, Questionnaire Alumni. All set instruments are organised in good way, question structure is satisfactory. But expert team want to point to the fact that is challenging for the university to carry out numerous evaluations, especially in the case of electronic evaluations, when evaluation fatigue sets. Maybe to think about transparent communication and publication of evaluated results. The corresponding responsibilities have been defined and are carried out by the appropriate persons.

Unfortunately, there are no reports on how the public or university members are informed about quality development in a public report beside web site.

This expert team did not find in documents and web site Quality Politics and also General Strategy for the Faculty.

All presented evaluation report result is in one report and it represent summary for all University. In those terms' expert team means that are necessary improvements.

Results from the report are in some field low and not representative since number of graduates is much more, for example: the questionnaire "Graduates – University" was completed by a total of 84 graduates, while the abilities gained at UHZ, is evaluated with 3.56.

The same is with employers, only 13 for all University fill the questionnaire and given result is 3.66.



The questionnaire “Self-evaluation of academic staff” was completed by a total of 65 full-time staff and 13 part-time staff, the working conditions are evaluated with 3.81, while teaching and personal development with 3.95.

It will be very productive to see the comments and also improvements since this evaluation report is from July 2020.

From the available documents and the discussions on site, it is clear to the experts that the data collected will also be used for continuous development. The corresponding responsibilities have been defined and are carried out by the appropriate persons.

The quality assurance arrangements for the University are evaluated in 2019 and after that improved.

Information on the activities of the University is available on the website in Albanian and English, at a level that meets the standards very well. In addition, communication with stakeholders is maintained in a variety of ways.

The University is obviously taking its social role seriously. There is evidence that the Polytechnic's contribution to the local community is at an advanced level and in line with standards.

This expert team is not able to confirm with yes or no standard 2.2. since in this phase we are in accreditation process of EM study program. But based on the regulation on the Quality Assessment and Assurance System, the Quality Management Council, internal evaluations it is obvious that is strong will for this.

For Standard 2.6. it seems the same. We were in position to analyse existing analytical data (other programmes) delivered by University.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	



Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	n.a.	
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.	n.a.	
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. *Write a Quality Policy and make it public.*
2. *Write a Development Strategy for Faculty and make it public. Quality Assurance Strategy is just a part of the general one.*



3. *Open discussion of the course evaluation results with the students.*
4. *Open discussion of the course evaluation results with the teachers.*
5. *Publication of evaluation results separately for every study program, not in join report.*
6. *Continue with good practice publication of results for the public.*
7. *Be very clear in publication what changes have been brought about by evaluation results.*
8. *Introduce all evaluation report since it now in this moment only visible one report from 2020.*
9. *The Faculty should make efforts to develop and implement a quality management system which ensures proactive involvement of all stakeholders following a PDCA-cycle approach.*
10. *The Faculty should make efforts to set functional and operational quality system with all stake holders.*
11. *In different operational quality bodies, it is necessary to involve external stakeholders and Alumni.*
12. *Establishment of alumni tracking and the corresponding integration into institutionalised surveys.*
13. *Introduce additional subjects with a focus on current and future knowledge and skills, both for current students and for external experts who need more advanced knowledge.*

2.3. Academic staff

From material received (SER), table 5, page 18, it is in detail presented in tabular form data: full time and part time academic staff, name, qualification, academic title, duration of official contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research for the study program. It is in total 12 professors, high qualified, they are all doctors with valid



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academic title. Nine of them are full time and 3 of them part time. All legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions are set according Administrative Instruction no 015/2018 for accreditation of Higher Institutions.

It is evident from the Panel discussion that 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.

It is also evident from the Panel discussion as well as formal staff profiles submitted prior to the review, that academic staff at University of Peja is able to deliver high level learning process. All academic staff/teachers are highly motivated and cooperative to implement this EM program. From received CV of teaching staff experts can conclude that all of them has expertise and knowledge for EM program. The Faculty staff formally consists of associate professors, assistant professors, teaching assistants. Staff appointment and ranking is determined by educational, scientific, research and service criteria.

In this moment the planning number of students is 25. So, in those terms existing number of academic staff is satisfactory.

Based on the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo and Article 211 of the UHZ Statute, the activity of the academic staff includes four elements of activity: teaching, research and development, professional activities in the interest of the university or academic administrative services and professional activities in the interest of the society or services to the society. All of those activities are described in detail, and the grade weight given by each evaluator is differentially measured according to this priority: dean 50%, self-assessment 30% and students 20%. Performance evaluation scales is from Insufficient level to Level 5.

The responsibilities of academic staff are learning process, material design, administrative jobs, scientific research, participation in conferences, boards, communication with students and exam preparations and etc. Although, it is vital that staff participate in regular peer-observations as well unannounced observations at least twice a year for sharing best academic practices. The aim of teaching observations is to enable academic staff to gain feedback from a trained and experienced observer as part of a process of reflection on teaching performance. It is the Panel's understanding that staff are currently engaging in discussions in critical discussion about learning and teaching overall as well as enhance teaching quality at the programme level.

Literature proposed in Syllabuses need to be improve and changed. This is the week part of this program proposal. In Self-assessment report is written:” In this regard, each teacher and



associate will ensure that the teaching material includes publications by the most prominent authors in the field, recent editions not older than ten (10) years or five (5) depending on the field.”

Some of the listed are older than 10 years.

Next very confusing part from Self-assessment report is: ”It is preferred that the reading material include a larger number of scientific works by well-known authors, not including the teacher's own publications.”

In European quality academic and teaching strategies one of the important tasks is to develop good own teaching materials. This has to be focus for the future in this EM program. It is motivation for professors and also much more acceptable for students.

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	
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	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Revision and extension for the contract duration for Dr. of economy, Ass (duration till 01.10.2020. and Dr.Prof. philosophy in environmental sciences Ass. (duration 01.10.2020.)*
2. *Be prepared in the case of bigger students to enrol new academic staff*
3. *Teachers should to a greater extent include the latest research, trends and knowledge on the labor market in the teaching process.*
4. *When hiring new teachers or part time teachers, the University should strive to hire young professionals whose professional and scientific results show that they follow global trends.*
5. *Improving the pedagogical competencies of teachers should become part of regular institutional activities.*
6. *The University should encourage teachers to significantly increase outbound mobility.*
7. *Literature revision in Syllabuses is obligatory.*
8. *It is important to ensure objective and transparent grade weight given by each evaluator for academic staff. It is little non-objective to have in total grade participation of the dean grade 50%. Student participation has to be more than 20%.*

2.4. Educational process content



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This expert team can conclude, from SER and Panel discussion, that importance of this program is very high for Kosovo. It is interdisciplinary program focused on sustainability and according to that it can be seen from all aspects.

Subject selection is done according available experts and needs in surrounding so from that point of view it is acceptable. It will contribute to the civil society and for sure develop the students' knowledge, skills and competencies.

But still there are some parts which need to be improve, especially in methodical approach and applying the modern learning methods.

The correlation between planned learning outcomes and specific courses it was not documented in Self Evaluation report. Subsequently this expert team received in additional document list of learning outcomes for study program.

The problem which is confusing in this important field are descriptions of: knowledge, skills, competencies and learning outcomes. This has to be improved before starting the program.

For example: Skill" Ability to identify, analyse and solve complex environmental management problems" is not connected with any of the learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes for study program has to be in direct correlation with competencies. Basically, they are the same but just written on another way. This part is very important for employers since they would like to know on the end of the day what graduates can do (competences) and you have to teach them that (learning outcomes).

The curriculum contains some weaknesses regarding the structure and titles: for example, Integrated Water Resource Management II can be Advanced Integrated Water Resource Management or Advance studies in environmental legislation just named Environmental legislation, and Principles of Air quality management renamed to Air quality management.

Structure of all program can be improved. Proposal of this expert team is to rearrange subjects true semesters. It will be more logical way to teach in first semester general topics like: Sustainable development, Biodiversity Conservation, Environmental Economics and natural resource management and Environmental legislation.

In second semester than you can have: Water management, Principles and practice of waste management, land use management and Air quality management.

Third semester has some illogicality. It is not clear is it GIS and Methodology of scientific research same subject (maybe is mistake in the text). Journal club and Methodology of scientific research can be merged. From the received information on Panel discussion the outcomes are basically the same.

The syllabi provided reveal different quality levels of course descriptions. The majority of syllabi is characterized by using active verbs for defining learning outcomes at the course level.



Some course descriptions are developed in a very traditional way emphasizing mainly the provision of knowledge. For example, in second semester course *Land use management* according to the curriculum, consists of two hours lectures per week and two hours exercises per week. In this course description, the learning outcomes only refer to “understanding” of theoretical foundations but not to the performance of calculation in terms of a performance-related skill for practical problem-solving in land use contexts, which seems to be covered in the exercise parts of the course. Similar shortcomings can be identified in other courses, too. Perhaps the reason for this uneven description of learning outcomes is mainly a matter of wording and can be improved by making these parts more explicit in the course descriptions.

For example, course Forest ecology should be written down like other syllabuses, it is not clear why author using this style. Also, need to be add missing learning outcomes.

For example, course Energy and Climate change has just two learning outcomes: define and interpret. Proposal is to use good example like Spatial planning learning outcomes.

All learning outcomes has active verbs but it need to be develop second level using the verbs for generic skills.

Most important part in creating the efficient and quality defined program is to make a matrix table with all learning outcomes for courses and learning outcomes for study program. After that you will be able to say that all of your courses contribute to study program in equal way. In this moment this expert team cannot conclude what is the contribution of all courses in program.

Some learning outcomes are very optimistic and need to revise (for example: being able to develop new research).

Overall, not much information was provided about the why and how of the curriculum’s structure, however, the definition of the learning outcomes at the program level corresponds to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework in general.

The complete lack of e-learning and online teaching as key elements of a modern teaching strategy is missing. It is necessary to develop online teaching and e-learning and integrated in practical teaching.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No



<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>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.</p>	X	
<p>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.</p>	n.a.	
<p>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.</p>		X
<p>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.</p>	X	



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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Involve foreign lecturers*
2. *Revise and standardize all learning outcomes*
3. *It is recommended to have 4-7 outcomes per course and a maximum of 10 for the study program*
4. *Make a constructive alignment and incorporate the acquisition of generic skills into the outcomes*
5. *Rename some of the subjects to be in accordance with the name of the study program*
6. *Multiple electives that will generate general competencies such as management*
7. *Link the learning outcomes of the study program with the competencies*
8. *Given the high academic level of graduate professional study programs (which achieve a master's degree), it is necessary to increase the emphasis on scientific activities*
9. *In order to better support international exchange, it is necessary to introduce lectures and courses in English in all studies. These lectures and courses should be defined as compulsory for all students, including homework.*



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10. *The time of living in 21 centuries is so unpredictable so the focus in teaching strategy should be also e-learning.*

2.5. Students

The expert team concluded according to self-evaluation report and site visit that:

The faculty has defined a clear and formal admission procedure offered to all interested participants who have completed bachelor's degrees of 180 ECTS. This procedure consists of an entrance examination test whose results are evaluated by theoretical knowledge deriving from the BA programme. Additionally, all the students possess a high school diploma and most of them will be coming from the Bachelor programme studied at the Faculty. We find high interest of student for this new Master program and therefore see it as a necessary addition for their bachelor students to continue further their education.

Study groups in the programs are designed to be small and seem to support effective and interactive exchange among study groups. Because of the small size of the Faculty and study groups, we found in principle a good level of communication and support from Academic staff concerning students.

All students will receive feedback on their performance and are consulted regularly with the mentors as well as with the administrative staff. Academic staff is available in sufficient time for student counselling. Each professor involved in the program has a fixed four (4) hour weekly consultation schedule. Additionally, students are will be consulted at the University level as well and will have their representative that participates in the Faculty Council protecting student interest. Additionally, students receive career development advices through Career development centre and further professional counselling is envisaged by engagement



of a psychologist. Special care is taken to enable flexible treatment of students in special situation.

Student rights and obligations are made publicly available in the statute of the University and Regulations of Master studies. They are both published on the University official website. Additionally, welcome week is organized for students to enable and promote information regarding their rights and obligations.

Regarding the transfer of students between the two universities, University has signed a Cooperation Agreement with the University of Pristina for this purpose. Internal transfers between faculties and study programs at University are regulated by both University Statute and Regulation of Master Studies. However, Procedures for the recognition and transfer of ECTS credits from other universities are very long.

We found good practice of collaboration and agreement with the industry and fully support its further development to ease the employment of the student that are planned to enrol in this program.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	



Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	n.a	
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: Substantially compliant



ET recommendations:

- 1. Improve the number of incoming foreign students through mobility programs*
- 2. Enable smoother procedure for the transfer between Universities and ECTS recognition*
- 3. Implement additional support for student for their professional counselling*
- 4. Continue good practice of industrial collaboration and external stakeholders*
- 5. Increase the number of the foreign students and ensure gender balance through the recruitment*
- 6. Provide mechanisms to ensure that work submitted by students is original*
- 7. Continue further developing the ALUMNI organization.*

2.6. Research

During the analysing the data from SER and Panel discussion this expert team conclude that there is a lack of research dedicated funds, small number of organized scientific conferences and low participation of academic staff involved. We also note a limited access of both students and academic staff to international databases of scientific journals.

Application to research project seem fairly difficult and bureaucratic. However, there is a good strategic plan to reach Faculty research objectives. More support from the government and the University is needed to fully implement research objectives. There is a need for improvement of the Research Facilities as well.

The academic staff is expected to participate in research activities and their performance is monitored and evaluated. These criteria are found in the University Statute and Regulation and promotion of Academic staff. We did not find a clear implementation of policy defining what is recognized as research according to international standards and norms. There seems to be presence of “fake” magazines that is not acceptable by any standard of HEI. Furthermore, we did not find clear policies established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.



Additionally, we did not find clear effective mechanism that ensure originality of both academic staff and student research.

In this new Master program students will be encouraged to participate in Research. To ensure this, program has set clear and defined scientific objectives. We fully encourage participation of students in Research as a necessity of quality of Education at Master level.

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. 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 6.10. 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	n.a	

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Continue further increase of number and quality of scientific publications*
2. *Explore the use of research funding from international organisation*
3. *Forster international collaboration in scientific research*
4. *Limit completely and regulate presence of unrecognized journals, this is against standard expected for any HEI*
5. *Use plagiarism tools to prevent plagiarism for both academic staff and students*
6. *Engage your future students in the research activities*
7. *Implement the Strategic Research plan you created*
8. *Networking with international universities in the organisation of conferences, especially in Balkan region*
9. *Clear introduction of research activities on web site*
10. *Applying research projects with NGO sector*



11. Interactive student involvement in research projects

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The Faculty has adequate facilities to conduct its teaching and research activities. Facilities consist of 10 classrooms, laboratories, computer cabinets, library and reading rooms and other facilities such as teacher cabinets, administration and student offices. Low number of students that are planned to enrol this Master program ensures that there is an adequate number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories. However, the infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program are not fully adapted to students with special needs.

We note recent improvement in library facility and a plan for its digitalization. Additionally, Faculty has developed a financial plan at the level of the study program that demonstrates the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years. Furthermore, The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kosovo has a legal obligation to provide adequate funding for the University to fulfil its obligations and responsibilities under the provisions of the University Statute. However, this plan needs to be fully implemented. We also noted that there is a limited University and Ministry budget to improve the infrastructure.

<i>Standard</i>	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	



<p>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.</p>	X	
<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> <p>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</p> <p>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</p> <p>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</p> <p>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</p>	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> <p>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p>	X	



d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for;		
e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.		
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs		X

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Continue collaborating with research Institutes to overcome lack of research infrastructure*
2. *Continue improving digitalisation and distance learning facilities*
3. *Ensure that students with special needs will have adequate infrastructure at the new Campus.*
4. *Developing the Student centre for social and phycological help or Student Welfare Support Unit which should be established to support students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia.*
5. *Developing the infrastructure true companies donations if applicable.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The Expert team would like to commend the programme development team for their proactive engagement with the Panel during the validation event. There was a very strong sense of teamwork and ownership exhibited by the programme development team. Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the Re-accreditation Panel recommends the following:



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

The overall compliance is assessed by the experts at the level of **Substantially Compliant**.

However, the following recommendations need to be considered in relation to programmes re-accreditation in future period:

- The study program has a great potential for students, professors and Kosovo so it has to be modern and based on good practices. You should strive for a fundamental revision of the SWOT analysis since strengths and weakness are not in balance and also threats are sometimes actually weakness. From that point we can clearly see what we can change in the future. The program mission needs better definition of the intended learning outcomes at the descriptive levels of the European Framework of Qualification.
- Focus yourself on the possibility that you become a leader in the region with attractive and best applying a coherent concept of student- cantered teaching and learning.
- Integrate of modern teaching practices and research at the program level, especially integration of e-learning and online teaching and learning at all levels of the teaching



concept and the entire curriculum in a differentiated way.

- Write a Quality Policy and make it public and also Development Strategy for Faculty
- Put a live open discussion of the course evaluation results with the students and teachers.
- The Faculty should make efforts to develop and implement a quality management system which ensures proactive involvement of all stakeholders following a PDCA-cycle approach.
- Revise and standardize all learning outcomes, make a constructive alignment and incorporate the acquisition of generic skills into the outcomes.
- Rename some of the subjects to be in accordance with the name of the study program
- In order to better support international exchange, it is necessary to introduce lectures and courses in English in all studies. These lectures and courses should be defined as compulsory for all students, including homework.
- Enable smoother procedure for the transfer between Universities and ECTS recognition.
- Provide mechanisms to ensure that work submitted by students is original.
- Continue further developing the ALUMNI organization.
- Use plagiarism tools to prevent plagiarism for both academic staff and students.
- The University should aim to create an environment which welcomes all students, enabling them to participate fully in university life. This applies to students with physical disabilities.

And on the end:

- SER document is done very well but it has to be improved: a number of grammatical, translation, spelling and formatting errors have been recorded across all sections of original self-evaluation reports so this often-imposed understanding and could raise further questions. It is important for the institution to check all of these. Number of students, years, links to documents on Albanian language and etc.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program *Environmental Management* offered by *University "Haxhi Zeka"* is *Substantially compliant* with the standards included in



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the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **25 students** to be enrolled in the program.

4. APPENDICES *(if available)*

None

Expert Team

Chair

(Signature)

(Prof. PhD. Sanja Kalambura)

(07.04.2021.)

Member – Student expert

(Signature)

(Mr. Domagoj Vugić)

(07.04.2021.)