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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

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***PBHE “Universum College”***  
***Programme Evaluation***  
***Cyber Security, BA Professional, branch in Gjakova***

***ACCREDITATION***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*Zagreb & Riga, May 2021*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit:** February 11<sup>th</sup> 2021

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- Prof. Dr. Damir Kalpić
- Mikus Dubickis, Student expert

**Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (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

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *1. Accreditation manual*
- *2. KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report for programs\_09.07.2018*
- *3. Sample of a Final evaluation report*
- *CVs*
- *Publications*
- *Syllabuses*
- *KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report for programs\_09.07.2018*
- *Self-Evaluation report*
- *Sample Compliance calculation - Banking and Finance BSc.Prishtina Univer...*
- *SVP UMIB Computer Science*
- *Links to Universum documents of web*
- *Virtual visit and meeting according to 1.2. Site visit schedule*



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- *Additional documents and information provided after the visit*

**Criteria used for program evaluation:**

- *Accreditation manual*
- *Personal experience in evaluations*
- *Personal experiences as university professor / student*



## 1.2. Site visit schedule

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Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA)  
Site Visit Program

Programme Accreditation Procedure at Universum College  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2021

### Expert Team

- Prof. Emeritus, Dr. Damir Kalpić – University of Zagreb
- Mikus Dubickis, PhD student, Riga Technical University

### 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

### Site Visit Program

#### 30<sup>th</sup> March

09.00 – 09.40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated ( <i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i> ) – Joint session
09.45 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff - Joint session
10:30 – 11:15	Lunch break



11:15 – 12:15	Meeting with the heads of the study programme (Cyber Security, BA Professional, branch in Gjakova) - Separate session
12:20 – 13:20	Meeting with the heads of the study programme (Data Science. MSc) - Separate session
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with teaching staff – Separate session
14.10 – 14:50	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders – Separate session
14.55 – 15:05	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts – Joint session
15:05 – 15:15	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program – Joint session

No	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of the program
1	Cyber Security, BA Professional, branch in Gjakova (Accreditation)	Damir Kalpić Mikus Dubickis	Xhemile Morina Rrezart Prebreza Durim Gjoshi Besiana Zeka Valerina Smakaj
2	Data Science. MSc (Accreditation)	Damir Kalpić Mikus Dubickis	Lavdim Halilaj Shqipe Buzuku

#### Other information

#### Overall instructions for HEIs

1. The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc;
2. The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc;
3. The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution;



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4. Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session;
5. Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.

#### Contacts of the participants from KAA:

Shkelzen Gerxhaliu – 044 836 831

Arianit Krasniqi – 045 499 951

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

A detailed insight in the institution and programme under evaluation can be found in the PBHE Universum College, Program evaluation, Professional Bachelor in Cyber Security, Self-evaluation report, January 2021, Prishtina. Here will be presented a brief overview. Universum College was established in March 2004, in Prishtina and Ferizaj in order to provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities to Kosovar and international students through teaching excellence, life-long learning, applied research and partnership building, attempting to form the students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful. Among the offered studies, here is of primary interest BSc. in Cyber security, which is proposed for this accreditation.

Universum College is the most internationalized higher education institution in Kosovo, co-operating with respected educational institutions in the world. The education uses digital technology and Universum College is ranked in Top 1000 of the best Business Schools in the world and MA in Management programme is placed in top 17 best management programmes of Leadership and Management in Southeast Europe.

There is growing evidence about the positive correlation between effective leadership and continuous improvement of the Institution. It is attempted to apply "Leading at Every Level" model to provide faculty and academic leaders with information about the management and leadership expectations, available tools and resources for ongoing learning and professional development. They are prepared for managing and leading others in project or research teams, committees, or while supervising staff members or graduate students. The structure of the Universum College top management act is based on the principles of respect for normative acts, academic freedom, and refraining from political agenda.

During the 2020/2021, Universum College has established a new leadership Department of Innovation and External Relations. Each department consists of an Academic Director (leader) and Programme Coordinator. There exist lists of responsibilities for each of them.

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Graduates from the proposed study “Professional Bachelor in Cyber Security” should be able to:

- think critically and analyse real problems
- find, evaluate, and use resources
- work collaboratively
- demonstrate versatility
- demonstrate problem solving abilities
- communicate effectively
- function well in a global community
- deal with uncertainty and diversity
- continue learning after graduation

The teaching-learning process is well described in the mentioned Self-evaluation report and should provide proper expected outcomes.

## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission of Universum College is to support their students to become good citizens, successful and broad-minded leaders and thrive in the Revolution 4.0, the digital and globalized era. They do this by providing one-on-one academic & life coaching, putting their students and learning at the centre in an innovative, digitally enhanced environment that fosters creativity, inquiry, teamwork and satisfactory knowledge.

The Universum College mission is building upon the following strategic pillars:

Student and Learning at the Centre

- Quality Improvement
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Digital Transformation
- Internationalization

The Universum’s institutional objectives are:

- To provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities to students;
- To encourage personal and social development of students through activities outside





- the classroom;
- To provide students with an understanding and appreciation of world culture;
- To develop the College as a life-long learning centre;
- To continue development as the most internationalized HEI in Kosovo;
- To continue the development of dual-study programs with local and international companies;
- To foster applied research that is done in close partnership with the industry;
- Incorporate digital tools in teaching and student learning.

Compliance to the prescribed standards is first commented and in the second table evaluated.

Standard	Comment
<i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study programme mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	
<i>Standard 1.2.</i> 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.	As the study has to start yet, we have not found any explicit specific advice to be obeyed. It can be only presumed that a better guess for answer would be “YES”.
<i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	Descriptions of a few courses are incomplete, missing, partly or only in Albanian or with wrong names.
<i>Standard 1.4.</i> There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	We could not properly proof the fulfilment of those requirements for not being able to visit the site physically, nor the education has started yet. We had to rely mostly on the Self-evaluation document and discussions on the virtual meeting and rely on existing practices.
<i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	We find certain Standard’s requirements formulated as “available to all staff and students”, “ <b>All</b> staff and students comply...” and “ <b>All</b> policies, regulations...” as



	exaggerated and in practice hardly achievable. We would regard as most successful if instead of the required “all”, e.g. only 90% would be satisfied in practice. Trying to be realistic, we presume 67% to be “YES”, but if we can suggest relaxing the Standard’s requirements – instead of “all”, use the term “majority” or something similar.
<i>Standard 1.6.</i> 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.	As the study has to start yet, evaluation of compliance to this standard is <b>Non Applicable</b>

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



Compliance levels were defined with 4 discrete possible values:

- Fully compliant
- Substantially compliant
- Partially compliant
- Non-compliant

using the following guidelines, as required by the KAA Accreditation manual:

1.1. fully compliant – all the standards included in a particular general area are met. If the institution exceeds the standards and meets some of the performance indicators, commendations are appropriate. This recognition provides the institution motivation to pursue even greater levels of excellence in their quality management practices;

1.2. substantially compliant – 70 – 90% of the standards included in a particular general area are met, while the others are not yet in line with stated expectations. Also, there is potential for requirements of the standards not to be satisfied before the next review (examples may include the loss of key faculty members due to retirements, declining student enrolment, or projected reductions in financial or personnel resources, and others);

1.3. partially compliant - 30 – 60% of the standards included in a particular general area are met. Also, the institution lacks the strength of compliance with the standards to ensure that the quality of the institution will not be compromised;

1.4. non-compliant – less than 30% of the standards included in a particular general area are met. The institution does not satisfy the requirements of the standards.

With 5 “YES” and 1 “NO” in the above table measuring the **Mission, objectives and administration** the Compliance level would be  $4/5 = 0.8$  or 80%, implying “**Substantially compliant**”.

#### **ET recommendations:**

1. *Continue with your successful policy of international co-operation despite the existing challenges with visa regimes and temporary COVID-19 pandemic problems.*
2. *Engage experienced professionals from cyber security to teach part-time at Universum to share with students their real-life experiences. That might be interesting and motivating to the students.*
3. *Pay more attention to present the courses properly.*



## 2.2. Quality management

Considering the information gathered during the evaluation visit and the additional information received after the visit, the experts' team agrees that staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity. While talking to the head of the bachelor's programme, the Expert Team (ET) observed a lack of awareness of the challenges and how to deal with them. Therefore, the ET cannot confirm that the evaluation processes and planning for improvement would be integrated into normal planning processes. The HEI has developed Staff Handbook. Also, both the HEI and external stakeholders would benefit from a publicly available Quality Policy.

Quality assurance processes at the HEI deal with all aspects of programme planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution. Quality evaluations offer an overview of quality issues for the overall programme and different components within it.

Survey data is being collected from students, graduates, and employers, but the results of these evaluations are not made publicly available. Only a few of the employers who took part in the visit were able to name some examples of cooperation with the HEI (hackathons). No one was involved in implementing and evaluating the programme (no one had received and filled in any questionnaire from the HEI). Consequently, it can be concluded that cooperation with employers should be expanded. The ET can confirm that the institution ensures that reports on the quality are prepared periodically (yearly), and the results of the internal quality assurance system are considered for the development of the study programme. However, the student workload is not monitored. The quality assurance arrangements at the HEI are regularly evaluated and improved. The quality assurance processes ensure that most of the required standards are met. There is continuous improvement, but the evidence could be better prepared (English language). Overall, the Quality Management at the HEI is on a high level.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
<i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.		X
<i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	



<i>Standard 2.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates, and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.		X
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system have been taken into consideration for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (e.g., every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses	X	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level: 7/9 = 0.78 = 78%, Substantially compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Design and publish Quality Policy.*
2. *Publish the results that represent survey data collected.*
3. *Expand the cooperation with the external stakeholders, e.g., employers.*
4. *Establish procedures for monitoring and coordinating student workload.*
5. *Conduct a comprehensive reassessment of the programme at least once every five years. Policies and procedures for conducting this reassessment should be published. Programme assessment should involve external stakeholders (e.g., experienced people from relevant industries and professions and experienced staff from other institutions).*
6. *Design and publish a specific improvement plan interrelated with the survey results (advisable at the study programme level – so the implementation of recommendations could be clearly assessed by the HEI staff and the external reviewers). The improvement*



*plan should clearly indicate the areas as follows: survey results, investigation of the student workload, academic success, and graduates' employment.*

7. *Continue to evaluate and improve the quality assurance arrangements regularly and systematically (once a year). Review of quality assurance arrangements should include both internal and external stakeholders, including students.*
8. *Ensure high engagement of students in their academic life at the HEI.*
9. *The documents used as evidence in the external evaluation process should be prepared in English.*

### **2.3. Academic staff**

Based on the table in Chapter #3 of the Self-Evaluation, one can note a usual problem in developing countries and emerging disciplines. The newest and the most demanded and best paid professionals in Computing, available for teaching, are in scarce supply. It reflects here in the fact that the highest academic rank in charge of the Cyber security study is assistant professor. That is nowadays due to the fact that only the state university approves academic promotion, but that might change and one should not be taken by surprise. The situation can be still regarded as favourable. The availability of staff may deteriorate with time, especially when Kosovo joins the EU. The brain-drain will be difficult to control. However, Universum apparently leads a clever and able policy of stimulating its staff for engagement in multiple domestic and international professional and scientific projects. Universum can hardly be accused as competition to IT companies. IT companies as a rule prefer to offer completion of repetitive tasks and make more profit due to economy of scale. Engagement in specific highly specialised and complex projects is usually not attractive to them. They avoid investing a lot of effort, time and money and sell the solution only once.

On the contrary, routine professional tasks are not attractive to academic staff, regardless of possible good earnings. They can learn very little or nothing on such tasks. Universum staff seems not to be under strong pressure for publishing papers. They seem not to publish papers just for the sake of publishing, what often happens in academic communities. However, it would be advisable that the teaching staff dedicates some effort for publishing scientific and professional papers, as a by-product of the work on projects. Interesting case studies, reflecting real-life experiences are accepted also in reputable journals and on conferences. A number of such published papers may be useful to the authors in some future occasions. They should declare as authors their affiliation to Universum, as it may become also useful for the institution.



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The research conducted to address acute local professional and scientific problems in real life, bring additional value to the local community, the researcher and his/her team earn some extra money what can help in further advancement of the team, rise members' satisfaction, and increase respect in the local community.

Engagement of the Universum staff in projects is not a loss of time or diversion from their basic tasks. It can be an additional attractive motivation to follow the market demand, acquire the relevant applicable knowledge and disseminate it among the students. The labour market might appreciate that and the demand for your students can further grow. On the other hand, the financial situation of the Faculty staff can significantly improve and so their level of satisfaction and self-fulfilment.

It is important that the education must keep its position as the primary concern. Universum could participate in income through the projects signed on behalf of some of its staffers. The Faculty has the right to participate in sharing of the income, but it would be advisable not to overpass 20% (10% Faculty + 10% Department). The rest should be at disposal of those who earned it, of course respecting all the local legal obligations. For the departmental funds, the department staff can buy equipment, literature, pay conference fees and travelling expenses. If the departmental work force is insufficient, additional young professionals can be hired from the alumni and paid from the projects. They will surely be the best available and there should be no worry that nepotism might arise, if people decide regarding their own earned money. When the Universum management funds allow, the best among the project-financed researchers can become regular teaching staff.

Regarding the staff, a general objection is that their CVs are not presented in the same standardised format. Some of them are partly or only in Albanian. Some mention remarkable achievements, experience, and publications, while some have no publications or have missed to mention them.+

It is for us impossible to check completion of Standard 3.3. as we cannot dispose of all the higher education data in Kosovo and in vicinity. As the respective education process has not started yet, we cannot guarantee future fulfilment of standards 3.5 and 3.8. We expect them not to be fulfilled immediately.



Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 3.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
<i>Standard 3.3.</i> 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
<i>Standard 3.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.5.</i> 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
<i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
<i>Standard 3.7.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.8.</i> 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
<i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
<i>Standard 3.10.</i> 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: 7/10 = 70%, Substantially compliant**





### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Continue with your successful policy of enforcing international and domestic projects.*
- 2. Continue supporting the Universum staff initiatives to solve local challenging real-life problems and moderately motivate them to publish their achievements in relevant journals.*
- 3. Occasionally engage distinguished professionals from industry to provide invited lectures for the students and/or to be co-mentors for students' theses dealing with real-life problems from practice.*
- 4. Try to provide at least a few full and/or associate professors, as a precaution measure for fulfilment of some possible future harsher legal requirements.*

### **2.4. Educational process content**

Standard 4.4. cannot be satisfied because description of some courses is incomplete or even missing.

Regarding the Standard 4.5, we have not noticed considerations of using as the teaching language any other language except Albanian.

Syllabus is in part in Albanian.

We could not find some courses in the Syllabus list of courses (or at least not in English):

- Cyber security fundamentals
- Network and pentesting

“Software Development I” should be renamed as “Computer networks” because it would better correspond to the contents. Weekly contents summary is mostly described as “Lectures and Exercises”.

Software Development II” is mentioned in the Self-evaluation report, but it cannot be found among the courses contents in Syllabus.

The course “Information systems” has in Weekly planning the Lecture Topics of weeks 8-10 partly in Albanian, and in the column Summary, instead of a description, Chapter 11 and 12 are declared.



W E E K	Lecture Topic	Summary	Reading Material	Number of results expected from the Table	Exam or Assessment Part (YES / NO)
...	...	...	...	...	...
8	Knowledge of specialized information system management	Chapter 11		1,2,3,4,5	YES
9	Zhvillimi i sistemeve dhe analizat në sisteme	Chapter 12		1,2,3,4,5	YES
10	Dizajni, implementimi, mirëmbajtja dhe rishikimi	Chapter 12		1,2,3,4,5	YES
...	...	...	...	...	...

“Introduction to Data Structures” is described only in Albanian.

How is in “Project Management” achieved the goal #4 “Demonstrate the ability to use Microsoft Project to track project progress”, when in the weekly plan there is no mention of network planning, CPM, activities, their mutual dependencies, resources and their categories and availability etc.?

“Software architecture” – Summary in weekly plan is mostly declared as “Lectures and exercises”, instead of the summary of contents taught in the respective week.

Mathematics for Computer Science I is not listed in Syllabus and therefore no weekly plan is presented.

Mathematics for Computer Science II is not listed in Syllabus and therefore no weekly plan is presented. In addition, there is no description of the contents of this course at all.

It is questionable whether the students learn anything about probability and statistics. Can they deliberate about risks without that knowledge?



Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 4.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.2.</i> 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
<i>Standard 4.3.</i> 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
<i>Standard 4.4.</i> 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
<i>Standard 4.5.</i> 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
<i>Standard 4.6.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.7.</i> Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and	X	



assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.		
<i>Standard 4.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.9.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.10.</i> Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed.		X
<i>Standard 4.11.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.12.</i> 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 = 6/12 = 0.58 ≈ 60%, Partly compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Universum has a good record, rather long experience, excellent international co-operation and some excellently educated teachers. Introduction of a new study is not a simple task. Much attention and time should be dedicated to courses contents, their execution possibility and co-ordination among the courses contents to make a homogeneous whole.*
- 2. Use the first study execution cycle to collect experience and suggestions for improvements and better co-ordination. After 3 years propose a modified programme in order to improve the syllabus and become accredited for enrolment of more students.*
- 3. Even if the study is just about to begin, have immediately in mind the necessity to constantly adapt to new needs. Ever rising need for new courses is sometimes easier to*



*satisfy than to decide to remove certain courses. Offering more elective courses can help to decide which courses are in demand and should remain.*

## 2.5. Students

The study has not started yet. This chapter is omitted as non-applicable.

## 2.6. Research

Universum states in its Self-evaluation report that it is not a research-intensive institution, but it sees itself primarily as a teaching institution. The research however does take place. It reflects the current strengths of the institution and illustrates how applied research is used to strengthen their study programmes and to keep their curriculum up to date with the most recent developments in respective industries. Universum's strategic investment plan foresees to increase the research fund to comply with the needs of the current labour market. They intend further expansion of their research range, quality, and products.

Universum declares to be implementing an integrated teaching, research, and staff development policy by making it obligatory for staff to spend a substantial proportion of their working time in conducting research. This will give students the opportunity to participate in ongoing research along with their teachers. Due to the noticed lack of research on Cyber security in Kosovo, focus will be on applied research, and creation of knowledge.

To prepare industry-ready graduates, relevant job-specific skills are needed, provision of appropriate industry engagement, understanding of responsibilities and practice of working in the respective industry. The College designs programmes that provide students with practical learning opportunities, while having direct contact with industries and including research activities paired with publishing opportunities.

The above statements are a sound base for Universum's activities.

Already achieved wide co-operation abroad and in Kosovo is a proof that the applied strategy is effective and efficient.

More publications could be expected but it is important to maintain the practice that concrete relevant research is the principal goal and publications are a by-product of it, and not its only goal. It must be mentioned that some of the most productive researchers have spent some time abroad and published mostly there, while not being affiliated to Universum.



Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> 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
<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
<i>Standard 6.7.</i> 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
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.		X
<i>Standard 6.9/6.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
<i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	

**Compliance level: 8/11 = 0.72 =72%, Substantially compliant**



### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Make sure that all the academic staff publishes declaring the affiliation to Universum while being primarily employed there.*
- 2. Encourage academic staff to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to the study courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.*
- 3. Develop mechanisms for students' engagement in applied research projects and other activities, monitor the outputs, outcomes, and impact.*
- 4. Consider the organization of scientific sessions with the involvement of teaching staff, researchers, students, and graduates.*
- 5. Consider providing support for junior teaching staff in the development of their research programmes through mechanisms such as mentoring by senior colleagues, inclusion in project teams, assistance in developing research proposals, and seed funding.*
- 6. Consider monitoring and supporting staff's contribution to attracting financial resources through applied research projects and products. Consider including the staff's capacity to generate such financial returns in the individual performance review system.*

### **2.7. Infrastructure and resources**

Unfortunately, we could not observe the Universum premises in situ. According to the Self-evaluation report, the Board of Trustees allocates financial resources and investments in order to ensure that all the human resources, equipment and infrastructure is available for the long-term continuity of the programme.

The facilities adequate for the execution of the proposed programme, according to the same source are:

- Modern Campus with adequate number of rooms and seats to host large number of students
- Laboratories : The lab equipment has been procured keeping in view the educational requirements and the industry trends. All the labs in the Campus are furnished with the newest equipment, necessary for research and education.
- Licensed software for computer-aided learning, to support study processes and administrative services.



- Rich library with literature in Albanian and in English
- Rooms with tech devices, available for utilization and development of activities, accessible for students with disabilities and special needs as required by Standard 7.6.
- Spacious, well ventilated and equipped computerised central library with Internet access and rich collection of books, journals, periodicals, and e-journals in Albanian and English.

Having in mind intrinsic economic instabilities and unexpected problems on the global level, like the current COVID-19 pandemic, nobody can guarantee the Standard 7.2 requirement to know what might happen in three years from now. Universum owns sufficient space for the delivery of the program.

Spaces available are fully complying with the requirements stated in the Standard 7.3.

We suppose that all the requests in 7.5. cannot be satisfied to each detail. Literature in domestic language, access to some databases and some software licences usually are lacking.

The campuses of Prishtina, Ferizaj and Gjakova according to descriptions fully comply to all the requirements.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> 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
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;	X	





d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.		
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
<i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.		X
<i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	X	

**Compliance = 4/6 = 0.67 ≈ 70%, Substantially compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

- Literature in Albanian with modern, rapidly developing topics is usually lacking for reasons beyond the institution's capability to solve, but that should not be regarded as a serious problem. It can happen that while such a textbook is being translated, it becomes obsolete. Nowadays, practically every professional in Computing must be fluent in English and able to work in international environment. If necessary, provide additional courses in English.*



2. *Try to attract foreign students by lecturing certain courses in English. Some of your students would eagerly attend lectures in English. However, mother tongue should never be neglected, regardless of seemingly rational advantages of using only English.*

### 3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we could not be physically present at Universum and we had to rely on written materials and meetings via video link.

We gave some recommendations in each of the chapters. Our impression is globally positive. The weakest aspect is the syllabus and its presentation. It will surely experience some revisions during the first 3 years study cycle. If you continue keeping the staff and students' motivation high, maintaining the best internationalisation reputation, good ties with industry and by attracting the best student population and promoting co-operation with local industry but also with institutions and companies abroad, using possibility to work on-line, the study has very favourable perspective.

We do not expect that the first experiences with the new programme would be excellent, but rather satisfactory. Some objections were put in the report regarding the syllabus. A comprehensive analysis of the syllabus acceptance among students would be welcome so that noticed need for corrections can be applied, what should allow to increase the number of enrolling students if all other prerequisites can be met. Before such polishing has been made, it is advisable to enrol a moderate number of students. One must also have in mind that increasing the number of enrolled students lowers the overall quality of the student population, because all of them cannot be of above average quality, what can be the case by smaller numbers of applicants.

International co-operation is excellent in Universum, schooling and working abroad are very useful and usually attractive so that our recommendation in that aspect would be to motivate your quality staff and students to plan a subsequent return to their homeland, making it every day more prosperous.

Overall compliance:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
2. Quality management	Substantially compliant
3. Academic staff	Substantially compliant
4. Educational process content	Partially compliant
5. Students	Non applicable
6. Research	Substantially compliant



7. Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant
<b>Overall compliance</b>	<b>Substantially compliant</b>

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for program re/accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a **substantial compliance** level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure in meeting at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation.

In conclusion, in line with the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends **to accredit** the programme.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study programme **Cyber Security, BA Professional, branch in Gjakova offered by PBHE “Universum College”**, is *Substantially compliant*, with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study programme for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **70** students to be enrolled in the programme. Attention must be paid to monitor the labour market. Cyber Security is intrinsically an easier study than Computer Science and there might arise the danger of saturating the labour market requirements, while computer science graduates would still be lacking.

### Expert Team

#### Chair

Professor emeritus Damir Kalpić, PhD

14 May 2021

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

#### Member

Mr. Mikus Dubickis

14 May 2021

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)