"HAXHI ZEKA" UNIVERSITY

MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY – BSc
(ALBANIAN LANGUAGE AND BOSNIAN LANGUAGE)

1st March 2025

Affiliate of enqa.

INTRODUCTION

Date of site visit: 31st January, 2025

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Dr. Andreea Serban
- Dr. Marina Gregoric
- Giga Khositashvilli, PhD Student

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):
- Arianit Krasniqi, Director of Department for Evaluation and Accreditation
- Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer

Sources of information for the Report:

- Program Self-evaluation Report
- Study Programs
- Interviews during the site-visit
- University web-page
- Analysis of student demands and the needs of stakeholders for bachelor's and master's
- Feasibility (reasonableness) report
- Regulations for the internal mobility of students of Haxhi Zeka University
- Statute of UHZ
- Regulation for Internal Organigram and systematization of job positions
- Regulation on Basic Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts Studies
- Administrative Instruction (MASHT) 09/2019
- Regulations of the Study Programs
- Regulation on Basic Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts Studies
- Strategic Plan 2023-2026 (UHZ)
- Strategic Plan 2023-2026 (MTHM)
- Analysis of student demands and the needs of stakeholders for bachelor's and master's

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- Code for Ethics and Integrity in Scientific Research
- Code of Ethics of Academic Staff of The University "Haxhi Zeka" In Peja
- Regulation on Measures and Disciplinary Procedure for Students of the University "Haxhi Zeka"
- Regulations of the Study Programs
- Regulation on the Use of Equipment and Monitoring of the Working Hours of Academic Staff and Students at "Haxhi Zeka" University in Peja
- Regulations on the Quality Assurance and Assessment System at "Haxhi Zeka" University in Peja
- Quality Assurance Strategy
- Quality Assurance Guide
- Regulation for the Workload of Students at "Haxhi Zeka" University

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

The expert team conducted the program accreditation assessment based on the evaluation areas and corresponding performance indicators established by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). These criteria are outlined in Regulation (KAA) No. 04/2024, which governs the Manual for Accreditation, Reaccreditation, and Validation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programs at the Bachelor's and Master's levels. The program's compliance assessment was determined by KAA.

Site visit schedule

Program Accreditation Procedure at University Haxhi Zeka in Peja	
Programs:	1. Business Management (in Albanian and Bosnian Languages), MSc, 2 specializations: 1. Business Management, 2. Banking and Finance, 120 ECTS (Reaccreditation) 2. Management in Tourism and Hospitality (in Albanian and Bosnian Languages), BSc, 180 ECTS (Acreditation)
Site visit on:	31 January 2025
Expert Team:	Dr. Andrea Serban Dr. Marina Gregoric Giga Khositashvilli, PhD Student

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Coordinators of the KAA:	Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer Arianit Krasniqi, Director of Department for Evaluation and Accreditation	

Site Visit Program

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the program is integrated	Prof. Dr. Halit Shabani (Dean of the Faculty of Business) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fisnik Morina (Vice - Dean for Teaching, Student Affairs and Scientific Research at the Faculty of Business) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vlora Berisha (Vice- Dean for Finance, Budget and Infrastructure at the Faculty of Business) Adem Dreshaj - Dean of Faculty of MTHM Albona Shala - Vice- Dean for Finance, Budget and Infrastructure at Faculty of MTHM
09:45 – 10:25	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	MSc. Liridon Cukaj (Secretary of the Faculty of Business) MSc. Agron Halitaj (Quality Officer at the Faculty of Business) MSc. Rialda Muharremi (Student Affairs Officer at the Faculty of Business) MSc. Gentiana Kastrati - Director of the Office for Quality Assurance and Evaluation MSc. Luan Lulaj - Quality Assurance and Evaluation Officer Besa Baloku - Secretary of the Faculty of MTHM Kushtrim Agaj - Student Affairs Officer at the Faculty of MTHM
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the program holders of the study program Business Management MSc	Assist. Prof. Dr. Enkeleda Lulaj Head of the Study Program (BM-MSc) Assist. Prof. Dr. Bashkim Nurboja Head of the Study Program (BM-MSc.) Assist. Prof. Dr. Emin Neziraj Head of the Study Program (BM-MSc.)
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	
12:30 – 13:00	Visiting facilities	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fisnik Morina (Vice - Dean and Professor at the Faculty of Business) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vlora Berisha (Vice- Dean for Finance, Budget and Infrastructure at the Faculty of Business) Assist. Prof. Dr. Elvis Elezaj (Head of the Business Management Department)

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		Assist. Prof. Dr. Enkeleda Lulaj (Head of the Study Program)
		Assist. Prof. Dr. Bashkim Nurboja (Head of the Study Program) Assist.
		Libron Kelmendi - Faculty of MTHM
13:00 – 14:00	Meeting with the program holders of the study program Management in Tourism and Hospitality, BSc	Anela Dzogovic - Head of the Study Program (MTHM-BSc)
		Hajrija Shkrijel - Head of the Study Program (MTHM-BSc) Merita Dauti
		Head of the Study Program (MTHM-BSc)
		Bedri Millaku Head of the Study Program (MTHM-BSc)
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with teaching staff	Prof. Dr. Ibish Mazreku (Professor at the Faculty of Business)
		Prof. Dr. Theranda Beqiri (Professor at the Faculty of Business)
		Assist. Prof. Dr. Elvis Elezaj (Professor at the Faculty of Business)
		Assist. Prof. Dr. Mersiha Kacamakovic (Professor at the Faculty of Business)
		Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fitim Deari (Professor at the Faculty of Business and Economics, South East European University Republic of North Macedonia) Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Business
		Mimoza Hyseni Professor at the Faculty of MTHM
		Afrim Selimaj Professor at the Faculty of MTHM
		Afrim Hoti Professor at the Faculty of MTHM
14:45 – 15:25	Meeting with students	Mimoza Morina Student –Second Year (BM)-Faculty of Business
		Altina Gashi Student –Second Year (BM) -Faculty of Business
		Blin Zeli Student – First Year (BM) -Faculty of Business
		Ermina Hajdarpašić Student – First Year (BM) - Faculty of Business
		Earta Morina Student – Third Year Faculty of MTHM
		Arber Lajqi Student – Third Year Faculty of MTHM
		Muamel Dupljak Student – Third Year Faculty of MTHM
		Omer Honsic Student –Second Year Faculty of

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		MTHM
15:30 – 16:10	Meeting with graduates	MSc. Samir Dinaj (Graduate student in the BM program)
		MSc. Elsa Demaj (Graduate student in the BM program)
		MSc. Blendrit Miftari (Graduate student in the BM program)
		MSc. Liresa Binakaj (Graduate student in the BM program)
		MSc. Almir Nurković (Graduate student in the BM program)
		Nora Draga Graduate student, Faculty of MTHM
		Mendim Nimonaj Graduate student, Faculty of MTHM
		Aldin Muric Graduate student, Faculty of MTHM
		Selma Muric Graduate student, Faculty of MTHM
16:15 – 16:55	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Shefqet Dervishaj (Director of the Tax Administration of Kosovo - Branch in Pejë)
		Irfete Pasha (Human Resources Manager at Agency for Funding in Kosovo)
		Kenan Bardhaj ProCredit Bank
		Armend Delijaj "Restaurant Freskia"
		Mentor Bojku "Outdor Kosova"
		Saudin Sijaric "Restaurant Sijaric"
		Muhamed Hamza "Pastry Nora"
16:55 – 17:05	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
17:05 – 17:15	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Prof. Dr. Halit Shabani (Dean of Faculty of Business)
		Prof. Assoc. Dr. Fisnik Morina (Vice - Dean for Teaching, Student Affairs and Scientific Research at Faculty of Business)
		Prof. Assoc. Dr. Vlora Berisha (Vice- Dean for Finance, Budget and Infrastructure at Faculty of Business)
		Assist. Prof. Dr. Enkeleda Lulaj (Head of the Study Program)
		Assist. Prof.Dr. Bashkim Nurboja Head of the Study Program (BM)

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		Assist. Prof.Dr. Emin Neziraj Head of the Study Program (BM)
		Adem Dreshaj Dean of Faculty of MTHM
		Bedri Millaku Head of the Study Program (MTHM-BSc)
		Albona Shala Vice- Dean for Finance, Budget and Infrastructure at Faculty of MTHM

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

The given program at "Haxhi Zeka" University in Peja (UHZ) plays a crucial role in preparing students for the dynamic tourism and hospitality industry. Over the past three years, a total of 577 students have enrolled in the Albanian-language Bachelor's program, with 313 female and 264 male students. The Bosnian-language Bachelor's program has 140 students, comprising 52 female and 88 male students. Additionally, the Master's program has admitted 51 students within the same period. Students primarily come from the Dukagjini Region, including Peja, Decan, Klina, Istog, Gjakova, Junik, Rahovec, Malisheva,

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and Prizren. The faculty also attracts students from across Kosovo and neighboring countries such as Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, Germany, Switzerland, and Serbia. The university upholds a strong commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination, ensuring an inclusive environment for students of diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

The program is designed to equip students with the skills needed for careers in tourism management, sustainable tourism, and hospitality services. Admission is regulated by the UHZ Statute, requiring applicants to have completed high school and passed the Matura exam. The curriculum aligns with European higher education standards and follows the Bologna Process, awarding a Bachelor of Science in Management in Tourism and Hospitality (Level 6 NQF, 180 ECTS) upon completion. The program integrates theoretical knowledge with practical applications, covering a range of courses such as Tourism Planning and Development, Hotel Reservation Systems, Marketing in Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, and Event Management. Given the region's rich natural and cultural heritage, including the "Accursed Mountains" National Park, graduates are well-positioned to contribute to the sustainable development of Kosovo's tourism industry at both local and international levels.

The teaching, learning, and assessment approach at FMTHE is student-centered, incorporating modern educational methods and industry-relevant training. The university has adopted an integrated study concept, allowing students to tailor their academic path by selecting courses that align with their career aspirations. This flexible learning model fosters autonomy, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary engagement, ensuring that graduates are equipped with both practical and strategic competencies. The faculty consists of four full professors, three associate professors, six assistant professors, and one teaching assistant, who provide high-quality instruction and mentorship. Practical learning is emphasized through internships and collaborations with industry partners, enhancing employability prospects. With a steadily growing student body and a curriculum that reflects current industry trends, the program continues to meet the evolving needs of Kosovo's tourism and hospitality sector.

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PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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

MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

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

The program under evaluation, Management in tourism and hospitality, Bsc, 180 ECTS is proposed by The Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (FMTHE) as a new program to be offered in Albanian and Bosnian language. There is a historical experience since the previous programs and academic staff were already engaged in the following programs: Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment, BSc, 180 ECTS, Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment (Bosnian language), BSc, 180 ECTS, Environmental Management, MSc, 120 ECTS and Management and Sustainable Tourism, MSc, 120 ECTS. The experience taken from the already existing study programs will be applied and is incorporated in the creation of the new program under evaluation. The program is at the level 6, with the final degree as a Bachelor of Sciences in Management in Tourism and Hospitality. Duration of study is 3 years. The study program under evaluation is in line with the higher education institution's mission and strategic goals, needs of society and its publicly available. During the meetings with management and quality assurance representatives, as well as heads of the study program and external stakeholders, this program is very important for Kosovo, for the region and for the faculty. As elaborated in the SER the program follows the Higher Education Law 04/L-037 of the Republic of Kosovo, Administrative Instruction (MASHT) 09/2019 (as available in Annex 8), the Bologna Declaration, the Statute of UHZ, the Regulations of the Study Programs of UHZ (Annex 9), the Regulation on Basic Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts Studies (Annex 10), the Strategic Plan 2023-2026 (UHZ) (Annex 11), and the Strategic Plan 2023-2026 (Annex 12) of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment. The mission of the program to be accredited is to equip students with skills and knowledge that align with labor market needs, enabling them to become future leaders in the field of Management in Tourism and Hospitality and to contribute to the creation of policies and

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strategies for tourism that support the overall development of society. As such the program is fully aligned with the mission of UHZ. During the site visit it was clearly anticipated that all stakeholders understand the importance of the program for the market needs and further development of the tourism and hospitality sector in Kosovo and region including the narrow international market. Parallel to this the program is aligned to the mission of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment, and the strategic priorities, particularly the seventh pillar of the Strategic Plan 2023-2026, which focuses on "Entrepreneurship." This is evident from the SER and also confirmed during the meeting with stakeholders, especially committed and enthusiastic management and academic staff. The major focus is on cooperation with the external sector and stakeholders to integrate contemporary market needs into the teaching process and prepare students for market challenges and development of the tourism and hospitality sector. This can also be identified by strong orientation in integrating theoretical work with students' practical skills, following the National Qualification Framework of Higher Education, specifically Level 6 of the Bologna studies. Industrial board is actively involved in the creation and execution of the program by providing continuous support in internship opportunities, practical work with students, guest lecturing and cooperation with professors in creating different projects and tasks for students, supporting and donating when possible and employing students and alumni. The overall Faculty efforts in market research result with the creation of the study program which enables students to gain management skills in tourism and hospitality. These skills comply with the document and the framework available in: Skills 2020 Kosovo, (https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-06/digital_factsheet_kosovo.pdf) and by the industrial board of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment, which confirms the high demand for managerial skills in the labor market (Meetings with the industrial board of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment). This information can be found in the SER but it was stressed out in all meetings with stakeholders during the site visit. Expert panel evidenced strong relationship and support of external stakeholders and Industrial Board toward the UHZ and specifically towards accreditation of the study program in Management in tourism and hospitality, Bsc and the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment. The expert team is convinced that the step towards the accreditation of the study program is relevant and needed for the UHZ, Faculty and society. The importance is also seen in approach that offers students to study in Albanian and Bosnian language which covers mission of the UHZ and the Faculty, anticipating the opportunities in attracting students speaking Albanian and Bosnian and also by

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contributing to further economic prosperity of Kosovo and region, as well as international environment speaking Bosnian language. According to the information provided in the SER and as per the interviews with academic staff and management it is evident that they offer adequate facilities and equipment for the number of students. A detailed description of the infrastructure, which demonstrates the fulfillment of conditions necessary for implementing the program for the student population, can be found in the chapter on Infrastructure and Resources. Facilities and equipment dedicated for the implementation of the study program are capable of catering the intended number of students to be enrolled and new infrastructure is being built for the future generations. The plan is to enroll 80 students in Albanian language and 30 in Bosnian language per study year. During the site visit it was shown to the expert team together with current and future modern facilities. This element of the standard was also part of the evaluation of the MSc study program at UHZ during the same visit, and it is evident that the management takes it very important, serious and professional to create and contribute to better learning infrastructure for students, academic staff, administration and management, where the research capacities and library capacities will also play an important role in the advancement of infrastructure.

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)

At the level of UHZ as well as at the level of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (FMTHE), it is elaborated and evident that the study program under accreditation complies with the a policy of integrity and academic freedom, ensuring that all unethical behaviors are prevented. Accordingly, there are regulations developed and they are publicly available. All stakeholders, especially students, academic and administrative staff are informed about the documents and regulations and they have to comply with those standards. Consequently, the academic integrity and freedom is enabled by the policies and they prevent all types of unethical behaviour. UHZ and the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment uses the following documents to comply with this standard for the study program under evaluation:
1. Regulations of the Study Programs
2. The Higher Education Law 04/L-037
3. The Statute of UHZ
4. Code for Ethics and Integrity in Scientific Research

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5. Code of Ethics for Students at University "Haxhi Zeka"
6. Code of Ethics of Academic Staff of The University "Haxhi Zeka" In Peja
7. Regulation on Measures and Disciplinary Procedure for the Academic Staff of 'Haxhi Zeka
8. Regulation on Anti-Plagiarism Procedures with the Anti-Plagiarism System

Following the impression, arguments and meetings with stakeholders during the site visit, there was clear evidence that all stakeholders' groups are aware of the ethical considerations, anti-plagiarism measures and transparency in teaching, evaluation and research. As a conclusion, the expert team understood that there is a high level of anticipation and awareness of all stakeholders on the importance of keeping ethical standards and comply with them, as the whole team works and supports each other's; management, academic and administrative staff, students, alumni and external business sector representatives. There is a strong commitment to quality and high ethical norms at the UHZ and the Faculty.

In addition to above documents and regulations, to ensure mechanisms for monitoring any potential unethical behavior of students, lecturers and other stakeholders involved in the study program and to comply with them to be efficient, regularly implemented and disseminated among all relevant groups there are the following documents that UHZ uses and applies:

1. The Law on Protection from Discrimination (Law No. 05/L-021, Article 5)
2. The Law on Gender Equality (Law No. 05/L-020, Article 4)
3. The Regulation on Prevention and Protection from Sexual Harassment and Bullying
4. The Ethics Council ensures that all decisions are documented and implemented in accordance with institutional policies and regulations.

During the meetings with stakeholder groups at the site visit, there were no issues addressed or identified to this standard. It is identified that The Ethics Council ensures that all decisions are documented and implemented in accordance with institutional policies and regulations which shows again high awareness and commitment towards the prevention of unethical behaviour. The Ethics Council consists of 5 members and they address cases of ethical violations by academic staff. Cases involving students who violate the Code of Ethics are handled by the Disciplinary Commission within the respective academic unit. To ensure transparency and awareness, UHZ, the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHM), and the Career Development Office organize informational days to inform all stakeholders about the academic programs offered

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each year. (Annex 22: Brochure). The information is available in SER and also confirmed and elaborated to the expert panel during the site visit.

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)

As per the SER and information collected during the site visit, there is a confirmed and explained procedure supported with evidence that the relevant information is collected, analysed and used to ensure the effective management of the study program and other relevant activities. The Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHM) has a strict policy regarding the performance of all parties that impact the quality of the program and in line with that the the Quality Office periodically conducts evaluation activities in line with the Regulation on the System for Quality Assurance and Evaluation and the Performance Indicators for Study Programs. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) include: The pass rate of students in specific courses and across academic years, The dropout rate of students, Student evaluations of staff and vice versa, The employment rate of graduates from the program. Based on performance results, the faculty management reviews these outcomes at least once a year and takes the necessary measures to address any issues that require attention. The information collected during the site visit relates to the question "how often you revise and update the questionnaires, what is done with feedback and is it publicly available on the website?" show that it is done every year as a revision, distributed to each professor, and generated and summarized by the main office at the level of university, QA committee at the central level of university with provided recommendations and it is monitored by them, and results are published on the website to be available, especially to students. The recommendations from evaluation are sent to the rector and departments, and quality assurance office, the report is produced and closes the cycle on how to implement the recommendations. As this is relevant for the entire UHZ, it is also relevant and important for the study program under evaluation. The importance is to observe the implementation of all policies in the first year of the study program to be accredited and add, adopt, include all relevant and necessary evaluation options that could be specific and valid for specific study program Management in Tourism and Hospitality. This would also be a recommendation for the implementation of the study program.

Ethical norms and government policies, including Law No. 06/L-082 on the Protection of Personal Data (Annex 29) and UHZ regulations based on the Statute of UHZ (Articles 144, 181) and the Code of Ethics for UHZ Students (Articles 3-6), serve to protect personal data

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and privacy of students, and all staff has to maintain data confidential to align with data protection and integrity of students. There is a Student Management System (SMU) where the data protection and student privacy is maintained. Each student is provided with a personal account, secured by a unique username and password, allowing them secure access to their academic and personal information. Students and staff actively participate in planning follow-up activities such as UNIWIN/2024 and UNISUM (Regulation: Articles 11 and 14) and benefit from opportunities for internal mobility as outlined in the regulation on Internal Student Mobility (Article 3, Annex 30) as elaborated in SER, pg. 22. Activities like the winter university UNIWIN/2025 and the summer university UNISUM (Annex 31) are explained to the expert team during the site visit and it is evaluated as a very good practice, welcomed by staff and students. The idea is to offer students different experiences beyond the standard study period. Good practice is also seen in the possibility that students can select elective courses from various departments within the institution, fostering further development and enabling internal mobility through credit transfer and participation in diverse courses that align with their interests and professional ambitions. This approach ensures the program adapts to the needs and expectations of all stakeholders, contributing to the continuous improvement of the quality of both the learning process and organizational activities. Such practice is positively evaluated by the expert team because it shows the ambition and support of the UHZ and the Faculty to enable students to gain competencies beside their core/regular studies and develop skills for market needs and future career as well as the future education possibilites. It can also contribute to better research and project participation of students and staff and foster international mobility, knowing that the international professors are also invited and included.

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 study program is supported by adequate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its goals in teaching, learning, scientific research, and community service, facilitated by several key support structures. There is clear evidence in SER and as discussed with the stakeholders during the site visit. The support is ensured by the Alumni Association, the Office for Academic Affairs and Career Development Office which are formed to assist students in all their administrative needs, providing support such as opportunities for connecting students with professionals and fostering development after

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graduation, support in organizing and coordinating academic activities while guiding students toward achieving high performance, developing professional skills and connecting with employment and internship opportunities, ensuring a smooth transition from studies to the job market. These structures are essential for delivering comprehensive and effective support, enabling the academic and professional objectives of the study program to be fully realized, as explained in the SER and elaborated during the site visit with an expert panel. The management and administrative staff are fully aware of their role in supporting students and enabling them to have full support in many challenges they face during their study process. During the meeting with students there was feedback confirming their satisfaction with administrative support in the area of study process, research process, finding internship opportunities and also in the area of solving any other problem. Overall assessment of the collaboration with administrative staff, library, research, projects, collaboration with industry, professors and internship opportunities, including winter and summer schools is good and they do appreciate the concept of studies offered by the UHZ and the Faculty. Alumni also confirmed that it was easy to find good jobs and career opportunities because they learned competencies important for the Tourism and Hospitality sector and service sector, such as using different programs in the hotel industry, use of artificial intelligence in hotels and agencies, etc.

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)

Recommendations for improving the study program from previous quality assurance are thoroughly analyzed, and necessary activities and actions are taken based on internal and external quality assurance processes. These actions include the development of action plans and reports on the implementation of expert recommendations, which provide a solid foundation for the continuous enhancement of academic programs. The SER and the documents prove that the UHZ and the Faculty take the recommendations very seriously and implement them. The Council for Quality Management and Evaluation (Article 8, paragraphs 1.8/1.9) and the Office for Quality Assurance and Evaluation (Article 10, paragraphs 1.2.10/2) (Regulations on the Quality Assurance and Assessment System at "Haxhi Zeka" University in Peja) employ mechanisms and instruments designed to assess and monitor the quality of study programs effectively and this is elaborated to the expert team, too. The main aim is to maintain and improve continuously the quality of the study program but since this program under evaluation is under accreditation, currently there is

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no list of recommendations from previous external evaluation process. The study program Management in Tourism and Hospitality is to be accredited and is prepared by anticipating the evaluations of previous reaccreditations of the programs listed in 1.1. applying experience, knowledge, competencies of internal stakeholders (academic staff, administration and management) with support of Industrial board. Alumni representatives were not aware of the new study program but they are very motivated to participate in its future development, feedback, guest lecturing, projects and common collaboration. The overall impression of the expert team is that the management, faculty heads, academic and administrative staff are well aware of the importance of the new study program for the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHM) and the program will be fully supported by the external stakeholders (business sector representatives). Together with academic excellence, this can bring many benefits to students and development of Tourism and Hospitality in Kosovo and regionally, as it was emphasized strongly during the meeting with business representatives. Kosovo needs such programs and the Peja region especially because it aims to position itself as a tourist destination.

ET recommendations:
1. Continue good practice in supporting students' academic development, research and offering additional value added trainings, summer and winter schools
2. Continue implementing and maintaining high level of ethical standards
3. Continue regularly obtaining information from all stakeholders and implement them in the progress of the study program to be up to date with market needs
4. Continue and utilize strong relationship with economic sector and representatives of Tourism and Hospitality sector involving them not only in internship but also as guest lecturers and projects with UHZ and the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHM) at the level of a new study program

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

As it was demonstrated during the site-visit the internal quality assurance system at the university is structured to align with national and European standards, ensuring the continuous monitoring and improvement of study programs. This system involves multiple stakeholders, including university management, faculty, students, and external partners such as employers and alumni. The university has embedded quality assurance principles

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within its regulatory framework, guided by institutional documents. Additionally, a dedicated quality assurance structure oversees implementation, using a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle to facilitate ongoing improvements. Regular assessments, including stakeholder surveys and program evaluations, ensure that study programs remain aligned with institutional goals, labor market needs, and accreditation requirements.

University also ensures transparency and accessibility of study program information by publishing essential details online, including curricula, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and faculty credentials. Monitoring mechanisms, such as student and employer surveys, stakeholder meetings, and industrial board evaluations, contribute to continuous program enhancement. Internship programs, structured under clear guidelines, are closely supervised and assessed, reinforcing practical learning. Additionally, key performance indicators (KPIs) such as graduation rates and employment outcomes are tracked to assess program effectiveness.

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)

According to the submitted documents the internal quality assurance system at the university is designed to align with national regulations, the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), and other international benchmarks. As documented in the submitted materials and confirmed during the interviews, this system covers all phases of a study program's lifecycle, from its initiation and drafting to approval, monitoring, and evaluation. The regulatory framework guiding this process is outlined in the Regulation for Study Programs, which defines the procedures at each stage. The university has ensured that a wide range of internal stakeholders—including University management, faculty leadership, academic unit councils, study commissions, students, academic staff, and administrative personnel—actively contribute to the process.

According to the interviews with the QA staff, it was highlighted that the university has continued to refine and expand its quality assurance mechanisms, aligning them with both national policies and international standards, including those set forth by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and its Accreditation and Re-accreditation Manual. A range of institutional documents, including the Regulations on the Quality Assurance and Assessment System, the Quality Assurance Guide, the Regulations of the Study Programs, and the Guideline for the Study Programs, provide a structured framework for implementation. In 2022, the university further solidified its commitment to quality by

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approving the Regulations of the Study Programs, which formalized procedures related to program initiation, approval, monitoring, and evaluation. As the submitted documents state the university has established a dedicated structure to oversee quality assurance, comprising a Central Office for Quality Assurance and Evaluation, as well as quality assurance offices within each academic unit. These offices, staffed by personnel without teaching responsibilities, focus exclusively on quality assurance activities, including the implementation of quality assurance plans, data collection, evaluation of study programs, and support for accreditation and re-accreditation processes. The internal quality assurance system at the university is designed as a continuous improvement cycle based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model. Quality enhancement activities are planned and implemented at regular intervals, including semesterly and annual reviews, as well as ad hoc evaluations when needed. Based on these evaluations, the Rectorate develops an implementation and improvement plan, designating responsible parties and setting deadlines for action.

During the site visit, the expert team asked a few questions about the monitoring of the study program, as it was explained to maintain oversight of study programs, the QA Office implements an annual monitoring plan, which includes program reviews and regular evaluations conducted through stakeholder questionnaires. Internal and external stakeholders are actively engaged in this process, ensuring a broad perspective on program quality.

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

According to the SER and supporting documentation, the university has ensured that the program is developed in accordance with the Strategic Plan 2023-2026, which outlines specific procedures for accreditation and accreditation as detailed in the Regulation on Study Programs. As the submitted documents indicate, the program development process includes rigorous labor market research, extensive stakeholder consultations, and comparative analyses with both local and European universities to ensure alignment with national and international academic standards. During the interviews with university representatives, it was confirmed that the QA Office has played a crucial role in this process, ensuring strict adherence to internal regulations and European standards. From the initiation phase, program developers have been required to submit a detailed proposal demonstrating clear alignment with the university's mission and strategic priorities.

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The internal quality assurance mechanisms employed by the university reflect a transparent and structured evaluation process. As described in the SER and validated during stakeholder interviews, the program has undergone periodic assessments conducted by a dedicated commission comprising academic and administrative staff, students, and external stakeholders, ensuring a holistic review. This commission not only evaluates the program as a one-time requirement but continuously reviews key aspects such as student participation rates, pass rates, syllabus content, and adherence to expert recommendations. As documented in internal reports, the approval process follows a multi-stage structure, starting with the Academic Unit Council, moving to the Quality Management and Evaluation Council (QMEC), and concluding with final approval by the Senate before submission to the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

As confirmed in the interviews, quality assurance is embedded as an ongoing institutional priority rather than a single accreditation event, reflecting university's long-term commitment to maintaining high academic standards and implementing continuous improvements. Furthermore, as indicated in accreditation reports, the involvement of field experts, university coordinators, students, alumni, and employers in program development ensures that the program remains responsive to both academic advancements and industry needs. Additionally, the university has implemented key performance indicators (KPIs), including student graduation rates, employment outcomes, faculty qualifications, and student engagement in research, as confirmed in quality assurance evaluations. Regular monitoring, carried out on both a semesterly and annual basis, ensures that any deficiencies are identified and addressed in a timely manner. As reported in evaluation meetings, the integration of both academic and professional success metrics demonstrates the university's strong commitment to maintaining high educational standards and continuously improving the student experience.

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)

According to the findings documented in the SER and validation during interviews with university representatives, the surveys serve as key tools for gathering feedback on the quality of programs offered by the University and the level of satisfaction among graduates regarding the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies. Similarly, as confirmed by reports submitted by the Career Office and employer feedback collected through focus

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group discussions, the evaluations conducted with employers provide essential information about the quality of the University's graduates and their preparedness for the labor market. As outlined in quality assurance documents, these surveys provide ongoing concrete information regarding the extent to which the program have achieved their predetermined goals, ensuring that graduate competencies align with labor market expectations.

As described in the SER and corroborated by institutional records, the University has adopted a student-centered approach, prioritizing the effective management of student workload. During stakeholder interviews, university officials emphasized that in 2023, the institution approved the Regulation on Student Workload, defining specific measures for workload distribution. The submitted documentation confirms that this regulation establishes that one teaching hour equals 45 minutes, and one ECTS credit represents 25-30 hours of work, encompassing teaching, research, and personal study, with 20-25 hours allocated to classroom instruction. Various methods, including student surveys and employer assessments, are implemented to monitor whether learning outcomes are being achieved by students.

As documented in university policies, an industrial board has been established within the faculty, comprising external industry representatives, internal faculty members, and former students. According to the meeting records reviewed, focus group discussions are held monthly, while employer evaluations via surveys are conducted every three years. The Quality Assurance Office, as reported in accreditation documents, regularly administers stakeholder questionnaires and integrates feedback into the ongoing improvement of study programs.

As documented in the Internship Manual and confirmed in interviews with Career Office representatives, a clear and structured system for monitoring and enhancing internship quality has been established. The Internship Manual, as submitted to the Quality Assurance Office, specifies that this process is supervised by the course professor, the employer, and the Career Office, which systematically collects relevant data. As outlined in the evaluation reports and confirmed by feedback from internship mentors, at the end of each internship period, the internship supervisor formally assesses the student's performance, which contributes to the final course grade.

From the results of conducted surveys, focus groups, and meetings with academic and administrative staff, students, and industrial boards, comprehensive data is gathered to support the continuous improvement of study programs. As confirmed by the minutes of evaluation meetings and detailed in quality assurance reports, the results of these monitoring processes are communicated to all relevant stakeholders and made available on

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the University's website.

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

According to the submitted documents the faculty ensures that all relevant information regarding study programs is publicly accessible to prospective and currently enrolled students, as well as other stakeholders. This commitment to transparency is demonstrated through the regular publication of study program summaries on the university's official website. The published information includes essential details such as lecture and exercise schedules, consultation hours, and specifics for study programs offered in both Albanian and Bosnian languages. These details encompass the program name, qualification level as per the National Qualifications Framework, ECTS credit allocation, academic degree awarded, program duration, objectives, learning outcomes, teaching and assessment methods, and the structure of the curriculum, including mandatory, elective, and specialization courses where applicable.

The expert team noted that the accuracy and reliability of this information are maintained through systematic updates, allowing stakeholders to access the most current and relevant details. Additionally, policies, regulations, and guidelines governing study programs are publicly accessible, fostering an open and transparent academic environment. These documents are available through institutional platforms such as the university's website and other authorized publications, ensuring that students, faculty, and external stakeholders have a clear understanding of the framework regulating academic programs. Moreover, the university provides objective data on pass rates, dropout rates, and graduate employment, presenting a comprehensive and realistic picture of student progress and career outcomes. The availability of such data contributes to informed decision-making for both students and stakeholders.

ET recommendations: N/A

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3. ACADEMIC STAFF

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

The recruitment of teaching staff at the university follows national legislation and internal regulations, ensuring transparency, fairness, and equal access in the hiring process. Job openings are publicly advertised, primarily on the university's official website, which facilitates access for both national and international candidates. The selection process is outlined in institutional documents, detailing the steps from the public call to the final Senate decision. From an internationalization perspective, publishing vacancies on the university's website enhances visibility and expands the applicant pool globally. During the onsite visit, faculty members confirmed that recruitment procedures are transparent and equitable. However, while the university provided a website link for job postings, the platform was not functional at the time of report elaboration. This may be due to the absence of current vacancies, but it is recommended that the university ensures continuous functionality to maintain transparency and accessibility.

The SER explicitly outlines the recruitment procedures, detailing both policy frameworks and implementation. The structured recruitment process includes multiple evaluation criteria, ensuring alignment with institutional regulations. The university has established clear selection criteria, incorporating teaching performance, research output, and service activities. A point-based evaluation system prioritizes publications in high-impact journals indexed in Web of Science and Scopus, reinforcing merit-based selection and encouraging strong academic performance. Faculty members confirmed that promotion procedures are fair, job openings are managed transparently, and task distribution is clearly defined in internal documents.

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 Self-Evaluation Report (SER) provides a detailed overview of the academic staff, including their workload distribution across teaching, research, consultation hours, administrative duties, and professional activities. The qualifications and expertise of the faculty cover essential fields such as Tourism, Management, Environmental Sciences,

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Tourism and Hospitality, Insurances, Entrepreneurship and SME Management, Marketing, ensuring a well-rounded academic foundation for students. The qualifications of academic staff are relevant to the courses they teach, and their CVs, research publications, books, and professional engagements confirm their expertise. While the SER mentions that these records are publicly available on the university's website, the expert team was unable to verify this aspect due to the lack of an English translation. However, the CVs were attached to the SER and they could be reviewed by the Expert team.

The regular academic staff consists of 18 professors, all holding doctoral degrees. The total academic staff includes 18 full-time and 5 part-time members, a total to 23 faculty members. This ensures that the teaching staff is well-qualified and permanently engaged in the institution's academic and research activities.

The student-to-academic staff ratio meets national requirements and ensures an adequate level of student support. The student-to-full-time academic staff ratio for the study program is 1:20 ratio, ensuring students receive sufficient supervision and guidance. The faculty continuously monitors this ratio and is prepared to adjust staffing in response to future enrollment fluctuations.

The workload of academic staff is structured according to institutional regulations, with a 40-hour workweek that includes teaching, research, student consultation (minimum of 2 hours per week), preparation of materials, and student supervision. The workload for each academic title is explicitly mentioned, and for teaching-focused staff, it does not exceed 66.5% of total activities. This balance ensures that faculty members have adequate time for research and other professional engagements while maintaining teaching quality.

The university follows national and institutional regulations to ensure transparency and fairness in faculty recruitment. Academic staff engaged in the study program does not have more than two teaching positions within an academic year (one full-time and one part-time).

Although teaching staff reported feeling overburdened during the site visit, the institution maintains that the workload distribution complies with internal regulations. The primary factor contributing to workload pressure is the requirement to publish in high-impact journals, which demands significant time and effort. The university acknowledges this challenge and supports academic staff in balancing teaching, research, and professional responsibilities.

The research results per full-time academic staff (FT) are included in the SER, presenting relevant and new publications. However, it was noted that the university should have put more effort into formatting the references in APA style, as the lack of publication years

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makes it difficult to follow the research output effectively.

For each student group and for every 60 ECTS credits, at least one full-time faculty member with a doctoral degree is employed. This approach aligns with national regulations and ensures adequate academic supervision for students in their respective specializations. The institution also employs a sufficient number of qualified mentors, ensuring that students receive appropriate academic guidance.

Standard 3.3 The study program is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence. The advancement of staff arises from the higher education institution's strategic goals and is in line with the legislation and internal regulations in effect. (ESG 1.5)

The procedures governing the advancement of teaching staff at Haxhi Zeka University (UHZ) are designed to be transparent and objective, ensuring fairness in faculty career progression. Academic vacancies are publicly advertised, allowing for equal opportunities and broad accessibility. Applications are reviewed by the Evaluation Commission, which is appointed by the council, and assesses candidates based on predefined criteria. The entire process follows the "Regulation on Evaluation and Selection Procedures for Academic Staff" at UHZ, "Strategic Plan 2023–2026 of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment" and is in compliance with national labor laws and the UHZ Statute.

The evaluation process places significant weight on scientific and professional contributions, including publications in high-impact journals indexed in Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, teaching innovation, student feedback, thesis supervision, participation in international projects, and collaborations with scientific institutions. The university's emphasis on research excellence is reflected in its requirement for faculty members to publish in reputable academic journals as part of their career advancement. Additionally, leadership in research projects and active participation in the academic community are factors in the evaluation process.

The results of feedback mechanisms are systematically integrated into the reappointment and promotion process for teaching staff, even they are not calculated in the advancement of academic staff. No details on the self-evaluation or feedback

Standard 3.4 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study program is entitled to

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institutional support for professional development. (ESG 1.5)

The university has an operational plan dedicated to the professional development of academic staff engaged in the study program. This plan focuses on improving the quality of teaching and research, on implementing modern and innovative methodologies that promote and improve the quality of teaching for students. During the site visit, faculty members confirmed that the annual workload distribution consists of teaching, research, and other activities, with a balanced engagement in both academic and professional growth.

To enhance faculty expertise, the university provides targeted training programs tailored to the needs of its academic staff. Professors have participated in specialized training sessions, such as "Advancing Teaching Methods in Higher Education", funded by HERAS PLUS and the Austrian Development Agency. Additionally, training in learning outcomes equips faculty members with innovative pedagogical approaches, reinforcing a student-centered learning environment.

To support academic staff in assessment and evaluation methodologies, the university has established the Center for Excellence, which offers specialized training programs for faculty development. During the site visit, academic staff confirmed the mobility opportunities outlined in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment actively encourages faculty participation in international mobility programs, training programs abroad, and collaborative research initiatives. Faculty members also contribute as keynote speakers and editorial board members for renowned international journals and conferences, as evidenced in their CVs. New teaching staff receive training sessions to familiarize themselves with institutional policies, academic quality standards, and ethical guidelines, data analysis and software skills. These sessions include workshops on teaching methodologies, training in the use of the SMU system, and an introduction to the university's anti-plagiarism tools. Additionally, all teaching staff participate in regular professional development programs, ensuring continuous enhancement of research and teaching competencies. Faculty members strictly adhere to the university's Code of Ethics, fostering an academic environment that upholds integrity, professionalism, and transparency.

To further support research development, the university provides multiple mechanisms for academic staff, including involvement in research project teams, assistance with research proposals, and access to funding opportunities. The institution actively promotes research excellence by offering financial incentives for publications in high-impact journals, encouraging faculty members to contribute to the advancement of their respective fields.

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

The expertise of external associates in the labor market enriches the curriculum by exposing students to current challenges, innovations, and best practices in their respective fields. The development of syllabi follows the Manual for Syllabus Design, the SER provides also an example.

External associates from the tourism and hotel business sector and from other universities undergo training sessions designed to familiarize them with higher education teaching methodologies and assessment techniques. These sessions cover topics such as ECTS credits, learning outcomes, and teaching strategies, ensuring that external lecturers align their teaching methods with institutional and international standards. The training also includes technical guidance on using academic platforms like SEMS and SMU, facilitating effective communication and transparency between lecturers and students.

The university encourages external associates to participate in the supervision of final and graduation theses. This is supported by regulations governing Master of Science and Bachelor of Science programs, which allow experienced professionals to co-supervise and mentor students.

The workload and expectations of external associates are clearly defined through fixed-term contracts and workload regulations. These agreements specify teaching hours, responsibilities, and student consultation requirements, ensuring quality teaching and sufficient interaction with students.

ET recommendations:
1. Ensure the continuous functionality of the job openings webpage, even when no active positions are available, by providing a clear notice or maintaining a record of past openings.
2. Strengthen institutional support for research by increasing financial grants for faculty members engaging in high-impact research projects and publications
3. Expand training initiatives in innovative teaching methodologies, digital learning tools
4. Strengthen the collaboration between external associates and full-time faculty members to enhance knowledge exchange and further integrate industry expertise

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into academic programs, including participation of external associates in thesis supervision.

5. Improve the assistance for academic staff in developing research proposals

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

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

The study program intended learning outcomes formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices. They are aligned well with the published mission and strategic goals of the UHZ and Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHM). The study program under evaluation, the Management in Tourism and Hospitality, BSc, is offered in Albanian and Bosnian language to meet the requirements of the market needs, with a total number of 180 ECTS. Courses containing intended learning outcomes comply with the mission and strategic goals of the UHZ. Es explained in SER and during the site visit the major goal of the study program under evaluation is to provide to students the possibility to learn problem solving skills in the field of Tourism and Hospitality and gain competencies to manage, implement and organise best practices in the field, in Kosovo and regionally. The alignment of the study program with UHZ and MTHM mission and strategic goals is evident through the following course intended learning outcomes, skills and competencies:

1. Comprehensive knowledge and a basic understanding of the field of Management in Tourism and Hospitality
2. Knowledge of creating and managing tourist offers and packages, using acquired knowledge to develop products and services that meet market demands:
3. Skills in strategic planning and project management in the tourism and hospitality sector, including the development of plans and strategies for business growth and development:

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4. Understanding of modern technologies and management systems in the tourism and hospitality sector, using tools and software to optimize operations and services:

5. Knowledge of financial management for tourism and hospitality businesses, including budget planning, performance analysis, and cost management:

6. Knowledge of creating innovations and improving services and offerings in the tourism and hospitality sector, contributing to the development and growth of the industry through new ideas and practices.

The elaboration of the above goals is well explained in SER and discussed with clarification during the meeting with management and heads of the study program. The intended learning outcomes are aligned with the general goals and objectives of the study program is also evident from the following learning outcomes: development and implementation of effective strategies, analysis and interpretation of market trends, implementation of quality management systems, human resource management, application of contemporary technologies, development of sustainable practices and innovative initiative. According to the data collected during the site visit, the goals of the study program learning outcomes are well analyzed and decisions on the appropriate ones are made in compliance with the mission of the UHZ and the Faculty and they contribute to the market needs in Kosovo and the region.

From the student's perspective, the intended learning outcomes of the study program under evaluation are also clear by precisely indicating the competencies, knowledge and skills students will obtain upon graduation: familiarization of students with the key theories and methodologies of Management in Tourism and Hospitality, preparation of students prepare to analyze the tourism market and develop communication strategies for the management and development of tourist destinations, creation of opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills and manage innovative and sustainable projects, contributing to the promotion of tourist destinations and environmental preservation. The sustainability aspect of tourist destination management plays an important role in tourism studies in current times and it is incorporated in the study program. The learning outcomes cover introduction to Management in Tourism and Hospitality, creation of tourist offers and packages, research and prediction of market demands, strategic planning of tourism and hospitality products and destinations, usage of modern technologies and management systems, software and optimization service tools, financial aspects of tourism and hospitality and cost management, and creation of innovative tourist and hospitality services. During the site visit, students confirmed their deep understanding of learning outcomes and recognized benefits of such a study program to be introduced, accompanied

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by Alumni and business sector. As a result of following the standards and procedures of the National Qualification Framework (Annex 60), the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework (Annex 61),and the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo (04/L-037, Article 3/1.4) (Annex 62); LAW NO. 08/L-110 on KAA (Annex 63); the Bologna Declaration, and the Statute of UHZ, it is evident that the study program under evaluation bases its development on all regulations including Guidelines for Study Programs and the Strategic Plan of the University for the years 2023-2026. There is also a document which determines the standards of creating syllabuses called "Haxhi Zeka" University Syllabus Design Manual (Annex 64) and the study program under evaluation based the learning outcomes in accordance to it and at the same time it shows that it is aligned with international best practices anticipating market and students' needs.

Intended learning outcomes are of the indicated level of studies and include the development of generic and specific competencies, and are divided in knowledge, skills, and competences, too. The developed program is comparable to study programs in Management in Tourism and Hospitality at universities in Croatia, Management in Tourism and Hospitality at the University of Baltazar, Germany, Management in Tourism and Hospitality at Berlin School of Business and Innovation and Poland, Bachelor of Arts in Tourism and Hotel Management at Think Poland.

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 learning outcomes of the Bachelor's program in Management in Tourism and Hospitality fully align with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for level 6 (BSc). As elaborated in SER and discussed during the site visit, the information obtained confirms that the study program under evaluation developed intended learning outcomes which comply with the standard. Study program ensures that students develop advanced competencies in solving complex problems and leading teams in the tourism and hospitality sector. This program is a BSc, with 180 ECTS credits for the entire study program, and learning outcomes are in line with the bachelor's level, the National Qualifications Framework, and are comparable to similar programs in the region and internationally. The courses are divided into 3 years of studies with 6 semesters and include basics of tourism and hospitality courses, advanced courses, covering sustainability in tourism, research, internship, thesis and relevant courses in

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management, finance and economics and English language. The distribution of ECTS per course is well allocated showing the different load dedicated with higher number of ECTS to core and fundamental courses in Tourism and Hospitality, while allocating less ECTS to other study courses ranging from 2 to 7 ECTS. Total number of ECTS per semester is 30.

Upon completion of this program, students will earn a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in Management in Tourism and Hospitality. This program is designed to meet the qualification level standards, relying on the quality of the curriculum, teaching methodology, and the National Qualifications Framework.

The program is structured to provide comprehensive professional and advanced training in the relevant field. The study program does not overlap with current programs offered by the MTHM faculty and follows the requirements of the job market. This is one of the strongest characteristics of the program and it is highly supported by external stakeholders, business sector representatives being present during the site visit.

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)

Study program under evaluation is coherent and enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and to progress smoothly through their studies. In addition to compulsory courses students can also select elective courses according to their preferences and interests in acquiring other competences important for their future career. The mandatory courses are structured in a logical sequence to ensure the gradual development of students' skills and knowledge and this is evident from the curriculum, from the study program detailed elaboration in SER and from the discussions with professors and students. Academic staff are responsible for the creation of syllabuses and it is evident that they are competent and follow current market and scientific trends in Tourism in Hospitality, participate in projects and add value to study program and intended learning outcomes. The regulations for student progression in the program are in compliance with the standard requirements and ensure successful completion of prerequisites for previous courses is essential for continuing with subsequent courses in the curriculum. Progression to the second year requires the completion of the first year or meeting specific conditions to continue lectures in the following year, which is regulated, too. The core disciplines necessary for achieving the learning outcomes and acquiring competencies in the respective fields are adequately covered by the program courses and mapping of

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competences on course level against the program learning outcomes has been performed, and shown in Figure 2. Which course covers which learning outcome? (SER, pg. 122). The study program is comparable with three similar programs; Veleučilište Baltazar Zaprešić – Management in Tourism and Hospitality), BA. (Hons) in Management in Tourism and Hospitality at the University for the Creative Arts (UCA), and the Bachelor in Management in Tourism and Hospitality at Vincent Pol University in Lublin, Poland.

The study program covers similar courses as above mentioned study programs with the following distribution of similarity: 55% of the courses included in the program in Poland, 55% of the courses in the program in Croatia, and 33.4% of the courses in the program in Germany. The expert team agrees with the fact that such an alignment demonstrates a strong connection with international education standards and provides students with opportunities for horizontal and vertical mobility and prepares students for the European and global market.

Additionally, it is recommended to keep improving and updating already structured syllabuses in the area of evaluation/examination concepts to determine how students pass each learning outcome (not only type of exam but also type of the relationship between exams and specific learning outcomes). This is constructive alignment which allows students to pass learning outcomes within the course. In case of failing any, they could retake only learning outcomes they fail, instead of repeating the whole exam.

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) Not applicable for this program.

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)

Haxhi Zeka University (UHZ), in collaboration with the Career Development Office, has established a regulatory framework for student internships, detailed in the Internship Manual. This manual outlines the expected learning outcomes for the Management in Tourism and Hospitality program, ensuring students gain practical skills essential for

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professional development. The document defines the rights and responsibilities of students, mentors, and host institutions while providing all necessary templates for the internship process, including application forms, evaluation reports, and student activity records. The manual aligns with academic and industry requirements, bridging the gap between theoretical learning and workplace experience.

The university ensures that students participating in the practice period are assigned mentors from the academic staff of the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (FMTHE). The information was confirmed by the students during the onsite visit. They provide continuous support and supervision throughout the internship, guiding students as they apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. The internships take place in external environments, as stipulated by formal agreements with employers across the public and private sectors. Cooperation with the labor market ensures that students gain relevant experience in professional environments, fostering their readiness for future employment.

Internship activities in the Management in Tourism and Hospitality program are assigned 7 ECTS credits. These credits reflect the workload and learning outcomes, calculated based on student engagement in both practical and academic activities. Monitoring mechanisms include detailed activity reports, internship diaries, and supervisor evaluations, all structured according to the university's Internship Manual. The Career Development Office oversees the monitoring process, ensuring students' progress is tracked and evaluated effectively.

The delivery of the program is supported by formal cooperation agreements with institutions and organizations that host students for their internships. The management of the program confirmed they have stable agreements with public and private environment. This information was also confirmed by the external stakeholders during the onsite visit. These agreements facilitate the organization of student practice and ensure that learning environments meet professional standards. The university collaborates with various businesses and public institutions to provide students with practical opportunities aligned with industry needs.

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

The study program is designed with a clear didactic framework that supports students in achieving the intended learning outcomes. The curriculum focuses on aligning theoretical

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knowledge with practical application, ensuring students gain relevant skills for careers in Tourism and Hospitality Management. The course content and structure emphasize the integration of academic knowledge and real-world problem-solving, supporting students' academic development and professional readiness.

The program employs a diverse range of teaching methods, including interactive lectures, case study analyses, group projects, and problem-based learning. These methodologies align with the intended learning outcomes and are suitable for the bachelor's level. Faculty members effectively use real-life examples from the tourism and hospitality industry to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical scenarios.

The study program encourages research-based and interactive learning through a variety of teaching approaches, such as flipped classrooms, active learning, problem-based learning (PBL), and work-based learning. Additionally, by integrating research outcomes into teaching practices, faculty members ensure that students stay up-to-date with the latest developments in the field.

Teaching methods are regularly evaluated through student feedback collected via the student-Teacher Questionnaire on the SMU electronic platform. This system enables faculty members to adjust their methodologies based on data-driven insights from student performance and feedback. Additionally, pass rates and academic outcomes are reviewed by the Quality Office, contributing to ongoing improvements in teaching and learning processes.

The program demonstrates an inclusive approach by offering support to diverse student groups, including international students, part-time learners, and students with disabilities. The faculty provides personalized tutoring, accessible materials, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities, ensuring equal access to education and addressing the unique needs of individual students.

The university effectively integrates modern technology into the learning process. The Student Management Electronic System (SEMS) facilitates communication, assignment submission, grading, and access to learning materials. Additionally, advanced classroom technologies such as interactive whiteboards and video projectors contribute to an engaging and effective teaching environment.

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)

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The Bachelor program in Management in Tourism and Hospitality aligns each course with the program's overall intended learning outcomes. The course syllabi the specific learning objectives, ensuring that each course contributes to the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and competencies.

The program uses a variety of assessment methodologies, such as tests, individual and group works, presentations, and final exams, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of students' skills and knowledge. The use of a "Student Progress" portfolio for each student reflects a structured approach to monitoring academic achievements. The example provided for the Tourism Industry course illustrates a well-balanced distribution of assessment components. During the onsite visit, the student confirmed that the assessment criteria and grading methods are transparent and made available at the beginning of each semester. The course syllabi, distributed through the Student Management Electronic System (SEMS), outline evaluation criteria and grading standards.

The evaluation process is objective, with mechanisms in place for reviewing appeals and ensuring fair assessment practices. The university has established procedures to ensure transparency and consistency in student grading.

Feedback is provided promptly after each exam, allowing students to understand their performance and areas for improvement. Professors offer consultation sessions before recording final grades, ensuring that students receive clear explanations of their results.

The student appeals system is functional. Students have the right to file complaints both electronically and in written form, as outlined in Article 143 and Article 150 of the university statute, ensuring that they are provided with a formal and transparent appeals process. The Guidebook for young students clarifies this process.

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

The assessment criteria in the Bachelor's program for Management in Tourism and Hospitality are designed to reflect a balanced focus on theoretical knowledge and practical application. The evaluation process includes a range of assessment methods - exams, colloquiums, professional internships, and seminar papers - that ensure students demonstrate their competencies both theoretically and practically. The university follows a structure aligned with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), ensuring that the workload for students matches international academic standards.

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According to the university's regulations, each hour of student engagement encompasses various educational activities such as lectures, exercises, research, and independent study, all contributing to the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

The program applies a clear and systematic methodology for assigning ECTS credits based on the student workload. The limitation of 40 hours of weekly workload complies with European standards. Each ECTS credit corresponds to 25 hours of student engagement, which includes a combination of lectures, practical work, and individual study.

Each course is assigned between 5 to 7 ECTS credits based on its complexity and workload. Courses that demand more practical engagement, such as internships or projects, are allocated a higher number of credits to reflect the time-intensive nature of these activities.

ET recommendations:

1. Increase the number of formal cooperation agreements with relevant organizations in the tourism and hospitality sector to ensure a wider range of practical learning opportunities for students.

2. Continue good collaboration with business sector to be in line with current market trends and incorporate them regularly to curriculum by common project activities

3. Increase number of elective courses and offer different courses related to AI and digitalisation in Tourism and Hospitality

4. Continue improving international cooperation to offer better research opportunities for students and academic staff

5. Revise syllabuses in terms of evaluation of specific learning outcomes to offer students opportunity to pass specific learning outcomes within the courses

6. Implement constructive alignment in a way to design assessment tasks aligned with learning outcomes in all courses and all syllabuses

7. After implantation of recommendation 1 and 2, the communication and introduction of assessment criteria could be communicated fully to students

8. As a result of constructive alignment in assessment, students will pass learning outcomes

9. It will enable students to know exactly how many ECTS was assign to which learning outcome and in case student fail certain learning outcome, they will repeat only that specific learning outcome, not the whole exam

10. Distinguish difference between assessment methods and assessment of learning outcomes in syllabuses

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5. STUDENTS

The Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment maintains clear and transparent admission policies, as outlined in institutional regulations and confirmed through interviews with university officials. The process begins with a public competition announced by the University Senate, detailing eligibility criteria, entrance exams, and admission quotas. The selection process prioritizes merit, ensuring fairness and transparency, with mechanisms in place for candidates to appeal decisions. Student progression is closely monitored through structured assessments, an electronic grading system, and regular quality assurance evaluations. The university facilitates academic mobility through credit transfer policies and strict adherence to Ministry of Education regulations, though no recent student transfers were reported.

The university also prioritizes student support services, ensuring inclusive learning environments through counseling, technical assistance, and accommodations for students with special needs. Professors provide academic and career guidance, while the Career Development Center assists with job preparation. The university actively promotes national and international student mobility, with dedicated support from the Office for International Cooperation. While students appreciate existing opportunities, many expressed interests in expanding international partnerships and full-degree programs in English. Extracurricular activities further enrich student life, with workshops, exchange programs, and financial support for student-led projects. Additionally, students have a clearly defined appeals process for academic and administrative matters, ensuring fairness and accountability in decision-making.

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)

As described through institutional documentation, the university follows regulation, which outlines the criteria and procedures for admitting students into Bachelor programs. During interviews with university officials, it was emphasized that the admission process begins with a public competition announced by the University Senate, specifying the number of new students per study program, eligibility criteria, entrance exam

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requirements, and the publication of both preliminary and final results. As confirmed in the submitted regulations and guidelines, the competition is open to candidates who have completed secondary education and the state Matura exam. Moreover, as detailed in official admission policies, international candidates may apply, provided that their qualifications are recognized by the Ministry of Education.

As stated in the official regulations and verified through administrative reports, the commissions are composed of regular academic staff from the respective programs, excluding members of the management team. Additionally, as confirmed in interviews with academic staff, individuals involved in reviewing complaints cannot be part of the admissions commission to avoid conflicts of interest. Once candidates are selected based on the specified criteria, preliminary results are published on the official websites of the academic units, ensuring transparency. As indicated in procedural documents and reinforced by interview responses, candidates dissatisfied with the results may submit an appeal within a designated period.

As specified in institutional records and validated during meetings with admissions officers, for candidates without a Matura exam, the evaluation is based on high school performance (up to 30 points) and the admission exam (up to 70 points). For candidates who have passed the Matura exam, the selection criteria include high school success (up to 30 points), Matura results (up to 30 points), and the admission exam (up to 40 points).

The University ensures that the admission criteria and process are applied consistently and fairly. As explained in interviews with administrative staff and confirmed in the submitted admission reports, candidates are ranked based on their entrance exam scores, and only those who score at least 40% of the total allocated points are eligible for admission. If candidates score equally at the lowest admission threshold, the University prioritizes them based on their entrance exam performance, followed by high school success, Matura exam results, and, if necessary, a random draw. As documented in equality and non-discrimination policies, this approach guarantees merit-based selection and prevents discrimination based on gender, religion, language, or ethnicity, aligning with the university's commitment to equal opportunities.

The university also has clear policies regarding the recognition of prior study periods, facilitating academic mobility. According to statements from academic advisors during interviews, students who complete their undergraduate programs earn a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree. Additionally, as indicated in the SER, students may transfer credits from another program or institution. As confirmed in university guidelines and emphasized by faculty members during interviews, requests for program changes,

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continuation of studies, or exam recognition must be submitted before the academic year begins.

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)

During interviews, university representatives explained that academic progress is further regulated through a structured assessment system. Students must submit assignments and take exams according to the schedule established by their respective academic units. Exams may be written, oral, or a combination of both, and students must pass the written component before proceeding to the oral exam. Additionally, other assessment methods, such as seminar papers, research projects, tests, and practical exercises, are also utilized.
Both students and university staff confirmed that an electronic platform is used to monitor student progress across academic units and study programs. This system allows students to track their academic performance and provides them with 48 hours to accept or contest a grade if they are dissatisfied. If a student disagrees with their grade, they can submit a written appeal to the dean within two working days of the grade announcement. In response, the dean appoints an examination committee to review the complaint and re-evaluate the exam if necessary. When asked about the appeal process, students confirmed that such cases are relatively rare. Additionally, the Quality Assurance (QA) team noted that student progress is continuously monitored by the Quality Office, which compiles statistics on pass rates after each exam period and publishes evaluations of professors based on student feedback. The Student Affairs Office is responsible for managing student records related to registration, academic progress, and graduation while also compiling reports that assess students' academic success and ensuring transparency in quality assurance metrics for both staff and students.
As documented in the submitted reports, the university supports student mobility between different programs and departments, offering flexibility in academic pathways. Students who wish to transfer between programs or faculties must submit a formal request, which is then reviewed by the respective academic units. The university adheres to strict policies for recognizing qualifications obtained from other institutions, ensuring that all student transfers comply with internal regulations and the Ministry of Education guidelines. During the interviews, the expert team inquired whether any students had successfully transferred through this system, but no such cases were reported.

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

As described in SER, the university has established internal mobility regulations, allowing students to select or change courses within the institution. Additionally, international mobility programs enable students to study abroad under structured agreements with partner institutions. According to the submitted documents, students are well-informed about these opportunities through regular updates, online announcements, and notifications via the Electronic Student Management System (SEMS). Furthermore, during interviews, university representatives emphasized the central role of the Office for International Cooperation, which facilitates inter-university collaborations, provides information on national and international funding programs, and assists students in securing mobility opportunities.

Students are actively encouraged to participate in international exchange programs, particularly through partnerships with institutions under Erasmus+ and other global mobility initiatives. As confirmed in the interviews, the university offers comprehensive support throughout the mobility process, including information sessions, individual counseling, assistance with the application process, and guidance on course selection to ensure alignment with curriculum. Academic units are responsible for evaluating course comparability and facilitating the signing of mobility agreements. During the mobility period, students receive continuous monitoring and assistance, and upon successful completion, ECTS credits earned abroad are fully recognized, provided they meet the academic requirements outlined in university regulations.

The university has clearly defined regulations governing the recognition of ECTS credits earned during academic mobility, as stated in the submitted documents. Students who successfully complete courses at a host institution must submit their transcripts and signed learning agreements for credit transfer. In cases where students fail to pass exams or do not meet the required ECTS credits, the academic unit is required to provide written justification for non-recognition.

As highlighted in the submitted documents, the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment offers programs in both Albanian and Bosnian, ensuring accessibility for a diverse student population. Admission procedures and requirements are publicly available on the university's website and strictly follow university regulations. According to the SER, university actively promotes international student enrollment by

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reserving up to 5% of student quotas for applicants from Albania, North Macedonia, and other neighboring regions. These students must meet the same admission conditions as local candidates. This commitment to inclusivity enhances diversity within the institution and strengthens its international academic collaborations.

To support international student integration, the university provides structured English language courses. As explained during interviews with faculty members, these courses include lectures and practical exercises designed to improve students' proficiency in both academic and professional settings.

University systematically gathers and analyzes student feedback from both local and international participants in mobility programs, including UNISUM Summer University. According to survey results referenced in the submitted documents, 85% of students rated their experience as "very satisfactory," while 12.5% considered it "satisfactory".

The Office for International Cooperation plays a critical role in tracking student participation in mobility programs. As documented in the submitted reports, the university maintains detailed records of short-term exchanges (up to three months) and long-term mobility programs. Data covering the last five years, including statistics on incoming and outgoing students, is regularly reported to faculty management and the Rectorate.

During the site visit the expert team double checked how satisfied students were with the number of the possible mobilities, while they appreciate the existing initiatives, many have noted in interviews that they would like to see more partnerships, exchange agreements, and opportunities for full-degree programs in English. Some alumni also suggested that increasing the number of international guest lecturers and short-term study visits could further enhance the program's global dimension. It is recommended that the university expand its international partnerships, increase mobility opportunities, and develop additional full-degree programs in English to enhance its 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)

As it is described in SER the faculty is committed to providing structured support mechanisms, including counseling, technical assistance, and academic guidance. The university also prioritizes accommodating students with special needs by offering flexible learning options, such as distance learning, specialized materials, and assistive technologies.

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These resources aim to ensure that the learning environment is inclusive and accessible to a diverse student body. During interviews with faculty and administrative staff, it was emphasized that adaptable schedules and alternative learning methods are in place to help students meet their academic goals while maintaining flexibility. Faculty members also highlighted that teaching approaches and instructional materials are continuously revised to better cater to students' needs, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning atmosphere.

To maintain a high standard of student support, the faculty relies on a qualified team of professional, administrative, and technical staff, as outlined in the submitted documents. These staff members hold relevant qualifications in management, tourism, hospitality, and environmental studies, ensuring that they can provide expert guidance to students. Meanwhile, administrative personnel handle student registration and academic coordination, and technical staff manage infrastructure to support learning activities. The SER also highlights the faculty's mechanisms for evaluating staff performance, ensuring continuous improvement in service delivery and academic support.

The rights and responsibilities of students are clearly defined in the University's Statute and other regulatory documents, as referenced in the submitted materials. These cover aspects such as course registration procedures, study duration, lecture organization, evaluation methods, and available scholarships. The SER states that the university has developed a comprehensive student guidebook that details these rights, along with information on academic and administrative support services. To further raise awareness, the faculty also utilizes brochures and organizes events such as "Welcome Week" and "Quality Assurance Week", where students can gain a deeper understanding of their academic journey.

Student consultation is an essential component of the academic process. According to the SER, professors maintain regular office hours for academic and career counseling, allowing students to seek personalized guidance. This was further confirmed during interviews with students, where they highlighted the availability of scheduled consultations and email-based support. Additionally, the Career Development Center, as described in the submitted documents, provides students with career planning assistance and soft skills training to help them prepare for employment opportunities. For students facing personal challenges, such as emotional, financial, or family-related issues, the faculty offers support through a tutorial system designed to address both academic and personal concerns.

University ensures that students have the right to appeal academic and administrative decisions, as detailed in the submitted documents. This includes exam grades, course-

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related decisions, and other administrative matters. According to the SER, students can formally submit an appeal through written or oral requests, which are reviewed by an independent committee to ensure a fair and transparent resolution process. During interviews, both students and faculty confirmed that the appeal process is clearly structured, and cases are handled efficiently to uphold academic integrity.

Extracurricular activities play a key role in enhancing student life. As mentioned in the submitted documents, students are regularly informed about available opportunities through the University's website, on-campus notice boards, and faculty announcements. The SER outlines that student have access to Summer and Winter University programs, workshops, and seminars, which enrich their academic experience. During interviews with students, many expressed appreciations for these activities, emphasizing the value of networking opportunities and skill development gained through participation. Additionally, the university supports student-led initiatives by offering financial assistance for projects that contribute to academic and personal development.

ET recommendations:
1. It is recommended that the university expand its international partnerships, increase mobility opportunities, and develop additional full-degree programs in English to enhance its global engagement.

6. RESEARCH

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

The academic staff at UHZ benefit from research infrastructure and financial support, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2023-2026. A component of this plan is Research, including aspects such as improving the infrastructure for scientific research and artistic creativity, Promotion of research-scientific and artistic activity, Functionalization of the "Institute for Science and Arts" (ISHA), Increasing the number of scientific research and artistic creativity. These objectives are designed to improve research quality, expand international partnerships, and promote the integration of research into academic programs.

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To achieve research excellence, the university has set specific and measurable goals, including enhancing research infrastructure, encouraging faculty participation in scientific and artistic activities, operationalizing the Institute for Science and Arts (ISHA), and increasing research output by 50% between 2013 and 2026. Additionally, the Strategy for Scientific Research and Artistic Activity (2023-2026) provides a structured approach for establishing research initiatives, developing international partnerships, securing research funding, and creating a sustainable research environment.

The faculty members engaged in the study program have access to financial, logistical, and human resources to support their research activities. The UHZ provides financial assistance for academic staff to publish in indexed journals, offering €1000 for publications in Web of Science and €800 for those in SCOPUS. Moreover, funding is allocated for international conference participation (€500 per year) and research projects (€2000 per project). The university also recognizes academic achievements through awards such as "Best Work of the Year" (€200) and "Researcher of the Year" (€500), in addition to non-monetary distinctions.

The regulatory framework for research at UHZ is well-defined, ensuring adherence to academic integrity and international standards. The Strategy for Scientific Research and Artistic Activity, the Regulation for Scientific Research, and the Code of Ethics in Scientific Research establish clear guidelines for research development, ethical conduct, and funding allocation. Article 7 of the Code of Ethics and Integrity in Scientific Research highlights key principles, including transparency, academic integrity, respect for colleagues, cultural and environmental responsibility, and ethical research practices.

The Office for Scientific Research is responsible for monitoring research activities and facilitating financial support. At the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (FMHTE), academic staff are encouraged to publish in internationally recognized journals such as Web of Science and SCOPUS, ensuring that research aligns with global academic standards and best practices.

Through these initiatives, UHZ continues to expand its research ecosystem, support faculty engagement in high-impact research, and strengthen its reputation at the international level.

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.

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In 2021, UHZ established the Office for Scientific Research at the institutional level, with the primary goal of identifying research priorities and encouraging faculty engagement in scientific activities. This office plays a key role in promoting research quality, supporting career development, and recognizing academic achievements through structured incentives. By fostering a culture of research excellence, the university aims to increase academic output and strengthen collaborations within national and international research communities.

The academic staff at the Faculty of MHTMH actively contribute to research, with publications in international scientific journals indexed in prestigious databases. These publications align with the Administrative Instruction 01/2018 – Principles of Recognition of International Peer-Reviewed Platforms and Journals, ensuring that faculty research meets recognized academic standards. Faculty members regularly participate in conferences, symposiums, and seminars, further demonstrating their commitment to professional development and knowledge dissemination.

To support research engagement, UHZ has implemented concrete mechanisms that facilitate scientific and artistic research activities. These mechanisms include funding opportunities, structured research incentives, and collaboration initiatives aimed at enhancing the visibility and impact of academic work. The faculty is encouraged to publish continuously in indexed journals, participate in international conferences, and engage in collaborative research projects that align with the strategic objectives of the university.

The regular academic staff consists of 18 professors, all holding doctoral degrees and a proven experience in teaching and research (CVs).

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

The academic staff engaged in the study program contributes to research and development services to the community, particularly in the Tourism and Hospitality sector. The SER mentions that the faculty members are involved in regional projects and serve in working groups supporting local municipalities in policy development. However, while the institution states that staff are engaged in community-oriented research and policy drafting, no specific evidence or documented examples (such as reports, agreements, or project summaries) have been provided to support these claims.

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Collaboration with national and international Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is highlighted as a growing area of engagement, with faculty members participating in joint research projects and scientific collaborations with European institutions. In this regard, joint publication could be identified by reviewing the CVs, but other project agreements were difficult to be assessed.

The SERs mentions and the faculty members confirmed their contribution to policy development and practical applications of research in tourism and hospitality. Despite this declarative statement, no evidence is provided regarding formalized agreements, joint research projects with businesses, or shared resources that demonstrate active industry engagement. Also, concrete mention of technology transfer activities are not provided, innovation hubs, or structured mechanisms for knowledge exchange with the private or public sector.

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 engaged in the study program usually integrates their research findings into their teaching, as it was identified in the Syllabi.

The SER states that students are actively involved in research projects, particularly through master's theses and collaborations in faculty-led research. It is mentioned that some students are credited as co-authors in publications and that students have opportunities to participate in research stays at partner institutions and conferences. However, no supporting evidence (such as published student papers, project involvement records, or student conference participation) has been provided to substantiate these claims.

ET recommendations:
1. Continue supporting research infrastructure and financial incentives to maintain the upward trend in high-impact publications and international conference participation
2. Expand professional development opportunities by providing faculty with workshops on advanced research methodologies, academic writing for high-impact journals, and international grant acquisition
3. Encourage faculty participation in international research networks and consortia to increase the visibility of UHZ

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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 the SER and site visit presentation, the expert team has witnessed the facilities which could be improved, but are sufficient for performing education processes and research. There are several facilities with a total usable area of 5,734 m². The FMTHE Faculty shares part of its building with the Faculty of Business, utilizing a total of 2,604 m² of usable space. The facilities are adequate and sufficient to accommodate the potential number of students enrolled in this program. FMTHE Faculty is equipped with 89 computers, 21 printers, and 6 scanners, evenly distributed across the classrooms, 3 photocopiers and 14 projectors, (SER, pg. 172, table 11), sound systems in the classrooms, 2 E-kiosks and they utilize the University Management System (SMU). Specialized software such as Microsoft Office 365 and SPSS is also available. The spaces are the faculty's property as per the evidence included in the SER and per the Annex - Proof of Ownership. The IT laboratories are owned by the faculty and fully equipped with necessary information technology tools. The library includes a reading room with a capacity of up to 84 seats, and its book collection consists of 805 titles aligned with the disciplines covered in the curricula. The information is sourced by the SER and during the site visit the expert team visited facilities and library. UHZ works on the development of the new infrastructure which was also shown to the expert team during the site visit. The future infrastructure will be built as a modern campus that provides adequate conditions for teaching and learning and UHZ is in the process of constructing a new facility for the Faculty of Business and FMTHE. This facility will address the need for additional teaching spaces. The plan is presented in Figure 5 – The plan for the new facility for MTHE and Business units (SER, pg. 174). To implement the study program, FMTHE and the Faculty of Business have access to 16 classrooms with a total capacity of 1,077 m², a library with 84 seats, IT laboratories with 60 seats, and dedicated rooms for teaching staff. The regular academic staff consists of 13 professors and 1 assistant in their respective fields, along with 5 administrative staff

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members who provide administrative services to students and academic staff. The planned number of students admitted to this program is 80 for the Albanian language and 30 for the Bosnian language. Each lecture hall has a sufficient number of seats to accommodate the students during lectures. For exercises, the students will be divided into two groups depending on the type of exercise. The information is available in the SER and it was explained to the expert team during the site visit that the facilities can cater a planned number of students. The classrooms are equipped with whiteboards, projectors, and, in some cases, smart boards. Students are issued ID cards containing information about their identity, faculty, and program of study. The university campus is fully covered with free Wi-Fi for students and staff. The University Management System (SMU) provides access to various materials, including lectures and resources prepared by professors and syllabuses are published on the university's official website (https://unhz.eu/). Premises and equipment dedicated to the implementation of the study program are adjusted to students with special needs including ramps at the entrances. This enables individuals with special needs to access the ground floors within the faculty's premises. UHZ has an agreement with the "Xheladin Deda" Resource Center for Learning and Counseling in Peja (Annex), which facilitates the exchange of necessary teaching materials and offers expert advice from the center on improving working conditions for individuals with special requirements.

There is also a designated corner in the building that allows students and visitors—especially those with special needs—to connect their devices and utilize UHZ's network. The student service offices and the student union office are also located on the ground floor to ensure easier access. Further positive step in creating better study premises for students with special needs are seen in the initiative of UHZ to collaborate with the "Xheladin Deda" Resource Center for Learning and Counseling in Peja, to explore the possibility of developing a project to secure appropriate assistive technology for teaching, studying, and assessment which would include support for individuals with visual or hearing impairments, dyslexia, and other special needs. The expert team strongly supports the idea and understand how important it can be in the enhancement of the infrastructure by offering equal study opportunities to all students.

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

The HEI ensures an adequate library with good resources for study program which consists of a reading room with 84 seats, two IT labs with 60 seats, and the E/2 hall with 30 seats. Independent learning is ensured by the existing premises but it will be also improved in

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the new building under construction, which was presented and shown to the expert team during the site visit. The reading room can accommodate approximately 76.36% of the total number of students who can use the library at any given time. This capacity ensures a satisfactory level of flexibility, allowing students to utilize the space at different times of the day. The total capacity of the workspaces (two IT labs and Hall E/2) is 90 seats, which represents 81.82% of the average total number of students. For group work, students are divided into smaller groups of up to 20 students per group. According to SER and elaborated information with a capacity of 90 seats, these spaces can accommodate four groups of 20 students working simultaneously, while still leaving enough room for flexibility. The ratio of 90 seats to 20 students per group creates optimal conditions for collaboration and focus during group work. The number of published book copies and other electronic resources from Albanian, Bosnian, and English literature amounts to 805 titles including books in English, German, and Serbo-Croatian, catering to Bosnian community students, and electronic sources, as per the tables 13 and 15 (SER, pg.178-179). Library has a sufficient number of subscriptions to domestic and foreign publications and periodicals as presented in the SER, too and confirmed by professors and students who claim that they do have access to all necessary books and online sources and are always supported by professor that can also offer them pdf books and other important study materials.

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

The SER includes data which present the financial plan to deliver intended educational activities and research at the level of the study program under evaluation. It is prepared based on the national Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, demonstrating the sustainability of the study program for the next three years. The study program will be financially supported by the Ministry of Education and additional sources will be allocated by the FMTHE Faculty from scholarships for students, opportunities for paid internships, and participation in national and international projects. Additionally, transportation costs for study visits are covered, creating extensive opportunities for the academic and professional development of students both domestically and internationally.

As explained in the SER and elaborated during the meetings with management and heads of the study program, UHZ and Faculty of Tourism, Hospitality, and Environmental Management, utilizes additional financial resources to develop and enhance its study

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program obtaining funds from national and international projects, collaborations with business partners and the local community. The additional funding is used for international mobility projects, support for scientific research, organization of study visits and professional internships for students, conferences, training sessions, the Summer University (UNISUM), and the Winter University (UNIWIN). Expert team agrees that these initiatives significantly improve the quality of teaching and better prepare students for the labor market contributing to the further expansion of the UHZ, Faculty of Tourism, Hospitality, and Environmental Management and study program under evaluation. The expert team found the commitment of all stakeholders very positive and important for the current and future progress of the study program under evaluation and growth of UHZ, Faculty of Tourism, Hospitality, and Environmental Management. The support of the Industrial board, Alumni network and strong support and motivation of other representatives of the business sector can generate further quantitative and qualitative gains for the study program, students and staff. Common projects, donations, sponsorship and other events can be also utilized to further support the study program under evaluation.

ET recommendations:
1. Continue improving enlarging the library, study premises and the whole infrastructure
2. Keep improving digital access to journals and research papers, books and other literature by subscribing to databases and give access to academic staff and students
3. Continue searching for internal and external funding by offering programs of lifelong learning, summer and winter schools, and increased participation in local, regional and international projects, all in order to increase internal budget for the faculty and study program under evaluation.
4. Maintain profitable cooperation with business sector and Alumni to broaden funding possibilities for the study program
5. Develop more international cooperation with hotel industry and tourism sector by offering project activities to increase budget for research and improvement of infrastructure

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OVERALL EVALUATION AND JUDGMENTS OF THE ET

University of Haxhi Zeka, Bsc Managment in Tourism and Hospitality (in Bosnian and Albanian) demonstrated an overall Fully compliance, with 7 fully compliant area of evaluation including the mandatory areas. According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends to accredit the study programme for 5 years, with 110 students.

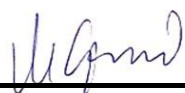| Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Fully Compliant
Quality management	Fully Compliant
Academic Staff	Fully Compliant
Educational Process Content	Fully Compliant
Students	Fully Compliant
Research	Fully Compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Fully Compliant
Overall Compliance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

Expert Team

Member

	Andreea Serban	01.03.03
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Marina Gregoric	01.03.2025.
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Giga Khositashvili	01.03.2025
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