UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES IN FERIZAJ

MASTER IN

"GREEN ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN"

PROGRAMME RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

June 2022, Lisbon, Portugal

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 26th May 2022

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Dr. Lina Nunes, Researcher, Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil, Lisbon, Portugal*
- *Ms. Rebecca Maxwell Stuart, PhD Student, Scotland*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Leona Kovaçi, Senior Office for Evaluation and Monitoring*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report (SER) of the University of Applied Sciences "Green architecture and interior design" MSc, Ferizaj, 2022;*
- *Staff' CVs including List of Publications;*
- *Syllabuses;*
- *Code of Ethics;*
- *Quality assurance regulation;*
- *Minutes from Programme Committees of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Technology, Stakeholders, Alumni and Senate;*
- *Web-site (http://www.ushaf.net/?lang=en);*
- *Requested documents received 30th May 2022 including a) the comparison of old and new curriculum and b) the peer observation template.*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA (updated 2021) Accreditation Manual;*
- *KAA (2021) The manual for external evaluation of higher education;*
- *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance.*

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1.2. Site visit schedule

Programme Re-Accreditation Procedure at University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj

Date of site visit: 26.05.2022

Site Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants/Comments
09:30 – 10:15	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Agron Bajraktari Bujar Jashari, Bujar Pira, Armend Hysa
10:20 – 11.05	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Bujar Pira, Fatime Musliu, Armend Hysa, Leonora Rudhani,
11:15 – 12:15	Meeting with the heads of the study programme	Agron Bajraktari, Bashkim Thaçi, Bujar Jashari (interpreter)
12:15 – 13.00	Meeting with teaching staff	Rrahim Sejdiu, Kushtrim Cukaj, Muhamet Ymeri, Faton Spahiu, Florit Hoxha, Ramadan Topuzi.
13:00 – 13:55	Lunch break	
14:00 – 14:45	Meeting with students	Erblina Asani, Xhenetë Mjaku, Resul Qorrolli, Lorita Rama,

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		Diana Çerkini, Elmedina Hyseni, Blerton Mustafa
14:55 – 15:40	Meeting with graduates	Rinidon Bislimi, Blertë Sylejmani, Ymri Lala, Dielza Rexhepi,
15:50 – 16:35	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Bujar Baliu (ANB Baliu), Arianit Kastrati (Tedes), Enver Haziri (EuroART), Nehat Ademi (Doqi),
16:35 – 16:40	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:40 – 16:45	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Agron Bajraktari, Bujar Jashari, Bujar Pira, Armend Hysa

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The tradition of academic and scientific work in Ferizaj dates back to 1976, and – linked to the Higher Technical School (HTS) - the machinery and wood industry section was set up in 1988. The present-day University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (UASF) was established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) on July 6, 2015 and was ratified by the Parliament of the Republic of Kosovo on July 16, 2015.

The current vision of the University is described as follows: "*A national model of a modern, innovative and of an integrative education university, where practice complements theory, professional and research skills are developed for the benefit of society.*".

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The mission of the University is "to provide quality education to prepare qualified professionals, dedicated researchers and educated and responsible citizens, to develop a professional career and to lead a productive life." The mission was developed to take into account values such as excellence, ethics and learning, which is employment oriented, balances theory and practice, focuses on active learning and critical thinking, and fosters responsibility and desire for lifelong learning. Collaboration and diversity are also mentioned as relevant values.

According to the university website and the self-evaluation report, the UASF has ten study programmes (including three MSc) divided by five faculties:
• Faculty of Engineering and Informatics;
• Faculty of Tourism and Environment;
• Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Technology;
• Faculty of Management;
• Faculty of Applied Arts.

The Governing and Academic bodies of the UASF are well defined and demonstrate the necessary interconnections. The University currently has 1469 full-time students of which 1220 are in bachelor studies and 249 are in master studies. It is noted that the University has started to attract in recent years an increasing number of foreign students mainly from neighbouring countries as Macedonia or Montenegro. At UASF over half of the students (55%) are female. The university has a total of 46 academic staff, all in full-time employment. Teaching at the university is organized in a space of about 7,000 m² with a number of dedicated spaces for practical work. A special Centre for Testing and Certification is under development and refurbishment with international financing.

The present report deals with the re-accreditation of the MSc programme from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Technology "*Architecture and Interior Design with Wood Products*" under the updated name of "*Green Architecture and Interior Design*". The Faculty currently has 418 active students, of which 66 enrolled in the MSc Architecture and Interior Design with Wooden Products. Considering the limited time of the programme, the students are divided by the different years of study and a first group of students have graduated or will be graduating soon.

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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The programme evaluation follows the numbering of the standards in the KAA Accreditation Manual. There is a table at the end of each section that lists the compliance assessment for each standard.

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

The programme, originally accredited by the KAA in 2019, was called MSc. in Architecture and Interior Design with Wooden Products and the number of students enrolled so far demonstrates the interest for the general area and the ability of the Faculty to attract students. With the recommendation of international experts and the confirmation of active and graduate businesses and students, a change of name to MSc. in Green Architecture and Interior Design and significant alterations of structure are proposed for the re-accreditation.

The mission of the program is to create professionals specialized in the field of Green Architecture and Interior Design with a special focus on the development and design of ecological products used in the interior, using the latest software and technologies which facilitate the work process and easily adaptable to the demands of the labour market. The logic behind the changes and the process is well described and justified in the SER. All relevant governing bodies and partners were involved in the process.

Though "wood" is obviously included as a "green material" the broader background of "green architecture" can be seen as a clear improvement to the previous programme that fits very well with the mission of the UASF and the demands of the present-day society where the principles of sustainability, life cycle analysis and circular economy are highly valued.

The MSc program in Green Architecture and Interior Design benefits from the recently refurbished workshops and laboratories to apply the mission of linking the theory to practice. An increased number of research outputs is expected as students finish their thesis. Publishing in scientific journals and participation on international conferences with review by peers should be highly encouraged and could have been better developed in the SER. The Centre for Testing and Certification under development will provide extra links between the University and all the relevant industries and stakeholders.

Traditional teaching (within the University premises) has been strongly challenged by the current Covid pandemic but the UASF has developed the necessary means for efficacious

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online learning. As the pandemic stabilizes the learning platforms established can still be very relevant on the overall learning process.

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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Continue the strategic implementation of the test facilities in order to reinforce the objective of learning by practice and to improve the research quality and the level of services to the community.*
2. *Develop a strategic plan and objectives for applied research that will lead to innovative products.*

2.2. Quality Management

The SER provides the required information about the participation of staff and students in the process of quality management through gathering the information of graduates, employment

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of graduates, employer feedback and subsequent performance of graduates. Extensive surveys are conducted (at least annually), and survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers. In recent years, all evaluation results are sent to all relevant parties automatically.

The University has created ALUMNI (graduate networks) and a virtual Alumni platform is under final development funded by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). The final aim is to create a triangle between university, graduates and industry to facilitate employment opportunities for graduates, good industry opportunities for hiring professionals in the field and ease the work of the University to see the employment rate of graduates and to analyze even better the programs offered.

Lack of administrative staff and unsatisfactory familiarity with electronic tools of some staff elements were identified as weaknesses of the faculty. Furthermore, resistance of staff and students to embrace digital data collection tools was identified as a challenge. Both aspects are very relevant and should be dealt with soon.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	

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Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Develop a strategic plan to promote the use of electronic tools by staff.*
2. *Digital networking should be further implemented.*
3. *Students should be further encouraged to improve their language skills and to participate in international exchange programmes. That will give them extra tools to be more actively involved in the program improvement and on the research objectives.*

2.3. Academic Staff

According to the SER there are 12 listed academic staff members, a majority of those have a Doctoral degree and a relatively young age which can be seen as very positive. The members of academic staff have either permanent contracts or clear written responsibilities. The number of academic staff is sufficient for teaching and for the established collaborations with companies. The importance of practical competencies is increasing and therefore the staff has to be flexible to teach also in an industrial environment. The teaching staff are encouraged to develop strategies for the improvement of their own teaching and maintain a portfolio of evidence of evaluations and strategies for improvement. The University has supported individual staff initiatives for participation in conferences and has sent a significant number of staff for study visits under ERASMUS + projects in European countries such as Great Britain, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Poland, Germany and Croatia.

The University regularly provides training to improve teaching. This process takes place either as part of the institutional development process (part of the strategic development plan), but also as a result of the need for improvement that arises from the evaluation reports of students, colleagues and managers. This should be further developed as the present MSc involves the use of specific software (e.i. Life Cycle Assessment) for which training tutorials are paramount for scientifically strong results.

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Training programs in teaching skills are provided for both new and continuing teaching staff including those with part time teaching responsibilities; these include effective use of new and emerging technology. The extent to which teaching staff are involved in professional development to improve quality of teaching is being monitored and discussed annually with the head of faculty. The results of the academic staff evaluation are taken into account for promotion purposes and renewal of contracts.

As already discussed, the present Covid pandemic has forced the use of new digital teaching platforms (e.g. Teams) with the necessary adaptations of the teaching habits and even programs. That was described as a challenge during the site visit but also as an opportunity to develop new skills and competences.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for	X	

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consultations with students and community service.		
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Elaborate clear and understandable objectives for the development of research capabilities of the teaching staff.*
2. *Consolidate the opportunities of co-operation with foreign universities leading to the development of joint research.*

2.4. Educational Process Content

The Master program has been re-developed with the support of all relevant internal boards, students, partners and stakeholders. Particularly, in an attempt to improve the acceptability of the programme externally the University of Applied Sciences in Salzburg, Austria was also involved.

The SER describes the teaching strategies and methodology for each subject as well as materials used in teaching and the assessment forms. The teaching in the program will consist of lectures (theoretical and numerical) followed by their connection with the practical aspect, either through case studies (by local and international companies), in seminars, or through laboratory work.

Teachers use modern equipment and technologies such as Smart Boards, scanners and 3D printers as well as Virtual Reality Headsets and other relevant equipment. As described before, the present COVID pandemic has forced the use of new digital teaching platforms and the development of e-learning systems.

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The student-teacher relationship is well defined, and the assessments explained. More diversity in assessment methods, with less reliance on exams would probably be more adequate for most subjects under study. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development and adjusted if need arises. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms seem to be in place for verifying standards of student achievement. The SER fully describes the policies and procedures to be taken when dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed. The number of students that have completed the MSc is still very low and thesis' supervisors should probably define a strategy to improve the numbers of completed MSc.

The University has signed over 50 cooperation agreements with various enterprises in various fields of industry. One of the objectives of these agreements is to create the opportunity for the enterprise to provide access to students to carry out the research work needed for the diploma thesis. That has proven to be an opportunity for students that find a job but also a challenge as internship staff may leave the University for a better paid job in the industry without completing their studies.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives,	X	

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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.		
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	X	
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	X	
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	X	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.		X
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	X	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	X	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	X	
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.	X	

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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Promote the discussion of relevant recent papers (for instance, published in international referenced journals by Faculty Professors) whenever adequate. That can be part of the student assessment.*
2. *Promote, whenever possible, the harmonization of the curricula with similar international institutions.*

2.5. Students

Student admission is done in accordance with the call for enrolment which is announced on daily newspapers in Kosovo as well as on the official website and social media sites of the University. The student selection and admission criteria are dictated by the University Statutes and are published along with the call for enrolment. The admission to Master studies is based on the grade point average of Bachelor studies: (a) Success in basic studies up to 50 points; (b) Points from priority courses (5 courses) up to 50 points.

The proposed number of admissions per year is 50 which is a substantial increase from the previous objective and very difficult to achieve under the present situation in Kosovo identified on the SER. Considering the information of the SER and gathered during the virtual site visit, the study groups are dimensioned to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process and the academic staff that participated in the evaluation meeting demonstrated a very good understanding of student-centered learning as well as interactive teaching, Nevertheless, it is recommended to plan the number of students in practical (workshop) classes not larger than 15 to 20 students.

Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations. Academic staff are available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Tutorial assistance is available on academic issues and has been introduced in the University also for non-academic issues. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record (online Management System – SMU).

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Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original: "The University is part of the Erasmus+ Capacity building funded project ReaserchCult through which University has secured access to anti-plagiarism software for staff and students for the next three years". However, it is crucial to ensure that the software for detecting plagiarism is available at all times, not just for a limited period.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	(X)	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	

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Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Establish procedures for monitoring year-to-year progression rates and program completion rates. Collect student completion rates at the study program level and include this aspect among quality indicators.*
2. *Establish procedures for monitoring and coordinating student workload across subjects.*
3. *Design recognition rules for qualifications obtained outside higher education institutions (informal education, experience, etc.).*
4. *Plan the number of students in practical (laboratory and workshop) classes not larger than 15 to 20 students.*

2.6. Research

The University has approved a Regulation of Scientific Research. This regulation defines the rules, procedures, and other supporting documents for the organization of scientific research activities of academic staff, researchers and students. To manage and support research activities, the University has established a Commission for Research and Science.

The academic staff has demonstrated their ability to produce valid research (even with limited financial resources) by publishing, from 2019 to 2021, 27 articles in referenced scientific journals and by presenting 17 papers in national and international conferences. The Research Regulation requires each academic staff to publish an average of one paper per year.

This objective will be made easier by the planned establishment of the Institute of Applied Sciences including the workshops where students will do practical work in the institution; the laboratories for research in various fields, where both the staff and the students will be able to participate in research projects of the University and the industry; the innovation centre with cutting edge equipment for the development and design of products, physical models, printing of various designs such as: 3D printers and 3D scanners, as well as VR Headsets. Machines

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such as CNC, Printer/Ploter, and other modern equipment. In parallel, commercial projects will be also developed, where "both the staff and the students will be involved in real commercial activities which will not only keep the staff's commercial knowledge updated, but also provide students with a closer look to industrial experience".

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	X	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	X	
Standard 6.8. 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	

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Standard 6.9. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		X
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Further develop a comprehensive strategic research development plan with clear objectives, actions and measurable indicators.*
2. *Optimize the testing institute use to improve the applied research component in research and lecturing.*
3. *Further develop international cooperation through common research projects and teachers exchange.*
4. *Established rules for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.*

2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

The University campus is large and the University building well equipped in terms of conventional lecture rooms. Moreover, it has a Library, IT rooms, Laboratories and Workshops.

As Public Institution of Higher Education and financial sustainability of the University is guaranteed by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework for the next three years. As a Public Institution of Higher Education and under the umbrella of MEST, the University owns the space it uses, where its laboratories and workshops are, has licenses to use software (either licensed or free licensed schools) for academic purposes. Specific needs of software for the MSc should be better identified and the required licenses obtained.

The improvement of the Library is strongly recommended not so much in terms of books and scientific journals made available on paper to students but on digital access to online resources which are fundamental for academic staff and research. Most of these resources will be available in English and that should give the students and staff an extra incentive to develop their foreign language skills.

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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	
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:	X	
a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisationlicence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	X	
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.	X	
Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10%of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	(X)	

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Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Improve the Library. More computer access and adequate software or licences are a priority as digital access to information is easy and fundamental.*
2. *Develop short courses for staff and students on the use of online scientific data bases (e.g. Web of Science, Research Gate or Science Direct).*
3. *Develop a clear plan to integrate the testing facilities with research and teaching needs.*

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The SER details the recent evolution and developments of the programme since the previous evaluation. The recommendations of the previous External Review Report were all taken into account and implemented as possible within the limitations of the University and the country.

The distinctive rise on the overall quality of the MSc study programme was demonstrated and differences supported by the rationale behind the change. The improvement of the facilities and infrastructures is also noted with satisfaction. The improvements of the webpage and on the presence of the University on relevant social media has also to be mentioned. The research outputs of the Faculty, although above the requirements, are still poor but the present programme can be an important contribution to the research activities of the Faculty.

The following table summarizes the recommendations of the Expert Team for the following accreditation period and defines the final compliance level.

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Standard	Compliance Level	Recommendations
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially Compliant	- *Continue the strategic implementation of the test facilities in order to reinforce the objective of learning by practice and to improve the research quality and the level of services to the community.* - *Develop a strategic plan and objectives for applied research that will lead to innovative products.*
2. Quality management	Fully Compliant	- *Develop a strategic plan to promote the use of electronic tools by staff.* - *Digital networking should be further implemented* - *Students should be further encouraged to improve their language skills and to participate in international exchange programmes. That will give them extra tools to be more actively involved in the program improvement and on the research objectives.*
3. Academic Staff	Fully Compliant	- *Elaborate clear and understandable objectives for the development of research capabilities of the teaching staff.* - *Consolidate the opportunities of co-operation with foreign universities leading to the development of joint research.*
4. Educational Process Content	Subtantially Compliant	- *Promote the discussion of relevant recent papers (for instance, published in international referenced journals by Faculty Professors) whenever adequate. That can be part of the student assessment.* - *Promote, whenever possible, the harmonization of the curricula with similar international institutions.*

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5. Students	Fully Compliant	- *Establish procedures for monitoring year-to-year progression rates and program completion rates. Collect student completion rates at the study program level and include this aspect among quality indicators.* - *Establish procedures for monitoring and coordinating student workload across subjects.* - *Design recognition rules for qualifications obtained outside higher education institutions (informal education, experience, etc.).* - *Plan the number of students in practical (laboratory and workshop) classes not larger than 15 to 20 students.*
6. Research	Substantially Compliant	- *Further develop a comprehensive strategic research development plan with clear objectives, actions and measurable indicators.* - *Optimize the testing institute use to improve the applied research component in research and lecturing.* - *Further develop international cooperation through common research projects and teachers exchange.* - *Established rules for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.*
7. Infrastructure and Resources	Fully Compliant	- *Improve the Library. More computer access and adequate software or licences are a priority as digital access to information is easy and fundamental.* - *Develop short courses for staff and students on the use of online scientific data bases (e.g. Web of Science, Research Gate or Science Direct).* - *Develop a clear plan to integrate the testing facilities with research and teaching needs.*

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In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the MSc Green Architecture and Interior Design offered by Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Technology at the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj is **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to **re-accredit the study program** for a duration of **5 (five) years** with a number of **40 (forty) students** to be enrolled in the program each year.

Expert Team

Member

Lina Nunes	16/06/2022

(Signature)

Member

Rebecca Stuart Maxwell	16/06/2022

(Signature)

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