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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



UBT College in Prishtina

MSc FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Reaccreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

February 2025, Prishtina

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
INTRODUCTION	3
PROGRAMME EVALUATION.....	8
1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	8
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	11
3. ACADEMIC STAFF	14
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	18
5. STUDENTS	23
6. RESEARCH.....	26
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES.....	28
OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET	31

INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- *SER*
- *Syllabus*
- *Staff CVs*
- *Annexes*
- *Discussions and observations during the site visit*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA indicators*
- *Compliance level according KAA*

Site Visit Programme

Programme Accreditation Procedure at UBT College	
Programme:	Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS, (Reaccreditation); Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS, (Reaccreditation);
Site visit on:	20.02.2025
Expert Team:	Prof. Reiner Doluschitz, Prof. Kyriaki Zinoviadou, Prof. Damir Magdic, Ms. Ștefania Armășelu, Mr. Gaga Gvenetadze,
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ilijana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer

Site Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants
08:30 – 09:15	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Fidan Feka Violeta Lajqi Ismet Babaj Veton Haziri Fjolla Ejupi
09:15 – 10.00	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Fisnik Laha Artan Tahiri Ibush Luzha Emine Daci

		Lorike Salihu Dion Bardhi
10:05 – 11:35	<p>Meeting with the heads of the study programme: Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS Prof. Reiner Doluschitz, Prof. Kyriaki Zinoviadou, Ms. Ștefania Armășelu</p> <p>Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS Prof. Kyriaki Zinoviadou, Prof. Damir Magdic, Mr. Gaga Gvenetadze</p>	<p>Prof. Lumta Dida Prof. Besa Veseli Prof. Shkelzim Ukaj Prof. Rozafa Fetahaj Prof. Smajl Rizani Prof. Vezir Januzi</p> <p>Prof. Valon Durguti Prof. Violeta Lajqi Makolli Prof. Kujtim Lepaja Prof. Medin Zeqiri Prof. Ibrahim Mehmeti</p>
11:35 – 12:35	<i>Lunch break</i> (provided at the evaluation site)	
12:35 – 13:05	Visiting Facilities	Lirigzona Morina, Ismet Babaj
13:05 – 13:50	<p>Meeting with teaching staff Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS</p> <p>Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS</p>	<p>Prof. Mergim Mestani Prof. Vesë Pakashtica Prof. Osman Fetoshi Prof. Pranvera Ibrahimimi Prof. Vlora Rama Prof. Flutura Ajazi</p> <p>Prof. Maxhun Shehaj Prof. Suzana Aliu Prof. Hyzer Rizani Prof. Demokrat Nuha Prof. Pajtim Bytyqi, Prof. Nexhat Balaj Prof. Arbnora Berisha</p>
13:50 – 14:35	<p>Meeting with students Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS</p> <p>Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS</p>	<p>Muhamet Babaj, students</p> <p>Era Gavazi, students</p> <p>Arta Demaj students</p> <p>Detare Ajeti, students</p> <p>Albulena Ilazi, students</p> <p>Janina Pela, students</p> <p>Albin Tahiri, students Besarta Lushtaku, students Nazmie Berisha, students</p>

		Bleart Halili, students Jon Pirani, students Altin Shalaku, students.
14:40 – 15:20	Meeting with graduates Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS	Mirand Rudhani graduates, Enis Buca graduates, Shqipe Haxhiu graduates, Djellza Elshani graduates Gzim Selimi graduates Fidel Krasniqi graduates Jone Popaj graduates Blerina Krasniqi, graduates Shpetim Salihu, graduates Sihana Bokshi, graduates Emanuela Krasniqi, graduates Arben Xhemajli, graduates Hysni Tahiri, graduates
15:20 – 16:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders Food Science and Technology, MSc 120 ECTS Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, BSc 180 ECTS	“Kalabria” SHPK, “FLUIDI” SHPK. “Grasep” “Agroproducti” “Agrosera” “Shoqata Organica” “Fidanishtja e Godancit” “PePeko” NP “Me Agro”
16:00 – 16:05	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:05 – 16:10	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

Overall instructions for HEIs:

- No presentations of any kind are allowed, as the meetings are intended to be free discussions;
- The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc.
- The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc.
- The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution.
- Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA, and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session.
- Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.

A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation [Source: Self_Evaluation_Report]

UBT was established in Prishtina, Kosovo in October 2004 by Prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi. The institution was built on the previous experience of the Institute of Enterprise Engineering and Management (IEME). The College holds the license of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) No.808/02-1 dated 18.10.2004.

UBT is accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency as a UBT College. The institution has undergone a number of external accreditation (both institutional and program) procedures.

The philosophy of the institution has been to offer internationally competitive programs in higher education and lifelong learning. UBT College offer is based on both the demand and supply sides of the education system. The institution has introduced innovative programs that are essential for economic and social development in areas of law, political sciences, media and communication, mechatronics, energy efficiency, medical sciences, and integrated design. UBT also offers programs that were meant to service the existing demand in the areas of international and European studies, economy, public policy, and medicine.

The institutional context where UBT operates is characterized by an evolving regulatory framework on higher education, dualization of education system into both public and private and high demand for higher education programs and certification.

The activity is based on strategic goals and the development and review of Strategy takes into account the educational philosophy, national educational policies and social-economic environment within which graduates will work.

Institutional Strategy is based on surrounding educational environment and it provides steps in education, which integrates academic excellence, humanistic education and entrepreneurial education.

With regard to the changes in the external environment UBT devotes particular attention to initiatives and developments in the context of EU Lisbon Strategy, the Bologna Group, the European Network of Information Centers, EU Directives on Regulated Professions and European Qualification Framework. With regard to developments and best practices in quality assurance UBT regularly monitors the European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

In relation to best practices in HE management, programs, services and funding models it regularly monitors the developments in the European University Association (EUA). Best practices related to student and staff mobility it follows the developments in the EU Erasmus

+ Initiative. Developments related to research and industry cooperation are monitored in the context of Horizon 2020 Initiative, Western Balkans Research and Innovation Initiative, OECD SEE Reports and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Smart Growth Initiative.

The number of enrolled students in the MSc program for the past 6 years under evaluation can be found in the next table where a relative stable number with small deviation per year can be seen.

Number of students enrolled in the two programs under evaluation for the last 7 years.

	Indicator	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Total
1	Number of students enrolled MSc. <i>Food Sciences and Technology</i>	55	54	53	49	44	52	307
2	Number of students enrolled BSc. <i>Agricultural and Environmental Engineering</i>	26	31	24	14	9	11	115

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard 1.1 The study program is in line with the higher education institution's mission and strategic goals, needs of society and it is publicly available. (ESG 1.1)

The mission of the study program is in line with the missions of UBT College in Prishtina as it is stated in the SER and confirmed during the on-site-visit discussions. More specifically, 'the mission of the program in Master Food Sciences and Technology is to educate and prepare students for to pursue and maintain a world-class leadership role in the quest for knowledge by way of quality research, consultancy, capacity building, and innovative outreach'. As the agro-food sector in Kosovo is still under development and an important element of the national economy the development of such programs is of great importance and should be considered as a top priority.

A particular positive aspect of the study program under evaluation is the close collaboration with local enterprises (confirmed amongst other topics in the on-site-discussions). This is generally of high relevance in order to provide internships as well as topics for M.Sc.-thesis, and foster subsequent job opportunities for students. This is of extraordinary importance in Kosovo due to the difficult situation of its labor markets. The SER confirms that the study program has a long-term and strategic goals vision of fulfilling its function and mission.

The program of Food Science and Technology (MSc) at UBT College aligns closely with UBT's position in the target in the field of education, scientific research and in the field of services. A detailed analysis is presented in the SER.

The intended learning outcomes of the Food Science and Technology MSc program are well defined and align closely with UBT's mission of offering a dynamic and innovative 21st-century academic environment.

As stated in the SER the institution has assessed the labor market needs that are prepared by this study program. During the expert team visit it was verified by the interaction with the stakeholders that this is the case.

Standard 1.2 The study program is subject to policies and procedures on academic integrity and freedom that prevent all types of unethical behaviour. The documents are publicly available, and staff and students are informed thereof. (ESG 1.1)

It is indicated in the SER that the Management of Food Science and Technology (MSc) study program at UBT College follows strict procedures to address plagiarism, academic dishonesty,

and discrimination, as outlined in UBT's Code of Ethics, which promotes integrity, responsibility, and academic freedom. (SER).

The Code of Ethics is available online to all staff and students in <https://www.ubt-uni.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Regulation-on-anti-plagiarism.pdf> while the issue of use of generative AI is regulated by the Generative AI Policy of UBT, which is publicly available in <https://www.ubt-uni.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Generative-AI-Policy-UBT.pdf>

In summary, it can be concluded that there are clear ethical regulatory standards that govern teaching and research.

Turnitin software is used to detect and manage plagiarism and there is a very defined policy regarding the penalties

According to the statement in the SER it can be confirmed that the Faculty Ethics Sub-Committee and the UBT Ethics Committee other structures are active in monitoring and dealing with cases of unethical behaviour, and their decisions are distributed anonymously to ensure transparency and fairness.

Standard 1.3 Relevant information is collected, analysed and used to ensure the effective management of the study program and other relevant activities and such information is publicly available. (ESG 1.7)

According to the SER, the mechanisms for monitoring and addressing potential unethical behaviour among students, lecturers, and other stakeholders involved in the Food Science and Technology program are efficient, regularly implemented, and well-communicated to all relevant groups

SER: "The higher education institution has a system in place that collects relevant, updated, and reliable information. This system should regularly gather data on key aspects such as student progression, graduation rates, employability, and student satisfaction. Additionally, it must include information related to program implementation, staff performance, and resource management"

Certain performance Indicators are monitored but it is essential to declare the desired goals so as to control to the extent they are met. For example, the graduation rate could be enhanced but on the other hand the students satisfaction rate is very high.

As stated in the SER UBT College complies with Kosovo's Law No. 06/L-082 on Protection of Personal Data and the institution's data processing activities are monitored by a designated Data Protection Officer (DPO) at the Student Affairs Department chaired by Mr. Lorike Salihu.

As confirmed by representatives from all levels the information management system (SMIS) includes relevant, updated and reliable information. Furthermore, concrete action plans are in place to monitor the implementation of the study program. In addition, the SER indicates that there are clear ethical regulatory standards that govern teaching and research.

Standard 1.4 The delivery of the study program is supported by appropriate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its goals in teaching, learning, research, and community service. (ESG 1.6)

All study program activities and operations are subject to a policy and review process that ensures adequate and efficient administrative staff and budgetary support as it is confirmed in the SER.

The study program has sufficient administration to support the teaching and learning needs of students and academic staff. This is confirmed in the SER where it is stated that The **Food Science and Technology (MSc)** program at UBT College is supported by a robust administrative structure that includes a **Dean, Program Director, Program Coordinator**, and a **Quality Officer**. It is also mentioned in the SER that the administrative staff is subject to continuous professional training as mentioned above, including training in foreign languages, IT technology and other important skills.

The SER also confirms that the administrative staff is subject to continuous professional training, which is important for the performance of their duties. Staff trainings are held several times a year, which are organized and financed by the rectorate. This has been confirmed by the on-site-visit discussions.

UBT College has established an Administrative and Budgetary Support Policy that ensures the study programs to have sufficient resources for its operations and growth. This is confirmed by the SER and by the outcome of discussions during the on-site-visit. Respective staff for administration is available and is subject to a Professional Development Plan.

Standard 1.5 The recommendations for quality improvement of the study program from previous internal and external quality assurance procedures are implemented. (ESG 1.10)

‘The Management of Food Science and Technology (MSc) program follows a rigorous quality assurance system that ensures continuous improvement based on internal and external reviews. The Faculty of Food Science and Technology conducts regular course evaluations by students, semester reviews, annual program reviews, and surveys of alumni and industry stakeholders.’

For external evaluations, such as accreditation processes, the faculty adopts a quality improvement plan based on the recommendations of accreditation panels. Following accreditation, the quality improvement plan is submitted to the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).“ (SER).

Despite the fact that such a plan has been provided certain information such as the timeline and the person in charge is missing. Moreover, a detailed SWOT-analyses not has been conducted.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Increase student involvement in all respective procedures of the study program.*
- 2. Specific budget allocation to additional professional development of teaching staff is recommended.*
- 3. Intensified exchange with comparable programs at international level is recommended.*
- 4. Please add a schedule for a regular review and a table of progress indicating the state of the implementation of the recommendations delivered by external experts.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Standard 2.1 The study program delivery is subject to an established and functional internal quality assurance system, in which all relevant stakeholders are included. (ESG 1.1)

“The internal quality assurance system is governed by a Quality Assurance Manual, which outlines the processes for maintaining high standards in teaching, learning, research, and management. The Faculty’s Quality Sub-Committee oversees the evaluation and improvement processes, ensuring that stakeholder feedback from students, alumni, industry, and staff is systematically incorporated into program revisions and quality improvement initiatives. Regular self-evaluations are conducted, including course evaluations by students, semester reviews, annual reviews of programs, and surveys with alumni and industry partners, ensuring that feedback loops are consistently engaged for quality enhancement.” (SER).

UBT College and its Faculties adhere to a comprehensive **quality assurance policy and follow a quality assurance manual**. The Faculty of Food Science and Technology at UBT is supported by a dedicated Quality Assurance Coordinator, PhD Cand. Lorike Salihu, who is responsible for monitoring the study program. Continuous improvement is given through the implementation of a structured **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle which is described in the SER in more detail. A respective monitoring plan is installed as well**. This plan includes course evaluations by students, program reviews, industry and alumni feedback, and annual

self-evaluation reports. During the expert visit it was confirmed that all these activities take place and there is evidence for this.

Standard 2.2 The study program is subject to a process of design and approval established by the HEI. (ESG 1.2)

‘The development of the study program in Management of Food Science and Technology and Infrastructure aligns closely with the mission and strategic goals of both UBT and the Faculty of Food Science and Technology.’ (SER).

The study program under evaluation underwent an adequate and transparent internal quality assurance process and was formally approved by the designated strategic management bodies of the institution. This process included internal evaluations conducted by the Faculty Quality Sub-Committee. External experts are mentioned in the SER and they are very well linked to the food sector. Its continuous improvement is planned. Therefore, a continuous improvement system should be further elaborated and implemented.

Concerning the ongoing approval of the study program a respective system is well defined by internal procedures as well as external procedures, e.g. submission of the program description to KAA where it undergoes an evaluation and accreditation procedure including international experts from suitable fields of expertise.

From the SER it can be quoted that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for monitoring the quality of the study program delivery are well defined and monitored annually. However it would be beneficial to provide more info regarding the nature and the target values of these KPIs.

Standard 2.3 The study program is periodically monitored and reviewed to ensure its objectives are achieved. The monitoring of the study program involves stakeholder participation. (ESG 1.9)

SER: “The study program has been developed with direct consultations and interviews with key agro-food sector stakeholders to ensure its relevance and alignment with market needs. Although no formal agro-food sector survey has yet been conducted for this new program as part of program review, UBT regularly conducts industry surveys that evaluate employability, practical skills, innovation, and community contribution of graduates.”

The SER can be quoted in this respect as follows: “The study program undergoes regular checks to establish whether the estimated workload (ECTS) allocation of students and the defined learning outcomes are achievable, realistic, and adequate.”

The program implements an inclusive quality monitoring process that actively involves all key stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, and employers. These stakeholders contribute through structured mechanisms such as questionnaires, focus group discussions, and qualitative interviews. (SER). This had been confirmed during the on-site-visit discussions, particularly in those with the stakeholders: The HEI demonstrates regular stakeholder engagement through questionnaires directed at students, staff, alumni, and employers.

Moreover, the Faculty uses a Learning Outcomes Achievement Matrix, which is filled by each professor at the end of the course as a self-evaluation tool to assess whether the course learning outcomes (CLOs) were realistic, achievable, and adequately addressed during the course. However, this CLO Achievement Review process has not been carried out yet for the program due to its newness, the Faculty ensures that it is a key part of the quality assurance process for future evaluations.

Standard 2.4 All relevant information about the study program is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and is publicly available. (ESG 1.8)

All Respective regulations and the relevant links are provided in the SER. All policies, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the study program are publicly available and such information is easily accessible by all interested parties.

Information on pass rates, and graduate employment is publicly available and provides a clear and objective overview of the Faculty's performance.

For all potential students and those currently registered as well as for all interested parties, the faculty continuously publishes on the website a summary of the study programs. However, certain information is not evaluated as it is not provided in English but the expert team trusts that whatever is written in the SER is accurate

UBT's data collection is a key component of their quality assurance process ensuring transparency and accountability through the public availability of evaluation results.

All findings from these surveys are not only utilized to inform and refine the institution's Quality Assurance Action Plan but are also made available to the public, demonstrating UBT's commitment to transparency and its proactive assistance in using stakeholder feedback for continuous improvement.(SER).

SER: 'The Faculty implements regular internal and external audits to ensure that its governance and quality assurance policy is effective and ensures continuous improvement.'

However, the SER in his current form is not yet fully following the new structure provided by KAA as additional information and old indicators are added in standard 2.

ET recommendations:

1. *Reports of surveys and evaluations should be exemplarily provided as documents in the Appendix of the SER.*
2. *A monitoring system for measuring continuous progress (progress report) should become further elaborated and to be available in the post accreditation evaluations.*
3. *Key quality parameters of the study program such as number of applications, enrolment, completion rate, duration of the study and grade overview should be included into the QA mechanism on a regular basis and also provided in the SER continuously and updated.*
4. *Aggregated results of the course evaluations should be provided to the teaching staff, the FAV management and included in the SER.*
5. *Development of an Institutional research office will enhance all these efforts.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

Standard 3.1 The study program delivery is supported by teaching staff who are recruited in line with national legislation, and internal regulations in effect, and it is based on objective and transparent procedure. (ESG 1.5)

In the Self Evaluation Report stated that UBT College advertises vacancies for staff in the website but link is on the page with Academic staff. It is not clear is this a mistake or there are no vacancies in this moment.

During conversation with different groups with academics involved in, expert team convinced that employees are fully familiar with conditions of employment, their obligations, rights and options for carrier development.

The University uses public calls for employment and announces job vacancies through public calls published on the university website and various employment portals. Procedures are fully in accordance with national legislative.

Recruitment procedures align with both the strategic goals of the institution and the specific needs of study programs, ensuring that only qualified candidates are selected.

All steps in processes for staff recruitment and employment conditions outlined in the Staff Handbook. The staff engaged in the program includes only staff that have previously been certified by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

Standard 3.2 The study program is supported by sufficient permanent academic staff who are adequately qualified to deliver the study program. (ESG 1.5)

University employs 41 full-time tenured academics mostly specified in food technology and closely related scientific fields. Tables with details about positions, degree, scientific field, courses and other relevant data provided in the Self Evaluation Report. The complete (100%) study program offered by full-time academic staff.

In one academic year the staff is allowed to cover only two teaching positions at maximum (one full-time, one part-time). This is checked through internal platform E-accreditation.

Total teaching workload for Academic staff is 8-16 teaching hours per annum. Table 3 in SER presents workload in details. All teaching staff fully employed at UBT. That means that UBT ensures more than required minimum of full-time academic staff.

The student-to-full-time academic staff ratio for the study program is 41:180 or 1:4.39, which is more than appropriate for achieving successful learning outcomes by the students.

The provided CVs and publications demonstrate comprehensive preparation and contributions of Academic staff to study areas of Food Science and Technology. List of publications for individuals presented on the UBT website but only publications from UBT International Conference listed. Analyzing randomly chosen individuals among Academic staff it was clear that they published their results in respectable international scientific journals also.

The workload of Academic staff aligns with relevant national legislation (40 working hours per week).

Detail workload of academic staff presented in SER (Table 5) where clearly showed appropriate distribution of all academic duties.

A sufficient number of mentors for students ensured and total engagement in mentoring is precisely regulated. One bachelor thesis mentoring counts for 0.4 hours per week. The Dean as administrator can cover up to five theses. Academic staff can cover up to 10 bachelors in maximum or combination of bachelor and master thesis where one master thesis counts for 0.8 hours of work per week.

Standard 3.3 The study program is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence. The advancement of staff arises from the higher

education institution's strategic goals and is in line with the legislation and internal regulations in effect. (ESG 1.5)

The teacher advancement procedures at UBT College are transparent and objective, as outlined in the Employee Handbook and the Regulation on Standards for Election into Higher Academic Titles. The candidates are evaluated based on a set of criteria, including their performance history, leadership qualities, contributions to the department, and alignment with the strategic goals of the academic unit.

Procedures for advancement through scientific-teaching titles are legally prescribed for every position and are publicly available. The inclusion of 20 additional points from various scholarly contributions further reinforces the comprehensive nature of the evaluation process.

The results of feedback and comments are a key element in the process of advancement, reappointment, and contract renewal of teaching staff. This evaluation process includes the use of questionnaires completed by students, management, colleagues, and the self-assessment of instructors.

Standard 3.4 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study program is entitled to institutional support for professional development. (ESG 1.5)

The staff development strategy and annual operational plan outline participation of academic staff in various development activities. Presented in the Annex of Self-Evaluation Report. In communication with academic staff became clear that they have full academic freedom and institutional support. The 80% of costs for research covered by institutional support. Staff established lot of international partnerships. After mobility they should prepare the final report.

The Guideline for Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Teaching Activity and Assessment Methods and the Guidelines for Student Assessment provide detailed instructions and examples on how to design assessments that effectively measure student learning outcomes. Both documents published on UBT website.

Professional trainings (assessment methods, learning outcomes and teaching activities, supervision skill and effective mentoring) are occasionally organized for academics and other employee.

In period 2023-2024 several staff members participated in international activities that were held in Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and some other countries. The Induction (Orientation) Training is mandatory for all new academic staff in the aim of strengthening their teaching competencies. Key aspects of the "Guideline on Competence-Based Teaching" and the "Competence-Based Teaching Guideline" are explained. New

16

academic staff are introduced to learning environment in details. The orientation continues over the two weeks. During the first week, the newly hired staff attends specialized workshops provided by different departments, such as IT (for Turnitin, Moodle, and SMIS training), Human Resources (on employment policies and procedures), the Research Office, and the Secretary's Office. In the second week, the orientation shifts to the faculty or department level, where staff members engage in detailed familiarization with their specific roles, responsibilities, and curriculum requirements.

College UBT provides support the development of research programs through advisory in writing research proposals through Project's Office of UBT chaired by Prof. Ass. Dr. Besnik Skenderi. Peer support is also provided by seven senior professors. This hinders the further development of a scientific career and the possibility of submitting project proposals.

Standard 3.5 External associates who teach at the study program have adequate qualifications and work experience for the delivery of the study program and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (ESG1.5)

The UBT engages external associates from labor market in the teaching process. Engaged experts come from Food and Veterinary Agency, Organic Association, FLOIL Food Beverages and Oils Industry and Institute of Food Quality in Peje. In SER listed experts seem to be adequate to deliver practical and obligatory contents from the field of food science and technology.

A specialized training session titled "Introduction to Higher Education Teaching Methods and Practices for Industry Associates" was designed and held for external associates from the private sector who were involved in the Food Science and Technology program. The training introduced the associates to the guidelines on competence-based teaching and how to incorporate industry insights effectively into academic content. In addition, other essential aspects of teaching were included in this training.

Bachelor and Master thesis enriched with industry feedback and co-supervised from external associates increase learning outcomes and interest for the study program.

External associates are responsible primarily for the practical parts of the courses, with a maximum of 2 hours per week dedicated to exercises and 0.3 hours per week for co-supervising.

ET recommendations:

1. *For supporting further development of academic staff, international mobility and study program specific education in English in teaching and in writing project applications is recommended.*

2. *Institutional support for applying for international funds and projects could be additionally promoted and financially supported.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2028

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

Standard 4.1 The study program intended learning outcomes are formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices; they are aligned with the published institution's/academic unit's mission and strategic goals and are publicly available. (ESG 1.2)

A very comprehensive mapping of the program learning outcomes MSc in Food Science and Technology with the mission and strategic goals of the Faculty of Food Science is provided.

The intended learning outcomes cover all study programme objectives. Specific program objectives and the intended learning outcomes are well presented in the SER. However, the potential for acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies is rather low in the study program.

It can be confirmed that the program's intended learning outcomes (PLOs) are written from a student-centered perspective, ensuring that they focus on what graduates will clearly know and be able to do after completing the program

The intended learning outcomes are designed to be comparable with similar programs in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). As mentioned in the SER The course learning outcomes were aligned with study methods and assessment procedures based on a call from Ministers as specified on page 7 of ECTS User Guide. Additionally, the intended learning outcomes of the study program under evaluation have been harmonised with similar study programs carried out in European Higher Education Area such as European Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Erasmus +) Hungary 2014, Corvinus University of Budapest (Erasmus +) Hungary 2015, Latvia University of Agriculture Latvia, 2015, Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences (Erasmus +) Lithuania, 2015, European Polytechnical University (Erasmus +), Bulgaria 2015, University of Zagreb (MoU), Croatia 2015, Technical University Sofia (Erasmus +), Bulgaria, 2015, Anhalt University of Applied Sciences (Erasmus +). However, it would be beneficial to perform a harmonisation with more current and updates programs as these ones are already 10 years old.

Standard 4.2 The study program intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. (ESG1.2)

As depicted in the SER the program's learning outcomes, content and teaching methods are designed based on the Kosovo Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

Standard 4.3 The content and structure of the curriculum is coherent and enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and to progress smoothly through their studies. (ESG 1.2)

The curriculum as presented in the SER provides a logical flow of subjects and several elective courses are offered. The first year all students follow the same curriculum while in the second year they can choose one of the three offered specialisations. The common year includes subjects that are useful for all such as Applied Microbiology in Food Industry, Advanced in Food Biochemistry, Advanced Nutrition, which helps students to orientate the subjects in the framework of the second year.

In the second year, student follow one of the three specialisations namely

- NUTRITION
- FOOD TECHNOLOGY
- FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The offered courses are interesting and relevant to the field of studies but the suggestions that were made in the previous report of developing a course on Innovation and entrepreneurship in for the specialisation of Food Technology has not been addressed.

The structure and content of the study program under evaluation have been harmonized with similar study programs carried out in the European Higher Education Area.

The thesis is compulsory for all students and is valid of 30 ECTS. This is an excellent practice as a means to enhance the research competency of the graduates.

As the mapping of competencies on the course level against the program learning outcomes has been performed, but also the constructive alignment of course learning outcomes with learning activity and assessment methods has been performed for this program. However, certain areas and especially the learning outcomes in the course descriptors have to be improved and depict the required levelness.

All required course information is provided in a well-arranged format in the syllabus found in Annex of the SER, comprising course objectives, learning outcomes, thematic content, teaching methods, students' assessment system and bibliography. However, the format of the descriptors is not homogeneous. The number of the learning objectives for each course of 5 ECTS should range between 4-6. More importantly the verbs that are used are not always appropriate for level 7.

The literature assigned for courses is often very outdated, up to 20 years old or older in some cases. Many of the assigned literature pieces are in English, which is not necessarily a drawback but no English language course is provided to students as part of the study programme and it is questionable how good the student's English skills are.

Standard 4.4 If the study program leads to degrees in regulated professions, it is aligned with the EU Directives and national and international professional associations. (ESG 1.2)

The study program "Master Food Sciences" is structured in accordance with the standards and requirements set out in the European Union (EU) directives. This means that the curriculum and learning outcomes are harmonized with European principles and best practices.

The subjects and modules have been selected to ensure that students acquire the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge, which is comparable to those offered in EU member states
Leading to an Internationally Recognized Diploma

As stated in the SER in defining the learning outcomes and developing the content and structure, the professional advice of the following stakeholders was considered:

- Food Science and Agriculture Industries Board Program;
- Evaluation by all the companies where our students work and practice;

During the visit it was evident to the expert team that UBT holds close ties with the private and public agrifood sector.

Standard 4.5 The intended learning outcomes of the student practise period are clearly specified, and effective processes are followed to ensure that learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students (if applicable). (ESG 1.2)

The curriculum does not include a specific professional practice course and this is a great drawback. The practical part is imbedded in different courses but this is not sufficient. Despite the fact that UBT has established several provision professional traineeships is not part of the curriculum so this part that is included in the SER is not relevant. This gap can be partly covered by the fact that certain thesis can take place in industrial environment as UBT collaborates with a large number of food industries but still this is not enough.

Standard 4.6 The study program is delivered through student-centred teaching and learning. (ESG 1.3)

Despite the fact that the first year a large number of students are enrolled in the second year that they split in specializations groups are smaller. This normally implies a more student-centered pedagogical approach as professors can dedicate individual attention to students.

The study program has the ratio of 50 % to 50 % between theory and practise.\

As stated in the SER The program Master Food Science and Technology employs a dynamic array of pedagogical strategies to foster active engagement and facilitate the attainment of learning objectives. This educational approach encompasses practical case studies, collaborative project work, problem-centric learning experiences, and immersive simulation exercises. Integral to this process are on-site excursions and presentations by seasoned industry practitioners, which augment the curriculum. The learning experience is further enriched by interactive components such as collaborative projects, in-depth case study examinations, expert guest lectures, teamwork exercises, and digital learning platforms.

The study program incorporates a diverse array of teaching methods specifically designed to encourage interactive, research-based learning, problem-solving, and creative and critical thinking. All these methods are presented in the SER and were confirmed during the visit.

Teaching methods are adapted to different student groups, ensuring that the program meets this indicator

Standard 4.7 The evaluation and assessment used in the study program are objective and consistent and ensures that intended learning outcomes are achieved. (ESG 1.3)

A very detailed mapping of the overall between the intended learning outcomes and each one of the offered courses is provided.

The assessment methodologies used in the program are systematically designed to assess individual learning outcomes in all relevant areas of knowledge, skills, and competences as outlined in the program learning outcomes. This was achieved through the implementation of the Guideline on Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Learning Activity and Assessment Methods The workshop was held for this for all academic staff in November 2023 and March 2024 available in <https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/ubt-successfully-conducted-a-comprehensive-workshop-on-constructive-alignment-of-learning-outcomes/>

UBT College has a policy that is foreseen also in the Regulation for Undergraduate Studies that students must receive timely feedback on the evaluation results. This is an excellent

practice as it can also provide to the student specific guidelines on how they can improve, however it is not clarified if it is valid for MSc students as well.

The evaluation methods are quite heavily reliant on written and oral exams, according to the detailed syllabus. Where courses have a heavy component of skills development and practical knowledge, the assessment methods should be adapted accordingly, and students' applied knowledge and skills should be assessed through applied and practical tests, both in group teamwork assignments and individual assignments.

The ET finds that it is rather fair and beneficial that students are evaluated by different means and not only by a final exam in the end of the semester as indicated in the syllabus. Despite the fact that examples of assessments and grading are not provided the ET trusts that the Faculty of FFT follows all these procedures. However, it may be beneficial to introduce the use of a second marker in certain courses that will evaluate a sample of student work blindly

The SER confirms that there is a well-defined appeal process that is clear to all students. However, Within the Agricultural and Environmental Engineering program, there has not been any cases where the student did not agree with the assessment and the assessment complaint was processed to the Vice-Dean for Teaching.

Standard 4.8 Learning outcomes are evaluated in terms of student workload and expressed in ECTS. (ECTS 1.2)

The study program ensures objective and reliable grading of students.

The assessment criteria are designed to clearly reflect what students know and are able to do as a result of achieving the intended learning outcomes. These criteria describe student performance in a measurable and clear way, ensuring that assessment is based on the demonstration of skills, knowledge, and competencies.

The program under evaluation has established a systematic approach to calculating the workload for each course, ensuring that ECTS are assigned to all learning activities in a way that is consistent with the programme learning outcomes (PLOs) and the course learning outcomes (CLOs). The standard used is 1 ECTS = 25 study hours, and these study hours include all learning activities such as attending lectures, participating in seminars, conducting independent research, completing assignments, and preparing for assessments.

ET recommendations:

1. *Define the role of program heads in assessing the adequacy of overall learning outcomes of students, and the responsibility in monitoring student progress, completion rates and graduation rates of enrolled students.*
2. *Officially designate the program head to be responsible for and empowered to follow-up on recommendations in this expert report pertaining to the study program, learning outcomes and curriculum and define their reporting lines and frequency of reporting to the hierarchy.*
3. *Revise the intended learning outcomes in a way that ensures inclusion of competences and skills including research skills, critical and creative thinking and other competences relevant to the labour market. It is suggested to use the BLOOM taxonomy in order to use the appropriate wording for each level.*
4. *Since nowadays the use of AI is increasing it is recommended to increase the number of oral presentations as a means of assessment in order to enhance students' soft skills and critical thinking as well as to indirectly evaluate the originality of the work.*
5. *Update learning materials.*
6. *Add a compulsory internship course.*
7. *Increase the number of hours of English courses that will also facilitate in attracting more international students.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

5. STUDENTS

Standard 5.1 Clear admission policies, including requirements, criteria and processes for the study program are clearly defined and are publicly available. (ESG 1.4)

The admission policies for the MSc Program in Food Science and Technology at UBT College are clearly defined, transparent, and publicly available. The requirements for admission include possessing a relevant bachelor's degree in fields such as food technology, plant production, agribusiness, engineering, and other related disciplines. These criteria apply equally to national and international students, ensuring a consistent selection process. The university has defined the decision-making process for admissions, ensuring that students admitted to the program have appropriate prior knowledge and competencies.

The admission criteria are consistently and fairly applied, preventing any form of discrimination. Additionally, the institution has established adequate procedures for recognizing prior study periods, allowing for the recognition of credits earned at other institutions. During the site visit, it was confirmed that both students and faculty are well-informed about these requirements through institutional websites and student information sessions.

Standard 5.2 Student progression data for the study program are regularly collected and analyzed. Appropriate actions are taken to ensure the student's completion of the study program. (ESG 1.4)

UBT College has a functional system in place to monitor student progression and completion rates. Data on student retention, graduation, and withdrawal is collected systematically and is analyzed to identify trends and challenges. This data is shared with faculty and administrative staff to support decision-making processes related to academic advising and curriculum improvements.

The institution provides assistance and counseling for students facing academic difficulties, ensuring that appropriate interventions are made when needed. The program clearly defines progression pathways, allowing students to understand their options for continuing their studies or transitioning into the job market. Students are also provided with information on the recognition of qualifications and the transfer process for credits earned from other institutions.

Despite these positive aspects, student retention rates could be improved through additional mentoring and targeted support programs for at-risk students. The institution should also ensure that all students are made aware of the resources available for academic support and career guidance.

According to SER, the program follows established policies for the transfer and recognition of qualifications from other institutions. This enables students with prior academic or professional qualifications to integrate their learning into the program, facilitating flexible pathways and ensuring recognition of previous achievements.

Standard 5.3 The study program ensures appropriate conditions and support for outgoing and incoming students (national and international students). (ESG 1.4)

The MSc Program in Food Science and Technology actively supports student mobility through international exchange programs and institutional partnerships. Students are regularly informed about opportunities for mobility programs, and financial support is available for those who participate. The institution also has clear regulations for the recognition of ECTS credits, ensuring that students who study abroad can transfer their credits seamlessly.

Information about admission procedures for international students is publicly available in multiple languages. However, there is limited evidence of active efforts to attract foreign students beyond providing basic information. While some support structures exist, such as language courses and administrative assistance for international students, these could be strengthened to ensure smoother adaptation.

The institution collects and analyzes feedback from both national and international students regarding their experiences with mobility programs. However, there is limited tracking of mobility participation rates over time, which would be useful in assessing the effectiveness of these programs.

Standard 5.4 The study program delivery is ensured through adequate resources for student support. The needs of a diverse student population (part-time students, mature students, students from abroad, students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.) are taken into account. (ESG 1.6)

UBT College provides adequate resources for student support, including academic guidance, career counseling, and financial aid opportunities. The number of professional, administrative, and technical staff involved in student support is sufficient, and they are appropriately qualified to assist students.

Students receive comprehensive information about their rights, study regulations, and available services through information packages, student handbooks, and the university website. The institution offers academic mentorship programs, ensuring that students have access to supervisors and tutors for academic guidance.

The program also considers the needs of a diverse student population, including part-time students, mature students, international students, and students with disabilities. However, more structured support is needed to ensure full accessibility for students with disabilities, including infrastructure improvements and tailored learning assistance.

Extracurricular activities are supported, with students being encouraged to participate in cultural, sports, and volunteer activities. However, financial support for student-led initiatives and recreational activities could be expanded to enhance student engagement.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Promote academic resources and support services more actively to encourage participation.*
- 2. Develop a digital platform for easier submission and tracking of student complaints.*
- 3. Enhance retention strategies by implementing structured mentoring programs and providing targeted academic support for at-risk students.*
- 4. Improve international student recruitment by developing proactive outreach efforts, expanding language support services, and strengthening administrative assistance for incoming students.*
- 5. Increase financial and logistical support for student mobility programs, including better tracking of participation rates and improving awareness of exchange opportunities.*

6. *Strengthen accessibility and inclusion efforts for students with disabilities by improving infrastructure and providing tailored academic support.*
7. *Expand extracurricular and student engagement initiatives, ensuring adequate financial support for student-led activities, cultural events, and career development programs.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2028

6. RESEARCH

Standard 6.1. The study program aligns with the institution's/academic unit's mission and the research strategic goals.

The study program is fully aligned with the vision and mission of UBT College and the Faculty of Food Science. The Research Strategy of the Faculty is available on institutional website. The topics updates from time to time. Activities are compatible with international practice and meet the requirements and standards of the relevant field.

Standard 6.2. The academic staff engaged in the study program is committed and supported to achieve high-quality research work and/or professional activity.

Faculty members with full-time tenured contracts are allocated 672 hours annually for research activities. UBT has established research incentive schemes that reward faculty for high-quality publications. For instance, first authors of Q1 and Q2 SCOPUS-indexed publications receive 1,000 EUR, with second authors receiving 800 EUR.

Support for publication of books and monographies provided through UBT Publishing and Printing House under two schemes. First case is where the author is the owner of the book but responsible for its distribution while second case defines shared revenues where books are sold and distributed through UBT Publishing and Printing House and the revenues are shared.

According to SER, over the last three years, the faculty has produced 171 publications. Total number of 326 publications indexed in SCOPUS and WoS, with 3 publications per staff member per year clearly demonstrates institutional support and individual efforts.

Standard 6.3 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study program is encouraged to participate in different aspects of cooperation with national and international partners.

Faculty members are required to submit their scientific research for publication in peer-reviewed journals, indexed in databases such as Clarivate, Scopus, EBSCO, DOAJ, and

26

WorldCat. To promote scientific researches and collaborations UBT hosts the Annual UBT Conference and financially supports publishing.

Eight cooperation at national and about 40 at international level, well documented in two tables the SER, demonstrates that academic staff highly encouraged and motivated for various types of networking.

In 2025, more than 40.000 EUR allocated for contributing research excellence and 12.500 EUR for staff development workshops. This is significant support for different types of cooperations.

Standard 6.4 The teaching staff engaged in the study program has a proven record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

Publications of full-time teachers of the Food Science and Technology master study program can be accessed via links in the SER and the university website. Published works are highly correlated with the curriculum and topics in teaching and permanently used for refreshing teaching content.

Students are occasionally involved in research activities with academic staff. Several papers published in highly recognized international scientific journals and UBT conferences have been produced with involving students in research activities. List of eight published papers presented in the SER.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Achieve additional funding to further boost research within the programme*
- 2. The UBT should pay special attention that all academic staff respect the criterion of an average of one publication per year.*
- 3. Promote the integration of research findings into teaching materials and encourage joint publications with students.*
- 4. As a means to enhance research activities trainings for the preparation and submission of project proposals and networking with foreign partners are highly recommended.*
- 5. Joint projects with the public and private sectors have the potential to attract highly qualified external associates also as collaborative financing of specific researches.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2028

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Standard 7.1. The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research. ESG (1.6)

The SER confirms that UBT College in Prishtina provides adequate facilities and equipment for the development of educational and research processes, including laboratories, library and scientific (basic) resources, as well as teaching spaces equipped with relevant technologies. This has been confirmed by the visit of ET at the locations of the infrastructure mentioned above.

Even UBT provides its own bus transportation system for transferring students between different locations and from/to homes.

In general, UBT's modern infrastructure is comprised of multiple campuses, including:

- Lipjan Innovation Campus: 27,132 m² of space, including amphitheatres, laboratories, classrooms, studios, a library, a dental clinic, clinical rooms, advisory centers, translation rooms, and reading halls.
- Prishtina Dukagjini Center: 5,000 m² of space, with 19 dedicated rooms for teaching and student activities

Sufficient volume and size of adequate infrastructure is of particular importance for the study program under evaluation “Food Science and Technology, BSc.”, since there is special infrastructure needed, including analytical laboratories and product development labs. The SER includes more detailed information about these infrastructure elements

The SER provides data on number of seats in the classrooms and the inventory list of existing equipment in the laboratories and IT equipment as well.

The SER states that the premises are compliant to the needs of disabled persons. This can be confirmed by the ET.

The space, equipment, and entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities, etc.) are fully functional and capable to cater for the number of students enrolled in the program. This has been confirmed in the SER and partially during the on-site-visit.

Standard 7.2 The HEI ensures adequate library resources for study program. (ESG 1.6)

SER: “The UBT learning environment is an excellent experience in Kosovo. It hosts the largest life sciences library in the region and offers access to electronic libraries. Classrooms and equipment, as well as student recreation areas, are designed to adapt to the learning dynamics

of contemporary students. Although the current space in reading rooms is optimized, there is still a need for expansion.”

The ET cannot verify the number of seats in the library (reading and work group rooms), due to time limitations. However, the ET trusts that such infrastructure is sufficiently available.

According to the SER, The UBT library holds a comprehensive book stock of 1550 titles for the Food Science program specifically tailored to the field of food science, with more than 50% published within the last 10 years. These books, along with access to a wide range of electronic resources such as EBSCO, JSTOR, and SAGE Journals, cover the specific courses within the curriculum and meet the academic needs of all students. The resources are sourced from recognized Albanian and foreign publishers, ensuring both quality and relevance to the study program. UBT Library has a collection of books in many languages other than English.

Systems and operating conditions are supported and guaranteed by a Student Management Information System (SMIS), which provides efficient information for students and management staff.

UBT Library provides access to online databases for research to currently enrolled students, faculty members, and staff members with an active ID in UBT College, and users can have access only inside the area of UBT.

UBT Library provides computers and laptops which are always up to date (cited from the SER).

The library of UBT operates during the whole year. It is open from Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 19:30, and on Saturday from 09:00 to 14:00.

Laboratories for all compulsory activities within the curriculum of the study program, wherever the analytical program includes such activities, are well-equipped with IT technology.

SER: The library currently provides a sufficient number of seats for students enrolled in the study program. However, the capacity currently available could become expanded to better meet the needs of students and particularly support group activities.

The library has a sufficient number of subscriptions to local and foreign publications, including periodical journals and electronic sources. It offers access to a wide range of online resources, examples for this are listed in the SER.

Standard 7.3 The study program is appropriately funded to deliver its intended educational activities and research. (ESG 1.6)

The SER confirms that the “financial allocation models will be moderated through the Strategic Plan objectives. The existing financial income model aims at striking a healthy balance between sources of income. While investors’ capital investments were essential in infrastructure development, the operation of programs, research, and staff development will have to rely significantly on student tuition fees.” The respective table is presented in the SER.: “Projected incomes under the financial plan of the study program”.

The Strategic Plan 2023-2028 of UBT for Faculty of Food Science and Agriculture Faculty under Strategic Outcome 3.1 foresees that for the period 2023-2028, UBT Food Science wins international research projects in the value of 550,000 Euro.

ET recommendations:

- 1. An even more detailed budget plan has to be presented for the study program, incl. general cost such as electricity, heating, bus transportation, etc.*
- 2. Insufficient equipment in existing laboratories should be improved and/or replaced.*
- 3. Sufficient reading and work group seats for students, particularly for group work, should be made available according to the respective standard.*
- 4. Purchase of sufficient number of appropriate IT equipment for on site and online learning.*

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of 2026


OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program “MSc FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY” offered by the UBT College in Prishtina is Substantially compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual (2021) and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number of 100 students to be enrolled in the program.


1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	Substantially Compliant
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	Substantially Compliant
3. ACADEMIC STAFF *Mandatory	Fully Compliant
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	Substantially Compliant
5. STUDENTS	Substantially Compliant
6. RESEARCH	Fully Compliant
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES *Mandatory	Substantially Compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially Compliant

Expert Team


Chair

	Dr. Kyriaki Zinoviadou	18.04.2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Prof. Damir Magdic	18.04.2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Mr. Gaga Gvenetadze	18.04.2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)