*University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakovë*

**Bachelor's in Informatics Engineering**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*Gjakovë, 5. February 2025*

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## INTRODUCTION

**Date of site visit:**

5. 2. 2025

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Miklos Hoffmann*

- *Prof. Dr. Seifedine Kadry*

- *Prof. Dr. Kruno Milicevic*

- *Matej Drobnic*

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

- *Naim Gashi, General Director of KAA*

- *Arianit Krasniqi; KAA Officer*

- *Shpresa Shala; KAA Officer*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *SER*

- *Annexes*

- *University webpage*

**Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations**

*Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA*

**Site visit schedule**

| Time | Meeting | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| **09:00 – 09:50** | Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated | Melinda Mula - *Acting Dean;* Dafina Kaçuri, *Vice-Rector for Teaching and Student Affairs*; Kaltrina Kusari, *Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance.* |
| **09:55 – 10:40** | Meeting with teaching staff | Elsa Vula; Nazli Tyfekçi; Drilon Bunjaku; Ermir Rogova; Korab Rrmoku; Arbnor Pajaziti; Artan Mazrekaj; Besmir Sejdiu. |
| **10:45 – 11:30** | Meeting with the program holders of the study programme: Informatics Engineering, BSc | Agon Kokaj; Ilmi Hoxha; Drilon Bunjaku. |
| **11:35-12:20** | Visiting facilities of the Faculty *Visiting the BoneVet labs in Gjakova* | Drilon Bunjaku; Agon Kokaj. |
| **12:20 – 13:20** | Lunch break | |
| **13:20- 14:05** | Meeting with students | Albin Tahiraj; Lyra Pozhegu; Eriola Hasanaj; Aziz Shehu; Elvira Vula; Blearta Halilaj; Besmir Pepshi; Vlera Morina. |
| **14:10- 14:55** | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff | Erlinda Rizvanolli; Abedin Sadrija; Rina Xhiha; Qëndresa Bardhoshi; Bujar Nura; Elinda Pruthi; Arbër Krypa. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **15:00- 15:45** | Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders | Arbnor Halili - *Global CT Digital Kosovo;* <br> Arbër Bakija - *BBros L.L.C.;* <br> Shpend Lila - *Innovation Center Kosovo, JaTech Program;* <br> Albert Aliu - *Digibrain;* <br> Hekuran Doli - *Cybee.ai LLC* <br> Arbër Lleshi - *BoneVet;* <br> Shtjefen Hilaj - *Tetbit;* <br> Fatos Stavileci - *ATI-Kos;* <br> Durim Gjoshi - *JointDots;* <br> Behar Ferizi - *K.R.M Çabrati;* <br> Blerim Halilaj - *City Heating Company - Gjakova;* <br> Daut Islami - *KRU Gjakova.* |
| **15:50- 16: 00** | Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts | |
| **16:00-16:10** | Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program | Melinda Mula; <br> Dafina Kaçuri; <br> Kaltrina Kusari; <br> Drilon Bunjaku; <br> Agon Kokaj; <br> Ilmi Hoxha. |

**A brief overview of the programme under evaluation**

University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova (UFAGj) is a higher education institution that operates in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Law in the Republic of Kosovo and the principles of the European Higher Education Area. UFAGj as an independent university started its work on October 1st, 2013.

The Faculty of Applied Sciences is organizationally led by the Dean and the program manager. The Faculty of Applied Sciences does not have a Faculty Council because it does not yet offer any study programs and as a result, the decisions of the academic unit regarding teaching and science issues are handled by the University Senate. Currently, the Faculty of Applied Sciences does not have an administration and all administrative work is carried out by the Rectorate administration, while some of the work is delegated by the Rectorate to the administration of other units until the capacity of the FSHA unit administration is built.

The program under evaluation for accreditation is a 3-year B.Sc. study program with 180 ECTS. According to SER, the study program is based on a similar program at Vienna

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University of Technology (TU Wien) – Austria, University of Ljubljana – Slovenia, University of Zagreb – Croatia and University of Skopje "St. Cyril and Methodius" - North Macedonia.

## PROGRAMME EVALUATION

*The programme evaluation consists of 7 standard areas through which the programme is evaluated.*

## 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 Informatics Engineering program is aligned with the mission of "Fehmi Agani" University, which focuses on fostering innovation and professional development in applied sciences. Program details, including curriculum structure, learning outcomes, and objectives, are publicly accessible through the university's website to ensure transparency and accountability. However, defining clear, quantitative minimum and goal KPIs in strategic documents will enhance strategic impact assessment and facilitate data-driven decision-making for continuous improvement.

The university serves students from Kosovo and Albania, strategically addressing regional workforce needs in the IT sector. The program is designed to equip students with skills that meet labor market demands in both Kosovo and international job markets.

The program emphasizes programming, cybersecurity, automation, and software development, aligning with industry needs and the institution's strategic vision. These learning outcomes are clearly defined and made publicly available to students, employers, and stakeholders via the university website.

Discussions with employers and student interest assessments, were conducted before launching the Informatics Engineering program. The analysis confirmed a strong demand for IT professionals, justifying the program's implementation.

The number of students admitted to the Informatics Engineering program was supported by discussions with high school directors to assess student orientation trends and interest in technology-driven study programs. Additionally, existing studies and reports analyzing labor market needs and employment prospects for IT professionals were considered.

While meetings have been conducted with relevant stakeholders, they lack documented meeting minutes with precise numerical analysis, and data-driven justifications for key decisions.

The university has made certain efforts to provide adequate facilities for this study progam, partly through its collaboration with Bonevet Gjakova NGO. However, the existing

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infrastructure, premises and equipment can't fully support the diverse range of laboratories and equipment required for a such a multidisciplinary program like Informatics Engineering. The program encompasses various fields, including IT, automation, software engineering, and hardware engineering, each of which demands specialized equipment and dedicated lab spaces, which, at the time of evaluation, only partially available for the university.

**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)**

The university enforces a Code of Ethics, an Ethics Committee, and anti-plagiarism software to prevent academic misconduct. Students and faculty are required to adhere to these policies, ensuring fairness and integrity in academic work.

The LMScheck system is used to detect plagiarism, and any work exceeding the 20% similarity threshold is required to be revised and resubmitted. Faculty members oversee the process, ensuring compliance with academic integrity policies.

Ethical standards for teaching and research are clearly outlined in university policies, course syllabi, and student handbooks. Ethics Committee ensures continued adherence to these standards.

The university has an independent Ombudsperson and an Ethics Committee to investigate cases of academic misconduct. Anonymous reporting channels and structured disciplinary procedures are in place to handle violations fairly. However, the students in the meeting did not demonstrate full knowledge of these mechanisms.

**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)**

A digital platform is used to manage course content, student performance data, and feedback, ensuring real-time monitoring of program quality. Action plans based on collected data guide continuous improvements in teaching and curriculum design.

The university complies with national data protection laws, ensuring student records and personal data remain secure. Exam results and academic records are anonymized when published to protect student privacy.

Students participate in surveys and focus group discussions to evaluate curriculum effectiveness and workload distribution. Faculty and administration use this feedback to adjust teaching methods and improve student learning experiences. Students and staff have confirmed also in meetings that their feedback has influenced decision-making and program improvements.

**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)**

The university has established policies that define administrative responsibilities and budget allocations for the study program. The Faculty also has provided a more detailed breakdown of financial distribution specific to the Informatics Engineering program.

The Faculty of Applied Sciences currently manages administrative responsibilities for the Informatics Engineering program through existing university structures. Defining a precise timeline and strategy for appointing dedicated Faculty administrative staff (and migrating work and responsibility from University to Faculty) would further clarify long-term program sustainability.

Administrative staff at the university have access to general professional development opportunities. For example, employees have carried out trainings related to digital systems, data analysis, e-governance, leadership, and legal compliance. The university support was also confirmed in the meetings by administrative staff. However, defining a personal professional development plan according to the specific needs of Faculty's administrative staff engaged in the delivery of the proposed study program, would enhance the effectiveness of training by ensuring that employees acquire relevant skills tailored to their specific roles in a timely manner.

**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)**

Not applicable (first accreditation of the program).


**ET recommendations:**

- *Define clear, quantitative minimum and goal KPIs for Faculty's Strategic plan (e.g. enrolment increase/number, retention rate, graduate employability, number of new industry partnerships, increase/number of scientific publications, research funds through projects and collaborations, percentage of students and staff participating in international mobility, etc.)*
- *A more structured, evidence-based approach is needed, including quantified evaluations of freshmen interest, labor market needs, and infrastructure capacity.*
- *Define a precise timeline and strategy for appointing dedicated Faculty administrative staff (and migrating work and responsibility from University to Faculty).*
- *Define personal professional development plan for administrative staff engaged in the delivery of the planned study program.*

- *To improve students' familiarity with anonymous reporting channels and disciplinary procedures, the institution should implement awareness campaigns, and provide clear and accessible guideline including practical examples*

## 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 university has established a structured internal quality assurance system that adheres to national regulations. The system includes clear mechanisms for monitoring program effectiveness and ensuring continuous improvement. Each academic unit has a Quality Assurance Committee, with its chair serving as the quality coordinator.

The university has a publicly available Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation, which outlines key principles and mechanisms for maintaining program quality. The policy, including is the Standards for Quality Assurance, and the Manual for the Evaluation of Performance, ensures transparency in program delivery, defining responsibilities for academic and administrative staff while setting standards for student assessment and feedback integration. These procedures include annual evaluations of teaching effectiveness and infrastructure adequacy, contributing to ongoing quality improvements.

The Quality Assurance Coordinator of each academic unit is responsible for overseeing the implementation of quality assurance measures, ensuring compliance with institutional and national standards. Currently, the Faculty of Applied Sciences does not have dedicated administrative staff, which means there is no appointed Quality Assurance Coordinator solely responsible for monitoring the study program.

The university applies the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology in its quality assurance cycle, ensuring structured and systematic improvements across all study programs. Regular evaluations and feedback from stakeholders are used to refine policies, improve curricula, and enhance student learning experiences.

Thereby, Quality Assurance Activity Plan outlines the monitoring of program implementation, with a defined timeline and responsibilities for academic and administrative staff. Stakeholders, including students, faculty, and industry representatives, participate in the monitoring process through surveys, focus groups, and advisory board meetings.

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

The Informatics Engineering program was developed based on the university's mission to promote innovation, applied research, and professional skill development. The program aims

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to fill a gap in the labor market, ensuring that graduates have the technical skills required by employers in Kosovo and beyond.

The study program was developed and reviewed through multiple levels of internal evaluation, including approvals from the Senate and the Governing Council. Thereby, as already mentioned in Standard Area 1, a more structured, evidence-based approach is missing, including quantified evaluations of freshmen interest, labor market needs, and infrastructure capacity. Continuous improvement is ensured through already established mechanisms (periodic evaluations and input from external stakeholders, including the Industrial Advisory Board).

The program development process is carried out according to The Article 19 in the Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation. However, process (at least at the Faculty level) should be refined so that it explicitly defines forms and outcomes of involvement with industry experts and external advisory boards, ensuring relevance to market needs and the regional specifics. The university tracks student pass rates, faculty performance, and graduate employment rates as key performance indicators (KPIs) for the program. These indicators are regularly reviewed by the Quality Assurance Office to inform strategic decisions and curriculum adjustments. However, as already mentioned in Standard Area 1, minimum and goal KPI values should be defined.

**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)**

Employer surveys and advisory board meetings provide continuous feedback on the alignment of the study program with labor market demands. Changes to the curriculum are made in response to industry trends and technological advancements.

The university conducts annual evaluations to ensure that ECTS allocation is appropriate and that students can realistically achieve the learning outcomes. However, a significant issue was noted during student meetings, where students were not aware of the meaning and value of ECTS credits, which is essential for understanding workload distribution.

Employers, students and staff have confirmed in meetings that their feedback is considered in program adjustments, ensuring continuous improvement. There was no dedicated alumni-focused meeting, limiting insights from graduates on program effectiveness and career impact. Students noted that there is no strong alumni club, which affects the university's ability to engage former students in continuous program evaluation and networking opportunities.

Surveys are conducted among students, faculty, and industry partners to assess program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The results of these surveys directly inform decision-making and curriculum updates.

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For student internships is planed regular assessments by faculty and industry mentors to ensure alignment with academic and professional standards. Student and employer feedback would be collected to enhance practical learning experiences.

Data from student performance evaluations, industry feedback, and accreditation reports inform updates to course content and teaching methodologies. Improvements are integrated into the university's strategic planning for long-term program development.

Summary reports on quality assurance activities and improvement measures are published on the university website. Transparency in decision-making ensures that students, faculty, and external stakeholders remain informed about program developments.

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

The university has made all relevant policies, regulations, and guidelines publicly accessible on its official website, ensuring transparency and ease of access for students and stakeholders. These include the Regulations on Bachelor Studies, Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation, and General Conditions for Registration, which provide essential details about the academic and administrative framework of the study program.

Admission criteria, qualification recognition, and enrollment quotas are clearly defined and published on the university's website and within the Regulation for Bachelor Studies. The study program details, including syllabuses, learning outcomes, credits, and assessment methods, are included in the student registration guidelines and official faculty publications.

Since the Informatics Engineering program is newly established, there is no available data on graduate employment; however, the university has committed to collecting and publishing these statistics once the first cohort completes the program.

For other faculties, the university already provides pass rate and dropout reports on its website, ensuring that similar data will be maintained for this program as soon as it becomes available.

For study program information published on webpages, no discrepancies were reported regarding accuracy, reliability, and objectivity in the meetings by users (e.g., students). Updates are managed and promptly communicated through the university's official website and public notices, ensuring that stakeholders receive the latest information on program details.


**ET recommendations:**

- *Program development process (at least at the Faculty level) should be refined so that it explicitly defines forms and outcomes of involvement with industry experts and external advisory boards, ensuring relevance to market needs.*

- *Integrate detailed explanations in student handbooks and syllabi, enhance academic advising on ECTS workload, and use practical examples to ensure students understand the value and impact of ECTS credits on their studies.*
- *Establish a structured alumni network, organize regular alumni-focused meetings, and actively involve graduates in program evaluations, mentorship, and career support initiatives to strengthen alumni engagement.*

## 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)**

The employment of academic staff at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova is regulated by national laws, internal university policies, and accreditation standards. Hiring follows a structured selection process, with job openings announced online and within the university premises.

UFAGj follows a detailed academic staff recruitment process, beginning with Faculty Council discussions and Senate approval. Review committees assess applicants and recommend candidates. If no suitable applicant is found, the competition is re-announced. Final decisions are made by the Senate, with an appeal option available.

The admission of academic staff at UFAGj follows strict procedures outlined in Articles 174-179 of the university's Statute and Articles 4-7 of the regulation on selection processes. Candidates must fully meet all specified criteria. The hiring process is transparent and structured, ensuring clarity for applicants, reviewers, and the Senate.

Applicants for academic positions at UFAGj can access job descriptions, general conditions, and relevant regulations on the university's website. They must submit all required documents electronically via aplikimi@uni-gjk.org.

**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)**

UFAGj's academic staff, including three full-time professors, meets all accreditation requirements and plays a key role in the institution's growth. Faculty members adhere to regulated teaching loads, with no professor covering more than two positions per year (To be verified by KAA). The university prioritizes aligning staff expertise with study programs, employing both full-time and part-time staff to ensure program sustainability. More than 50% of the program modules are taught by full-time faculty. In the BSc in Informatics Engineering program, most course instructors are full-time staff with the necessary qualifications and

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research experience. The program maintains a strong academic foundation, supported by qualified PhD-holding faculty, ensuring high-quality education and compliance with academic standards.

Full-time professors have a weekly teaching load of 6 lecture hours and 4 consultation hours, while full-time assistants handle 10 hours of exercises. If part-time staff cannot be recruited before the academic year starts, full-time staff may take on additional hours—up to 4 for professors and 6 for assistants—per university regulations. Part-time staff can teach up to 4 lecture hours. Faculty members cannot hold more than two teaching positions per academic year, in compliance with Kosovo's accreditation regulations. UFAGj ensures strict adherence to these rules, with staff verification conducted through the e-accreditation platform and confirmed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).

The program under evaluation has a mechanism in place to ensures that faculty members are not overburdened, maintaining their teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. Teaching hours and course assignments follow European institutional standards, allowing faculty adequate time for research, student mentorship, and professional development. This balance supports a high-quality educational environment that benefits both students and staff.

For the program under evaluation, more than 50% of the academic staff are full-time faculty, complying with Article 26, point 5.3.3 of Administrative Framework No. 15/2018 on Accreditation in Kosovo. Additionally, as per Regulation (AKA) No. 04/2024, the program meets accreditation standards by employing full-time staff with doctoral degrees for the student group and 60 ECTS in the study program.

The student-to-teacher ratio in the program under evaluation is 1:18, which is considered sufficient for achieving learning outcomes.

The academic staff involved in the implementation of the study program possess qualifications that align with the field of the BS. In Informatics Engineering program under evaluation.

The academic staff's workload complies with the "Fehmi Agani" University regulations regarding personal income, allowances, and compensations, specifically outlined in Article 14, point 2, table 3. The mentoring responsibilities are shared among regular academic staff, following the criteria for bachelor studies and UFAGj statutes. For the planned student enrollment, there is sufficient staff to oversee and mentor the master's thesis process, with additional support from colleagues serving as co-mentors. The Faculty of Applied Sciences has adequate staff to guide students in the new study program and mentor final theses, in line with the regulations for basic studies. Once the program is implemented and the Faculty Council is formed, additional mentors will be recruited to support students based on their needs.

**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 academic staff at the study program are eligible for advancement and reappointment through a regulated process. Six months before contract expiry, a public competition for promotion is announced, starting with an evaluation by the Faculty Council. After a review, the Senate decides on the competition announcement, which lasts for 30 days. Review Committees evaluate candidates and submit reports within 15 days. The Faculty Council reviews these reports before sending them to the Senate. The final decision on advancements or reappointments is made by the Rector. If conditions for promotion are not met, the candidate remains in their position, and a new announcement is issued.

The Regulation on Selection Procedures for academic staff appointments and promotions ensures equal treatment of candidates based on qualifications and experience. To advance, academic staff must publish a specific number of papers: at least one for assistant professor, three for associate professor, and five for full professor, all in WoS or Scopus journals. Additionally, to be appointed as full professor, candidates must have mentored final theses, authored textbooks, excelled in teaching, participated in projects, and received positive student evaluations.

The performance evaluation of academic staff is essential for advancement, utilizing data from various internal assessment tools, including self-evaluation questionnaires created by the Quality Assurance Office. These questionnaires cover teaching, research, and societal contributions, impacting contract renewals and promotions. The results, summarized in reports published on the UFAGj website, include evaluations from students on courses and teaching effectiveness.

Advancement is competitive and merit-based, guided by the Regulation for Quality Assurance and Assessment and the Manual for Performance Assessment. Evaluation committees focus on teaching quality as a key criterion in advancement considerations.

**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 University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova (UFAGj) prioritizes the professional and scientific development of its academic and administrative staff through structured training programs, research support, and international collaborations. The university's Academic Development Plan focuses on faculty advancement, scientific research, and publication support. The Didactic Center for Teaching Excellence (DCTE) provides training in teaching methodologies, curriculum design, technology integration, and foreign language instruction. Research at UFAGj is reinforced through financial support for projects, conferences, and publications, alongside investments in advanced infrastructure, including laboratories and digital resources.

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The university fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and encourages international mobility through programs such as Erasmus+, Mevlana, and Fulbright, with dedicated scholarship information sessions. The Quality Office assesses staff development needs, offering targeted training programs for both academic and administrative staff. Looking ahead, the Three-Year Plan (2023-2026) introduces new training on assessment and testing methods, while continued investments in faculty and research culture strengthen the institution's academic excellence. UFAGj's commitment to professional growth, high-quality education, and research innovation ensures a dynamic and globally engaged academic environment. Despite the plan of activities, it seems from the university website the last activities of DCTE dated 2022, with no more recent activities.

**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)**

External collaborators engaged in the study programs at UFAGj possess the necessary qualifications and experience to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Their academic and research expertise align closely with the program objectives, and their teaching experience and scientific publications reinforce their relevance to the curriculum. Verified through their CVs, these collaborators integrate the latest scientific research and innovative teaching practices, ensuring that study programs remain aligned with evolving labor market demands. Beyond teaching, they actively contribute to community engagement, participating in committees, student mentorship, conferences, research activities, and innovation boards. UFAGj fosters an active academic and scientific environment, regularly organizing international and local training sessions to support faculty professional development and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration. External collaborators are also involved in supervising final theses, ensuring that student research meets both academic and industry standards. Their workloads are sufficiently structured to maintain high teaching quality, with performance assessments conducted twice a year based on student evaluations (25%), peer reviews (15%), dean assessments (15%), scientific contributions (25%), and broader institutional contributions (20%). This structured approach ensures continuous improvement in teaching, research, and professional engagement at UFAGj.

**ET recommendations:**

- *DCTE needs to improve the plan of activities, to support the faculty members in terms of Assessment and achievement of learning outcomes.*
- *Improve the strategy of staff mobility and follow up on yearly basis.*
- *Add more industrial faculty members especially for hands-on type of courses.*

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## 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)**

The learning outcomes are provided in page 16 and page 61 of the SER, and in the website of the study program (https://fsha.uni-gjk.org/en/departamenti/informatike-inxhinierike). The three lists provided are not identical, for example the application of innovative technologies is missing in the website. That said, they are evidently written from the students' perspective. It is also sufficiently explained, how these outcomes are aligned with the general objectives of the study program. It is less obvious, how this study program fits to the institution's educational portfolio and practice. The academic unit (Faculty of Applied Science) practically does not functioning, therefore the coherence with the goals of this unit is not entirely relevant.

Although it is declared in the SER, that the intended outcomes of the study program under evaluation are comparable to similar study programs in other countries, this was not presented in detail. The first program in the list is the Informatics Engineering BSc in Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien) – Austria, which has quite different learning outcomes and curriculum (https://www.tuwien.at/fileadmin/Assets/dienstleister/studienabteilung/BSc-Studienplaene_2024/Bachelorstudium_Technische_Informatik_2024.pdf).

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

It is well assured that the intended learning outcomes of the study program overall comply with the National Qualifications Framework and the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) belong to this level of study. The program and curriculum are adequately structured with the classification of learning outcomes to three components: knowledge, skills, and competencies, and these outcomes are in line with the level and profile of qualification gained by the students.

**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 structure of the curriculum contains valuable parts and concepts, such as the overall logical flow of the studies and the inclusion of courses for the development of soft skills. That said there are also some inconsistencies and shortcomings in the curriculum. For example, fundamental programming skills are developed only in the 4th semester (year 2) through web programming and Python courses, way after the OOP course. It is also not clear why Financial

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Mathematics is obligatory, while important topics, such as signals and systems, or mechatronics, are only in the elective courses of the same semester. Overall, it is not clear what is the order of students' progression through the program courses in order to ensure that the learning outcomes of previously successfully passed courses are sufficient to meet the prerequisites of the next courses in the curriculum. In general, the prerequisites of the individual courses are not given, these are defined only at semester level, which is not fully adequate.

That said, overall, it is sufficiently justified, that the core disciplines of the field are incorporated into the curriculum, and the expected learning outcomes can be obtained by this curriculum.

**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)**

It is evident, that the study program is in line with the EU directives, since it is based on the Law on Regulated Professions in the Republic of Kosovo, article 4, point 1.9 Engineer of all fields, which has been analyzed and adapted in accordance with EU directives related to higher education, ensuring all students a qualitative and equal education.

It is also clear from the SER and from the on-site visit, that the study program has been designed considering the opinion and recommendations of the industrial sector of the region through the Entrepreneurship Advisory Board. However, these recommendations are not well specified, and beside the general needs of junior programmers, it is not clear what type of recommendations has been gained from these meetings. Moreover, it is not well evidenced that the standards and recommendations of large international associations, such as the ACM (Association of Computing Machinery) have been taken into account.

**Standard 4.5 The intended learning outcomes of the student practice 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 Faculty of Applied Sciences, the unit responsible for this study program, currently has no specific guideline for the organization of student internships. The SER refers to the general university-level practice but due to the very different nature of this study program from existing programs of the university, this reference is not fully convincing. As a consequence, expected learning outcomes and responsibilities of all parties involved in the student practice period are insufficiently defined. Although cooperation agreements with a couple of industrial partners exist, as the ET has learned from the onsite visit, a typical industrial partner is willing to offer around 5 internship positions, therefore the current amount of potential places for internship is insufficient.

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

The study program has a concept that focuses on the simultaneous development of students' engineering, computing and mathematical competencies, which is good practice. The achievement of outcomes in the learning process is well planned. The concept of the study program overall adequately integrates teaching methods and techniques, lectures, practice and labs, that include active, collaborative, and student-oriented learning, ensuring full student involvement in the learning process. Due to the very nature of the study program, the delivery of the courses is ensured through the use of modern technology.

**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)**

The assessment criteria of the courses and the program are adequately presented. Students are informed about the assessment method and achievement criteria at the beginning of each course by the professor of the relevant course. Evaluation methods and criteria are also specified in the course syllabi. The nature of the assessment criteria and methods is well defined, as well as the grading criteria for the study program, and these are publicly available for all students in advance. This is in line with the regulations.

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

Although the learning activities are all credited, and the table of ECTS is provided as an annex of the SER, it is not well explained how the workload is calculated for each course and credit. Specifically, there are several courses with 2 hours of lecture for 4 ECTS, while courses with 3+2 hours are credited by 6 ECTS, and other courses with 2+1 hours are also credited by 4 ECTS. This does not seem fully proportional and the calculation is not justified by the brief description of the SER.

**ET recommendations:**

- *The different lists of learning outcomes should be unified and published in the website.*
- *During the adjustment of the curriculum, international standards and recommendations should be considered.*
- *Regulations of the student practice period have to be developed in detail, and a sufficient number of internship place must be assured in advance.*
- *The ECTS must be applied in a more proportional manner, justified by a detailed calculation for each type of courses (3+2, 2+2, 2+0 etc.)*

## 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)

Students are admitted under the rules set by the University of Gjakova (Regulation on Bachelor studies of the Faculty of Applied Sciences and the Statute of UFAGJ), with a public announcement of the admission contest published through national media by the University itself. These regulations clearly define the conditions for the enrolment of both national and international students. Students are familiar with the enrolment requirements and know where they are published.

The enrolment conditions are appropriate. For students wishing to enrol at the bachelor studies, the requirement is to have successfully passed the Matura exam (organised by MEST), while for international students, special conditions are set out in the Regulation.

The selection of the candidates is based on the public call criteria – it is based on the success in the admission test, success in secondary school and the score earned in State Matura exam. Candidates who apply in programs at the Faculty of Applied Sciences are tested in subjects specified by the Faculty of Applied Sciences.

The admission requirements are set in a non-discriminatory manner towards all candidates for admission, and the group of experts believes that they are being followed accordingly.

The conditions for continuing studies after interruption and the recognition of previous studies are defined in the Statute but not in the Regulation.

### 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)

The expert team assumes that students will get feedback on their results according to UFAGJ internal regulations (Regulation on Bachelor studies of the Faculty of Applied Sciences and the Statute of UFAGJ). The feedback and exam results are provided soon after the exams. The assistance is in a form of consultation meetings with the teachers available twice per week. During the interviews, the group of experts found that professors are also available to students for additional explanations or advice, if necessary. Students highly praised the accessibility of professors. The university takes care to distribute the information through electronic platforms such as webpage and social networks Facebook, Instagram, etc. Most important information is available to students through Student Handbook, which students confirmed as an excellent source of information.

According to the information provided, there are processes in place to collect and analyse data referring to the student progression and drop-out rates. An example of such report, received by

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the expert team, shows the number of student enrolments for each academic year and the number of students who dropped out, which allows us to conclude what the student progression rate is between academic years. The faculty states that they take appropriate actions in case of detected deviations, which was also confirmed during the interviews. According to interviews, the expected dropout rate of students for this new study programme is similar to average at faculty.

The results of student progress monitoring are regularly shared with staff and students through SMU. During the interviews, the expert team found that staff in particular is aware of the results of student progression and the number of enrolled students.

Students are aware of the options for continuing their studies which are published at the university's webpage. The expert team considers this statement compliant to the standard. The options for the transfer of student credits are appropriate described in the Statute UFAGJ and in the Student Handbook as well as in the Regulation on Bachelor studies of the Faculty of Applied Sciences.

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

The international mobility of students is regulated by the Regulations for Academic Mobility of Students in UFAGJ. Possibilities and procedures are also clearly described in the student Handbook. Calls for mobility are public announced on the webpage of the faculty. Recognition of ECTS credits is appropriately regulated. Students are aware of exchange opportunities and the criteria for selecting students.

Information on application procedures and conditions for this study programme are available only in Albanian language but Student Handbook and some other Regulations are available also in English language.

The faculty does not offer foreign language courses for foreign students. However, the majority of professors speak fluent English. With the decision of the Senate and according to the proposal of the council of the academic unit, the lectures can be held in other languages.

Faculty collects and analyses feedback from national and international students who were on exchange. Impressions from some students' exchanges are also very well presented on the faculty's website, in Albanian and English. The expert team considers this example of encouraging cooperation in exchanges to be very good.

**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)**

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The number of professional, administrative and technical staff providing support to students in the study program is currently sufficient and adequately qualified to provide support to students. If there would be additional 330 students at this study programme (assumed), the teacher-student ratio would be 1:23.

Information and rules of studies are publicly available on the university or faculty website, some also in English. However, the main source of information for new students is Students Handbook. This was confirmed by students during interviews.

Students receive advice about their studies mostly from professors and from students from previous years as well as from student tutors. During the interviews, students confirmed that academic staff is available for consultation and they have no problems reaching them. Besides consultations, they are also available via e-mail and closed groups on social networks.

The UFAGJ Statute clearly defines student rights and obligations. The document is publicly available, in Albanian and English. Rights and steps student can take to make a complaint are clearly defined and are appropriate.

In SER the faculty states that students are informed about and have opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, however students expressed the need of more activities. The expert team suggests that the faculty should support these activities even more and, within its capabilities, also financially.

**ET recommendations:**

- *To support extracurricular activities, such as sport activities and social events even more, both with premises, staff and financially - within the limits of capabilities.*

## 6. RESEARCH

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

The UFAGj aims to generate knowledge through modern teaching, learning, and research methods, contributing to Kosovo's socio-economic development with high-quality, market-oriented study programs. The program aligns with the university's mission to provide valuable academic and research experiences, fostering integrity, critical thinking, and scientific growth while upholding transparency, accountability, and equality.

For 2021–2025, UFAGj focuses on institutional strengthening, academic quality, and labor market alignment. The program ensures academic integrity through internationally standardized assessments and supports international collaboration via exchanges and research projects. It prepares students for professional success while addressing local socio-economic

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challenges, reinforcing UFAGj's strategic goals and commitment to excellence in education. The study program aligns its scientific research objectives with UFAGj's 2021–2025 Scientific Research Strategy, aiming to advance high-quality research in education and pedagogy while emphasizing its broader impact on local and international communities. A key focus is enhancing research capacities through international collaborations and participation in global projects, fostering innovation and networking opportunities. The program also prioritizes student involvement in research from early academic stages, preparing them to contribute to scientific advancements. Additionally, it supports sustainable research development by improving the quality and international recognition of publications, providing academic staff and students with necessary resources. To further reinforce these efforts, UFAGj has introduced a new regulation on scientific research activities, drafted in March 2024, which awaits approval. This regulation aims to increase the number of eligible scientific publications by implementing a revised classification system that ties financial incentives to the journal's quartile ranking. The study program follows institutional, national, and international policies to ensure academic and scientific standards. It adheres to regulations like the Bologna Declaration and Kosovo's higher education and accreditation laws, maintaining quality and global alignment. Despite the strategy looks solid, it is timespan is this year. A new strategy for the coming years must be in place.

**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.**

UFAGJ has implemented policies and financial incentives to enhance research competitiveness, international visibility, and scientific advancement. Research funding is allocated through the university's budget, approved by the Governing Council. Academic staff receive financial support for publications in indexed journals, with €1,000 for first authors and €700 for corresponding authors, limited to two publications per year. Participation in international conferences is also supported with €300 per event. To further encourage research, the Governing Council has allocated an annual budget of €80,000, with €20,000 designated for research projects and €15,000 per academic unit. The allocation process will be refined in the upcoming regulation on scientific research. Once the Faculty of Applied Sciences is operational, budget distribution will be reconsidered. UFAGJ tracks research activities internationally, showcasing new publications on university websites and maintaining a categorized list of faculty publications. While only research produced under UFAGJ affiliation is officially listed, staff members' prior works are included in their CVs and personal profiles, ensuring comprehensive visibility of their academic contributions. The university has a clear strategy and support for research, but the faculty members of the program are not all active, the majority of them didn't publish since 2022. Therefore, if the program gets accredited a strategy must be planned for the faculty members of the program to boost their scientific research.

**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.**

The academic staff involved in the study program actively collaborate with national and international partners, engaging in various scientific and capacity-building projects funded by organizations such as MASHTI, HERAS, Erasmus+, and Horizon. Faculty members regularly work with colleagues from other higher education institutions on joint research activities, contributing their expertise to community development, which is a mandatory requirement in UFAGJ's performance evaluation process. Staff must report on their research and service activities twice a year as part of their individual assessments. Additionally, they play a key role in establishing research collaborations and agreements with other institutions, enhancing scientific research quality and participation in joint projects. Several cooperation agreements with higher education institutions and industry representatives support the implementation of the study program, documented under Memorandums of Cooperation and Projects. To align with labor market needs, UFAGJ has established an Advisory Board at the faculty level and a Board for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the university level. These advisory bodies hold periodic meetings with UFAGJ's governing bodies and collaborate with partner institutions to develop strategies and cooperation initiatives. Through bilateral agreements, UFAGJ staff also engage in practical and scientific work across various institutions, strengthening research and professional development opportunities.

**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.**

The teaching staff of the study program have a track record of research in their respective fields. The faculty planned for the Informatics Engineering program includes experts specialized in the field of the program. The academic staff's research backgrounds and professional contributions enhance the program's quality, providing students with a good level instruction. Additionally, professors are required to regularly update their syllabi with modern topics, teaching materials, and pedagogical techniques to align with industry trends and labor market needs. Their performance is periodically evaluated, influencing reappointment, promotion, or necessary adjustments based on institutional regulations, ensuring continuous improvement in education delivery. Students in the study program will be encouraged to engage in scientific research throughout their academic journey, culminating in an independent thesis. A forthcoming regulation on scientific research activities is expected to introduce financial support for students who publish in indexed journals such as Scopus and Web of Science. Additionally, the regulation will enable students to collaborate with professors in applying for research project funding, fostering their active participation in academic and scientific development.

**ET recommendations:**

- *A new strategy beyond 2025 for the coming years must be developed.*
- *The university has a clear strategy and support for research, but the faculty members of the program are not all active in research, the majority of them didn't publish since 2022. Therefore, if the program gets accredited a strategy must be planned for the faculty members of the program to boost their scientific research.*

## 7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

According to Tables 15 and 16 of the SER, UFAGj has some premises suitable for conducting teaching and research activities in general. The university has standard classrooms (from 12 to 60 places), and two computer rooms in the Faculty of Education, what they also intend to use for this study program. However, these computer rooms are heavily booked for other study programs as well.

Moreover, the university has an agreement with Bonevet, an NGO, mainly targeting primary and secondary school students, and partly adults for non-formal creative learning. Bonevet possesses premises 100 meters from the main building of the university. The agreement declares that Bonevet intends to support UFAGj with 700 m2 of laboratory space and the use of all laboratory equipment, including electronics (12 workbenches). Potential students of the Engineering Informatics study program at the Faculty of Applied Sciences can use the laboratories from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

During the site visit it was clarified that Bonevet can provide the following premises and equipment:

a) 2 "classical" computer rooms for 12 persons each
b) 1 lab for 26 persons and 3 labs for 12 persons each. "Labs" are practically empty classrooms with a large table for creative working. For these activities they have a limited number of specific equipment, such as Arduino-s, 3D printers, LEGO robotics sets, sensors, microcontrollers etc.
c) 1 "mechanic lab", mostly for woodwork
d) 1 "electronic lab", with some measuring facilities.

As we have also clarified during the site visit, Bonevet could support some courses, obviously not for 120 students, but for a smaller group. However, there are some study fields which cannot be covered already in the first semester (fiber optics), and also in other semesters (energy conversion, PLC programming, human-machine interaction). Based on this, the following consequences can be drawn: the university currently do not possess adequate premises and technical facilities for performing this study program. The agreement with

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Bonevet may partly, but not fully solve the problem, and it is also problematic that a state university is so strong dependent on a private entity in terms of fundamental physical facilities. Since the ET must evaluate the current situation during the accreditation procedure, it is evident from the shortcomings mentioned above, that at the time of evaluation the university does not possess the required minimum level of premises and equipment to start this study program. Since this is a crucial – mandatory – part of the accreditation procedure, the lack of sufficient premises and equipment makes the study program unsuitable to start in its current form.

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

The small library is adequately equipped with reading rooms for individual work, spaces for group work and its own book stock according to the courses included in the study program. The variety of books in the field of teaching methodology of various disciplines as well as pedagogical aspects of primary education is sufficient. Students and research staff have access to various research databases, including EBSCO and ACM Digital Library. However, it is not ensured that students have rooms for extracurricular group work or individual work, especially not with engineering or computing facilities – this kind of activities mainly take place in the evening hours, and although the library can be used after 4:00pm, BONEVET premises and equipment, due to the private engagement of the NGO, are not freely accessible for the university students.

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

Although the financial background of the university is overall stable, the SER does not provide budget calculations for this specific study program. In fact, the faculty-level budget provided in table 20 of the SER does not contain any information about the Faculty of Applied Sciences, which would be responsible for this specific study program. As a consequence, the financial background and the required additional budget for this relatively expensive and equipment-intensive study program for a large number of students is insufficiently specified and secured. Overall, the financial strategy for, and the financial status of the potential new study program is not fully clarified, even if the university participates in various national and international projects, gaining some additional financial support.

The ET notes that the recent decisions of the university certainly have the potential to meet this standard if they are once fully implemented.

**ET recommendations:**

- *The university has to create a program-specific, long-term financial plan for this study program*

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- *The university has to establish a strategy to provide the required premises and equipment for students on the long-term basis, sufficiently covering every aspect and every course of the study program.*
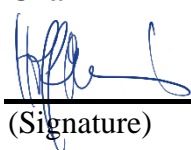
**Final recommendation of the ET:**

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for institutional accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a substantial compliance level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure in meeting at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation.

University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakovë, **Bachelor's in Informatics Engineering** demonstrated an overall non-compliance, with 2 partially compliant areas of evaluation including the mandatory areas. According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends **to not accredit** the study programme Bachelor's in Informatics Engineering at the institution University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakovë.

| Standard | Compliance Level |
|---|---|
| Mission, objectives and administration | Substantially compliant |
| Quality management | Fully compliant |
| Academic Staff | Substantially compliant |
| Educational Process Content | Partially compliant |
| Students | Fully compliant |
| Research | Substantially compliant |
| Infrastructure and resources | Partially compliant |
| **Overall Compliance** | Non compliant |

**Expert Team**

**Chair**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Prof. Dr. Miklos Hoffmann* | 20. 2. 2025 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

**Member**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Seifedine Kadry* | *Prof. Dr. Seifedine Kadry* | 20. 2. 2025 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

**Member**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Prof. Dr. Kruno Milicevic* | 20. 2. 2025 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

**Member**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Matej Drobnic* | 20. 2. 2025 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |