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***UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA***  
***APPLIED ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT***  
***(IN ENGLISH)***

***RE-ACCREDITATION***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*17 March 2022, Stoke-on-Trent, UK*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 01/03/2022**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Dr Jana Fiserova, BA(Hons), MSc, PhD, SFHEA, University Campus of Football Business, Manchester, UK*
- *Marija Vasilevska, PhD Student, University American College Skopje (UACS)*

**Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):**

- *Leona Kovaci*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self-evaluation report “Bachelor of Applied Economics and Management”, 2021 Prishtina*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual updated 2021*
- *Syllabi*
- *Staff CVs*

**Annexes:**

*Rule of Procedures for the Electronic Management System for Students, Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Prishtina, Guide for course evaluation from Students and Use of Results at the University of Prishtina "Hasan*

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*Prishtina", Manual on the use of management and monitoring of attendance at the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Regulation for Student Academic Mobility in UP, Regulation on Selection Procedure of Staff, List of staff scientific papers, Staff participation in conferences, Staff participation in training, Code of Ethics for Academic Staff, Budget 2019-2021, Statute of UP, Regulation on Disciplinary Procedure, Sample completed by student assessment, Scientific Journal Balkan Economic Review, Regulation on PhD studies,*

***Additional requested documents:***

*Cumulative evaluation of the academic staff at the level of the Faculty of Economics – academic year 2020 – 2021, Students’ evaluation for course and academic staff of the Bachelor Programme in Applied Economics and Management 2021 – 2022, Processed results – evaluation of the students’ needs related to career development, Statistics – Evaluation of students needs related to career development, Academic Contracts, Regulation on staff payment.*

**Criteria used for programme evaluation:**

- *Standards and performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA (2021)*



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## 1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:45	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Driton Balaj Alban Elshani Aferdita Berisha Drita Konxheli Valbona Zhubi
09:50 – 10:35	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Besnik Loxha Saranda Kajtazi Lura Rexhepi Neshat Podvorica Drita Zhushi
10:40 – 11:40	Meeting with the heads of the study programme:	But Dedaj Nimete Berisha, Gazmend Qorraj.
11:40 – 12:25	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
12:25 – 13:10	Meeting with teaching staff	Driton Qehaja; Petrir Gashi; Ardiana Gashi; Arber Hoti; Mjellma Carrabregu; Gentrit Berisha
13:15 – 14:00	Meeting with students	Erisa Kallaba; Alma Bajramaj; Rrita Tejeci; Djellza Qyqalla; Rina Ademi; Yll Matoshi
14:05 – 14:50	Meeting with graduates	Mrika Molliqaj; Dren Sopi; Diellona Kostanica; Rine Lamaj
14:55 – 15:40	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Agron Krasniqi; Alban Kryeziu; Iilir Berisha; Shkendie Himaj Ahmet Ismaili Bujar Statovci
15:40 – 15:50	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:50 – 16:00	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and programme	

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

The Faculty of Economics is part of the University of Prishtina "HASAN PRISHTINA" that started to work as a separate academic unit in 1971/72. The Faculty is focused on preparing the future society leaders for taking their roles in the community in Kosovo and abroad to contribute towards economic and social development, and advance the global knowledge in the field of economics through teaching, research and practice. Moreover, the Faculty aims towards the establishment of an institutional culture for quality development and cooperation with international institutions in the field of economics with the aim of integration into scientific networks in the field of economics and implementation of research projects through the Economic Research Institute. The Faculty's aims are achieved through (i) higher education provision at a Bachelor, Master and Doctorate level; (ii) continuous improvement of teaching curriculum and methodology; (iii) intensive engagement in research; (iv) continuous training of academic staff; (v) transformation into a leading centre for the advancement of economics knowledge and education in the region; and (vi) full participation in the regional and international higher education community.

The programme that is the subject of this accreditation, i.e. Applied Economics and Management, is the only such programme delivered by a public university in the English language.



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## 2. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

From the evidence presented in the self-evaluation report (SER) submitted by the University of Prishtina (UP) as well as the evidence gathered during the site visit, the Expert Team (ET) can conclude, that the study programme and its mission are in compliance with the overall mission of UP. The purpose of the study programme Bachelor of Science in Applied Economics and Management (in English) is set out by UP to “equip students with problem-solving abilities, to enable them to work independently and responsibly in future professional areas, in both scientific and practical environments” (p). It has been observed by the ET that academic staff use real-life examples and problems in their teaching such as discussion of minimum wage, using real-life data from the EU, Kosovo and the world, and COVID crisis and its impact on the real macroeconomic variables from different sectors. In addition, academics host guest speakers from prominent global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund.

Unfortunately, no evidence was provided in the SER to support the statement that the study programme “is compatible to the level 6 of the National Qualification Framework and ... to the level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework” (p). Further clarification was sought by the ET who specifically requested concrete examples of how the qualifications objectives were considered in the design of the study programme. However, the response stated that they simply had been considered and are aligned. From the study visit, it was apparent that, in line with the objectives of the Higher Education Strategy in the Republic of Kosovo, this programme meets the objectives of internationalisation through the contribution of teaching staff and students of the programme in international scientific conferences and workshops; that the academic staff



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who are in charge of leading the programme do so with consideration of international trends and demands of the local and international labour market. These have been evidenced by the regular discussions with the industry representatives and by collaboration with international higher education institutions. Evidence gathered during the study visit therefore seems to support the claims presented in the SER, however, it must be formally and explicitly stated with examples and concrete evidence to demonstrate how the programme is consistent with the required standards and how the academic and professional advice is sought and utilised in maintaining the compatibility with the required standards.

A didactic approach to teaching refers to a manner of instruction in which information is presented directly from the teacher to the student, in which the teacher selects the topic of instruction, controls instructional stimuli, obligates a response from the student, evaluates student responses, and provides reinforcement for correct responses and feedback for incorrect ones. Whilst it was not clearly and explicitly stated in the SER what teaching methods are commonly used in teaching, during the site visit, the ET observed evidence of a well-defined didactic approach. Namely, academics use module descriptors to outline the content to be delivered to the students, use lectures, ‘exercises’ and consultations to deliver the content, and use in-class tests, colloquia and exams to check student understanding and to provide them with formative and summative feedback. In addition, according to the SER, staff are “encouraged to integrate new technology at the level of subjects” (p). This was evidenced by academics during the visit by demonstrating that they embed videos on the electronic system (SEMS), use accounting software and statistical programmes for data analysis (e.g. SPSS, STATA, R), and improve interaction between academic staff and students by implementing e.g. Kahoot, Moodle, and Google classroom.



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The SER outlined that the support for research and scientific work of academic staff comes from the Institute for Economic Research. Whilst it was outlined what it does and how it aims to support academics in their research activities, the SER did not outline how these activities relate to staff teaching and how they in turn support student learning. Moreover, via request for additional information, the ET learnt that “due to the difficulties set in the Regulation for activating research institutes within the University of Prishtina, the Institute for Economic Research of the Faculty of Economics was unable to run research projects funded by third parties....”. Consequently, there were “no research projects implemented by the Faculty of Economics in the last 10 years and more” resulting in students on the programme “not being able to take part in research projects where the Faculty of Economics was a grant holder”. This is highly concerning and should be considered as a priority for UP and the new FE management. In addition, the Faculty management failed to provide evidence of any conceptual and well defined research agenda for their staff. From the discussion with academics during the site visit, it was however apparent that and how staff use their own research to support their own teaching and even that they include students in research projects. Therefore, it is important that the research activities, research concept and research agenda are formalised and clearly defined for the Faculty and its academic staff and that research is explicitly linked with teaching on the programme.

Sufficient evidence was provided regarding formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. It can therefore be concluded that administration and quality assurance of the programme, the interaction between teachers and students and their rights and duties are well developed and well known to these groups.

From the meetings with the programme leaders, academics and students, the ET conclude that there is a good level of compliance with internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in

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research, teaching and assessments. One major difficulty that was reported concerns the lack of system for plagiarism detection. In the meetings during the site visit, the ET were informed that there was no software for plagiarism detection and that academics handle plagiarism checks individually. This is concerning, as there should be consistency across all staff at UP and they should all have access to the same software provided centrally by the University.

The Faculty of Economics publishes all relevant information and regulations on the University website and the SER states that they are being reviewed once a year. It is however unclear as to who reviews them and how they are/have been/can be amended.

Standards	Compliant	
	Yes	No
1.1. The study programme 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 programme 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	



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Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the programme are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	X	
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**Compliance level:** Partially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. It should be explicitly demonstrated how the programme is consistent with the required national and European standards and how the academic and professional advice is sought and utilised in maintaining the compatibility with the required standards.*
- 2. Research activities, research concept and research agenda should be formalised and clearly defined for the Faculty members and research should support and be explicitly linked with teaching on the programme.*
- 3. To assure quality of student work and to ensure consistency across all the University, a plagiarism-check software such as Turnitin (or equivalent) should be centrally provided by the University*



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## 2.2. Quality management

The quality management at the FE follows the system set at the University level. The University has a set out structure prescribed in the following internal documents: Statute of the University- where the importance and the objectives of the quality management is set out, the Regulation in Quality Assurance (QA) and Evaluation at University of Prishtina, and the Guide for course evaluation from students and use of results at UP. The main governing bodies responsible for QA and the evaluation system are the Central Quality Assurance and the Evaluation Committee at the University level, Office for Academic Development at the University level, Dean of the Academic Unit, and Quality Assurance and Evaluation Committee at the Academic Unit level.

The quality culture has been set as a standard among everyone in the FE. In particular, academic staff and students participate in the self-evaluation process through completing questionnaires for collecting their feedback. University units and their governing bodies are obligated to provide and cooperate in collecting the necessary data for the evaluation process. The administrative staff participate in providing additional data, collecting and analyzing data available through the electronic system for student management (SEMS). In addition, there is a peer observation of teaching evaluation organised for academic staff. It is a pilot project for evaluation of academic staff performance which is expected to be included in their performance review and set out as a condition for their promotion. The ET would like to commend to the Faculty of Economics for their efforts in including peer observation in its quality management system.

Article 13 of the Regulation on QA and Evaluation at UP prescribes that the evaluation data provided for the evaluation processes shall be used for the University's annual and strategic

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planning, prioritization of development activities and future planning. The same document prescribes that the Rector is responsible for ensuring that the results from the evaluations are translated into operational measures for appropriate improvements and rewards for best practices. In addition, the Statute of UP prescribed that evaluations and the quality assurance processes in general are conducted in order to achieve the objectives, adjust the work and economize the measures taken. The SER shares specific examples of how the collected data through the evaluation processes are used for reviewing academic staff performance and for future planning, especially in terms of what academic staff can improve in their performance. The students that ET met during the site visit confirmed that they believe the evaluation process is used for improvement and they shared specific examples of things that have been improved based on their feedback provided in the evaluation process.

As prescribed in the Statute of UP, the QA processes cover the following: evaluation of the management measures on all organizational levels, evaluation of study programs and organization of studies, the quality of teaching, research activities and artistic work. However, from the provided example of a student survey for evaluation of teaching and courses, it can be concluded that most of the questions are focused on the teaching process and there are no questions for the student services, either for the inputs or the learning outcomes.

The Statute of UP specifies two types of collection of data - questionnaires for academic staff and anonymous questionnaires for students. These two types of questionnaires have been digitalized and made mandatory for all students. Data from the employers have been collected through conducting interviews with them (as reported in the SER) and from the organisation of focus groups with them (as ET learnt during the site visit). The ET cannot conclude that the results from the evaluations are made publicly available since the University website is not translated into English.

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Article 6 of the Guide for course evaluation from students and use of results at the University of Prishtina specifies that each year, each faculty produces an evaluation report in which it analyses the results from the course evaluation, documentation of quality assurance measures and lists of plans for improvement of the quality. During the site visit, the representative of the QA office within the Faculty shared that the Faculty intends to have checking of the quality of the programme once every three years. However, due to the fact that the KAA`s accreditation for the programme was usually given for a period of three years, the Faculty tends to conduct an evaluation of the programme on a yearly basis in preparation for the KAA`s accreditation.

Moreover, as prescribed in article number 2 of the Regulation on QA and Evaluation, the objectives of the quality assurance and evaluation system are to identify and promote best practices, intervention to improve the existing situation, and ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of University activities.

Article 12 of the Regulation on QA and Evaluation, specifies that the period of the evaluation for programme accreditation is scheduled for at least once every five years which is in line with the dynamics of programme accreditation.

Standard	Compliant	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	

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Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of programme 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 programme as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.		X
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.		X
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study programme. 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 programme 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 programme are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Student survey for evaluation of teaching and courses should include questions for evaluation of student services and of students' learning outcomes.*



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2. *Collection of feedback from employers and graduates should be formalized and structured. Other tools and methods for the collection of their feedback should be taken into consideration, such as questionnaires.*
3. *The peer observation of teaching process should be formalized and included as a regular quality assurance activity.*
4. *The Faculty should publish all reports on the evaluations and all quality management procedures in the English language on its website.*



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### **2.3. Academic staff**

There is substantial evidence, which is also appropriately presented in the SER, that academic staff at the FE are highly qualified and perform duties associated with the roles of professors, associate professors, teaching assistants and lecturers. It is stated in the SER that all academic staff at the FE are employed on a full-time basis with some having fixed-term and some permanent contracts. Examples of job descriptions and conditions of employment were provided upon request.

According to the SER, the teaching staff are in compliance with the legal requirements regarding the occupation of teaching positions, which are included in the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation. Procedures for appointment to academic posts and subsequent staff promotion are outlined in the “Regulation on selection procedures regarding appointment, reappointment and advancement of the academic staff”, which was provided as evidence in support of the SER. It is stated in the SER that academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions. Whilst there is no evidence to the contrary, it is not clear as to how this is ensured.

The responsibilities of all academic staff at the EF include engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service. Abundance of evidence in support of this claim was gathered during the discussions with academics during the site visit. Academics have pre-determined number of hours they dedicate to consultations each week, which are transparently communicated to the students. Academics at the FE also engage with academic community both nationally and internationally through staff mobilities, studies abroad and scientific conferences. In addition, staff tend to be engaged in cooperation

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with the public and private sector companies and organisations thus contributing to their local and national community.

There is substantial evidence that opportunities for additional professional development of teaching staff are provided. There is support available for staff to attend conferences which will maintain their cutting-edge knowledge of their respective disciplines which will benefit their teaching and in turn improve their students' learning. In addition, the Centre for Excellence in Teaching provides basic and advance teacher training which is mandatory for all staff and engagement with the training is one of the requirements for promotion.

There is substantial evidence that staff are regularly evaluated by students, their line managers and through self-assessment (although the ET has not been provided with any evidence that would suggest that the output of the evaluation is made publicly available). However, a formal peer review process appears to be missing from the 360 degree evaluation. During the discussions with academic staff, it became apparent that a pilot project on peer observation of teaching was being implemented, which means UP is recognising the value of peer evaluation. However, it is important that the University as well as the Faculty use formal peer observation of teaching as a further *developmental* tool for professors and other student-facing academic staff. It is important that whilst this process should be formalised, it should not be *judgemental*. Staff should be able to engage in a critical discussion and learn from each other and the scheme should be set up so that both the observer and the person being observed will benefit from the process. Whilst it may be expected that such a scheme would have senior staff observing junior staff, it is important to recognise that when junior staff observe more senior staff they will learn from the other person's experience. When the senior staff member observes the more junior staff member, the observer can not only provide constructive feedback but also learn e.g. about



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new emerging technologies and how they can be effectively used to engage students and interact with them.

Standards	Compliant	
	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 programme 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 programme are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study programme.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study programme, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self- evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.		X

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Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Develop and implement a formal peer observation of teaching scheme as a developmental tool for teaching staff.*
- 2. Make outcomes of evaluations publicly available*



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

“The purpose of the ... Applied Economics and Management [programme] is to equip students with problem solving skills to enable them to work independently and responsibly in future professional areas in one scientific and practical environment” (SER, p30). This was evidenced by discussions with academic staff who presented plethora of concrete examples as to how this is achieved. Staff use real-life examples of economic and business problems onto which students apply academic and theoretical concepts to develop a solution. Staff use relevant software which students will use and experience in the industry. Such activities are suitable to “prepare graduates to be competent to use economic data and methods to explain economic issues of interest at local, regional and international level” (SER, p30).

The programme contains relevant modules so that upon completion of the programme students are able to understand, apply and analyse economic and business concepts and issues. The combination of the modules is appropriate to develop skills and knowledge in both parts of the programme, i.e. Applied Economics as well as Management. From the discussion with the programme graduates, it was apparent that both aspects of the programme were delivered effectively and graduates were using their knowledge and skills in practice from both specialisms of the programme. Each module carries an appropriate number of credits and the overall programme contains 180 ECTS credits, thus meeting the requirements of an undergraduate Bachelor programme in line with European standards.

The module descriptors contain information on objectives and contents of the courses as well as on the proportions of different assessment formats. Similarly, the SER lists seven learning outcomes of the programme. It would however be useful, in line with European Higher Education practice, to develop a Programme Specification document which would define the

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overall learning outcomes and objectives of the programme, its teaching and assessment strategies, its explicit alignment with the relevant qualification frameworks, and specific competencies such as professional, methodical-analytical, social and personal, which student will develop during the programme.

The programme is delivered in English as the only programme of its kind at a public university in Kosovo. The institution prescribes that students who are accepted on the course must pass an entrance exam which is entirely in English. This ensure that the prospective students have sufficient command of the language in the business and economic context to ensure sufficient understanding throughout the programme. Vast majority of staff who teach on the programme have studied abroad, particularly in the UK and the USA, and thus are proficient in English and their delivery is thus facilitated to a very high standard. From the discussion with both students and staff it was apparent that all of them had an excellent command of the English language.

The student-teacher relationship is clearly a partnership in which each party assumes the responsibility of meeting the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained at the beginning of each module. Students are encouraged to discuss matters arising from teaching directly with the academics be it in lectures, exercises or during consultations. The types of assessment are sufficiently varied to ensure that all students can present their skills in a variety of ways and that all skills are examined ranging from written assignments and exams, to team collaboration and oral presentations.

Assessment strategies are varied and communicated to students transparently via module descriptors. There are processes in place to ensure that a student can appeal against the grade they were given and the assessment and student performance are evaluated by another

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academic. However, to make this mechanism even more fair and objective, the ET recommend that an *internal moderation* and *external examination* process is implemented in line with practice in e.g. British higher education institutions. This process ensures that individual grades cannot be challenged by individual students as an independent internal moderator (i.e. another academic from the department/faculty) and an external examiner (i.e. an academic from another higher education institution) checks a proportion of assessments and associated feedback for accuracy, consistency, and alignment with the assessment criteria and learning outcomes. This way students can only challenge the process and thus as long as the process was followed and assessment was internally moderated and externally verified, students cannot challenge individual grades. This not only makes the students more assured of the fairness and objectivity of the marking process but also academics will face fewer challenges from students and thus maintain good collaborative relationships. In addition, this process maintains consistency over time, across modules and programmes not only across the institution but across the sector as a whole. Furthermore, whilst UP provides grading standards and assessment policies in its statute, the internal moderation and external examination process ensures that these standards are indeed followed and met.

Another tool that is recommended by the ET to further improve the consistency of application of the marking criteria and grading standards is the process of *standardisation* before marking commences. This is particularly useful if multiple academics mark the same module assessment (e.g. to reduce the workload on a single academic). This process enables academics to independently grade a small sample of papers or exams and then discuss together any discrepancies in their grades or feedback, why they may have occurred, and how they can be addressed so that marking is standardised across markers before the official marking begins.

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Standards	Compliant	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study programme is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	x	
Standard 4.2. The study programme complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the programme are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study programme under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study programme under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the programme.	X	
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	X	

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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 programme and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	X	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	X	
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a programme, 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 programme 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 organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study programme.	X	
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- To further enhance fairness, objectivity and transparency of assessment and related processes, it is recommended that standardisation, internal moderation and external examination are considered to be implemented.*

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## 2.5. Students

The ET met a group of students and graduates who are highly motivated, prepared and focused on sharing their professional knowledge in the society through their engagement in the public, private and research sectors on a national and international level. Both groups were highly satisfied with the Faculty, their professors and the opportunities that the particular programme provided them for their future professional career. Thus, the ET would like to commend the Faculty and its staff for the level of student readiness for industry practice.

UP regulates the admission procedure in its Statute and in the “Regulation for Bachelor studies”. The whole process is based on the national regulation framework. In particular, those who have completed high school and the Matura exam can apply for bachelor studies, as prescribed in the Regulation for Bachelor studies. In addition, the entrance exams for this programme is in English, as the ET learnt from the Heads of the study programme.

The SER specifies that the study groups are dimensioned appropriately to ensure effective teaching and learning. There is a maximum of 50 students enrolled in the programme per year who are included in one study group. The dimension of the study group was also confirmed by the Heads of the study programme during the site visit.

As shared in the SER, on a programme level, there are methods for student support, such as discussions with professors during consultation hours, which are also included in the syllabi. The partnership between the students and professors was highlighted in several meetings during the site visit, especially from the students. The ET can thus conclude that the feedback on the students’ performance and results from the assessments are given based on the student needs.

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Article 109 of the Statute of the University of Prishtina specifies the grades that will be applied by all academic units for describing the success level in examinations. In addition, the Statute and the Regulation for Bachelor studies regulate the number of ECTS credits that the student will get after finishing their bachelor studies. Upon successful completion of Bachelor studies, the students receive a degree of Bachelor of Science. Records of student completion rates and students' portfolios are kept in the electronic system for student management (SEMS).

Despite the initiatives from some professors, FE does not have access to a centrally provided software for plagiarism checks that can be used to ensure that the students' work is original. If a student commits academic misconduct, there is a specific committee formed to take appropriate measures. Whilst the Code of Ethics is a formal document, which sets the standards and maintains that plagiarism is a case of academic misconduct, it is only focused on academic staff and not students.

Article 4 of the Regulation for Bachelor studies specifies that students are regularly informed of their rights and obligations through the University website. Moreover, the students are informed about the structure of the study programme and the teaching and exam schedules at the beginning of the academic year in accordance with the Statute of UP. This information is also available through the SEMS system, as the ET learnt from students and administrative staff during the site visit.

The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programmes is not clearly regulated in the formal internal documents.



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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study programme 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 programme 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 programme and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the programme as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		X
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	



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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. The Faculty of economics should purchase software for checking the originality of the students' work.*
- 2. The Faculty should regulate the students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs in its formal internal documents.*



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## 2.6. Research

The study programme does not seem to have defined scientific/applied research objectives whether on its own or as part of a research centre. The establishment of the Institute for Economic Research is a commendable initiative, however, there were major issues highlighted during the request for additional information (please see section 2.1 for more details). Whilst there is significant evidence of research activities being performed at FE and across UP, no evidence was provided of a strategic research development plan or a specific research agenda for the Department, Faculty or the University.

Expectations for teaching staff regarding their involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified in the “Regulation on selection procedures”. The regulation and the UP statute transparently outlines research and scholarly output requirements for recruitment and subsequent promotion and the weight and importance of publications indexed in various databases and published in various journals.

Staff have a proven track record of publishing research and scholarly output which is relevant to their teaching. Through the discussions with staff it was apparent that they actively use their own research output and experience gained from their involvement in community practice to share cutting-edge knowledge with their students and thus improve their learning. Indeed, academics on the programme publish their work in highly recognised academic and scientific journals and present at international conferences. However, it must be noted that the publication record submitted as part of the evidence to support the SER was dated (period covered was 2015-19) and the current up-to-date information about staff publications and research activities had to be retrieved by the ET from the staff CVs. From the CV review, it was apparent that whilst there are some members of staff who are active researchers and publish their work

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regularly, not all have published at least three publications in the last three years, as required by KAA.

From the discussion with academics, students and graduates, the ET can conclude that academic staff underpin their teaching with their own research and scholarly activities as well as other significant research developments in the field. Moreover, staff include, where possible, students in (applied) research projects, which is commendable. However, neither the SER nor the site visit provided any evidence that policies have been established regarding ownership of intellectual property and commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. This should be rectified centrally by UP particularly because students and staff are encouraged to and have been taking part in applied research.

Standards	Compliant	
	Yes	No
Standard 6.1. The study programme has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center or interdisciplinary programme), 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 programme.	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 specialty magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars	X	

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etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.		
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, 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.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Strategic research development plan or a specific research agenda for the Department, Faculty or the University should be developed and explicitly connected to teaching.*
2. *Each academic staff member and researcher should produce at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year*
3. *The University should establish policies regarding ownership of intellectual property and commercialization of ideas developed by staff and student*

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## 2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The bachelor programme in Applied Economics and Management in the English language operates in the facilities of the Faculty of Economics which are of approximate size of 3,500 m<sup>2</sup>. The facilities include teaching classrooms, computer room, library, and offices for management, administration and academic staff. The FE shared a video produced in February 2022, which presents clean and well equipped facilities including a computer room and teaching classrooms. The ET learnt during the site visit that FE made a case to UP and requested a new building.

The ET met a dedicated new management team including the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and the Heads of the Programme followed by a group of representatives from the administrative and academic staff. Based on the discussions with them, the SER and the additional requested documents, the ET can conclude that the implementation of the programme is stable mostly due to its connection with the University of Pristina, the premises, human resources, and equipment.

According to the UP Statute, the FE, same as the other academic units, has a budget that consists of a certain percentage from the student fees to improve educational quality and for covering any unforeseen expenditures of the teaching staff. The FE management evaluates the budget for the programme as stable. During the site visit, the FE management shared that they are requesting budget lines that they are foreseeing as needed for the upcoming year in every budget. However, in the SER the centralized budget is listed as one of the weaknesses and as a challenge for the achievement of the strategic objectives of FE. In addition, the SER annexes include the “Budget planning for the period 2019-2021”, presenting revenues (own-source revenues and student fees) and expenses (salaries, goods and services, travel expenses, equipment and others), but there is no financial plan for the next three years.

The FE is an academic unit of the University of Prishtina that owns its facilities. Hence the ET can conclude that the Faculty owns the spaces for the educational process including adequate equipment mostly focused on ICT equipment and library including reading rooms.

The SER presents a table with a list of physical spaces in the FE including the number of seats. Given that a maximum of 50 students can enrol onto the programme every year, ET can conclude that the number of seats in the lecture and seminar rooms are adequate for the size of



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the study group. The SER shares that the Faculty is equipped with IT equipment, and there are two large computer rooms for students which was confirmed in the video presenting the FE facilities. However, the SER and the participants (including the students) that ET met during the site visit highlighted the importance of investment in more computer rooms and IT equipment especially considering the overall number of students in the Faculty.

The FE has a library with more than 2000 literature samples and a small reading room. In addition, the Faculty cooperates with the National Library of Kosovo (NLB), from where the students can obtain additional literature. The Head of the programme during the site visit pointed out that the library is the greatest weakness of the programme. They highlighted the lack of access to quality literature as a UP problem, despite the fact that they have online access to different online databases. In addition, the students that the ET met during the site visit shared that the library is more equipped with Albanian literature and that the literature that they need for the studies has been usually shared with them by their professors.

As reported in the SER, the EF facilities are not adapted to the students with special needs.

Finally, the Faculty should develop a plan for continuous investment in the facilities especially with regards to IT equipment and adjustment to students with special needs. The FE can consider alternative ways of financing in accordance with the national and institutional regulations.

Standard	Compliant	
	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study programme is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study programme that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study programme for the next minimum three years.		X



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<p>Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study programme submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years:</p> <p>owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</p> <p>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>adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</p> <p>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 number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study programme;</p> <p>a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study programme;</p> <p>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> <p>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;</p> <p>a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p>	X	
<p>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the programme is adapted to students with special needs</p>		X



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**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. The Faculty should invest funds into adjustment of facilities for students with special needs, more IT equipment and computers.*
- 2. The Faculty should provide students with access to more relevant academic literature published in English.*



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

The Expert Team would like to thank the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the Faculty of Economics at the University of Prishtina for a very efficient organisation of the re-accreditation process and a very warm welcome at the University. The visit was conducted online and in spite of a minor technical glitch, the visit went smoothly and according to plan.

The Expert Team was provided with evidence that demonstrated high quality of academic staff who are highly accomplished and actively engaged in their respective fields with significant experiences from other organisations and higher education institutions nationally and from abroad. Moreover, their command of the English language facilitated fruitful and productive discussions. It was apparent that they are committed to continuously improving their practice and contribute to positive changes in the teaching culture at the University, making their lessons interactive and student-centred.

These aspects were also acknowledged and recognised by current and former students who are motivated, appreciative of their staff and of the opportunity to learn from them. The programme graduates are the testament to the quality of the programme. They recognised that they now build on the solid foundations they developed during their studies on the programme of Applied Economics and Management. In addition, they are accomplished in further studies and professional practice and thus are true ambassadors of the University, the Faculty and the programme itself. The programme team should therefore be proud of their accomplishments.

Having considered the evidence provided and gathered during the site visit, the re-accreditation panel concludes that the programme is **overall substantially compliant**. This conclusion is based on the individual standards' assessment outcomes which are as follows:

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<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
Mission, objectives and administration	Partially compliant
Quality management	Substantially compliant
Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
Educational Process Content	Fully compliant
Students	Substantially compliant
Research	Substantially compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant
<b>Overall Compliance</b>	<b>Substantially compliant</b>

In this external review report, there are a number of recommendations that the Expert Team suggests the Faculty and, perhaps more importantly, the University should consider for its further improvement. The following recommendations are however considered by the Expert Team to be those that will be particularly beneficial for reaching full compliance with the KAA criteria and enhancing quality of the higher education provision:

1. It is strongly recommended that every programme has a Programme Specification document which clearly and explicitly outlines the programme learning outcomes and the



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competences to be acquired by students and how these relate to the relevant descriptor levels of the European Qualification Framework.

2. It is apparent that research is an important part of academic practice at the Faculty. However, there does not appear to be a specific and defined research focus or agenda for the Department or the Faculty. It would be beneficial for academic staff if they were supported in their research activities that directly relate to their teaching. To this end, having a clear research focus and agenda would make this support effective and efficient. Therefore, a strategic research development plan or a specific research agenda for the Department, Faculty or the University should be developed and explicitly connected to teaching.
3. The programme of Applied Economics and Management is proud to be a practical and applied programme which uses theory and research to solve real-life issues. Such approach to teaching and learning is highly beneficial to the society. However, such contributions to the society should be recognised and protected. To this end, the University should establish policies regarding ownership of intellectual property and commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. The obvious benefit is income generation which can be used by the University to invest in areas such as infrastructure, research support, student and staff mobilities etc.
4. It is important that the University commits to providing a plagiarism-check software which can be consistently and transparently used by every faculty, programme and module.
5. It is apparent that the University takes the process of Quality Assurance seriously and uses it for its continuous improvement. To continue in this direction, existing initiatives and pilots of peer observation of teaching should be evaluated and the process should be formally implemented as a developmental tool for teaching staff. Peer observation of teaching should foster dialogue and critical discussion, and should provide

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supportive, collaborative, stimulating and non-judgemental platform to improve teaching and share good practice.

6. Internal moderation, external examination and standardisation are processes which should be considered as part of the University medium to long term strategy to further enhance fairness, objectivity and transparency of assessment and assessment-related processes.
7. The University should make itself more inclusive and provide opportunities to study for individuals with physical disabilities or other special needs. Establishing a Student Support/Welfare office and ensure disabled access to all teaching rooms, library and other parts of the University campus would be a step in the right direction.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers the study programme of Applied Economics and Management offered by the Faculty of Economics at the University of Prishtina to be **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends **to accredit** the study programme for a duration of **three years** with a number of **50** students to be enrolled in the programme.

### Expert Team

#### Member

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