



**Republika e Kosovës**  
**Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo**  
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency



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***UNIVERSITY “FEHMI AGANI” IN GJAKOVA,***  
***FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY***

**BA English Language - Translation and Interpretation**

**Re accreditation**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*22/05/2024, GJAKOVA*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Context**

**Date of site visit: 22/05/2024**

#### **Expert Team (ET) members:**

- Dr. Beatriz López Medina
- Dr. Dhurata Shehri
- Matej Drobnic, Student Expert

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

- Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer
- Lenda Hyseni, KAA Officer

#### **Sources of information for the Report:**

- KAA Accreditation Manual (2021)
- KAA Manual for external evaluation of higher education institutions (2021)
- Self-evaluation report for the English Language -Translation and Interpretation
- Additional documentation provided by the Department and Institution (CV's, appendices, syllabi)
- Information gathered during the site visit

#### **Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations**

- Standards for institutional evaluation as outlined in the Accreditation Manual 2021 of the KAA

## 1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:45	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the program is integrated	Sindorela Doli-Kryeziu - Acting Dean at the Faculty of Philology Petrit Duraj - Head of the study programme Master in Albanian Linguistics Elsa Vula - Senator
09:45 – 10:25	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Daut Islami - Head of office for Quality Assurance, Arbër Krypa – Head of IT and international project supporter, Qendresa Bardhoshi - Salaries and honorarium officer, Donika Xharra – Diploma officer Mentore Zejnullahu - Student Services Officer, Member of Quality Assurance in the Faculty of Philology, Arianit Kupa - Legal Representative.
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the heads of the study program Albanian Language, Ma 120 ECTS (room 1) Dr.Dhurata Shehri	Fridrik Dulaj Petrit Duraj
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the heads of the study program English Language – Translation and Interpretation, BA, 180 ECTS (room 2) Dr. Beatriz Lopez Medina Matej Drobic, Student Expert	Elsa Vula Mejreme Ymeri Nazli Tyfekqi
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	
12:20 – 12:50	Visiting Facilities	
12:50 – 13:35	Meeting with teaching staff	Gentiana Muhaxhiri – Professor, Sazan Kryeziu – Professor, Besim Muhadri – Professor, Senad Neziri – Professor, Pranvera Osmani – teaching assistant, Yllka Imeri- teaching assistant

		Hana Qurdina– teaching assistant, Muhamet Lajqi– teaching assistant, Hana Radoniqi- teaching assistant, Leonita Parallangaj– teaching assistant
<b>13:35 – 14:20</b>	Meeting with students	Elvira Pepaj, Agnesa Babuni, Elvir Sutaj, Ernesa Bytyqi, Ardiana Dinaj, Erleta Tahirsylaj, Blearta Halilaj, Elvira Vula
<b>14:25 – 15:10</b>	Meeting with external stakeholders	Erjona Rama– Language Networr Miranda Macula Shllaku – Director of Primary school “Fehmi Agani”; Gjakova, Valentin Tanushi – ABC Center of Training Egzon Haxhosaj - ALFA Projects; Zymer Berisha.– Senior officer in the Education Department of Municipality of Gjakova, Engjëll Berisha –Director of Central Library, Eldita Mullahasani- Responsible editor in the local medium“TV Syri Vision”, Lena Bokshi Kryeziu- Director of the theater “Hadi Shehu” in Gjakova.
<b>15:10 – 15:15</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
<b>15:15 – 15:20</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

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

“Fehmi Agani”; University started work on 1 October 2013, with the Faculty of Education, with the Preschool and Primary programs, the Faculty of Medicine with the Nursing and Midwifery programs, and the Faculty of Philology with the Albanian Language programs and English Language and Literature. However, there is a long tradition of education in Gjakova. Thus, in the 1967/1968 school year, the Pedagogical High School was opened in Gjakovë, which then became the Pedagogical Academy in 1967. Initially, the Academy operated with three teaching programs: Albanian Language and Literature, Mathematics, and History-Geography, to be expanded with other programs in 1977. In 2001, the Senate of the University of Pristina approved the teaching plans supported in the Declaration of Bologna for the Bachelor’s level in Gjakova. The Faculty of Education started working in the academic year 2002/2003. On 07. 05. 2003, MESTI approved the decision that the Faculty of Education, with regional centers in Prishtina, Gjakovë, Prizren, and Gjilan, from the academic year 2003/2004, start with the teaching programs for the preparation of subject teachers. In September 2004, the University of Pristina started work on the branch in Gjakovë, with the Faculty of Philology, Albanian Language and English Language and Literature programs in the academic year 2010/2011, the Faculty of Medicine with the Nursing and Midwifery programs in the academic year 2011/2012 and the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences with the Educational Chemistry program, also in the academic year 2011/2012.

The diplomas in are the following: the English Language - Translation and Interpretation program (BA, 180 ECTS) and the Albanian Language and Literature program (BA, 240 ECTS), UFAGJ also offers the faculties with the corresponding programs: Faculty of Education: Preschool (BA, 240 ECTS); Primary (BA, 240 ECTS). Faculty of Medicine: Nursing (BSc, 180 ECTS), Public Health (BSc, 180 ECTS), Physiotherapy (BA, 180 ECTS), Health Management (MA, 120 ECTS). Faculty of Social Sciences: Social Care and Welfare (BA, 180 ECTS). University in Gjakovë (UFAGJ) today develops its activity following the processes of Bologna, the labor market, and the European area of higher education.

## **2. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

### **2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration**

The mission of the university is absolutely clear in the documents provided. As a public HEI, it has a general educational mandate. The objectives of the institution (organisational, institutional and academic) have been clearly outlined. The mission regarding the study program “English Language – translation and Interpretation” is also appropriately developed and is fully in line with the orientation of the faculty and university. The objectives of the program are stringent and plausible. During the evaluation it became very clear that the program is organised and implemented according to the relevant national standards, based on the requirements of the European Higher Education Area and the connection with the labour market. Academic and personnel requirements were adequately taken into account.

The Self-Assessment Report (henceforth, SER) provides a clear description of the three University pillars (Steering Council, General Secretary and Deans and Vice-Deans) with clear functions and responsibilities. It shows an organizational and managerial effort carried out in a short period of time considering the recent creation of University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, (henceforth, UFAGj) in 2013.

The didactic concept (St. 1.3) is mostly convincing; The study program shows a comprehensive approach towards translation and interpretation studies, and both through the SER and the visit, the need for graduates in the field is evident.

The unit of administration operates in nine different departments/ units with clear independent functions. The teaching staff is qualified, and its work is demonstrably based on internal regulations and general guidelines.

The relevant documents are easily accessible. The information has been presented in an organised and clear way. Ethical criteria, including plagiarism, are taken into consideration and the university develops and applies procedural criteria related to ethical conduct (St. 1.5). The regulations defined by the UFAGj are clearly defined, organised and are also publicly available.

The specific regulations of the study program are periodically reviewed and are subject to broad monitoring. All necessary authorities are involved in this process and have the objective of continuous improvement in mind. To take account of changing requirements, employers and stakeholders are also appropriately involved in the further development of the study program. The different procedures are clear and systematic and cover all significant areas. Standard 1.6. is fully accomplished.

In addition to strengths and potential, weaknesses and challenges were also clearly identified as part of a SWOT analysis. The upcoming tasks are thus clearly explained accentuating the

importance of Postgraduate programmes (MA and PhD level) as one of the most salient weaknesses, as will be indicated in section 4.

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

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

## 2.2. Quality Management

At the university, the Office of Quality Assurance functions for the purpose of ensuring quality, excellence, equality, transparency and efficiency. Quality management is regulated by the Regulation of Quality Assurance and Evaluation (2021). The Office cooperates with the Central Commission for Quality Assurance in UFAG that is responsible for the field of the quality assurance at university level. At the faculty level, the Committee for Quality Assurance and Evaluation aims to determine the procedures and mechanisms of quality. Students and professors fill questionnaires for academic staff and for students. An example of the teaching staff questionnaire and student questionnaire were presented to the ET. Despite



the fact that all stakeholders indirectly participate in the self-evaluation process through surveys, it would make sense to participate directly in these processes as well (e.g. students write a chapter about students, academic staff could be more involved in the preparation of the SER).

There is an assessment procedure on course level based on electronic and hard-copy questionnaires that are mandatory for students. Teaching staff has access to the results, gives feedback to the students and improves the courses accordingly. The Office for Quality Assurance, in cooperation with the commissions, prepares a self-evaluation report that contains all relevant information. Quality assurance covers all areas from planning, implementation and evaluation.

In quality assurance, all stakeholders are indirectly involved in the process, including students, teaching staff, non-academic staff and employer representatives. The SER states that quality assurance is subject to internal and external evaluation as well as the accreditation process. The management of the faculty is in contact with the Advisory Board for Entrepreneurs, to better understand the interests of society and the community. During the interviews, the representatives of the employers e.g. confirmed that on the labor market there is a need for the graduates from this study program.

The faculty collects feedback from all stakeholders and the analysis of these questionnaires provides assessments achieved on the subject they elaborate on, so that in the next semesters, improvements can be continuously made as far as the working conditions allow. The summary report for each semester is published and accessible to all on the faculty webpage.

Survey data from students and teaching staff members are systematically collected by questionnaires (Standards 2.1, 2.2, 2.3). Feedback of employers is collected in meetings with the Advisory Board. Results are publicly available; however, the ET would suggest that the faculty includes also graduates in the report.

Quality Assurance activities plan 2023-2024 was presented to the ET where all activities for the whole study year are listed. There is well defined time for the implementation and also responsible person. However, this action plan covers general quality assurance activities and does not address all the opportunities listed in the SER.

In the Regulation of Quality Assurance and Evaluation in the University ‘‘Fehmi Agani’’ in Gjakova, Article 18 it is defined that the institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically.

The quality assurance processes are regularly evaluated by the KAA and updated according to KAA requirements. The University regularly updates the regulations (the current regulations are from 2023). In accordance with these regulations, the faculty also adequately monitors the implementation and updating of study programs.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.</i>		<b>X</b>
<i>Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>		<b>X</b>
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.</i>	<b>X</b>	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

### **ET recommendations**

1. *The ET recommends more (pro)active participation of all teaching staff and students in the quality assurance processes*
2. *The faculty should include in the report also feedback from graduates*

### 2.3. Academic Staff

Regarding the academic staff, both the SER and the interviews show a group of academics with a sound knowledge of the programme and concerned with the demands of the labour market. Information regarding their scientific and academic degrees and also some additional information on the teachers' profiles is provided, as it is the information regarding the legal requirements related to teaching positions. Once again, it is important to highlight the way of presenting all documents, clear, organised and following an institutional template.

The interviews show a strong commitment to teaching, and a dedication to enhancing its quality and innovation. This commitment is confirmed by the students. The educators' qualifications are evidenced by their education, training, and work experience. Additionally, their participation in various activities, memberships in professional organizations and awards further underscore their suitability for teaching in the program.

According to the KAA guidelines, the Faculty presents comprehensive information about full time and part time academic staff. (St 3.1.). Specifically, for the program in English Translation and Interpretation, 90 % of the regular academic staff of UFAGj are responsible for the teaching modules. This high percentage of regular staff involvement ensures stability in teaching positions, which positively impacts the daily operations of the Faculty. The teaching staff abides by the legal requirements outlined in the Administrative Instruction for Accreditation. Finally, they do not cover more than two teaching positions (one full-time and one part-time) in one academic year (St. 3.3.).

The access to employment is determined through a public competition. The ET highlights the clarity and transparency in the procedures as well as the fact of announcing the positions through different channels (webpage, newspaper board and notice board).

In the programme under evaluation, more than 50% of the classes are covered by the full-time staff of the Faculty, as was also checked during the interviews. The teaching staff seem to be satisfied with their subjects, which matches the information provided in the SER, when indicating that "UFAGj attaches particular importance to selecting academic staff to match their interests with the programs offered" (p. 28).

The UFAGj shows evidence of the compliance to the requests of the KAA in relation the employment if at least one full time staff with PhD title for student group and for every 60 ECTS in the program (St. 3.5.).

The Faculty provides evidence of training courses and events carried out between 2021 and 2024. The training courses and workshops are varied, including areas such as quality assurance or leadership. They are notable for their interdisciplinary approach and focus on internationalization, particularly in relation to various projects (Erasmus, QATEK, SUSWELL, QUADIC, etc.). The expert team values the evidence provided, encourage the Faculty to continue with the training activities and recommends that all academic staff keep taking part in some of the courses and workshops offered. The ET also values the cooperation

with different international institutions in the training programmes. Notwithstanding, the ET recommends fostering such partnerships and also extend the scope of international cooperation to facilitate the knowledge exchange and update teaching practices and methodologies. Regarding the training offered to the academic staff, although interdisciplinary is essential, it is also true that training on teaching areas and topics specifically related to the study program is missing.

It was observed through the SER, student interviews, and the visit to the facilities that teachers are available for weekly consultations. Through interviews with students, it becomes evident that they are not only knowledgeable, but readily accessible and actively involved in guiding and supervising students. They also participate actively in the university community, as the different pieces of evidence indicate.

The academic staff undergoes regular evaluations to ensure alignment with institutional teaching standards (St. 3.8.). These evaluations involve a comprehensive and systematic process which is rigorous and transparent and seeks to promote the continuous improvement of the teaching staff. It covers many different areas (lectures, collaboration with peers, tutorials, etc.) and is composed by different categories of questions taking into consideration the different stakeholders. It comprises different rubrics and illustrative examples. This system also highlights the areas which require attention. The intercollegiate evaluation stands out since it is not common practice in European Universities. The evaluation results are positive and reflect a high degree of satisfaction with the teaching.

The heads of the study program and the teaching staff are concerned about the quality enhancement of the teaching-learning process. The teaching strategies are questioned, revisited and changed when necessary, according to the students' needs (St.3.9.). The teaching staff is updated, and this is a key trait for professionals devoted to translation and interpretation fields. In this respect, the ET values the concern to incorporate updated technology to the programme. In addition, it is remarkable the link with the industry and with potential employers. In this respect, during the interviews, the collaborative efforts are shown, as it is the fact of engaging students in different activities which enhance their educational experiences. The academic staff is proactive and cooperates with other colleagues at national and international level to improve teaching methods, course content and learning resources. Notwithstanding, mentions of excessive bureaucratic procedures and of the potential growth through a Centre of Foreign Languages in the Faculty as are frequent through the interviews.

Regarding standard 3.10, the SER indicates that the retirement process of academic staff is conducted according to the legal regulations (Labour Law and University Statue). Notwithstanding, the post-retirement engagements adds significant value to the Faculty, retaining valuable institutional knowledge and experience; this is why certain instructional duties are allowed by the UFAGj until the age of 70.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.</i>	<b>X</b>	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

## **ET recommendations:**

- 1. The ET recommends continuing working on the updating methodologies and mainly materials, since translation and interpretation is a fast-moving market.*
- 2. The ET encourages the Program to foster international links by increasing the scope of collaboration.*
- 3. The ET recommends establishing measures to increase teaching mobility in order to improve research collaboration and professional development fostering the academic networks of the Faculty.*
- 4. The ET recommends the program to take steps towards the establishment of a Centre of Foreign Languages so as to extend the Languages learn by students and make the Faculty of Philology more competitive and attractive to different stakeholders.*
- 5. The ET recommends fostering training on teaching areas and topics specifically related to the study program.*

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

The program in English Language -Translation and Interpretation adheres to its qualification objectives, ensuring alignment with standard 4.1. Through interviews with both students and employers, it is evident that the program is designed and executed with a keen focus on meeting the demands of the job market. Therefore, the alignment with target potential professions is clear. Employers specifically comment on the program's emphasis on equipping students with a balanced blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, facilitating a smooth transition into the workforce. Notably, employers emphasize the connections forged with the academic staff throughout many years, which often culminate in internship opportunities and job placements highly valued by the industry. They consistently praise the students' competencies such as critical thinking or creativity, also highlighting the program's efficacy in preparing graduates for success in their chosen careers. Notwithstanding, the employers attending the interviews point out some areas of improvement which would facilitate even more the access to their job offers, such as script writing, content writing or the need of postgraduates for specific positions.

The study program is in accordance with both the National Qualifications Framework and the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework (St. 4.2.). Its individual components are strategically integrated to effectively meet the specified qualification objectives while accommodating diverse forms of teaching and learning. Specifically categorized under level 6 based on the International Standards for Education Qualification, the program prepares students for advanced knowledge in the fields of study Translation and Interpretation.

The programme encompasses a multifaceted approach to ensuring the acquisition of knowledge and competence among students. It bears in mind the different areas of the job market linked to these studies: Translation, Interpretation, Teaching, among others.

The ET highlights the activities embedded in the curriculum, mainly those where students are also involved, providing them with experiential learning opportunities, and enabling them to apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios.

Continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms allow for the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and expertise required in various professional and academic scenarios within the field of language. Notwithstanding, as it becomes clear through different interviews, the postgraduate programmes are needed and is addressed by different stakeholders (including employers) through the interviews.

The ET acknowledges the provision of syllabuses for the different subjects within the SER. They all show a balance between theoretical and practical work and describe the main contents in a consistent way. However, ET has identified a (very) minor area that requires attention, i.e., unifying the style of documentation basic and additional literature (APA or the style chosen by the Faculty) and address specifically the year of publication (some years missing, or they are shown in a non-consistent way of citing).

The level of vehicular languages and bilingual skills are evaluated upon students' admission (St. 4.5.). The academic staff makes sure the level of language knowledge is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The partnership between teachers and students is seen as an important aspect within the academic community. Through the interviews, it becomes evident that the academic staff is strongly involved in fostering favourable learning outcomes for students. This commitment is exemplified by their proactive efforts to adapt teaching methodologies, engage students in various initiatives, and equip them with the requisite competencies essential for success in the job market. Both alumni and current students attest to the effectiveness of this collaboration, noting the articulation of the program and delivery of content without apparent overlapping.

A key component of the evaluation process is the integration of formative assessment methods, as evidenced in the syllabuses and reiterated during interviews. The information regarding the main contents of the syllabus, including the assessment procedures, is presented in class, ensuring that grading is carried out in accordance with predetermined criteria, seeking fairness and consistency. Through transparent communication of assessment methods and criteria, students are provided with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how their performance and the learning outcomes will be evaluated. This approach promotes academic integrity, and different efforts to ensure these aspects have been made in the last years.

Efforts have been made regarding ensuring academic standards in comparison with other study programmes. It is desirable that this cooperation continues and develops towards additional agreements and more opportunities for mobility; the ET is aware of the efforts carried out in this respect but recommends keeping working on initiatives which can lead to increase incoming and outgoing mobility for academic and administrative staff and for students. This way, the different stakeholders can benefit from experiences which can enrich the programmes, the teaching methodologies and the students' learning outcomes and experiences. Moreover, it would facilitate the use of English in natural contexts beyond the merely academic, which is one of the weaknesses pointed out in the SWOT.

In cases where the standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed, there are policies and procedures established; thus, the Student Evaluation Committee is responsible for working on potential insufficient students' achievements (St. 4.10.).

The practice stages can be considered one of the most significant strengths of the program. Well organised through procedures followed by both the university and the institutions, there is a clear long-established collaboration between mentors and supervisors which leads to successful outcomes. The guidance through the subject Practical Work, the evaluation through the portfolio and the evaluation grid as a tool are indicators of the careful monitoring of the whole process (St. 4.11.).

The transition to the job market is facilitated by the practice stages, and the interviews with employers confirm so. Notwithstanding, taking into consideration the demand of translators and interpreters in the region, some recommendations are included below suggested by the group of employers interviewed and that the ET supports.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.</i>	<b>X</b>	



<i>Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.</i>	<b>X</b>	

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

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The ET recommends unifying the way of including basic and additional literature in the syllabi.*
2. *The ET recommends considering the possibility of establishing a MA and, potentially, also a PhD in English Translation and interpretation.*
3. *The ET recommends the program to continue fostering initiatives to promote mobility*
4. *The ET recommends incorporating additional content / elective subjects / training which can be even more aligned with the employers' needs. In this respect, it also recommends getting in touch with the employers to make sure the needs are met and the potential new contents are feasible to be incorporated into the program.*

**2.5.Students**

According to the SER (p.41), the admission procedure is clearly defined at the institutional level, defined in the Statute of the university. The admission process is also well defined in Regulation on Definition of Master Study Criteria (2020). The competition is announced in

advance on the university's webpage. Selection criteria are the following: success in preliminary education and success in the entrance exam, both having the equal weight (50%). The minimum required success in the entrance exam is also specified for the candidate to be granted the right to enrol.

Conditions for application and registration in studies are proscribed in the Regulation on Definition of Master Study Criteria (2020) Article 3 at the UFAG level states that all the candidates who have completed the basic studies (bachelor) with credit at least 180 ECTS (three years of study) have the right to apply for the master level studies.

According to the SER (p. 43), accepted students will be divided into study groups sized according to the most appropriate way to create a more effective and interactive learning process. However, no details about the intended study group size can be found in the SER.

According to the Statute of the UFAG (2013) Article 110: Exams serve as a regular form of assessing knowledge. The procedure of delivery of an examination is defined by the study program. The mode of determining the knowledge and passing the exam is defined by all course syllabuses. The entire area of examination is clearly defined in detail in the Statute of the university. There is available mechanism for complaints. In case of dissatisfaction students can complain to the dean and the special commission review the written exam or the oral exam can be repeated in front of the special commission.

All modules are certified with the load of lectures and the students' practical work, and the ECTS of the given module. The certification of these modules is done in accordance with the standards of the KAA and European standards which are a condition for the accreditation of a program. However, in many syllabuses, ECTS credits (according to the Faculty definition that 1 ECTS = 25h) are rounded down (e.g. 4.3 ECTS = 4 ECTS), so the total sum of unrounded ECTS credits represents a larger amount than what is actually recorded. Therefore, we suggest that the faculty (also due to the easier international comparability of courses) unify ECTS credits with the hours determined for each course.

The Regulation on Definition of Master Study Criteria proscribes that the Master studies at the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" conclude with the defence of the master thesis, in accordance with the study program. The regulation on Definition of Master Study Criteria (2020) proscribes that the Master studies at the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" conclude with the defence of the master thesis, in accordance with the study program.

Students will be informed about the study program, the exam deadline, the organization of the program, as well as the accreditation status of the program. The Faculty has flexible treatment for students in special situations (e.g. adjustment of the formal implementation of the program, exam deadlines or the internship period).

According to SER (p. 44) exam results from all regular and non-regular terms throughout an academic year are collected, analysed and used to improve the quality of learning and teaching

throughout the following years. Students' exams are kept for a period of one year as evidence of the results achieved. In SER (p. 44) it is stated, that: "Students will first become aware of the importance of the originality of their works through the course Methodology of scientific work in linguistics", then, in various works where the mentor's care for the student will be of particular importance so that he/she does not deviate from academic ethics, but to observe correctly and with full responsibility the rules on academic writing and the originality of the work. Final work (Master thesis) will be checked by antiplagiarism software that is available at the university level. The field is also well regulated at the level of all regulations.

The rights and obligations of students are initially regulated through the Basic Studies Regulation of the Faculty of Philology (articles 17 – 20). They are well presented also in Handbook for students. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals. Student representatives are also members of all committees at the University and Faculty of Philology as well as working groups with the right to vote. There is an established mechanism for students' rights ensured.

The transfer of students between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in university acts. Detailed information is available in the student handbook. Students also have the possibility of exchanges, which is presented in detail in the brochure available to them.

All relevant and important information for students is available Student Handbook of the UFAGj. During the interviews, students from other study programmes confirmed that academic staff is available for consultation, they communicate also via emails and other electronic communication channels. They got all relevant information also on webpage of the faculty and on various social networks. Students are also provided with the Centre for Development, Career and Alumni, which serves as an unusual initiator of the employment of graduate students.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	

<i>Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>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.</i>	<b>X</b>	

**Compliance level:** *Fully compliant*

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The ET recommends updating the website with up-to-date information, especially in English language.*
2. *The ET recommends clearly defining the size of study groups that will ensure the effective learning process.*

## 2.6. Research

As indicated in the SER and through information obtained in the interviews, research objectives are reflected in the study program, which is aligned with the research development plan of the UFAGj.

Regarding the research development plan, both the SER and the interviews show that the academic staff's needs in terms of research are supported and funded by the University in order to improve the indicators related to the research plan. The design of the research strategy 2021-2025 "OPEN EYES" establishes specific goals and objectives covering the main research outcomes (different types of publications and projects). The scientific activity is organised and specifically in the observed unit, there is an ambitious individual plan aligned with the university strategic plan for research. The ET values the efforts made to devise the plan, to comply with the objectives and to monitor the outcomes (St. 6.1.).

Regarding the commitment to research activities, there is an active participation in conferences as symposia. It is noteworthy the possibilities of applying for funding to the Science Council.

The SER provides different links to facilitate access to the academic staff's scientific work, which providing heterogeneous outcomes regarding scientific production. The ET recommends keeping up with these efforts, especially enhancing publication outputs in databases such as Web of Science or Scopus, particularly in peer-reviewed journals with high impact factors and international visibility, which would benefit the faculty, especially by promoting recognition of its scholarly contributions. Moreover, fostering increased international collaboration and engagement with researchers from diverse backgrounds could facilitate knowledge exchange, and expand opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.

The manual for the evaluation of performance quality and curricula establishes the evaluation of all academic staff of the UFAGj, where research takes up 25% of the criteria. The ET highly values the academic staff's performance assessed against these criteria in staff evaluation. The faculty needs to continue working in the directions outlined by the regulation to advance in the research culture and outcomes.

The ET values the effort made by the UFAGj to send a number of professors from the Faculty of Philology to those universities and institutions which could provide assistance in different areas of research, teaching and assessment strategies. The participation of projects is also significant, taking into consideration the number of academic staff and the ET recommends continuing the participation and/or leadership in international projects. Notwithstanding, it is desirable that some of the new projects are oriented towards research in the fields of translation and interpretation. The links between training, teaching and research is significantly more noticeable in the publications, which are mostly connected with the subjects taught and the academic staff's previous training (specifically in their PhD studies).

Apart from publishing in speciality journals and/or publishing houses, the academic and research staff has also published 8 publications in the “Fehmi Agani” Publishing House. There are regulations on the criteria required to the different products that guarantee their quality. In addition, the SER and the additional documents provide information on the scientific papers indicating their indexes. It is advisable to foster the publications with higher indexes. The ET values the positive results obtained in 2023 in this respect.

The academic and research staff affiliated with the UFAGj publish under the institution's name as full-time staff. Also, based on the regulation on research-scientific activity, this fact is connected to the funding (St. 6.8.).

The Department's staff is encouraged to share their scientific works/scholarly activities with students in their teaching information. The syllabi do not include this information. Although the ET understands that this is not possible in all cases (translation Workshop or Work Placement, for instance), it is advisable to incorporate scientific works which might be of help for students in specific subjects at least in the additional literature; this way the link between teaching and research can become more visible.

The Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics regulate intellectual property rights. The ET suggests the development of a protocol or specific policies addressing the unethical use of Artificial Intelligence.

The student-centred approach of the Faculty is clearly visible in the SER and especially through the different interviews. The ET appreciates the effort made to encourage students to participate in exchanges with different universities. The participation is still limited, and the ET recommends making more efforts in this respect, also to include incoming students. The participation described for standard 6.11 is not directly linked with research, therefore the ET recommends working in this direction (helping in the organization of scientific conferences, participation in events related to the final projects, seminars, etc.).

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff</i>	<b>X</b>	

<i>evaluation and promotion criteria.</i>		
<i>Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.</i>		<b>X</b>
<i>Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.9/6.8. 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.</i>		<b>X</b>
<i>Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.</i>	<b>X</b>	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The ET encourages the Program to prioritize publications in peer reviewed journals with high impact.*
2. *The ET recommends that the Program should review the staff's total workload to make sure they can dedicate more time to research.*



3. *The ET encourages the Program to develop research projects oriented the fields of translation and interpretation.*
4. *The ET suggests the programme the incorporation of the teachers' research work related to their subjects in the section additional (or basic) literature in their syllabi.*
5. *The IT suggests the development of policies and a protocol on unethical usage of AI in academia.*

## **2.7. Infrastructure and Resources**

As indicated in the SER and was observed in the visit, the location of the Faculty of Philology favours the implementation of the program and the space is considered sufficient in to develop it. Equipment, human resources, and premises are mostly secured (St. 7.1.).

Specifically, the number of seating areas in lecture rooms is sufficient for the number of students and all the lecture rooms are equipped with projectors. The laboratory designed for the courses of the program meets, according to the academic staff and students, the needs of the training in the field. The capacity of the library is sufficient for the current number of students, but it would become insufficient with a slight increase in the ratio or the inclusion of new programmes. Since the UFAGj is planning to extend the campus, the ET recommends taking into consideration an extension in terms of room and library stock -2047 books-. In addition, there is no access to the IT equipment for students in the library, and therefore, IT equipment is recommended to be included – at least a few individual computer equipment-. Notwithstanding, the ET is aware that students, as the ET was informed through the interviews and visit, often use the City Library

The infrastructure devoted to teachers and administrative staff seems to cover the needs of teaching. The ET recommends, notwithstanding, to regularly check the correct functioning and updating of materials resources, since there are some comments in the evaluation reports in this respect. As for students' rooms, there should be a place where research is done, where students prepare for their exams (not on the hallways where they may interfere or hinder with teaching behind closed doors). Only one room is available for students and activities.

The standard regarding the financial plan (7.2.) is met; the Department has no sustainable income, nor it relies on itself - all economic questions are handled at the University level and at MESTI level. The total budget of the UFAGj is detailed in the SER (2021-2025) as they are the estimations for 2026.

Regarding standard 7.3., the spaces are considered sufficient for the current number of students and staff. The ET appreciates the efforts devoted to the setting up, maintenance and updating of the laboratory, as well as to the upgrading of the current software. The outcomes of various projects are reflected in the acquisition of diverse technological equipment, as well as updates focused on technology and software.

Lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories are sufficient for the current needs of the program under study.

As for standard 7.6, the ET observes the following: While there are some improvements with regards to accessibility of premises, there are still capital steps to be made. One of them is the elevator which would allow students with disabilities an undoubtedly easier access to lecture rooms and professor cabinets. The possibility of offering classrooms on the ground floor does not cover the basic needs of training, since the lab, for instance, is not located on the ground floor. Since the campus is expanding, the ET recognises this as an opportunity to address this concern and the ET recognises this as an opportunity to address this concern. Some progress has been made in the last years and a large opportunity is on the rise.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.</i>	<b>X</b>	
<i>Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years:</i> <i>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</i> <i>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</i> <i>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</i> <i>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</i>	<b>X</b>	

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

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The ET recommends working in infrastructural projects, especially regarding rooms for students' activities and an elevator, in order to accommodate all needs.*
2. *The ET recommends incorporating IT equipment in the library.*

### 3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

*Overall, the program English Language -Translation and Interpretation demonstrates a trajectory focused on continuous improvement where previous identified issues regarding quality assurance have been addressed. Specifically, improvements are observable regarding the implementation and monitoring of procedures and policies regarding potential underachievement of the teaching staff, the incorporation of employers to evaluate Q.A., and making information public and accessible, and specially monitoring system that includes assessing the professional development activities of all teaching staff, to name but a few. In short, quality assurance processes have undergone significant enhancements, resulting in an effective framework. There is a coherence regarding the articulation of the program which involves the different stakeholders, who unanimously appreciate the sustained growth and development of the program over time.*

*In addition, efforts have been made to provide students with an attractive program, where the teaching staff seeks the best possible learning outcomes. Students are involved in different activities and the connection with the labour market is clear. The learning environment of the program is optimal, as corroborated by both academic staff and students. The commitment of the academic staff in the quality of the programme leads to excellent results as professionals from the job market observe.*

*Notwithstanding, certain areas need to be addressed, mainly those related to internationalization, research projects and infrastructures. As for internationalization, the ET appreciates the improvements made since there are some mobilities described in the SER and corroborated in the interviews. However, it is still limited, especially regarding students and, most specially attracting international students to Gjakova. The internationalization is also limited regarding research collaborations and efforts need to be made regarding the participation in research projects (i.e., not only Erasmus or innovation projects.) In the area of research, it would be advisable to participate in projects regarding languages, if possible within the fields of translation and interpretation. Finally, as for infrastructure, complete accessibility is required if the Faculty seeks to include diverse students who present special needs.*

*It has already been mention, but the ET would like to highlight once more the detailed SER and the amount of information presented in an orderly way. It shows professionalism and a significant amount of time devoted to present a high quality report.*

*In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program MA Program in English Translation and Interpretation offered by Faculty of Philology of the UFAGj is substantially compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual.*

*Program is re-accredited.*

<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>COMPLIANCE LEVEL</b>
1. Mission, objectives and administration	<i>Fully compliant</i>
2. Quality management	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
3. Academic staff	<i>Fully compliant</i>
4. Educational process content	<i>Fully compliant</i>
5. Students	<i>Fully compliant</i>
6. Research	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
7. Infrastructure and resources	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<b>OVERALL COMPLIANCE</b>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>

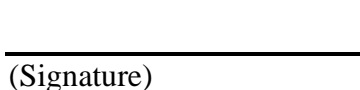
**Compliance level: Substantially compliant**

**Student quota recommended:** the recommended quota for student enrolment each academic year is 60

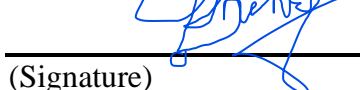
**Five Years**

**Expert Team**


**Member**

 Dr. Beatriz López Medina 14/06/2024  
 (Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

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