Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo

Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju

Kosovo Accreditation Agency

University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani"

Public Health, BSc, 180 ECTS
RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

22nd May 2024

Kosovo Accreditation Agency

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 22nd May, 2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Dr. Joke Denekens*
- *Ass Prof. Dr. Ketevani Kankava*
- *Dr. Nibal Sabri*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Arianit KRASNIQI, Director of Department at KAA*

Sources *of information for the Report:*

- *The Self-Evaluation Report, Bachelor (BSc) in Public Health with the annexes as follows;*
  1. *Syllabus of Public Health BSc*
  2. *Curriculum Vitae CVs of academic staff*
  3. *Database of Scientific Publications of Academic Staff with UFAGJ affiliation*
  4. *Regulations in Albanian!*
  5. *Library and facilities in Albanian!*
- *Interviews with personnel and stakeholders (One expert onsite, two experts online)*
- *Facility Site visit*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of Kosovo Accreditation Agency, 2021*
- *European Guidelines and Standards*

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1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:45	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Haxhi Kamberi– Dean Hasime Terziqi – Vice dean for educational and student affairs Kimete Canaj – Vice dean for Development Projects and International Cooperation
09:45 – 10:25	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Rilind Obërtinca – Head of Physiotherapy Program, Member of Quality Assurance in the Faculty of Medicine; Abedin Sadrija – Head of the academic affairs office; Member of Quality Assurance at University level Freskina Mula Ermeni– Head of department for international affai ; Rina Rudi Xhiha – Head of the budget and finance division; Marigonë Shkoza - Legal Officer; Krenare Shala - Students services officer; Dorina Ponosheci Baraku - Assistant At Dean's Office, Member of Quality Assurance in the Faculty of Medicine
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the heads of the study programme **Health Management, MA 120 ECTS** (room 1) Dr.Ketevani Kankava	Faton Hoxha Artan Nimani

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10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the heads of the study programme **Public Health, BSc, 180 ECTS** (room 2) Dr. Joke Denekens Nibal Sabri	Antigona Ukehaxhaj Haxhi Kamberi Hajrullah Latifi
11:30 – 12:20	Lunch break	
12:20 – 12:50	Visiting Facilities	
12:50 – 13:35	Meeting with teaching staff	Ramush Bejiqi Kamber Zeqiri Dafine Kaçuri Arben Boshnjaku Laura Naka Skender Uka Muhamet Kadrija Bylbyl Kadrija Arta Dalipi Vanesa Tanushi
13:35 – 14:20	Meeting with students	Anjesa Gashi Lyra Pozhegu Eurolinda Lushaj Lirigzon Goçi Francesk Zefaj Enis Vishaj Marigona Nuzaj Arigona Nikqi Albina Vrella Edita Hoti Mejreme Hakaj
14:25 – 15:10	Meeting with external stakeholders	Hilmi Shala - Director of the General Hospital in

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		Gjakova.
		Lendita Thaqi Berisha – Health Director of National Occupational Health Center in Gjakova
		Arben Koshi - Director of the Main Family Medicine
		Ibrahim Treshnjaku – Public Health in Food and Veterinary Agency.
		Aida Kumnova-European Clinic Kosova
		Hysni Muhadri- Director of Inspection Work in Municipality of Gjakova
		Gazmend Ajdini - Institute of Public Health in Gjakova.
		Veprore Shehu - Medica Kosova
15:10 – 15:15	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:15 – 15:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

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1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

The University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova (UFAGJ) is founded on the basis of the Law of Higher Education of the Republic of Kosovo to offer bachelor, master, and doctoral academic studies.

The University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova started work on October 1, 2013 with the Faculty of Education with the Preschool and Primary programs, the Faculty of Medicine (FM) with the Nursing and Midwifery programs, and the Faculty of Philology with the Albanian Language programs, and English Language and Literature with programs that were accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in April 2013.

After the transition to the Committee for Education in the Assembly of Kosovo, the Statute of the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova was approved by the Parliament of Kosovo in December 2020.

According to the Statute, the goals of the University are:

- To play the leading role in the development of education, science, culture, society; and the economy of Kosovo;
- Help in the process of promoting citizen democracy;
- To aim to create and support the highest standards in the field of teaching and learning, scientific research and artistic creativity;
- To use its own resources as efficiently as possible;
- Cooperate maximally and participate in all higher education activities at the national, regional and international level;
- To advance and protect these statutory articles of UFAGJ, its mission, vision and values as fundamental values for fair management, integrity and respect for rights and obligations.

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At the moment UFAGJ, has established five faculties, while in the process of accreditation and re-accreditation, it has the following programs: preschool education, primary education, Albanian Language, Public Health, Health Management, English language translation and interpretation, Nursing, Physiotherapy and Albanian Language and literature.

The mission, vision and values of the University address three main pillars: education, scientific research and community service. The UFAGJ is characterized by many special values, such as:
- Traditions in education at the country level,
- Favorable geographical position, because it is the connecting bridge of the region and the north Albania,
- Unique study programs, the Faculty of Medicine at UFAGJ is the only one in the region,
- Special policies for staff support for research,
- Direct contribution to society, through the center for psycho-social counseling.

The University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova is committed to creating "knowledge through contemporary methods of teaching and scientific research, encouraging student enthusiasm and promoting academic integrity. The university offers academic and research experiences by collaborating with the community and contributes to the social and economic development of the country and the region, through unique and quality study programs"

The University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova is a public higher education institution that offers studies in the humanities and medicine "where teaching, learning and scientific research are tailored to the needs socio-economic development of society".

Values are listed up in the SER:
Tradition in education, teaching, cultural tradition;
- Academic integrity and ethics - guarantees academic freedom, expression, research and scientific research;
- Transparency and accountability - we build relationships based on transparency, honesty and mutual respect, in the teaching and learning relationship;
- Respects equality between genders, ethnicities, and treats the views and contribution of all without distinction;
- Taking responsibility for decisions and results;
- We monitor and review performance to drive improvement at work;
- Cooperation and promotion, national and international partnerships;
- Orientation towards the labour market;

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- Democracy, main and universal principle;
- Modern infrastructure, sufficient and recreational spaces;
- UFAGJ is a flexible, innovative and reliable institution offering harmonized services to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The functional organization of the UFAGJ is based on the University Statute and fulfils the relevant laws of Kosovo. The main governing body of the UFAGJ is the Steering Council, which has the responsibility for an effective function of the university and for all decisions regarding financial issues (budget, staff and infrastructure). Appointments of members of the Steering Council are regulated by the Statute of UFAGJ.

The Senate is the highest academic body of the University and is responsible for general strategic issues related to research, studies, teaching, student' admission criteria, selection and promotion of academic staff, content of curricula and quality assurance and evaluation. The UFAGJ Senate consists of 12 members. All, but one have the right to vote.

The Chairman of the Senate is the Rector who is the main managing authority of the university. He is responsible for the effective and regular operation of the university and for its management according to the policies established by the Council.

Vice-Rectors are appointed for Academic Affairs and Quality Increase, International Cooperation and Scientific Research and Budget, Finance and Infrastructure.

The University grants scholarships and exemptions of semester payments, when students meet specific criteria. Quotas of students from neighbouring countries and minorities are admitted to study programmes as well.

The Faculty of Medicine is managed by the Dean, Pro- Deans and program chiefs. In addition to the Dean, the Faculty also has a Professional Scientific Teaching Council (PSTC), where teaching and scientific issues are addressed. Proposals of the Faculty Council are forwarded to the Senate for approval. Student representatives are included in most decision making committees of the University.

The re-accreditation of the Public Health program is based on the labour market, the interest of young people to study in this program and the experience witnessed during this period, as well as because there is still no such program in public institutions in Kosovo.

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2.   PROGRAM EVALUATION
2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The strategic objectives of the UFAGJ based on the 2021-2025 Strategy are:

1. Institutional and organizational strengthening of the UFAGJ, with the aim of developing the necessary capacities and providing them in implementation of the obligations issued during the implementation of this strategic document.

2. Ensuring the quality and academic integrity in UFAGJ, analyzing and connecting the programs with the needs of society;

3. Quality programs, teaching and scientific research easily accessible and distinguishable from other current programs.

4. Internationalization and networking of the university and student structures with other universities in the country, region and beyond;

5. Students and community partnership efficient and easy services for students, in partnership with the community;

6. Modern infrastructure and suitable environment as necessary to fulfill the commitments from this document and other documents of the UFAG.

The Faculty of Medicine, has defined the following objectives:

- To prepare competent professional staff in accordance with the labour market and in service to the wider community;

- Reaching agreements with other local, regional and international higher education institutions;

- Increasing participation in various local and international academic and infrastructural projects;

- Providing mobility for academic staff and students with relevant international institutions;

- Support of scientific research work;

- Raising the capacities of human and infrastructural resources;

- Internationalization of programs;

- Ensuring a high level of quality;

- Increasing access to contemporary literature through academic platforms and literature.

The Public Health programme aims to improve "the conditions and behaviours that affect health, so that all people can achieve it. This mission includes not only the practice of public health policy, but the research of public health issues and the education of future leaders who

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will ultimately translate that research into practices and policies to improve people's health national, regional and global level. "

The objectives (n= 11) of the programme are

To prepare competent professional staff for the provision of knowledge, skills and health services necessary for the community and the labour market;

To expand the different fields of study;

To reach agreements with other local, regional and international higher education institutions;

To Increase participation in various local and international academic and infrastructural projects;

To offer mobility for academic staff and students with relevant international institutions;

To support scientific research work;

To internationalize the programs by offering modules in English ;

To ensure the highest quality levels;

To promote health and healthy lifestyle;

To promote ethics and adequate communication in patient-health professional and intercollegiate relationships;

To increase access to contemporary literature through academic platforms and literature.

Core values of the programme are Community, Diversity, Innovation, Professionalism, Science and Sustainability.

The objectives of the programme are aligned with the objectives of the Faculty of Medicne and the institutional strategic goals.

The curriculum is based on the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation's aim to increase participation in higher education. The Public Health programme is designed to meet the requirements of the national qualifications framework.

The programme is designed based on experiences of international universities, ensuring the application of the highest- level standards, always based on the requirements of the Bologna and Lisbon Charters, European Directive 2005/36/EC, and EU Directive 2013/55, with implementation of ECTS system. The programme comprises 180 ECTS points and aligns with international standards for the Classification of Education at level 6, as determined by the Bologna Framework with the title "Bachelor."

The curriculum is benchmarked on the experience of international universities of the following programmes: "Public Health" IEC University Badi; Faculty of Health Sciences; Bachelor of Science "Public Health and Health Promotion" Syracuse University "Public Health"; University of Applied Sciences in Tirana "*Public Health."*

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In the SER the expert team didn't find a well - defined didactic and research concept.
During interviews with heads of programme, teachers and students it became clear that the overall didactic approach is student- centred by working with activating assignments with presentations and group works to stimulate multiprofessional team work in order to prepare graduates for the labour market. The expert team founds that the nexus between teaching and research is realised in different research concepts as tutored-led, research-based, research-oriented, research -led learning activities (Healy 2005)
Methodology of working with learning outcomes is integrated in the syllabi.
The expert team recommends to work on an overview of the contribution of each course to the defined objectives at programme level.
Research is embedded in courses as epidemiology, research methodology and biostatistics and health informatics in the second semester. In the 4th semester there is a research project(3 ECTS) and in the sixth semester a bachelor thesis with 6 ECTS points
Several courses are working in a research-based modus with activating teaching and learning activities and with assignments individual and in group with immediate feedback and discussion to reach the higher levels of Bloom.

The expert team recommends to define explicitly the didactic and research concepts of the programme and to inform students better about learning outcomes as tools to steer learning at competence level.

The SER states that policies, guidelines and regulations are in place to deal with procedural and academic issues. The expert team has been able to consult those documents in the annexes and on the website. Students in the Public Health BSc program are very well informed and aware of the university policies and regulations. The University Student Handbook, available online in both Albanian and English, has been a very useful guide for them to navigate their rights and obligations.

Ethical conduct is regulated by the code of ethics, in place since 2021.
Students and staff are well aware of this important document.

All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are amended in the light of changing circumstances and reviewedon a continuous basis.

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

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. The expert team recommends to define explicitly the didactic and research concepts of the programme and to inform students better about learning outcomes as tools to steer learning at competence level.

2. The expert team recommends to work on an overview of the contribution of each course to the defined objectives at programme level.

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2.2. Quality management

The quality management system at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova (UFAGJ) is well structured and integrated in each faculty including the Faculty of Medicine (FM).

The Office for Quality Assurance is an independent structure, under the umbrella of Central Commission of Quality Assurance and Evaluation in University. Its duty is internal quality assurance, and its objectives are to:

• Ensure institutional qualitative level;
• Ensure qualitative level in study programs;
• Ensure qualitative level in teaching-learning;
• Ensure qualitative level in research;
• Ensure quality of literature, library and sources of information;
• Ensure quality in infrastructure and equipment;
• Continuous improvement of quality
• Ensure functionality of procedures and mechanism of quality

The Committee for Quality Assurance at the faculty level consists of:

• Coordinator for quality assurance at the faculty level and who is also a member of the Central Quality Assurance Commission;
• A lecturer / assistant; and
• A student with an average grade of over nine and who is fluent in English.

This commission together with the central office for quality, draws up the FM quality report based on the finding from a collection of questionnaires that they use to evaluate performance. This report is approved in the FM Council after the presentation by the Quality Coordinator and is sent to the Central Quality Commission for approval by this body and finally these reports are published in a joint report after approval by the Senate of the UFAGJ. On the web page there is a special link where every actor can have access and can be informed with the Quality Commission within the FM.

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The expert team commends the UFAGJ commitment to transparency by providing information in both languages, Albanian and English, including reports, recommendations, decisions, policies, and regulations. Their website is highly informative, fostering an impression of transparency and confidence. All documents have been updated from 2020 onwards, yet it is recommended as part of a quality assurance process to undergo review of all documents periodically , every two years , to adhere to the KAA standards .

The relevant mechanisms of self-evaluation in the Faculty of Medicine are provided for both the administrative and academic staff and as mentioned in their "Manual on Evaluation of Performance, Quality and Curricula". Unlike what the name of this official document refers to, the procedures per this manual are mainly based on staff evaluation and barely on how the curriculum will be evaluated. The common instrument used for evaluation, per the manual, is a survey methodology (questionnaire) for the staff of the FM.

In that regard, the expert team finds that the questionnaires are informative and well-structured. However, the expert team would like to draw attention to the fact that, despite the effort put into structuring the surveys, the peer evaluation questionnaire—which accounts for 15% of the staff evaluation categories—is not comprehensive . This indicates the need for a quality assurance mechanism to evaluate survey's validity and effectiveness. The structure of all the questionnaire should be periodically assessed. Similarly, criteria for evaluating the contributions to community service, which also count for 15% of staff evaluation, should be established to ensure reliability comparable to all other criteria.
This mechanism of staff evaluation is used for promotion purposes, but the ET failed to realize that it is being used for any personalized approach for professional development.

UFAGJ uses the same methodology (surveys) to evaluate administrative staff, study plan, syllabi, student service, etc.
Per the SER, the main instruments of internal quality assessment, meeting the KAA KPI 2.1, are as follows:
•	Questionnaire for students
•	Peer evaluation questionnaire
•	Questionnaire for the administrate and support staff.
•	Questionnaire for administration services – evaluation by students.

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- Questionnaire for administration services – assessment by academic staff.
- Questionnaire for students before graduation
- Questionnaire for graduate students – ALUMNI.
- Questionnaire for employers (graduate students).

Despite the effort put in structuring reliable questionnaires for all stakeholders and collate results in analytical reports with recommendations, which are given at the end of each report to improve the quality of the academic unit at FM. Yet, kindly note that these remain subjective and are not enough to evaluate or enhance the quality of a program.

Besides, the external evaluation reports as a guide for improvement, UFAGJ-FM should have its own internal quality assurance system to evaluate its own programs. This system should be based on quantitative data analysis of the results from reliable and valid assessments and students' success rate, reflected per course and across the program, drop-outs rates, student/teacher ratio and more. Kindly note that assessments results are a reliable source when there is a structured system to link them to course learning outcomes, the educational process and the program learning outcomes as well as graduate competencies.

The University has identified indicators in its guide for assessing the performance of the study program. In that regard, the expert team must highlight that the University published a report "Indicators for assessing the performance of the Faculty of Medicine "for year 2023, which is very commendable. Yet, these analytical reports fail to draw any conclusions to inform decision makers on enhancement opportunities. These indicators should be linked to KPI and set of data over the years to periodically evaluate and measure their achievements.

Moreover, service providers such as the Didactic center should be evaluated, and their programs should follow a quality assurance process to assess the effectiveness of their training courses. Similarly, services provided by external institutes for the practical training of students should be quality assured.

The Advisory Board for Entrepreneurs was formed in November 2023. It has been mentioned in the interviews that that they have regular meetings with the board every 2nd month to

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inform program heads on societal needs. However, the ET failed to see decisions used to inform or advise on a change, along a non-clarity on the procedure to realize those recommendations.

Per the SER KPI 2.5, Students are actively involved in the quality assurance process, filling out questionnaires for teacher assessment, subject/course, study program, infrastructure and student services. They are part of the commissions for quality assurance at the university and faculty level. This is all commendable nevertheless the ET highly recommends enhancing students' participation in the committees from a representation with a right to vote, to more of having leading decision-making roles in quality assurance initiatives.

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

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evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.		
Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	**X**	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	**X**	

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Set KPI derived initially from your own identified indicators. Later on, reassess to add others that would be of more relevance to measure successful achievements of your own goals.

2. Manage the follow up on recommendations at a faculty level and check the effectiveness of the decisions made as well as their successful implementation. Currently the process stops at taking actions per recommendation without further checking for continuous improvement purposes.

3. Besides the qualitative data from surveys, include quantitative statistical data analysis related to the actual process of student learning from the variety of assessments methods used across the program.

4. Aggregate your annual reports to evaluate progress and improvements over the years.

5. Reassess the criteria set in the surveys for reliability and validity especially in peer-peer evaluation and make sure to set criteria for community service.

6. Encourage staff to use the 'staff evaluation reports" to set a professional developmental plan and follow up.

7. Change the title of your manual "Manual on Evaluation of Performance, Quality and Curricula "to reflect its content and purpose which is merely based on staff evaluation.

8. Evaluate the services at the University which have an impact on student learning such as the Didactic centre, for the effectiveness of their training in meeting needs

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of you staff, as well as for other centres such the counselling services, the Centre for Career Development and the Student Aid office and others.

2.3. Academic staff

Public Health program is taught by 29 instructors, at least 18 of them are also teaching in the Health Management program. The list of academic staff members with all details (as required by standard) have been provided. There are enough PhD's as required by the KAA standards. The instructional process and staff, based on qualifications and completed specializations, have been adjusted to meet the legal requirements outlined in the Administrative Accreditation Guidelines. Academic staff recruitment happens according to the standard procedure described in "Regulation for the selection procedures of the academic staff". The procedure is clear and transparent, staff members confirm, that the described procedures work in real life. Staff members comply to requirements of "Administrative Instruction on Accreditation".

The allocation of hours and commitments in the UFAGJ is regulated by regulations approved by Governing Counsel of UFAGJ (Regulation on staff workload – systematization of workplaces)

There have been no reports of occupation of more than two teaching positions by academic staff. Most of staff members are full-time employees(more than 75%).

Academic staff members participate in professional development activities organized by university. The Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching plans and implements activities for improving the competencies in teaching, assessment, research, leadership, etc. Teaching methodology and teaching strategies are improved as a result of these courses. Staff members actively participate in such activities. They are satisfied with the way they were taught to write syllabi, define learning outcomes and they find these activities very useful for success in constantly modifying field of education as for example on teaching methodology in collaboration with Drake University in the United States.

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However expert team failed to identify any personalized approach in planning of professional development activities based on the evaluation results. Neither could any actions be seen in favor of the staff members who need special assistance. Poor performance at staff evaluation is considered rather a misbehavior possibly leading to sanctions.

The expert team recommends to go further in evaluations of the undertaken actions in professional development and evaluate not only satisfaction of teachers but to measure **effectiveness of implementation** of the innovations in teaching practice.

In addition to teaching, staff members conduct consultations, plan and work on projects supporting student participation, spend extra time on supporting the students with special needs. Academic staff members are actively engaged in community services by participation in healthcare related projects for increasing awareness in local community. Staff members are available for student consultation outside the teaching hours, students confirm that they can approach the academic staff freely within their consultation hours.

Staff members are being evaluated by dean, colleagues, students. Self-evaluation does also take place. The results of the assessment are shared with the employee himself and cumulative data are also published and can be assessed by anyone.

Very interesting is the summary report of teachers performance 2021-2023 with several recommendations. In the implementation report published in November 2023 the expert team has not found alignment with these recommendations.

As per the Labor Law and university statute teachers retire at the age of 65 and can only work part-time until the age of 70.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract,	x	

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workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.		
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	x	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	x	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	x	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	x	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		x
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	x	
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	x	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	x	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	x	

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Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. It is recommended, that professional development activities for teachers are planned in a personalized manner analyzing the problems identified with staff evaluation.
2. It is recommended, that administration proactively makes extra effort to identify staff members in need of special assistance or training and plan actions accordingly.
3. The expert team recommends to go further in evaluations of the undertaken actions in professional development and evaluate not only satisfaction of teachers but to measure effectiveness of implementation of the innovations in teaching practice.

2.4. Educational Process Content

The study program has defined qualification objectives in order that graduates will be able to work in the public and private sectors, at all levels of healthcare in Kosovo and abroad.

The curriculum is based on the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation's aim to increase participation in higher education. The Public Health programme is designed to meet the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework.

The programme is designed based on experiences of international universities, ensuring the application of the highest- level standards, always based on the requirements of the Bologna and Lisbon Charters, European Directive 2005/36/EC, and EU Directive 2013/55, with implementation of ECTS system. The programme comprises 180 ECTS points and aligns with international standards for the Classification of Education at level 6, as determined by the Bologna Framework with the title "Bachelor."

Learning outcomes at programme level are defined according to the international benchmark. The curriculum is benchmarked on the experience of international universities of the following programmes: "Public Health" IEC University Badi; Faculty of Health Sciences;

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Bachelor of Science "Public Health and Health Promotion" Syracuse University "Public Health"; University of Applied Sciences in Tirana "*Public Health."*

In the SER the expert team didn't find a well - defined didactic and research concept.

During interviews with heads of programme, teachers and students it became clear that the overall didactic approach is student- centred by working with activating assignments with presentations and group works to stimulate multiprofessional team work in order to prepare graduates for the labour market. More can be done to work with integrated teaching and learning activities and assessment especially in the practice in the field to realize competence-based learning and assessment.

The expert team found that the nexus between teaching and research is realized in different research concepts as tutored-led, research-based, research-oriented, research -led learning activities (Healy 2005).

Methodology of working with learning outcomes is integrated in the syllabi at the different levels of Bloom.

The expert team recommends to work on an overview of the contribution of each course to the defined objectives at programme level.

Research is embedded in courses as epidemiology, research methodology and biostatistics and health informatics in the second semester. In the 4th semester there is a research project as elective (3 ECTS) and in the sixth semester a bachelor thesis with 6 ECTS points. In the opinion of the expert team the bachelor thesis should have 10 ECTS at least to reach the Dublin descriptors at this level.

Several courses are working in a research-based modus with activating teaching and learning activities and with assignments individual and in group with immediate feedback and discussion to reach the higher levels (analysis, synthesis and creation of an action plan) of Bloom.

The expert team recommends to define explicitly the didactic and research concepts of the programme and to inform students better about learning outcomes as tools to steer learning at competence level.

The coherence of the programme is realised horizontally as well as vertically.

Graduates at the end of their studies should be able to:

1) Apply concepts and models from social and behavioral disciplines related to public health practices.

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2) Use various data sources, information resources, and evidence-based approaches in public health.

3) Plan, implement, and evaluate public health programs.

4) Communicate public health information, utilizing population diversity and media variety.

5) Assess the population's health status, determine health and disease, and identify factors influencing health promotion and disease prevention throughout life.

6) Analyze behavioral, social, and environmental factors affecting health and health inequalities.

7) Compare the healthcare system of their country with those of other countries.

8) Apply basic principles of epidemiology and interpret public health issues.

9) Demonstrate cultural competence towards diverse population groups and vulnerable populations.

10) Act based on ethical and professional values in public health practices, research, and education.

11) Collaborate with community members and stakeholders promoting health.

12) Communicate responsibly with patients, families, communities, and other healthcare professionals in an interdisciplinary approach to patient management in various situations.

13) Develop a basic list of research, critically assess research, and practice evidence-based medicine.

The SER mentions only that "a sufficient number of hours for clinical practices are planned to enable students to gain both theoretical and practical skills. The program includes an adequate number of credits for professional practice and work in the laboratory and field, which will be carried out in the first and second years. Clinical practice is mandatory for students, and attendance is monitored through student signatures on the attendance list."

The expert team has not found specific hours for practice in the field although there is a huge collaboration with different institutes as in mentioned in the SER. "For the realization of the program, the Faculty of Medicine at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova, besides having infrastructure, laboratory cabinets, and high-level equipment according to European standards, collaborates with all Healthcare Institutions in Gjakova (General Hospital, Family Medicine

Centers, Mental Health Center, Occupational Health Institutions, Regional Public Health Institute), especially with the Main Center and Family Medicine Centers in Gjakova, "Isa Grezda" General Hospital in Gjakova, and the University Clinical Center of Kosovo in Pristina."
The expert team recommends to make practical hours in the field obliged for all students in order to realize the nexus between teaching-research and services to society.

The structure of the program includes mandatory (core) courses and elective courses; divided into 8 specialized fields, 2 elective courses per year, over three academic years elective courses will accumulate a total of 18 ECTS (10%) of the entire program.
In the second semester Biostatistics and Health Informatics and mental health in the 5th semester are elective course. In the opinion of the expert team this course has to be obliged. Also the electives Health Economics and Health and Politics , both electives in the 3th semester should have a substantial part obliged for all students. Those domains are crucial in order to implement the domain of sustainability in the programme.
Last but not least is the research project in the 4th year an elective course. This course should be mandatory; it is obvious that the ECTS points have to be rearranged to put the essentials of the elective courses as mandatory and to stay with the in depth approach of these domains as electives.

Although much attention has been given to train the teaching staff in working with learning outcomes , the expert team is not yet convinced that learning outcomes are steering the learning process of the students into mastering all competences defined at programme level.
The expert team recommends to make an overview table with the defined learning outcomes of the courses and the contribution of these learning outcomes to the learning outcomes at programme level.
This will be useful to follow the growth of competences for each individual student and give the guarantee not only that learning has taken place in the right direction but also that at the end graduates will be fit for purpose.
During interviews the expert team is convinced of the student-teacher relationship and the fact that teachers are available for questions and feedback.

The expert team has not seen matrices and grids for judgment to higher the reliability and the validity of the assessment formats.

There is not a "preventive" system in place to detect students with difficulties in a systematic and structured way before mid term and final exams.

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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	x	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	x	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	x	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, 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.	x	
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.	Only Albanian Not appblicable	
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		x

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their relevance to the students' development.		
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.		x
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	x	
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	x	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed.	x	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.		x
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units. *To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)*	x	

Compliance level: substantially compliant

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ET recommendations:

1. The expert team recommends to define explicitly the didactic and research concepts of the programme and to inform students better about learning outcomes as tools to steer learning at competence level.

2. More can be done to work with integrated teaching and learning activities and assessment especially in the practice in the field to realize competence-based learning and assessment.

3. The expert team recommends to work on an overview of the contribution of each course to the defined objectives at programme level.

4. The expert team recommends to augment the ECTS points for the bachelor thesis bachelor 10 ECTS points.

5. The expert team recommends to make practical hours in the field obliged for all students in order to realize the nexus between teaching-research and services to society.

6. The expert team recommends to rearrange the programme in order to put the essentials of the elective courses as mandatory and to stay with the in depth approach of these domains as electives.

7. This will be useful to follow the growth of competences for each individual students and gives the guarantee not only that learning has taken place in the right direction but also that at the end graduates will be fit for purpose.

8. The expert team recommends to work in assessment formats with matrices and grids for judgment to higher the reliability and the validity of the assessment formats.

9. The expert team recommends to install as "student services" a "preventive" system to detect students with difficulties in a systematic and structured way before mid term and final exams.

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2.5. Students

The students at the University of Gjakova (UFAGJ) are very passionate about their respective studies in Public Health. They find that these programs open up a wide range of perspectives in the job market, and they look forward, as the first cohort of its kind in the Republic of Kosovo, to becoming health professionals. They see opportunities in government agencies, regulatory bodies, research institutions, schools, community organizations, and healthcare facilities, including hospitals, daycare centers, outpatient centers, and specialized care facilities.

Students in the Public Health BSc program are very well informed and aware of the university policies and regulations. The University Student Handbook, available online in both Albanian and English, has been a very useful guide for them to navigate their rights and obligations.

The admission procedure is smooth and well-communicated through the university website. It is published in a timely manner, allowing students to apply in the first round from July to September. A second round for the second term is open for those who miss the first opportunity and for students from non-majority communities (Bosnian, RAE, Turkish, Serbian) as well as those coming from neighboring countries (Republic of Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia) to fill their respective quotas accordingly.

The competition is very high due to the limited number of seats available and the high demand reflected in the number of applicants. The selection process is clear, based on students' high school diploma grades, which count for 40%, while the entrance exam results weigh 60%. Despite this clarity and the predetermined criteria for selection, we recommend reevaluating the content of the entrance exam. Currently, it is mainly based on basic scientific knowledge in biology and chemistry. Incorporating general knowledge questions about the social context of Kosovo would likely expand the spectrum of selected candidates for this special program.

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Based on the SER (page 54), students are distributed into three main pillars, with larger groups in lectures (10-60 students) and smaller groups for laboratory and practical work (4-10 students). However, according to the students, their cohort is split into halves for teaching and lecturing practices, comprising 30 students per group. Additionally, each mentor oversees 10 students during practical sessions and promotion days, which is considered a high ratio if we are aiming for quality teaching, especially given that this is the first cohort with relatively small numbers.

Academic staff have office hours where they are available to schedule meeting with students to offer them consultation and guidance. Feedback is continuously provided to students throughout their learning cycle, during lectures, seminars, and practical work with guidance for further readings and support to enhance their understanding. This includes both informal feedback mechanisms during regular sessions and formal mechanisms after their summative assessments. In the formal mechanism, students have a period of 72 hours to accept or reject the grade provided.

Typically, when a student rejects the grade, a meeting is arranged to provide feedback and discuss the results. However, this structured mechanism only offers verbal feedback and is limited to summative assessments upon request. This might raise concerns about its effectiveness and how students can utilize it to enhance their studies as they progress.

All feedback provided is verbal, and we couldn't find any other forms of feedback (i.e written) mentioned in the SER or during the interviews.

The Medical Faculty at UFAGJ has a centralized system, Electronic Student Management System (SMU) for admission as well as for progress, reporting, evaluation, grading and record keeping. The UFAGJ ensures having a contract for SMU maintenance and this contract includes the academic unit of the Faculty of Medicine.

Student assessment is carried out in accordance with the subject syllabus, records are kept for continuity, student activity, seminars, presentations, and final exams. Student results are

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transparent, published on the notice board in the faculty, and consultations with the subject professor are held before grades are entered into the SMU.

Statistical Report, with the common list of students who have undergone the exam, along with the physical individual answer sheets, are submitted to the representative in the Medical Faculty administration for storage. The submission and acceptance of the physical answer sheets for each candidate who has passed and accepted the grade are recorded in the protocol, alongside the subject name, the instructor's name, the deadline, and the number of submitted/accepted answer sheets.

The UFAGJ has its own automated anti-plagiarism system available for students and academic staff to check the academic integrity of any submitted work. On their website they offer students a Manual of the Anti-Plagiarism System - SAP for STUDENTS, with full instructions on how to access and how to use. They are in the process of acquiring more advanced software to further enhance this system and address any flaws in their current one. According to the UFAGJ guide for thesis writing, Guideline for Writing a Diploma Paper for Basic Studies, students must follow the necessary steps for presenting their thesis until its defense. At the end of the program, students are required to submit their thesis in adherence to the guidelines, in both physical and electronic copies. These are then published publicly. Originality is assessed by the mentor and commission members during submission and defense, as well as upon publication.

Based on the UFAGJ Statute and regulations, the possibility of student transfer is clearly defined, with particular importance given to the "Higher Education Information Management System (SMIAL)" project, a digital platform launched by MEST, providing opportunities for students to be informed about academic offerings from universities and colleges.

Students are engaged in the decision-making process, and they are represented in different bodies and committees at Faculty level and University level.
They are represented in:
a) The Senate, based on the UFAGJ Statute, two student representatives are members of the senate, where one has the right to vote in the senate,
b) Governing council, there is an observer-student member in the Governing Council:

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c) In the Study Committee, a student has the right to vote,
d) Likewise, in the Faculty Council, students are represented by one member for each academic unit within the UFAGJ.
e) In the Central Quality Assurance Commission, a student is a member of the commission.

They are very well informed and proactive in offering initiatives that they are supported to carry on and realize. Students' parliament, who has democratically elected leaders, propose projects to the senate and when approved their activities are financed by the rector. Examples of those projects are stated in the SER page 9. However, one commendable example is the support UFAGJ provided for the "Student Tutoring" initiative, which was based on student recommendations in community services and occasionally individualized for junior students on learning approaches to seminars. We highly recommend structuring this opportunity further into a learning activity for both senior and junior students. This process could include reflective journals on their experiences to assess communication and professionalism skills. Student involvement in decision-making is evident.

The student support services at the university are well established meeting by that the KPI 5.4 set by the KAA. Recently in 2021, UFAGJ established a Student Aid Office at faculty and university level offering help services by informing them about exam deadlines, literature, activities, registering subjects, presenting exams, formulating student requests, appeals, declarations, assistance with scholarship applications, reporting any irregularities students may encounter per the SER page 57 which was also verified during the meetings when the students elaborated on having an office for psychological support for those in need to deal with anxiety and other emotional personal matters .

Moreover, UFAGJ has a newly established Centre for Career Development and Alumni

, with two main objectives: to provide advisory guidance for students regarding career planning and employment preparation as well as to develop and promote the community of graduates and create a connection with students. Despite that this is very commendable, yet the ET team didn't see its advantage on career development during their UG studies rather that a mean for exploring opportunities after graduation with a focus on UFAGJ graduates.

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Clinical and community practice is mandatory for students, and attendance is monitored through student signatures on the attendance list.Yet the evaluation process is carried off campus by non-Academic staff and not based on criteria submitted by the Faculty .

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

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faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.		
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	**X**	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Evaluate the selection process and include other elements than basic knowledge in sciences as Biology and Chemistry that is more related to the needs of this program to ensure a wider spectrum of your selected candidates.
2. A formal feedback mechanism should be incorporated through the learning cycle and not to be mistaken by the formal mechanism currently applied after the summative assessments in the window of 72 hours or with the informal verbal mechanism applied throughout the student learning.
3. Ensure that group sizing in clinical and community practice is minimized and proportionate to allow for more quality of teaching and learning, tailored to the context and needs of that practical session.
4. Build on the" student tutoring "initiative and incorporate that as a learning task for both juniors as well as seniors by having a systematic approach to encourage participating to assess Attitude skills such as communication and professionalism to promote lifelong learners' attributes. Encouraging the use of student portfolios would be the best example in this case.
5. Involve UG students in the webinars, conferences and projects which are focused on UFAGJ graduates to expand their horizon on job opportunities and better inform them on their elective choices to guide their future career.
6. *Evaluate the educational processes during student participation in clinical practice for their effectiveness, reliability and added value. This evaluation should not be based *on*

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attendance alone, and criteria should be established and communicated in advance by academic staff in collaboration with service providers to adhere to standards and align with needs and purpose.

2.6. Research

Research is a priority at UFAGJ and therefore reflected in several strategic objectives. Based on the recommendations of expert panel the university included "The development of a multidisciplinary scientific environment, in order to achieve the maximum utilization of the scientific potential of the University" as one of the strategic objectives and planned activities for its implementation are as follows:

- Determining the University's main research areas in accordance with the University's staff potential.
- Formation of multidisciplinary research teams and creation of institutional support for their development.
- Strengthening of existing organizational units (faculties) and formation of new research/scientific organizational units of the University (Institutes, Research Centers) with the aim of multidisciplinary scientific development.
- Development of institutional support for research activity by strengthening the capacities and activities of the Office for Science and Project Management.

The expert team has not found enough evidence of implementation of the 4 strategies for implementation as defined in the SER.

Allocation of budget is the same for all units. No prioritization is made according to define the strong groups, that need financing on the long run (at least for 5 years for example) and the weaker groups that need seed funding.

In the SWOT analysis is written that more support is needed for cooperation between different groups in the faculty to do multiprofessional research.

Support for the Office for Science and Project Management is not yet structurally embedded.

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The descriptive part of the SER regarding the research-related standards was identical for SERs of Healthcare Management MA program and Public Health BSc program and this alone demonstrates, that research objectives still haven't been defined for study programs, but rather at the institutional level. Determining the research areas/objectives/focus at program levels could facilitate distribution of resources and make research management more effective.

According to the report on the implementation of the strategy action plan for 2021-2023 the university started subsidizing publications indexed in journals of the Web of Science platform and Scopus. In addition UFAGJ allocated separate budget for scientific activities. Research is financed by the budget of UFAGJ, MESTI and external partners and donors co-participating in joint research projects. Currently the total annual budget, determined by university, comprises 80, 000 Euros for the financing of scientific research activity. From this amount, 20,000 euros are planned for the realization of research and scientific projects, while the rest will be divided proportionally (15,000 euros) for each of the academic units. Some general rules regarding research funding are described in "Regulation for scientific research activity in UFAGJ", however detailed regulations for allocation of funds and distribution of these among proposed projects haven't been presented.

The expectations for the academic staff regarding their scientific activities are defined and taken into account for evaluation of their performance. Staff members are aware of these regulations and confirm, that this assessment takes place regularly . Currently university pays special attention to publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals, this is the main measure of scientific activities and currently the only tool used for research validation. In some areas of research it might take too long to produce an article, therefore it would be advisable to add other measurable parameters to assessment of the research productivity of staff members.

Starting from 2021 a number of trainings have been conducted for improvement of scientific skills of academic staff members (Research and scientific publications, Promotion and support of research-based teaching, Workshop for Research and Scientific Research).

The average number of publications for faculty is above 1, however the list of publications, provided to experts, contains the names on only 16 staff members, involved in the program, out of 27, whose CVs have been provided. It has to be noted that the list of publications of the staff members of Public Health program contains quite a large number of titles, not related to the program or the courses. Expert panel members randomly checked the publications and researcher profiles and all of them are affiliated to *UFAGJ* in scientific databases.

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During the interview staff members described their active involvement in international conferences, symposia and congresses, some of which were financially supported by the university. The statistics of activities for research result presentation and spreading have not been provided in SER. Inclusion of research results in teaching process was described with an example of the study on diabetic foot. Most of the research results published by the faculty are not reflected in syllabi. In this way the expert team is not convinced of the systematic and structural updating of the relevance of the content of the program for new knowledge in the field of public health.

The only way the students get to know about the research is by being involved in the process mostly on voluntary basis. University representatives admit, that involvement of students in research is not as high as they wish and a number of activities have been planned to positively influence student engagement. First of all university is starting to finance the projects with involvement of students. Two projects with involvement of 20 students in each have already been planned.

The expert team recommends to create a research line in the programme in order to make that graduates are able to design small research projects and realise research output independently in the field and that skills as critical thinking and problem solving make they work evidence-based

In order to trigger interest of research career among graduates, university helps graduates find PhD positions and offers graduates with PhD degree employment.

The policies for ownership of intellectual property are in place and described in "Regulation of intellectual property in UFAGJ". The expert team has not seen any application in this program.

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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	**No**
Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	x	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	x	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	x	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.		x
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	x	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.		x
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	x	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	x	
Standard 6.9/6.8. 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.		x
Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property	x	

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and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		
Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.		**x**

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Allocation of budget is the same for all units. No prioritization is made according to define the strong groups, that need financing on the long run (at least for 5 years for example) and the weaker groups that need seed funding.
2. Define an allocation budget for financial support based on well defined criteria
3. More support is needed for cooperation between different groups in the faculty to do multiprofessional research.
4. More support and professionalisation is needed for the Office for Science and Project Management.
5. Create information channels to apply for international, national and regional research funds
6. Create in a systematic way help for writing grants with academic staff professionalized in this domain
7. Create a research line in the programme in order to make that graduates are able to design small research projects and realise research output independently in the field and that skills as critical thinking and problem solving make they work evidence-based
8. Install interdisciplinary research unities and ensure an increase collaborations with international research institutions
9. *Increase capacity for conducting high-level experimental research*
10. Involvement of students in research has to be strengthened

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11. Open up opportunities to increase the possibilities for scientific research work of teachers aligned with teaching loads, especially for regular employees

12. Implement in a systematic and structural way the updating of the relevance of the content of the program for new knowledge in the field of public health(not only for the own research).

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The faculty of medicine has a separate building, which currently accommodates students of all programs. Laboratories at the Gjakova Hospital are used for teaching purposes and the faculty does also have its own room in the hospital building. The teaching halls/amphitheaters at the faculty are equipped with screens/projectors and all the necessary tools for lectures and seminars. In the same building library, laboratories, individual working/meeting area for students and rooms for academic staff are located.

On the ground floor of the building there is a reception/student service centre, which is easily accessible for students and they can approach the friendly staff anytime during the day.

The centre for diabetic foot is also located on the ground floor. Here the students are involved in investigation of diabetic patients, which is an effective project for the community interests.

The premises are sufficient for current student number, but as more programs are about to be established at the faculty, the infrastructural development is unavoidable. It has been taken care as the university is planning to build a new building near the hospital, where the faculty of medicine will be transferred. The university representatives anticipate the building process to start soon this year.

The financial plan at the university level is in place. The numbers are reassuring, that the institution has a strong financial position. The financial plan at the program level is rather general and doesn't provide the insight into the details, neither analysis of past experiences. From overall numbers one can conclude that the programs seem to be financially sustainable, however individualized approach to each program in financial aspect is crucial to ensure long term financial stability. Part of the critical equipment was funded from a project, some - from donors. These financial aids and action plans in case of their absence need to be analyzed

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thoroughly. Moreover, it has to be noted that the budget of the Faculty of Medicine is anticipated to reduce to € 993,876.96 in 2025 from € 1,221,951.41 in 2024 - the reasons and effects of this change need to be analyzed and reported.

The library at the medical faculty building is small, but comfortable for the students. Currently there are 30 seats and this is not enough to reserve enough seats for 10% of students at each program (total number of students at medical faculty is far above 300). In addition university has agreements with other libraries (Regional library, Municipal library), where students can use spaces for individual and group work. There are diverse titles both in English and Albanian languages. Experts could find the literature, randomly selected from the syllabi in the library. Students confirm, that books are available both in physical and electronic form and students can access them from anywhere using internet. The library provides access to relevant periodicals, the list and links are provided on the web-page.

In the building of the faculty of medicine there are rooms available for student meetings and group works/discussion. The Student parliament has its own room.

The infrastructure is not adapted to the students with special needs. There's no elevator in the building and although teaching rooms and library can be found on the first floor, other spaces, including laboratories and rooms for students are located on upper floors.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.		X
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process.	X	

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

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. It is recommended that university elaborates financial plan at the level of the Public Health program in order to better analyze its contribution to financial processes at university level and ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.
2. The library spaces need to be enlarged in order to meet the standard requirements.
   It is necessary that all university students, including those with special needs, have access to all university spaces.

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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

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Considering the documentation provided and discussions with the program development team, the ET gave the following compliance levels:

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

Recommendation:
- Accreditation for 3 years
- Number of students: 60

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Expert Team

Chair

Deneke⬤
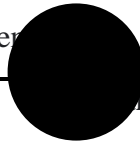
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Expert Member   **Ketevani Kankava**   13.06.2024

(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

Student Member

                              Nibal Sabri   14.06.2024
(Signature)   (Print Name)   (Date)

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