UNIVERSITETI "FEHMI AGANI" IN GJAKOVA

PROGRAMME

Teaching English as a Foreign Language, MA

Accreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

FINAL REPORT

Gjakova, February 17, 2025

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Programme Accreditation Procedure at University "Fehmi Agani" Gjakovë	
Programmes:	Teaching English as a Foreign Language, MA (Accreditation)
	Teaching Children's Literature, MA (Accreditation)
Site visit on:	**05 February, 2025**
Expert Team:	Melita Kovacevic
	Tanja Gradecak
	Elisa Knief
Coordinators of the KAA:	Naim Gashi, General Director of KAA
	Arianit Krasniqi
	Shpresa Shala, Senior Officer at KAA

Site Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Ilmi Hoxha Edita Haxhijaha Ruzhdi Kadrija Mimoza Kurshumlia
09:55 – 10:40	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Emirëjeta Kumnova Nita Pruthi Elinda Pruthi Mentore Zejnullahu Abedin Sadrija Arianit Kupa Qendresa Bardhoshi

10:45 – 11:45	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme: Teaching English as a Foreign Language, MA	Laura Naka
11:50-12:40	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme: Teaching Children's Literature, MA	Nexhmije Kastrati
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch break	
13:45- 14:30	Visiting facilities	
14:35- 15:20	Meeting with teaching staff (mixed of both programmes)	Venera Vala-Këndusi Elsa Vula Labinot Berisha Melinda Mula Agon Kokaj Shyhrete Morina Sindorela Doli Kryeziu Behxhet Gaxhiqi
15:25- 16:10	Meeting with students (mixed of both programmes)	
16:15- 17:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders (mixed of both programmes)	Pleurat Rudi- *principal in SHFMU "Zekeria Rexha" in Gjakova* Veprore Shehu - *NGP Medica Kosova* Zymber Berisha DKA (*Educational Municipality Directorate) in Gjakova* Naser Gega - DKA (*Educational Municipality Directorate) in Peja* Valma Kamisha - *Principal of primary school (SHF) "Kelmend Rizvanolli" in Gjakova* Berat Bejtullahu - *Principal in SHFMU "Yll Morina" in Gjakova* Yllka Juniku - *principal of Gimnasium "Hajdar Dushi" (high school) in Gjakova* Fatos Axhemi -*Jakova Innovation Center Gjakova, director of the center* Mimoza Shala-Daija *Pincipal school "Mehmet Akifi" Gjakova* Arianit Krypa - *Prime Academy manager*
17:00-17:10	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
17:10-17:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Ilmi Hoxha Edita Haxhijaha

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		Ruzhdi Kadrija
		Mimoza Kurshumlia
		Laura Naka
		Nexhmije Kastrati

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

Fehmi Agani University in Gjakova is a higher education institution of regional importance. It has a total of five faculties, one of which is the Faculty of Education, which offers programmes in pre-school and primary education. The Faculty intends to offer additional programmes and at the Master's level. One of these new programmes is a Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. The proposed programme is one year programme with 60 ECTS.

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)

Both the University and the Faculty have defined their mission and strategic goals, and the proposed new educational programme is in line with these. According to the SER, UFAG's mission is "to create knowledge through contemporary teaching and research methods, fostering student enthusiasm and promoting academic integrity". The university has undertaken a number of activities, based on its regulations and decisions, to implement its mission and vision. At the system level, management and monitoring of the teaching process and activities have been established. This has also been brought down to the faculty level. According to the institutional strategic planning, programmes have been offered at bachelor and master level.

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 Faculty, as a university unit, follows and implements in its daily routine various mechanisms and tools developed to prevent plagiarism and academic/research misconduct. There is a Code of Ethics which defines standards of ethical and professional behaviour. Academic integrity is emphasised through various faculty and programme activities and is addressed to both academic staff and students. The University Senate has also established an Ethics Council, which is responsible for promoting the principles of ethical behaviour among students and for implementing the Code of Ethics in the necessary

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contexts. All documents and information related to the Ethics Council are publicly available. Students are also well informed.

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)

The Faculty of Education regularly monitors and periodically reviews all its programmes. This process involves various members of staff, both administrative and teaching. Programmes are reviewed annually, and various indicators are analysed, including the expected and achieved results, course syllabi, the content of course descriptions, the content of teaching activities, and so on. All these activities are used to improve the existing programmes, but also to plan changes, according to SER. However, it is not clear and fully transparent where this information is shared, it is not publicly available and it is not clear what actually happens once the information is collected and analysed.

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 Faculty of Education has a modest but probably sufficient administrative staff, given the size of the Faculty, covering various areas of management and student support. There is a student services officer, a student records officer, a legal officer, a dean's assistant, a placement officer, a learning coordinator and a librarian. There are additional staff that are shared by all the faculties, such as IT officers or financial officers. However, there is a discrepancy what is written in the SER, and what it could be found on the website.

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)
This is not applicable since the programme is for the first time in accreditation process.

ET recommendations:
1. *To ensure that the management of the programmes is effective and efficient, the information collected, the analysis carried out and the changes implemented are publicly available.*

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 Faculty has established all relevant procedures, documents and regulations for the implementation of internal quality assurance. Each academic unit has its own Quality Assurance Committee, there is a coordinator, while at the institutional level there is a Central Quality Assurance Committee.

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The staff responsible for quality is made up of representatives of the academic staff, administrative staff from the Central QA Office, a representative from the Office of Academic Affairs and a student representative. There is also a responsible Vice-Rector at university level.
Documents are publicly available.
The monitoring of programmes is carried out on an ongoing basis and is analysed and updated annually.

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

Study programmes are developed according to the institutional mission and strategic objectives. It has well-defined procedures for approving new programmes, and various internal and external stakeholders are involved in this process. The Advisory Board, a body of external stakeholders, plays a specific and important role before a new programme is proposed. Once the programme is approved and accredited, it is monitored within the institutional system of internal quality.

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)

All stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the implementation of the programme also contribute to the process of monitoring and reviewing the programme. This process is ongoing and the data collected is analysed on an annual basis. Faculties and/or individual units conduct surveys and collect additional information from employers and students. The information they collect is used to make changes to the programme where necessary.

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 majority of documents, policies and regulations are publicly available on the institutional website, but there is still some information that is not accessible. When it comes to the results of some surveys, especially student evaluations, or some statistical data and figures that speak about the efficiency and functioning of the Faculty are not accessible. According to the SER, the Faculty carries out a number of surveys and conducts questionnaires among students, employers and mentors, but the results and outcomes of these activities are not publicly available.

ET recommendations:
1. *Additional efforts should be done in order to update all the information relevant for the study programmes and to make them publicly available*

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

Administrative instruction on placement, licensing and career in teaching according to job placement is foreseen and a Master's degree in Teaching is required. Therefore, the program under evaluation enables all candidates who intend to practice the profession of teaching English as a foreign language to become professionally qualified and have the necessary skills for the teaching process. The teaching staff should thus represent the best possible selection of experts in contemporary teaching

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methodologies who undergo continuous education in the field and produce relevant expert research. Aside form this, teachers included in this MA program were depicted by students in interviews with the ET as very good teachers and kind and understanding people.

The expert team (ET) was presented with the plans for staffing the new program. Table 10. of the SER provided essential information about the planned staff members, but not all CVs were in English, which prevented ET to cover in full the scope of their professional expertise. As indicated in the SER, the Master's study program in Foreign Language Teaching (English), in addition to the regular academic staff from the Faculty of Education, the academic staff involved as course leaders also include members from the Faculty of Philology at UFAGj, all of whom are on regular contracts at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova.

The majority of staff members planned for teaching are full time employed in the Faculty of Education and have qualifications in the field of education. Whereas this allows for the educational/pedagogical elements to be well covered, it does not sufficiently address the EFL specificities, as only a limited number of full-time staff members (3 members out of 9) have qualifications also in English.
It is the understanding of the ET that the program is intended to be with delivery in English, but it was established during the visit that many staff members do not have proficiency levels of English to be able to competently deliver the program. During the interview with the teaching staff members, their international experience was indicated within various mobility programmes (e.g. Erasmus+), but the answer to the direct question whether any native speakers are planned to be included in the teaching process was not positive. The ET could thus not ascertain whether any international, English speaking staff have already been secured and what the measure for securing their involvement may need to be. There might be the option to have some elements of teaching innovations in Albanian, but the currently designed program does not explicitly indicate this. Also, it must be remembered that EFL comes with its own peculiarities and different EFL-native language combinations (in this case EFL-Albanian) may generate different elements of difficulty in teaching and may be underpinned by different pedagogical strategies. As immersion is widely promoted, the value of staff being able to deliver the full program in English so as to demonstrate EFL understanding and capacity is believed by the ET to be of paramount importance.

Whereas the ET was told of the efforts teachers make for continuous professional development, it was indicated during the visit that those staff members who also have English language competence do not have any experience of teaching at master's level and no training or development has been organised to mitigate this lack of experience.

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

In the program under evaluation, 5-course leaders are from the Faculty of Education, while 4-course leaders are from the Faculty of Philology at UFAGJ, all of whom are regular academic staff at UFAGJ. Consequently, for the evaluated program, full-time teachers make up more than 50% of the academic staff covering the study program (all teachers are regular staff at UFAGJ), which is following Article 26, point 5.3.3 of Administrative Instruction No. 15/2018 for the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosovo.

The study program is supported by the academic staff employed by the Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo No. 04/L-037, Law No. 03/L-212 of Work, and the internal regulations in force at UFAGj. In addition to these legal acts in force, the employment of academic staff at the "Fehmi Agani" University in Gjakova is carried out according to the Statute of UFAGj; Administrative Guidelines and Regulations of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation; Regulations of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency; Regulation for the selection procedures regarding appointment, reappointment and promotion of academic staff at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova; and according to the Regulation for Personal Income for academic staff, function supplements, honorariums, and permanent committees at UFAGj.

UFAGj has clear, objective and transparent processes for staff recruitment and employment conditions, which is supported by the above listed documents and examples of competitions publicly announced at the University web pages, employment contracts for some of the teaching staff etc. The procedures and conditions for the admission of academic staff are clearly defined in Articles 175, 176, 177, 178, and 179 of the Statute of UFAGj, specifically in the Regulation for the selection procedures regarding appointment, reappointment and promotion of academic staff, Articles 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Each point of these articles must be fully met by the candidate applying.

UFAGj has adequate procedures for the selection of the best candidates for each position (teacher recruitment procedures arise from the strategic goals of the HEI and the specific needs of study programs, and they are aligned with the legislation and internal regulations in effect).

Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and employment conditions on the university's website, where they can find all the internal regulations, including the code of ethics for academic staff and students, regulations for disciplinary procedures for academic staff and students, and more. However, **there is no clear procedure for advertising positions at the international job market** (e.g. Euraxess).

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)

The Faculty of Education has 23 full-time staff with regular contracts, of which 18 are professors and 5 are assistants.

The majority of staff members planned for teaching this MA program are full time employed in the Faculty of Education and have qualifications in the field of education. In addition to the regular academic staff from the Faculty of Education, the academic staff involved as course leaders also include members from the Faculty of Philology at UFAGj, all of whom are on regular contracts at the University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova.

According to *Regulation on Definition of Master Study Criteria* (2020) Article 24, teachers with regular employment contracts in the designated academic unit and who teach at the level of master studies during the academic year can **mentor** up to 15 candidates in one academic year per teacher. The teacher can lead **up to 5 candidates at a time** and in view that the expected teacher- student ratio is 1:7, it is **not clear whether this regulation can be followed** and they may have more MA papers to mentor since they are engaged in other MA programs (and/or BA programs, so BA theses may be included in the final count as well).

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As the program is not yet accredited, the ET can only go on anticipated workloads and cannot test the reality of cumulated teaching load for individual teachers, which, of course, needs to be correlated with hours for assessment, graduation thesis coordination and general consultations availability. Upon request by ET a document with clarifications regarding teachers' workload and budgetary considerations was supplied but the tables refer to the workload on study programs at the Faculty of Education only and not to other institutions at UFAGj, so that a **full workload of individual teachers at this MA study program could not be properly assessed.** One example is the case of Prof.assoc. Dr. Sazan Kryeziu whose workload of 4 contact hours is presented but the rest of 17 contact hours in 5 courses at the Faculty of Philology is not included, making it a total of 21 contact hours, which is more than the allowed 10 hours per week. The argument presented during ET's meeting with the Faculty authorities and teaching staff was that some of the teachers' courses are elective, and may not be selected by students, so they would not overstep the maximum is not acceptable, because it is highly speculative and would mean that limitations on the choice of elective courses for students would be possible since teachers' workload should not be potentially overstepped

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)

With regard to professional development opportunities for academic staff, the ET found that although these are offered, they are still underutilized. There is still a clear **need for improvement in terms of content**. The **range of further training should be significantly increased**, especially in new methodology of teaching. This proves even more important given that the program is at master's level, on teaching and promotes as some of its learning outcomes are dependent on the teachers being knowledgeable in these areas, for example: "understand contemporary language teaching methodologies, strategies, and approaches, and prepare to apply them in diverse teaching contexts" and "incorporate modern technologies and digital tools into their teaching to enhance the language learning process." Importantly, this could be achieved through international cooperation which is missing or very weak.

In the ET's discussions with members of the teaching staff as well as with students and graduates of BA programs, it became very clear that, in addition to their commitment to the academic community, the teaching staff are also available for consultations and advice with students, which is anticipated to continue for the English program.
The regular evaluations of academic staff were explained in detail to the expert team by the members of the quality assurance team. Teachers are aware of the importance of regular evaluations.

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)

HEI has been implementing training courses on innovative teaching practices targeted at academic staff members**.** The Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching (DCET) is part of the "Fehmi Agani" University of Gjakova (UFAGj). DCET offers training, as well as individual and group counseling, for teaching staff. These trainings include improving teaching skills, curriculum design, developing

teaching materials, utilizing technology in education, integrating scientific research into teaching, offering courses in foreign languages (English and German), as well as project design and management. The training objectives are well developed, but a vision of training in **more contemporary teaching methods and especially IT skills**, such as the use of AI in the teaching process would be advisable. Also, to our best knowledge, we could not deduce whether the listed training objective of "Contemporary teaching methods" involves **the methods in EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction)** which would be a desired asset for teachers at an MA study program in TOEFL. International mobility of the teaching staff is sufficiently developed, evidence of which is provided for six out of nine members. This type of mobility should, however, be more strongly practiced, as well as the **incoming mobility of teachers**, preferably in the field of TOEFL and native speakers of English would be recommended.

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 program come from English Language – Translation and interpretation at the UFAG Faculty of Philology and should have sufficient qualifications and experience to achieve the desired learning outcomes of the study program. Their field of study and research areas align with the objectives of the program being evaluated.
The external collaborators have over 10 years of experience in teaching, and their scientific publications are focused on the field of education, with a particular emphasis on foreign language teaching. In some courses in this MA program, however, they are to teach the same content offered in the BA program (cf. 4.3 below), so it would be advisable to align their teaching practices and research with the ISCED and EQF 7 level of qualifications.
At the same time, e.g. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Sazan Kryeziu is to teach "Theories of Second Language Acquisition" where he has not taught such or even similar course, as far as his CV can tell, and has not done any research in the field, and also, Prof.Ass.Dr. Elsa Vula is an expert in translation and not in EFL, which she is to teach within the course "EFL for teachers".

Teaching of English as a Foreign Language is a very wide field of applied linguistics, well developed and productive in research and study programs, so it would be recommendable to orient the external staff intended to teach at this MA program in that direction.

ET recommendations:

1. *Competitions for work positions should be publicized internationally in order to attract international experts, possibly native speakers of English.*
2. *Total workload of all teaching staff must be taken into consideration without reservations regarding the potential exclusion of elective courses from the total workload count.*
3. *The Program must clarify the language of delivery and where courses are to be fully taught in English, staff members need to have qualifications for English language*
4. *All staff intended to engage with the program must have some exposure to master's level teaching and understand Level 7 requirements or must receive induction/training to this effect.*

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5. *The Program should ensure improved teaching strategies with the support of new technologies anticipated to influence heavily the future of education: AI and distance learning.*
6. *The Program should increase the variety of provided opportunities for professional development for the teaching staff especially for the external teaching staff and in areas related to research and involvement in international projects.*

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

The SER, the syllabi available online and the teaching staff comments indicate that the study program has a qualification-related orientation, although, more attention could be given to the specificities of English as a foreign language. The ET noted that some of the electives may be better suited as compulsory components, for example "Information technology in ELT" with a very heavy workload of 5 contact hours should be potentially moved to the elective course, since e.g. electives "Teaching Strategies for language teachers" and "Theories of Second Language Acquisition" are much better suited to the desired profile of the MA student at this program and would clearly benefit from orientation towards EFL specificities.

The ET took a close look at the content of the curriculum which was discussed with the Program holder and teaching staff in terms of concrete implementation and adaptation to current requirements and circumstances. The ET also discussed the curriculum and its relationship to the requirements of professional practice in detail with students and graduates of the BA program English Language – Translation and interpretation at the UFAG Faculty of Philology or similar at other Kosovo universities and prospective employers who had had some level of engagement in the planning of the English program (Advisory or Industrial Board, as it was, not quite properly, called). Generally, the appropriateness of the curriculum content was confirmed.

The language of instruction is English in the majority of elective courses, however the ET noted that there is no clear requirement for entry for competence level by students nor any proposed support for language enhancement. Additionally, 6 out of 9 full-time staff do not hold qualifications in English and it has been noted by the ET in interviews that their command of English is not always without problems. Still, additional education in English is supplied by the HEI's QA management and this support, as one in international mobility should be encouraged.

The ET identified a good focus on varying teaching strategies. Nevertheless, a greater use of digital technologies must be seen as a good way to involve the new generation in a new teaching strategy. The ET will expect that this will become more evident on the implementation of the English program, more specifically if numerous available digital and AI supported tools for learning foreign languages are to be introduced.

The ET identified that some learning outcomes are replicated in slightly adjusted manner when it comes to mandatory and elective courses, so, e.g. "Diversity in English Language Classes" (or "Diversity in the English language classroom", as it is called in the Program plan), is an elective course sharing a range of LOs with the mandatory course "English Language Teaching Methodology", describing one

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of their LOs in the following way: "...develop effective classroom management strategies that address the challenges and opportunities presented by a diverse group of learners, creating an inclusive and positive learning environment" vs. " Implement a variety of classroom management strategies", respectively. And although we allow for the fact that learning and repeating certain aspects of the teaching process is never obsolete, closer attention should be paid to diversify Los and be more specific in the aims of particular courses.

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 program in evaluation has used **examples of best practices in defining learning outcomes**, referring to the ECTS Guide, 2015, as a guide that outlines the steps for the high-quality design of the program. It is modelled on qualification objectives which are subject-related and interdisciplinary and include the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies.

The intended outcomes of the program, **aligned with the mission of UFAGj**, are in accordance with the institution's mission, with the mission of the Faculty of Education and with the stated objectives of the study program. They 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. However, **none of the LOs of the mandatory course "Information technology in ELT" corresponds to the elements in the HEI's mission** or explicitly stated program objectives, so it would be prudent to re-evaluate the importance of this course and recategorize it, perhaps, as an elective course. It is ET's opinion that the distribution of the workload, ECTS credits and the category of all courses in terms of their relevance should be re-examined and applied accordingly.

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

The evaluated program: Master's in Teaching English as a Foreign Language is at level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework, which includes academic and professional higher education programs, the completion of which leads to a qualification with the general title of Master. The expected learning outcomes of the study program are fully aligned with the National Qualifications Framework and the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), in three components: knowledge, skills, and competencies. The learning outcomes of the study program will not involve the use of skills or knowledge that correspond to other levels of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), but will focus on being aligned with the learning outcomes of the specialized program, such as the level 7 program of NQF by providing access to employment and career advancement within the field of teaching English as a foreign language, as well as supporting enrolled students for professional and academic development.

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)

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The program has been analysed and adapted in accordance with the EU directives related to higher education, ensuring all students receive quality and equal education. The content of the program is structured in a way that includes competencies and learning outcomes that align with those required by European directives, preparing students for the increasingly competitive labor market.

The study program has been designed taking into account the opinions and recommendations of the Advisory Board for Entrepreneurship, which has provided valuable guidance in the relevant fields, ensuring that the content of the program is in line with best practices and market requirements

Taking into consideration that the bulk of the planned student body would enrol following the BA programme English Language – Translation and interpretation at the UFAG Faculty of Philology or similar, a look was taken at some of the courses similar in their titles, so, e.g. the elective course at 1st year; I Semester "English for Specific Purposes" (2P, 3 ECTS) was compared to the course "Teaching English for Specific Purposes" 1st academic year- 1st semester in the MA programme and completely same learning outcomes, aims of the course and basic and additional literature were listed in both course descriptions. The only difference in course description was: "The course also integrates technology and current trends in language teaching to prepare learners for various English language terminology." [1] The rest of the description is dedicated to students actually learning various specialized terminology, so this final remark seems to be a token indication of the required teaching skills to be found in courses found in this MA's syllabus.

It is also indicative that some course names are different in the study plan and in the syllabuses (e.g. "Diversity in the English language classroom" in the study plan and "Diversity in English Language Classes" in the syllabus) and that some course descriptions in English are translated very badly[2], which does not bode well for the quality of English instruction in this program general. Taking into consideration that only 3 out of the 9 teaching staff members are experts in English and are expected to teach in English, it is difficult to envision sufficient exposure time to the English language required at this level of highly specialized education.

The mandatory course "Information Technology in EFL Teaching" with its teaching load of 5 contact hours and 6 ECTS does not justify them with its content since it presents in the course description the very basics of text processing and Internet searches, skills that have been most certainly surpassed by contemporary generations of students. In view of the development of English as a global language and its use in the generative Large Language Models, it would be advisable to dedicate more attention to **educating MA students of TOEFL on how to use them** in class or how to construe good search prompts to be able to engage their future students in new types of class activities and to disable as much as possible the threat of plagiarism.

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[1] https://edukimi.uni-gjk.org/upload/dokumentet/1732009087-6.%20MA%20-%20Teaching%20english%20for%20specific%20purposes%20-%20English.pdf
[2] https://edukimi.uni-gjk.org/upload/dokumentet/1732009738-5.%20MA%20-%20English%20langauge%20for%20teachers%20-%20English.pdf

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As suggested in the SER, some of the programs abroad, accredited by EHEA, are comparable to the results of the program under evaluation. For example, the Ibero-American University Foundation (FUNIBER)[1] in Spain offers a Master's program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, which includes a range of pedagogical aspects aimed at promoting collaborative learning between teachers and students. However, this program does not correspond to the planned MA study program at UFAGj since it is specifically designed for distance learning and, as a result, the material used has been designed to be accessed on the Internet by means of a special interface created for this reason. The interface is a central part of this type of teacher training since the virtual interaction, by means of e-mail, discussion groups, chats, etc., bridges the geographical gap between the different components of the course.

The FUNIBER program aims to help practicing teachers, or those wishing to become teachers, address in an informed and principled way the issues and professional needs that relate to their own working environment. Thus it corresponds partially to the MA program at UFAGj, but, e.g. it requires linguistic skills of students at the level of specific TOEFL or Cambridge Certificate test, so it would be **advisable to have some kind of (self)assessment according to CEFR** at least that would more or less unify the students body in their knowledge of English. There are MA programs (albeit not too many of those with 60 ECTS) at education departments in the wider region that incorporate e.g. English modules in their study programs, which may serve as role models for **the structure of the program[2] which would potentially help in finding balance between pedagogical and applied linguistic courses**.

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)

SER of the Program provided arguments for this standard that the study program had been designed taking into account the opinions and recommendations of the Advisory Board for Entrepreneurship, which had provided valuable guidance in the relevant fields, ensuring that the content of the program is in line with best practices and market requirements. The program has been analysed and adapted in accordance with the EU directives related to higher education, ensuring all students receive quality and equal education. The content of the program is structured in a way that includes competencies and learning outcomes that align with those required by European directives, preparing students for the increasingly competitive labor market.
The Faculty of Education, specifically UFAGJ, ensures that the pedagogical practice runs effectively by securing cooperation agreements with the Municipal Directorates of Education in the Gjakova region and north Albania, particularly with educational and academic institutions, primary schools, as well as public and private educational institutions, where cooperation agreements have also been made.

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[1] https://www.educations.com/institutions/funiber/master-in-applied-linguistics-teaching-english-as-a-foreign-language

[2] https://www.foozos.hr/en/graduate-studies/ ; https://www.ufzg.unizg.hr/graduate-study-programme-in-early-childhood-and-preschool-education-english-language-teaching/

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Regulated professions, however, refer also to legally required preconditions to be met in order to pursue them. In the case of this Program, HEI must **align with the *Norms on the professional framework of General Education* drafted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo**. Articles 31 to 34 of these Norms provide criteria for employment in schools as teachers, and one of the most important conditions is in Article 33, point 4 , which says: "All programmes leading towards a teaching qualification shall, by not later than the commencement of academic year 2012/13, be equivalent to a second cycle programme of 300 ECTS, consisting of professional and academic training and practice, the details to be regulated in a bylaw.". The 60 ECTS covered by this Program lead to the required 300 ECTS provided that appropriate 240 ECTS BA programs have been absolved by the prospective student.

Administrative instruction on placement, licensing and career in teaching according to job placement is foreseen and a Master's degree in Teaching is required. 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. Therefore, the program under evaluation enables all candidates who intend to practice the profession of teaching English as a foreign language to become professionally qualified and have the necessary skills for the teaching process

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

The Faculty of Education, specifically UFAGJ, ensures that the pedagogical practice runs effectively by securing cooperation agreements with the Municipal Directorates of Education in the Gjakova region and north Albania, particularly with educational and academic institutions, primary schools, as well as public and private educational institutions, where cooperation agreements have also been made. UFAGj collaborates with the labour market and has cooperation agreements with many educational institutions, both public and private schools, at the primary and secondary levels.
The Faculty has developed a guide for organizing the Practical Work of master's students in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching, which includes the expected learning outcomes and the responsibilities of all parties involved in this process. The Program also includes practice for students within courses " English foreign language for teachers" with 30 hours in pedagogical practice in schools and the same amount in the second semester course "Assessment in Education" (please, check the titles of courses in syllabi and in SER, also, table on page 62 attributes 0 hours of workload for students for practical work, which does not correspond to the actual state of affairs). Although it may seem that the 10 ECTS is sufficient for practical work, one third of the program for future teachers dedicated to teaching practice, as opposed to mostly theoretical courses making up the remaining 20 ECTS in the Program seem to be insufficient. It might be useful to reconsider **the distribution of mandatory and elective courses** and **give precedence and make obligatory those that contain more practical activities.**

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

The study program is carried out through various pedagogical methods that are appropriate for the master's level and closely linked to the intended learning outcomes. These methods include active and interactive learning, discussions, case studies, seminars, scientific research, and projects, as well as research presentations, enabling the development of students' analytical, critical, and research skills, and preparing them for the application of knowledge in professional practices. A wide variety of methods that support the learning outcomes of the program are suggested in SER and those would be practiced in well equipped teaching facilities.

The obligatory attendance time for students, including lectures and exercises, is 20 hours per week on average (26 in 1st semester, 14 in 2nd, not taking into account the time necessary for writing the MA thesis). This might give students sufficient opportunities for independent study, reflection and analysis. But it must be considered that, especially in **master studies, a high percentage of students are already employed** (as evidenced during the experts' meeting with the students). The official workload per semester is equivalent to 30 ECTS. (1 ECTS is calculated with 25 hours, which means a workload of 750 hours in six months, approximately 30 hours per week.) For some **students it may be really a challenge to manage this workload**. The expert admits however that she is familiar with cases where very highly motivated students manage this extreme workload.

Efforts to improve quality are recognizable, but not yet sufficient in the view of the ET. Particularly in the area of teaching materials, the ET was unable to detect any convincing evidence of **reliable sources for teaching materials and lack of contemporary literature in the English** language was detected as one of the weaknesses in the SWOT analysis of the educational process, so more finances should be allocated to this purpose. Further efforts are needed here, in which international cooperation can be helpful. It would also be conceivable to develop special **teaching material that focuses more strongly on the qualification requirements and needs of the students**.

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)

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 by the respective course professors, and these are also specified in the course syllabi. Assessment in the study program is objective and consistent, based on clear criteria that help eliminate subjectivity (this sentence is used twice in SER, please revise).

For assessment, the methods and grading criteria are also communicated to students through the Student Handbook, which is published on the University's website. Students in the study program will be assessed through formative evaluation, gathering all activities in an individual portfolio on a weekly basis. Students are informed after the completion of evaluations through the publication of results, via email, SMU (Student Management System), personal meetings, and consultations. It is essential that **student anonymity** is guaranteed in the evaluation and assessment process.

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

Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The evaluation criteria are determined based on the completion of tasks and responsibilities of the students. These are described in each syllabus, and students are informed about the workload for each course in the first week of the semester. 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.

ET, however, would like the Program creators to **re-evaluate the distribution of mandatory and elective courses, and the class type**, e.g., whether "Academic Writing" should consist of 2P or whether more time should be dedicated to practical exercises in writing and corrective feedback. The same issue has already been remarked upon for the mandatory course "Information technology in ELT" (cf. 4.1. above).

ET recommendations:
1. *Find study programs abroad that which would potentially help in finding balance between pedagogical and applied linguistic courses.*

2. *The distribution of the workload, ECTS credits and the category of all courses in terms of their relevance should be re-examined and applied accordingly. Re-evaluate the distribution of mandatory and elective courses, and the class type, i.e. the ratio of theoretical vs. practical classes.*

3. *Examine carefully all learning outcomes in course syllabi and adjust them so that they correspond to ISCED 7, i.e. MA level in order to differentiate them from similar LOs in the BA program English Language – Translation and interpretation*

4. *Reconsider the LOs of the mandatory course "Information technology in ELT" which do not corresponds to the elements in the HEI's mission or explicitly stated program objectives.*

5. *Introduce explicitly numerous available digital and AI supported tools for learning foreign languages.*

6. *Introduce reliable sources for teaching materials and secure contemporary literature in the English language and TOEFL.*

7. *Secure teaching material that focuses more strongly on the qualification requirements and needs of the students.*

5. STUDENTS

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

The admission process at UFAGj is structured around international conventions and national regulations, as outlined in the university's Statute. While general admission criteria are publicly

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available on the university's website and social media platforms, specific details for international applicants are not explicitly provided. For undergraduate programs, applicants must hold a high school diploma, while those applying for a master's program must have completed a bachelor's degree with 240 ECTS credits. In particular, the Master's program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language ensures that admitted students possess the necessary academic foundation by requiring a minimum entrance exam score of 40%. However, students from non-majority communities—such as Preshevo, Bujanovac, Medvegja, Albania, North Macedonia, and Montenegro—are granted admission with a slightly lower threshold of 30%. UFAGj upholds an anti-discrimination policy aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for all students. As part of this commitment, candidates with certified special needs receive additional bonus points in the admission process. Furthermore, the Faculty of Education organizes an annual admissions competition, allocating 12% of available seats to students from non-majority communities, with 5% specifically reserved for applicants from the aforementioned regions. While the SER highlights that study period recognition is integrated into the academic framework to facilitate student progression, it lacks sufficient detail and supporting evidence on how these procedures are implemented. Strengthening transparency in this area could enhance clarity for prospective and current students.

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 HEI has a structured system for monitoring student progress and providing individualized support through three key stages: student assessment, individual reports, and assistance from the academic development office. Emphasizing the importance of teacher-student communication, the institution integrates feedback as a fundamental aspect of its educational philosophy. Student progress data is systematically collected through reports from the student services office, the academic development office, instructors, and the University Management System (SMU). Additionally, the HEI tracks student completion rates for each cohort, ensuring continuous evaluation of academic performance. This information is regularly communicated to the Dean, Vice Dean, and program leaders, while all reports are made accessible through the official website and the University Management System. The HEI also ensures transparency by publishing a detailed description of the Master's study program on its website, including the program's mission and objectives. Furthermore, it has a well-defined procedure for study transfers at the beginning of each academic year or semester, with credit transfer policies clearly outlined and communicated to students.

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

The HEI informs students about international mobility programs through various channels, including information sessions, emails, flyers, and the UFAGj website, with the Office for International Cooperation playing a central role in disseminating this information. According to the SER, students receive guidance and support from this office, particularly regarding application procedures. Interviews

with students highlighted collaborations with Zurich University and a mobility program in Albania, while mobility data indicates consistent and strong participation over the years. The university has established regulations for recognizing ECTS credits, with clearly defined procedures for transferring and acknowledging credits earned through international mobility programs. These procedures adhere to standard protocols, and detailed information is readily accessible. Additionally, UFAGj's website is available in English, ensuring that all application procedures and requirements are accessible to international applicants. However, there is no clear evidence of structured initiatives or programs specifically designed to attract international students. The only reference to international student enrollment is that courses may be conducted in English if foreign students are admitted. While the university states that it is working to attract international students by offering advisory assistance, a suitable study environment, and information on living arrangements and community integration, it does not appear to have a concrete international recruitment strategy. Instead, its primary focus remains on promoting outgoing student mobility. The HEI offers foreign language courses for international students and provides a limited selection of courses in English, which are publicly listed in the subject catalog. Furthermore, the HEI requires students to submit a report at the end of the academic year, which is reviewed by the institution, with appropriate measures implemented by the International Office. However, neither the website nor the SER provides detailed information on the process of collecting, analyzing, and addressing this feedback. While the SER includes mobility-related data for academic staff, students, and administrative personnel, this information is not published on the university's website. Making student mobility data publicly available would enhance transparency and allow prospective students to assess the university's level of global engagement.

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)

The SER indicates that the university employs a sufficient number of staff to support students, with clearly defined roles, including academic counseling and student services officers. New students receive information packages during an initial meeting with faculty staff, which include all necessary documents, such as study regulations. Additionally, the university's website provides details on study regulations, tuition fees, and scholarship opportunities, ensuring transparency and accessibility. Students enrolled in the program benefit from multiple support structures. The Career Development Office offers training focused on skill development and provides information on career opportunities. Furthermore, the Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching (DCET) selects student tutors to assist their peers with academic matters, fostering a collaborative learning environment. The student complaint procedures are well-defined and transparent. Information on these processes is available through the university's website, electronic platforms, open days, and the Student Handbook. Moreover, students can submit complaints through designated complaint boxes located within the faculty. Beyond academic support, the university offers a variety of extracurricular activities, as outlined in the SER. Students are informed about these opportunities through multiple channels,

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including the Student Parliament, Student Council, academic staff, the university's website, and social media platforms.

ET recommendations:

1. *Enhance the clarity and accessibility of information on the university's website by publishing international mobility opportunities and providing comprehensive data on student participation in international mobility programs over the past five years. Currently, this information is available in the SER for academic staff, students, and administrative personnel but should also be publicly accessible to help prospective students assess the university's global engagement.*

2. *Explore ways to publish program-specific admission criteria for international students, and include details on additional assessments and required documentation.*

3. *Explore ways to define and publish procedures for assessing prior knowledge and competencies, giving examples of assessment criteria.*

4. *Strengthen both outgoing and, in particular, incoming student mobility by developing a structured pathway to attract international students.*

5. *Increase the international dimension of the program by fostering greater collaboration with global institutions and expanding participation in international conferences. These initiatives will better equip students for success in a globalized environment.*

6. RESEARCH

Both from the SER and from the discussions with members of the academic staff, it became clear that the definition of research and research results that are important in the context of the study program is generally known, but the focus is on research objectives closer to the general research axis of the Faculty of Education, i.e. specific pedagogical and educational fields, but it is a strong position of this ET that focus should also be put on research in TOEFL by all members of teaching staff engaged in this Program.

The institution has developed policies and incentive measures aimed at increasing competition, international visibility, and advancing research-scientific work. The amount of financial resources for research-scientific activities is determined by the UFAGJ budget, approved by the Governing Council and is quite generous, but ET does not see in SER any clear indication that teaching staff are allotted specific time or workload portion for research. Also, taking into consideration that almost all of teachers are engaged in teaching at almost full capacity, it is doubtful that they have time and energy to dedicate to writing research papers and project proposals. More specific directives in this sense should be made in HEI's regulations or research strategies. .
In the area of research, the ET certainly acknowledges the efforts of the academic staff to date. Nevertheless, the ET sees research as an area for further improvement if the study program is to fully benefit as an MA program with potential to be a platform also for PhD education, which is scarce in the area and presents a serious problem and threat for the HEI and its staff.
There is a lack of clear plans for advancing research in the department in a structured manner.

Further intensive efforts are required here to improve expectations, quality and results. A significant improvement is most likely to be achieved by strengthening international cooperation and carrying out more ambitious research projects within the field of TOEFL.

It has been observed that at this HEI there is no clearly structured administrative support for performing research activities, i.e. research projects/grants in the form of the Project Office or a Research Center. ET's experience and evidence from other respectable HEIs has proved that if a needed administrative support for improving international cooperation, both in research and teaching is provided, and when it is not burdened upon academic staff themselves, much better results are achieved in research and internationalization goals.

ET found that the research output presented for staff who are planned to teach on this program is satisfactory and does cover areas which are likely to be of interest and can be included in the teaching demonstrations across the various courses.
The current design of the program indicates a course on Research Methodologies and a graduation thesis requirement which the ET would expect to be implemented as conductive to intensifying research contributions from students and for writing their MA theses in an acceptable methodological and structured manner. UFAGj actively encourages interdisciplinary collaboration between experts and students, their research mobility and internationalization of research activities and research publication from related fields and more financial support for this kind of collaboration would be advisable.

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

The study program has defined scientific research objectives in accordance with the Scientific Research Strategy 2021-2025 of UFAGj.
The program under evaluation also supports internationalization and networking by fostering collaboration with other universities in the region and beyond through academic exchanges and joint research projects and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts aim to provide, on the one hand, an excellent incubator for students' individual and professional development, and on the other, a comfortable environment for academic and administrative staff to pursue further professional and academic growth. SER indicates that high-quality scientific research in specific pedagogical and educational fields is promoted, but **focus should also be put on research in TOEFL**, especially because there are numerous projects and other research initiatives in this field of applied Linguistics.

A new regulation on research activities initiated by HEI in 2024 aims to increase the number of scientific works eligible for financial incentives for academic staff, introducing a new classification system where the amount is determined by the journal's quartile ranking. UFAGj provides a dedicated budget for scientific and applied research. This budget includes funding for research projects conducted by staff and students, support for scientific publications, and participation in national and international conferences university ensures access to digital resources and international research networks, facilitating the development of innovative projects

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Students are allowed to participate in research activities that address local socio-economic challenges, making the program relevant to community service and the economic development of Kosovo. It would be advisable also to **secure financial support for student researchers** of UFAGj to participate at research and student conferences and to enable publication of their original research.

As one of the programs at ISCED 7 level the Program should have a substantial research component, which does not yet lead to the award of a doctoral qualification but is designed to provide advanced academic or professional knowledge, skills and competence. This element **should be integrated in all course descriptions in order to secure continuous improvement of the quality of scientific research**, and potentially project proposals and publications by providing support to academic staff and students.

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.

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. The institution has developed policies and incentive measures aimed at increasing competition, international visibility, and advancing research-scientific work. The amount of financial resources for research-scientific activities is determined by the UFAGJ budget, approved by the Governing Council. Financial support for the academic staff of UFAGj, after preliminary approval by the Council for Science and approval by the Governing Council, is provided for publication in international journals indexed on the Web of Science platforms (SCIE, SSCI, AHCI) and SCOPUS.

An annual budget of 80,000 euros for the financing of research-scientific activities was approved by the Governing Council of UFAGj, with a special decision in 2023. Implementation of research and scientific projects is allocated 20,000 euros and each academic unit receives 15,000 euros.

It can be observed that UFAGj has a significant number of scientific publications in the higher quartiles (Q1 and Q2), even though most of the scientific publications belong to the lower quartiles (Q3 and Q4). However, this discrepancy is expected to change with the new regulation for research-scientific activities, which is expected to categorize financial support according to the quartiles in which the journal is indexed.

As far as this MA Program's teaching staff is concerned, not too many high quality publications can be observed, which is viewed as natural since the higher quartile publications have only recently become preferred in view of their being financially supported by HEI. Still, the document passed in 2021 by UFAGj, "Regulation on selective procedures related to the appointment, reappointment, and advancement of academic staff" provides regulation for the assessment of research related to appointment and mentions only point allocations related to databases (e.g. WoS, Scopus, DOI etc.) but does not indicate journal quartiles as relevant. Here is thus obvious the **discrepancy in achieving specific research and career goals**, since teacher's advancement may be easier to achieve through these regulations.

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The planning and organization of the distribution of research projects will be specified in the new regulation for research-scientific activities, which is already in the final stages before its approval. ET proposes that a clearly structured administrative support unit for performing research activities, i.e. research projects/grants in the form of the Project Office or a Research Center is founded at this HEI. ET's experience and evidence from other respectable HEIs has proved that if a needed administrative support for improving international cooperation, both in research and teaching is provided, and when it is not burdened upon academic staff themselves, much better results are achieved in research and internationalization goals.

The research and professional activity of UFAGj staff maintains the respective affiliation, which enables the monitoring of research-scientific activities at the international level. New publications are posted on the faculty's website and the university's website, usually accompanied by a descriptive and promotional text about the work done. At the university level, there is a list of publications by academic staff affiliated with UFAGj, ranked according to the respective units,
Based on the University "Fehmi Agani" Development Strategy and the QDPM work plan, UFAGj organizes a one-day training session for new academic staff to familiarize them with the university's functioning and strategic development plan. Among others, these are: "Scientific Research", "Internationalization and International Projects", "Anti-plagiarism software" etc. It should be noted that more effort should be made in **educating teaching staff in project development**, from research aims to work and financial plans.

Each September, the management of UFAGj organises workshops on Internationalization, and quality journals, and the training with the theme "Research and Scientific Publications" is organized and conducted by the Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching, with trainers from UFAGj certified by HERAS+ and UFAGj. Some of the training objectives include the importance of scientific publications and selecting journals/platforms, formulating the scientific problem in research, research questions and literature analysis in the selected paper. The training with the theme "Research and Scientific Publications" organized by the Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching in collaboration with the HERAS project is also conducted where various other skills in research and steps in publishing staff's research is elaborated on.

UFAGj's open access scientific journal *Journal of Social Education and Interdisciplinary Science* (JSEIS) publishes scholarly work in the social, educational and interdisciplinary sciences. The scope of the journal includes scientific studies in the humanities and natural sciences defined in the classical meaning in the field of social sciences: educational science and field education, medical science, communication, history, linguistics, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, philology, musicology, fine arts, sociology, archaeology, economy, international relations, social services, political science, international studies, business management, applied econometrics, applied statistics, law, public administration. Its web page could not be accessed, so ET was not able to assess its indexing and potential impact factor. It is potentially **a good platform for publishing internationally recognized research publications**.

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.

Through bilateral agreements, UFAGj staff conduct practical work and scientific research in various institutions. The academic staff involved in the study program are already participating in various aspects of collaboration with national and international partners in their respective fields: QATEK" (QATEK- Towards Quality Oriented System of Initial Teacher Education to Increase Teacher Professionalism in Kosovo and TAKE "Together Advancing Kosovo's Training and Employment within the Education Sector". Those are broadly set projects with aims in HEI quality assurance and teacher education in general, so, **more focused project aims should be selected and project and research networks in TOEFL should be joined** and project proposals should be created based on those networks' research interests.

UFAGj and its staff are involved in a significant number of scientific projects and local and international capacity-building initiatives, starting from projects funded by organizations within the country (such as MESTI, HERAS, etc.) and third-party donors (Erasmus+, Horizon, etc.). Additionally, the project leaders and other educators planned to be involved in this program and continuously collaborate with colleagues from other higher education institutions in the implementation of research-scientific activities.

The HEI has established an Advisory Board at the unit level, while UFAGj has established an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Board at the university level. These advisory bodies have specific defined duties and responsibilities and hold periodic meetings among themselves and with UFAGj bodies, thereby enabling the development of the university in alignment with labor market needs.

It is certainly desirable that **cooperation programmes be established with universities and other institutions in English-speaking countries**, in particular with the aim of introducing exchange programmes for university teachers and of giving at least some students an opportunity to study abroad for a while.

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 academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity, either as single or first authors in collaborations. Journals listed as sources may be at lower quartiles, but ET expects that the new financial incentive might increase the ratio of more quality papers and journals.

The list of staff publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) in SER is quite extensive, but the ratio of papers in TOEFL is approximately lower and mostly authored by the Program Holder, Prof. Laura Koshi Naka. Other researchers from the field of English Linguistics, e.g. Prof. asoc. Dr. Sazan Kryeziu is focused more on English Literature and Translation, which is understandable, taking into consideration his interests and teaching at the BA program at the Faculty of Philology. Prof. ass.

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Dr. Nazli Tyfekqi also has a rather diverse set of research interests, but it may be that teachers have been engaged in many different courses and have followed research aims in those areas of English studies.

There is a rather small number of research projects in collaboration with external partners, so **future intensification of research activities becomes an imperative** and requires not only a **research-friendly environment**, but also methodological development and qualification, which will ultimately also benefit teaching and the quality of the study program as a whole.

ET recommendations:
1. *Put more focus on research in TOEFL.*
2. *Research component should be integrated in all course descriptions in order to secure continuous improvement of the quality of scientific research.*
3. *Strive to annul the discrepancy in achieving specific research and career goals, i.e. align promotion criteria with research financial incentives at HEI.*
4. *More focused project aims should be selected and project and research networks in TOEFL should be joined or planned.*
5. *Cooperation programmes should be established with universities and other institutions in English-speaking countries.*

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 16 and 17 of the SER, UFAGj has appropriate premises suitable for conducting teaching and research activities in general. This was approved by the on-site visit of the ET. However, regarding this specific study program, the equipment related to the teaching of English as a foreign language is not satisfying. The faculty mostly provides facilities for pre-school and primary school teaching practices, and much less some targeted equipment for language teaching.. This must be compensated first for the methodical courses and practices. Further on, premises and equipment are only partially adjusted to students for special needs (for example only the ground floor is fully accessible).

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 English is somewhat limited. Students and research staff have access to various research databases, including EBSCO and ACM Digital Library. Note, that Z-library is also listed in the SER, but its legal status is doubtful, therefore its use is not recommended.

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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 seemingly stable, the SER does not provide study programme specific calculations at all. This is especially problematic because this study programme requires further academic staff, and its financial background is not fully explained. That said, the financial status of the faculty seems to be stable.

ET recommendations:
1. *There is a lack of equipment for methodical courses and teaching practices targeting for language teaching.*
2. *The adjustment of premises for students with special needs must be extended.*
3. *The launch of a new programme requires transparent financial planning to ensure the sustainability of the programme.*

Final recommendation of the ET:

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for program re/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.

The ET concludes that the **MA Teaching English as a Foreign Language** degree offered for accreditation is evaluated as **non-compliant**.

In conclusion, in line with the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends **not to accredit** the program *Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.*

Standard	Compliance level
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially Compliant
2. Quality management	Substantially Compliant
3. Academic staff *Mandatory	Non-Compliant
4. Educational process content	Partially Compliant
5. Students	Substantially Compliant
6. Research	Substantially Compliant
7. Infrastructure and resources *Mandatory	Partially Compliant
Overall compliance	**Non-Compliant**

Expert Team

Chair
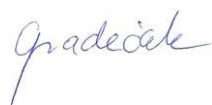
	Melita Kovacevic	**24 February, 2025**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Tanja Gradecak	**24 February, 2025**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Elisa Knief	**24 February, 2025**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)