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**UNIVERSITY “ISA BOLETINI” IN MITROVICA  
FACULTY OF GEOSCIENCES**

**MINING (MSc) PROGRAM**

**RE-ACCREDITATION**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

30. May, Estonia – Latvia



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 27. April 2022**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Dr. Alvar Soesoo*
- *Mārtiņš Upmacis (Student Expert)*

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

- *Flamur Abazaj, SO for Evaluation and Monitoring*
- *Leona Kovaci, KAA Officer*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self Evaluation Report MSc Mining, 2022*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual*
- *Syllabi of the program*
- *CVs of academic staff*
- *UIBM Statute*
- *Regulation of the Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini", 2018*
- *Guideline for Quality Assurance at UIBM, 2020*
- *UIBM Strategic Research Plan, 2021-2025*
- *Strategic Plan of Faculty of Geosciences (revised), 2019-2021*
- *Regulations for Master Studies-FG*
- *Regulation on the procedures and criteria of promotion selection and appointment of academic staff UIBM*
- *Regulation of Publications, 2021*
- *Regulation on Internationalization and Mobility*
- *Rulebook on Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Geosciences*
- *Summary Report on Self-assessment of the Academic Staff, 2020*
- *Summary Report on Questionnaire Conducted with External Stakeholders, 2020*



- *Summary Report on the Questionnaire Performed with the Alumni Network, 2020*
- *Medium Term Expenditure Framework, 2022-2024*
- *Law on Budget, 2022*
- *UIBM Forecasts for the years 2023-2024*
- *ECTS User Guide*
- *MEST Guidelines*

***Additional documents requested by the ET:***

*Regulation for Master studies, 2015*

Link to the reports: <https://www.umib.net/en/quality-assurance-reports>

*Master students enrolment during the period of 2019-2022*

*Graduated MSc students during the period of 2019-2021*

**Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations**

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

**1.2. Site visit schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<b>09:00 – 09:40</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
<b>09:45 – 10:25</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
<b>10:30 – 11:20</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme:
<b>11:20 – 12:00</b>	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)
<b>12:00 – 12:40</b>	Meeting with teaching staff
<b>12:40 – 13:20</b>	Meeting with students
<b>13:25 – 14:05</b>	Meeting with graduates
<b>14:10 – 14:50</b>	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
<b>14:50 – 15:00</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
<b>15:00 – 15:10</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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

The University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica (UIBM) is a public institution of higher education, which delivers high quality academic education, scientific research, professional counselling, and other fields of academic activities. It consists of six academic units, that deliver in total 22 programmes of Bachelor and Master studies: Faculty of Geosciences (FG), Faculty of Food Technology, Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Education. In 1974, Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy was established with three departments: Mining, Technology, Metallurgy, while in 1987, the Department of Geology was established. Today, the Faculty of Geosciences is committed to provide educational programs and applied and fundamental research in the fields of geology, mining and metallurgy.

The country's development strategy is also counting on the development of mineral resources. Thus, it requires geological, mining and material sciences and metallurgy graduates, which in addition to exploring, mining and resource-processing knowledge, will also possess the ability to cope with various environmental problems. The development of regional spatial planning, the provision and sustainable management of mineral resources, environmental protection and coping with natural hazards are the focus of teaching the new generation of Earth scientists, mining and environmental specialists for Kosovo. Faculty of Geosciences is the only institution of higher education in Kosovo which educates competent experts and carries out scientific and professional research in the field of geology, mining, and materials and geometallurgy. With its activities, the Faculty continuously contributes to the prosperity of its professions in the area of geosciences.

The Faculty of Geosciences is situated within the new Campus of the University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica. The new campus buildings bring new opportunities for development, teaching and research work for new generation of geoscientist and engineers. The campus provides infrastructure for teaching, laboratories, library, computer centre, communication areas, geo-materials museum and other service facilities. The total usable space of the Faculty of Geosciences is roughly 3980 m<sup>2</sup>.



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The Faculty of Geosciences is responsible for two levels of study:

**Bachelor** (three-year studies)

**Master of Science** (two-year studies)

For Bachelor level FG provides educational programs for:

1. Geology (Accredited until 30.09.2024)
2. Mining (Accredited until 30.09.2022)
3. Material and Metallurgy (Accredited until 30.09.2024)

3.1 Specialization on:

- (a) Materials
- (b) Metallurgy

For Master level FG provides educational programs of study for:

1. Deposits of Mineral Raw Materials (Accredited until 30.09.2022)
2. Hydrogeology and Engineering geology (Accredited until 30.09.2024)
3. Mining (Accredited until 30.09.2022)
4. Material and Metallurgy (Accredited until 30.09.2024)

4.1 Specialization on:

- (a) Materials,
- (b) Metallurgy

The academic year begins on October, 1 and ends on May, 31. Fifteen weeks of teaching are provided for each semester. Undergraduate studies are divided into six semesters and master studies into four semesters. Teaching load is in accordance with the ECTS credit system. The present Mining MSc Program has been accredited until 30.09.2022.



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## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

As UIBM has implemented the Bologna Framework 2001, the teaching process follows these common rules. The Department of Mining / Faculty of Geosciences (FG) mission is to prepare young professionals for the raw materials exploration and mining, especially related to national needs and beyond. The Department of Mining is providing teaching curricula in mining and conducting mining-related research according to international standards. This is the only Mining Department in Kosovo.

The mission statement of the MSc study program is defined very clearly in the SER: *In recognition that mining is a global industry we are committed to offer modern teaching methods to prepare postgraduates students to carry out research for the domestic society needs and beyond, who will be able to overcome current and future challenges, in order to develop the mining industry in line with sustainable development principles and social welfare.* The expert team (ET) considers it as formulated on a good level with very important emphasis on research and the future. The mission statement of the University "Isa Boletini", Mitrovica is as follows: *to provide relevant and high quality higher education for the preparation of cadres in unique fields for the labor market in Kosovo, region and beyond, committed to developing research, professional projects, professional advising and to serve better on sustainable development, wellbeing, and social advancement.* The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the University and adjusts it to the content and level of the MSc program.

In spite of lack of information in the chapter regarding the standard 1.2. in the SER, another section of the SER contains a statement that the Commission (Study Committee) in its meetings reviews the determination of learning outcomes which should be in line with the competencies under the National Qualifications Framework of Kosovo and the European Qualifications Framework. Details of this procedure still remain unclear for the ET. The answers from the management of the Faculty during the visit did not persuade the ET. There are seven learning outcomes for MSc in Mining graduates: *1. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge in mining at advanced Level especially mine management, planning, modeling and*

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*optimization, safety and Risk assessment, mine development and valuation. 2. Students demonstrate a high level of analytical skills to identify, formulate, analyze And solve certain engineering issues by applying engineering, science and mathematical Methods 3. Conduct theoretical and experimental studies, analyze and interpret findings, and use engineering judgments and draw conclusions 4. Students independently carry out technical research on a specific topic and present results through oral presentation and written technical reports. 5. Evaluate and develop feasibility reports and design mining projects 6. Apply modern engineering, computer modeling and simulation tools for mining and minerals engineering projects development 7. Demonstrate an understanding of professional and ethical responsibilities.* The ET considers these as in line with the level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework. Every study course description contains information about the learning outcomes of the study course.

Based on the information provided in the SER and meeting with the management of the study program and teaching staff of the study program during the visit, the ET considers that the study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept. Didactic concept is based on student-centered learning with good understanding of it, for example, implementation of the ECTS credit system, learning based on the results of the learning, interaction between professor and student, students as active participants in knowledge creation, as members of various academic committees, including their participation in curriculum design. Understanding of research concept is rather practical not theoretical. The Faculty and University supports students to participate in various research activities. Nevertheless, the ET considers the research concept as too wide.

There are formal policies, guidelines, and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues at the University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica. These are available for all stakeholders in a specific section “Regulations” on the website of the University, where the list of several documents is provided. Without specific permission or authentication, the ET had access to all 29 documents in Albanian and in English. One of the main documents in this list is the Regulation for Master Level Studies (dated with February 2015), which contains a lot of valuable information for students and academic staff. However, the ET considers that the Regulation is outdated at should be reviewed at the earliest possibility.

According to the opinions received during the meeting with the academic staff and students, there is a common understanding that ethical conduct in research, teaching, and assessment,

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and ethical conduct in all academic and administrative activities is defined and sanctioned under the Code of Ethics. Document is available on the website of the University. Management of the Geoscience Faculty, management of the study program and teaching staff confirmed that there is a system in place that detects plagiarism in the University and that ensures there is no plagiarism in the students' work and proper measures are taken, if needed.

According to the SER, “*at the program level, all policies, regulations, terms of reference and disclaimers regarding program distribution are reviewed annually and may be changed as appropriate.*” It complies with the standard completely. But the question about Faculty and University level policies, regulation terms of reference reviewing remains open. Since this is accreditation of the study program, not institution, ET considers this as acceptable situation.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.</i>	X	
<i>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.</i>		X
<i>Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made available publicly to all staff and students.</i>	X	



<i>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.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.</i>	X	

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. To define a clear procedure for formulating and revising the learning outcomes.*
- 2. To define the research concept in more specific way.*
- 3. To renew the Regulation for Master Level Studies.*

**2.2. Quality Management**

As part of the activities of the Faculty Strategic Plan in the framework of quality development, in coordination with the quality office at the University, all academic staff participates in the self-assessment process and cooperates with reporting and improvement processes in the field of their activity. According to the SER, there is a defined list of participants, who drafted the self-evaluation report. The list includes Dean of the Faculty, Vice dean of the Faculty, Coordinator for Academic Development, Chief of Mining Department, several professors, Head of Geology Department, two students, several representatives of the industry and two alumni. It should be noted, that Faculty Strategic Plan is currently out of date, since this plan is developed for 2019 – 2021.

The Faculty of Geosciences in the Strategic Plan has a series of activities, for which at the end of each academic year an evaluation of the realization of the activities planned for the respective year is made. Within an academic year, the faculty applies 8 assessment instruments, for example, evaluation of academic staff by deans - 2 times a year after each semester from



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where the report is submitted for each academic staff separately, and evaluation of services by students and professors - once a year for the services and conditions offered by the University and each faculty. Not only evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes, but quality assurance processes deal with services and resources provided by other parts of the institution. However, the ET noticed that there is no procedure how to measure whether the mission of the study program is achieved.

In general, the quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as for different components within it. Overall results of the questionnaires are presented on the webpage of the University: <https://www.umib.net/en/quality-assurance-reports>. ET found that not all results of the 8 previously mentioned assessment instruments are available there. Actually, there are very few overall results regarding this study program. Quality assurance representatives claimed that the dean of the faculty receives all the results and reports. Since each faculty has its own section on the University's webpage, there is a section Annual report on the section of the Faculty of Geosciences. The Annual Report of the year 2019 is also available in this section.

The minimum criteria for the study program are defined under the legislation on Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Kosovo, while continuous improvement is achieved based on the effort of the Faculty. The Dean of the faculty plays a very important role in the continuing improvement of performance. Depending on the results from general performance data, the dean of the faculty, in cases of less satisfactory evaluations, in communication with the evaluated, depending on the result of the evaluation and communication can draft an improvement plan. The implementation of the improvement plan is monitored by the Dean. According to the SER, there are very good examples of real actions of the management of the University and the faculty taken after findings of the previous expert report and recommendations, for example, training for contemporary teaching methodologies for a part of the academic staff are organised.

There are several questionnaires used in the University with a defined regularity, which makes a good system for getting feedback from main stakeholders. Students evaluate the teaching process, subjects and resources, research work, program; support services, faculty management, University's management. Graduates evaluate the program; teaching staff, study conditions. Educational institutions evaluate the competencies of UIBM graduates. There are



defined processes for how University works with these data. But, as ET mentioned before, not all results of these evaluations are made publicly available.

According to the SER, findings from internal and external evaluations are discussed with staff during the Faculty Council meetings in preparation for the start of the new academic year. The staff takes the responsibility for reviewing the syllabus, updating the literature with the latest information in the field, necessary changes as a result of requests from students or management and sends the syllabi for approval to the study committee at the faculty. The Commission reviews the determination of learning outcomes; distributing the student workload and determining the respective credits while respecting the course load; defining assessment policies ensuring the achievement of competence for each grade as well as their harmonization with the learning outcomes of the subject.

The evaluation of the overall quality of the program is developed through the evaluation of its constituent components. Some of these components are evaluated twice a year, and some once a year in each academic year. The evaluation of the components is done through instruments drafted by Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation and implemented by the Quality Office at the University. Summary report from assessments in the University is available on the webpage. ET would like to make a few comments on this regarding the standard 2.8. Firstly, this summary report is overall report on the overall quality of the institution, but not the specific study program. Secondly, this summary report refers to academic year 2018/2019, meaning that the next report should be drafted about this academic year.

The quality assurance system at the Faculty of Geosciences and at the University is continuously evaluated and improved, through different kind of discussions, drafting of new instruments, providing recommendations for program improvement and specific components according to the findings after the development of the instruments and publication of the report at the level of academic units and at the level of the University.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No



<i>Standards 2.1. All staff participate in self-assessment and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their field of activity.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.2. Evaluation and improvement planning processes are integrated into normal planning processes.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and distribution, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.4. Quality assessments provide a summary of quality issues for the overall program, as well as the various components within it; assessments consider data, processes, and outcomes, paying attention to student learning outcomes.</i>		X
<i>Standards 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure that both required standards are met and that there is continuous performance improvement.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.6. Study data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these assessments have been made available to the public.</i>		X
<i>Standards 2.7. The results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for the further development of the study program. This includes assessment results, student workload investigation, academic success, and graduate employment.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg every three years) for review within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 2.9. Quality assurance arrangements for the program are regularly evaluated and improved.</i>	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**



- 1. Since the strategic plan of the Faculty is outdated, to put all effort to renew it as soon as possible.*
- 2. To public the newest Annual reports on the webpage of the Faculty.*
- 3. To make all results of evaluations publicly available.*
- 4. To draft and publish report on the overall quality of the specific study program in the end of academic year 2021/2022.*

### **2.3. Academic Staff**

Fourteen teachers/specialists are employed altogether for the program, while 11 have a full-time and 3 persons part-time contracts at the Mining Department. The academic staff employed by UIBM, as well as the FG, are hired through the competition procedures, with the announcement of the vacancy posting all the requirements for the announced position as well as the job description. The competition is equal for all targeted candidates, without any discrimination and is in accordance with MEST guidelines, Labor Law, UIBM Statute and UIBM Internal Regulations. Recruitment - appointment of candidates to their respective academic vocation or promotion, requires the fulfilment of the minimum criteria set forth in the UIBM Interim Statute.

UIBM provides the manual that will include rights and responsibilities, recruitment processes, supervision, performance appraisal, promotion, support processes and professional development. In addition to the manual, all candidates and employees prior to starting work will be provided with a job contract that contains full job descriptions that they have applied for or that have been employed as well as a code of ethics and conduct. The teaching staff complies with the legal requirements regarding to teaching position. According to SER and site visit information, the Faculty of Geosciences and Department of Mining has adequate academic staff for the studies it offers.

Every position is monitored by the UIBM Human Resources Office and FG management in order to assure that the staff engagement is in line with the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation, MEST guidelines, Labour Law, UIBM Statute and Regulations Interior UIBM. This was confirmed during the site visit.



The University of Mitrovica requires the academic staff to have at least two teaching trainings, which are conducted at the Center for Teaching and Excellence. The majority of staff have proceeded with these trainings (by the end of 2020). According to SER and site visit information the staff members are encouraged to take part in scientific mobility research motivation activities. However, while the interest of staff is high, the number of such visits seems to be low. The limiting issues of international mobility are related to financing, and visa requirements.

Apart from teaching, the academic staff are responsible for scientific and applied research, as well as student supervision. The responsibilities are regulated by a policy of UIBM. In general, each week staff will spend about six hours for teaching, 2-4 hours for student consultation per week, in addition to Diploma/thesis supervision, research and other responsibilities.

The evaluation of the academic staff is carried out regularly through self-evaluation, evaluation by students' feedback and by Dean's office. This assessment takes place on a formal basis, is performed on-line and carried out in regular bases after each semester. According to information during the site visit these processes mostly run smoothly and the Dean and Faculty Committee are aware of capabilities and activities of every staff member.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions for 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 services, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.</i>	X	



<i>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.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with Ph.D. title or equivalent title in the case of artistic / applied science institutions.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of the teaching staff, especially full time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer, and superior's evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available?</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.</i>	X	
<i>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.</i>	X	





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**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Ensure continuation in staff personal development and international cooperation*
2. *Find possibilities to create more permanent positions in coming years. Prepare a plan how to attract new high level researchers and teacher for the Department*
3. *Ensure staff and student mobility activities*
4. *Closely monitor the age profile of the main staff and their advances in publishing and project applications.*

#### **2.4. Educational Process Content**

Both the Bachelor and Master programs in Mining are based on modern curricula, with the current version having been jointly designed and advanced with visiting [Fulbright specialist](#). The new curriculum will be engaged in autumn 2022. The MSc program fulfils the modern mining industry needs and is related to Kosovo's mining industry development plans. The students acquire the basics interdisciplinary subjects and the specific mining subjects including practises.

As the SER states: *“The Master of Science in Mining program aims to provide students with a comprehensive and specialized academic and scientific education in the mining industry“*. This information was verified during the visit by meeting different groups (stakeholders, graduates, employers, staff). There is also a report with external stakeholders available stating the fields of future cooperation and development. According to the report the program can be advanced by developing students internships. The new program provides a course “Summer Practise”. Stakeholders are involved in Program design and they support the present curricula.

The study program is in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and Bologna Framework.

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According to FG officials, the MSc program in Mining is similar to a number of similar program in neighbouring countries, including University of Ljubljana, University of Zagreb, Freiberg University of Mining and Technology, University of Leoben and elsewhere.

By analysing the Program, curriculum and syllabus, it is clear that 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. All learning outcomes at the mining program level are harmonized with the learning outcomes at the level of each course. The learning outcomes for the Mining Master program are listed as follows:

- 1. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge in mining at advanced level especially mine management, planning, modeling and optimization, safety and risk assessment, mine development and valuation.*
- 2. Students demonstrate a high level of analytical skills to identify, formulate, analyze and solve certain engineering issues by applying engineering, science and mathematical methods*
- 3. Conduct theoretical and experimental studies, analyze and interpret findings, and use engineering judgments and draw conclusions*
- 4. Students independently carry out technical research on a specific topic and present results through oral presentation and written technical reports.*
- 5. Evaluate and develop feasibility reports and design mining projects*
- 6. Apply modern engineering, computer modeling and simulation tools for mining and minerals engineering projects development*
- 7. Demonstrate an understanding of professional and ethical responsibilities.*

The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise: course description, course objectives, expected learning outcomes, teaching methodology, assessment methods, basic and supplementary literature, and the tentative plan of topics covered in each week of lectures.

Teaching at the Department of Mining is provided only in Albanian. The Faculty and the Department members mentioned that if there is interest in the development in teaching in other languages (including English), FG has the opportunity and academic staff for these activities.

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It has stated in SER that if there are cases of Erasmus+ mobility students visiting the Department the staff are willing and ready to provide lectures in English. However, during the site visit not all staff members were willing to speak in English, and in some cases, the ET were not able to assess if this claim is true.

It has also stated by the University “that on the base of the Regulation on Internationalization and Mobility, UIBM and other partners of the HERAS project within five years should develop 1/5 of the study programs in foreign language in one of the study cycles offered by the University”.

It is a common practise, that at the beginning of semester, each lecturer clearly defines the learning outcomes and how these outcomes relate to the student’s development and the needs of mining industry. Student participation in lectures is mandatory. Students are encouraged to seek clarification during lectures, and other teaching activities.

Teachers are available for consultations (generally 2-4 hours per week), and it was noted by ET that this is common across the department. It was mentioned by the teaching staff that most of lectures are organized in such a way that they are interactive, when possible and oriented to practical situations and outcomes. As the groups are small, flexibility in lecturing and assessments is easily achievable. Assessment types are defined before the course. The evaluation of students is done continuously throughout the semester, using tests, seminar papers, fieldwork reports, research project reports, laboratory work, etc. The grading standard is consistent for each subject of this program and by each teacher. Assessment policies are also defined in the UIBM statute (Article 101 and Article 102) and those are followed by teachers.

It was mentioned during the meeting with teaching and Faculty staff that FG has already approved the regulation which specifies cases where students may have been inconsistently or unfairly graded, and they have the right to complain. Student’s complaint will be reviewed by the Faculty committee and the final evaluation will be made by a commission composed of professors in the field of the given subject. In cases where the standards are not met, student achievement is insufficient or assessed inconsistently then they react through the faculty council.



The program includes practises. In the last semester, the study program has the mandatory course “Summer Practice” which provides 5 ECTS. In this course students are required to perform internships in local mining companies, in the laboratory or in the field. The whole internship period is monitored by appointed academic staff of the study program and the host representative. During the internship students describe all the performed internship activities in the daily bases in the internship diary record. At the end of the internship, students submit the internship diary which is accepted, checked, and approved by three professors of mining department.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.</i>	X	



<p><i>Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	



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

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Ensure at least 50% of teachers to be ready to teach in English and have teaching material in English when needed*
2. *Ensure attractiveness of the Mining MSc program for wider studentship (e.g. BSc in related study fields) and students from abroad*



- 3. Advance departmental homepage, include the best practises from students working in successful mining companies, governmental organisations, good internship experiences and emphasise the mining sector importance for Kosovo, etc.*

## 2.5. Students

The MA study program Mining in the Faculty of Geosciences applies a clear and transparent student admission procedure that is approved on the institutional level. There is a chapter “Conditions for enrolment in studies” in the Regulation for Master studies. The regulation is available on the webpage of the University.

Applications for master-level study programs are made in two ways – online on the University’s management system with the access from the webpage of the University or directly at the University. In order to enrol in the MA study program in one of both ways, students must have a bachelor degree. The Studies Commission determines the number of exams depending on the degree of comparability or similarity of the program followed in the candidate's previous studies. Candidates must receive the maximum number of points according to the following criteria: (1) success in basic studies (30 percent of the score), (2) success in the entrance exam (70 percent of the score). Since the program is implemented only in Albanian, the admission requirements are not available in English.

Since this is master level study program, besides the specific content, the number of students in the lecture groups is relatively small. ET considers it as benefit for students and for teaching staff as well, because it is possible for the teaching staff to take into account student interests and needs, which is not possible in big lecture groups. There are about 15 students in one lecture group, which is good enough to ensure effective and interactive teaching and learning process.

The ET understands from the study course descriptions that every study course has clearly and individually defined assessment methods so students have full information on how exactly they can obtain a grade. There is a specific chapter “Exam and exam success” in the Regulation for the Master Studies. The results of student assessments are placed in the University Management System (SMU), through which at the end of the studies the transcript of grades



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as well as the exam result statistics are automatically generated. The moment the professor inserts the grades in the SMU, the student receives a confirmation in his/her email that he/she has been graded by the appointed professor in the assigned subject. In the Faculty of Geosciences, in addition to lectures, there are mechanisms for assistance to students in the form of consultations. The respective professor consults students who have not passed the exam, and this is accompanied by supporting mechanisms for students who need it.

According to the Regulation for Master Studies Article 25, the regular exam terms include: January, June and September term. The exact period for each term is determined by the general calendar of studies, which is accepted by the Senate and is available publicly. The details about the start and end date of each exam term are determined by the councils of the academic units. Exam term schedules, which include daily schedules, are announced at the beginning of the academic year. Exam schedules will be determined in such a way that the student does not have more than one exam per day. Exam schedules, after they have been announced, are mandatory for both the examiner and the student. Furthermore, the Article 27 defines that at his/her request, the student may be allowed, by the Dean of the academic unit, to take the exam earlier if he/she participates in an international program for exchange of studies or is doing practical training abroad during the period assigned for the exam. Academic staff and students in the meetings with the ET confirmed that usually it is possible for students to discuss with academic staff the deadlines of exams if there is an objective reason in place.

Records of student completion rates are generated from the University Management System (SMU), hard copy reports are archived in the Faculty of Geosciences administration. Successful completion of the year in accordance with the study program is set at SMU, and it is a prerequisite for the student to be enrolled in the next year. The ET did not obtain any information that the records of student completion rates are included among quality indicators, analysed on the regular basis and, based on such analysis, the decisions would be made.

There is a Code of Ethics that helps to ensure that the work submitted by the students is original. The Article 17 in this document defines plagiarism. The Code of Ethics is available on the website of the University and easily accessible to every student, every academic staff member, and every stakeholder. Students are required to submit their work during the semester through projects, seminars, and presentations via email, in order for the professor to ensure that the student work is original. During the visit, ET received a confirmation that the academic staff uses the program for checking student paperwork.

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The students' rights and obligations are defined in the Regulations for Master studies of the Faculty of Geoscience, in Article 20. ET considers it interesting that the students' rights defined in this regulation slightly differ from students' rights and obligations that are mentioned in the SER. The students' rights and obligations include the rights to appeal against different decisions in the Article 22 and against grades in the Article 29 of the Regulation of Master Studies. The ET tried to find the Regulation of Master studies, but could not open the Documents' section of the webpage of the Faculty of the Geosciences (English version).

There is a possibility to undertake study courses in other structural units of the university or to participate in international mobility. The SER does not contain any information about the student transfer procedure between study programmes. During the site visit the ET was informed that there have been two cases of student transfer to this study programme, both taking place within the University. The Regulation for Master Studies states that the transfer procedure is foreseen by the Statute of the University, but the SER provides links to the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 instead of the Statute, therefore the ET could not confirm that the procedure is clearly regulated.

According to the SER, every professor has to keep two hours twice a week for consultations with students and there are additional consultations for colloquiums and exams. However, during the meeting with the students the ET was informed that consultations take place once a week. Although the ET was convinced that consultations take place and are provided as necessary, it is recommended to ensure that the policy on consultations is communicated in a consistent way.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standards 5.1. There is a clear and officially accepted admission procedure at the institutional level that the study program respects when organizing student recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied to all students.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation degree or other equivalent study document, as required by the MEST.</i>	X	



<i>Standards 5.3. Study groups are dimensioned in order to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.4. Students' feedback on their work and the results of the assessments is given immediately and is accompanied by support mechanisms if necessary.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.5. The results obtained by students throughout the study cycles are verified by the academic record.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is provided in relation to the official deadlines and requirements in the program and for all examinations.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.7. Student completion level records are kept for all courses and the program as a whole and are included in the quality indicators.</i>		X
<i>Standards 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that the work submitted by the students is original.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.9. The rights and obligations of students are made available to the public, promoted to all concerned and applied equally; these will include the right to academic appeal.</i>	X	
<i>Standards 5.10. The transfer of students between higher education institutions, Programs and study programs is clearly regulated in the official internal documents.</i>		X
<i>Standards 5.11. Academic staff is available at ample scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate teaching aid to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.</i>	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. To include the records of student completion rates among quality indicators and perform regular analysis of the results.



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2. *To ensure that the information about student transfer procedure is clear and publicly available.*
3. *To communicate the policy on consultations by the teaching staff in a consistent manner.*
4. *To internationalise the study process by organising study programme or part of the study process in English.*

## **2.6. Research**

*The Faculty of Geosciences in its Research Strategy, in line with the UIBM Strategic Research Plan 2021 - 2025, as part of the University Strategic Plan 2019 – 2021 (Revised) and in accordance with the national initiatives and strategies defined by MEST, has clearly defined the strategic research objectives of the study programs to foster a disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research culture and productivity in their focus areas. Financial resources are limited, while logistical and human resources are sufficient. The FG, including the Mining Program conducts scientific research as an integral part of all of its academic activities. The current staff of this program are qualified and consist of PhDs, PhD Candidates and MScs who have experience in publishing in basic and applied scientific research.*

The staff members of the Department of Mining are publishing books and research and overview articles in several journals. The University has set rules for publishing in the following documents - Regulation of Publications and Regulation on Internationalization and Mobility. Several publications are presented at conferences as Abstracts and Presentations. The University publication's rules have updated on October 2021, defining better the level of international journals (WOS, 1.1; SCOPUS etc. databases). Although the number of published high level research papers has increased during a few last years, there are still challenges to increase considerably publication activity in WOS journals for most of the academic staff. Good publications are vital in order to increase visibility of UIBM and Mining Department researchers worldwide.



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The University provides financial support for academic staff to publish their papers and presentations at conferences (up to 70% of costs). However, there is little evidence of research grants for researchers in FG. The lack of directed scientific research funding may severely limit research itself and consequently the publication activity. According to the SER and discussions during the visit, several students are engaged with research and publishing. Through cooperation with foreign universities and local and foreign companies, both the academic staff and students are engaged with national and international mobility. However, despite there being a high amount of interest in participation acquired during the visit, the number involved remain low. Students have a possibility to present their research every year in the conference organized by FG. Knowledge transfer between academic staff and students and between students themselves can be supported by several activities, namely “*Center for Young Researchers*” and the creation of “*Summer Academy*” as envisaged by the University (UIBM Strategic Research Plan 2021 - 2025).

According to SER each member of the academic staff has published at least one applied or research scientific publication for the last three years. Generally, it is a good practice to ask full time academic or research staff to be publishing at least one paper per year. In this respect, Department’s staff needs to increase publishing activity to fulfil a common European standard for researchers and teaching staff.

In addition to teaching and research, FG staff contribute to the local community through their involvement in professional organisations, management boards of exploration and mining companies, Geological Survey and with public organisations (such as government agencies) and the private sector.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>



<p><i>Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	



<i>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.</i>		X
<i>Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.</i>	X	
<i>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.</i>	X	
<i>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.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.</i>	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**



1. *Encourage and support staff members and involved researchers to publish their research in high quality (WOS etc) journals*
2. *Ensure at least one scientific publication per year for all categories of academic staff in high quality applied and fundamental science journals*
3. *Increase research visibility in neighbouring countries and worldwide*
4. *Ensure international mobility for staff members by applying EU grants and involving Faculty mobility support*
5. *Increase activities towards international scientific cooperation including joint applications for European and other funds (Horizon, ERC, EIT, EEIG etc).*

## **2.7. Infrastructure and Resources**

The Faculty of Geosciences is located in a new campus building. The building includes classrooms (746 m<sup>2</sup>) with internet access and projectors, library (333 m<sup>2</sup>), laboratories (587 m<sup>2</sup>), computer room (110 m<sup>2</sup>) and other rooms. The library and laboratories are shared with students of geology, materials and metallurgy, hydrogeology and engineering geology. The laboratories have new equipment, which is suitable for basic studies. The Faculty' physical provision for the Program is adequate, although problems with space may arise when the number of students increase considerably. This possibly is not the problem for MSc studies where the groups have been very small. SER states *“Referring to the available spaces discussed in the previous standards, as well as the number of students in groups, the size of the halls and amphitheatres are more than enough to organize lectures and exercises in directing the level in geoscience.”*

The number of available basic instruments (microscopes, some field equipment) is well supporting the present number of students and is likely sufficient for larges MSc student groups (up to ten per year). For instance, during the years 2018-2021, a total of 10 students have graduated only. Currently FG has only eight microscopes to explore optical feature of minerals and rock structure, including one for ore mineral studies. It was also emphasized by the staff that they are seeking for new opportunities to purchase additional equipment and increase the number of basic instruments. Some equipment has been used outside of the University on collaborative basis as it was mentioned during the visit.



The planning of the financial resources to improve study environment and laboratories are defined in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework for the years 2022 - 2024 for the University of Mitrovica, the Law on Budget for the fiscal year 2022, the forecasts for the years 2023 - 2024. According to SER, the main sources of funding are revenues from the Kosovo Budget / Government Grant, own source revenues and sources from donations.

Library provision is adequate according to staff and students interviewed, however more modern English language textbooks are needed. Several online magazines and textbooks are available. SER notes that more digital materials are needed in the library and access to several important electronic databases is lacking. The university purchases book titles depending on demands. From 157 book titles which are physical, around 70% are in Albanian. FG aims to increase English textbooks in future.

While IT resources may be considered relatively basic, there were no complaints about the quality of IT support, so the resources seem to be adequate for the Program. The infrastructure and facilities related to the program are suitable for students with special needs.

The limits set according to Medium Term Expenditure Framework 2022 - 2024 and the Law on Budget for 2022 justify the sufficient budgetary measure and sustainability of financial resources to realize the mission, objectives and activities related to the strategic documents reflected in the Strategic Plan for the Faculty of Geology for 2019 – 2021 and in the extended version of the Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2024 (which is in the status of compilation, as it was indicated during the visit, April, 2022).

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.</i>	X	





<p><i>Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years:</i></p> <p><i>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</i></p> <p><i>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</i></p> <p><i>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</i></p> <p><i>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>X</p>	



<p><i>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</i></p> <p><i>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</i></p>		X
<p><i>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</i></p>	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Ensure available basic learning and research equipment for all students (especially when the number of students is expected to increase. Pay attention to purchasing more optical microscopes and microscopes for metallographic samples research.*
- 2. More general geophysical instrumentation and specific equipment for ore mineral studies is needed to purchase*
- 3. Instruments for geochemical and microscopic studies - SEM, XRD, XRF and ICP-MS are recommended to include in the list of purchases*



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4. *Digitalisation of library materials (textbooks etc) is needed*
5. *Ensure internet access to Earth sciences and engineering databases, which are not accessible at present but needed by students and researchers.*
6. *Centralised budget may be an obstacle for achieving the strategic objectives of the department and the study programs – we suggest discussing the budget options with the Deans Office.*



### 3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance Level</b>
Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially Compliant
Quality Management	Substantially Compliant
Academic Staff	Fully 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>

**The overall compliance level is assessed by the experts at the level of substantially compliant.**

**Student quota recommended: Three Years; up to 20 students per year**



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### Expert Team

#### Member

**Dr. Alvar Soesoo**

**08.06.2022.**

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(Signature)

(Alvar Soesoo)

(Date)

#### Member

**Mārtiņš Upmacis (Student Expert)**

**8.06.2022.**

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(Signature)

(Mārtiņš Upmacis)

(Date)