



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju Kosovo Accreditation Agency

University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan Master program in Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

April/May 2024, Gjilan





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 24.04.2024

Expert Team (ET):

- Prof. Peeter Normak
- Prof. Peter Parycek
- Ms. Katarina Klimoska

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring

Sources of information for the Report:

- 1. Self-Evaluation Report (SER).
- 2. Statute of the University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan.
- 3. Strategic Plan for 2023-2028.
- 4. Manual for Planning and Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance.
- 5. Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 6. Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at "Kadri Zeka" Public University Gilan.
- 7. Regulation on Procedures for Quality Assurance.
- 8. Regulation on the Establishment and Functioning of the Council for Quality and Evaluation Supervision.
- 9. Strategic Research Plan
- 10. Regulation for Master Studies.
- 11. Regulation for Master Studies in the Faculty of Education
- 12. Development Strategy for Internationalization and IRO Action Plan 2020-2025.
- 13. Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor (Faculty of Economics).
- 14. Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor (Faculty of Education).
- 15. Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor (Faculty of Law).
- 16. Regulation on the Work of the Senate of the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.





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- 17. Regulation to Support the Mobility and other Activities of the Academic Staff of the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 18. Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ.
- 19. Regulation on Code of Ethics and Integrity in Research.
- 20. Regulation on Student Engagement in Internships at Administration of the Public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 21. Strategy for International Cooperation and Project Management.
- 22. Regulation on the Procedures for the Engagement of the External Associates at the Public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 23. ECTS user's Guide.
- 24. The following lists 1) Cooperation agreements with HEIS, universities from Kosovo, the Region, Europe and beyond; 2) UK membership in institutions and organizations; 3) Cooperation agreements with institutions, businesses, NGO's and others; 4) partnerships with Universities and other institutions within Erasmus+ projects, and within this list below are briefly described the activities within these projects.
- 25. Regulation. Commission for the Supervision of Implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Public University "kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 26. CVs of the academic staff.
- 27. Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan.
- 28. Key Performance Indicators in UKZ.
- 29. Syllabi of the subjects.
- 30. Regulations on basic studies bachelor.
- 31. Accreditation Report of the Expert team of 2021 accreditation.

Additionally, some documents in Albanian language were provided.

Requested documents:

- 1. Updated lists of participants on the interviews (esp. employers).
- 2. The minutes of the two most recent meeting of the Industrial Board.
- 3. Development Plan of the Faculty of Computer Science.
- 4. Detailed budget of the University for years 2021-2024 (actual income and expenditures for 2021-2023 and planned budget for 2024-2027) including reveneus from R&D projects.





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- 5. The following data in tabular form on the number of students on the Control Systems and AI (and separately for eGovernance) study program:
 - a. Columns 2021, 2022, 2023
 - b. Rows:
 - Total number of students
 - Number of applications
 - Number of students admitted
 - Number of graduates
- 6. Anonymized work contracts of an associate professor and of a lecturer
- 7. Document that states the mission of the Faculty (if not contained in the Development Plan).
- 8. One anonymized Individual Development Plan and a report.
- 9. The most recent Annual Action Plan (mentioned on page 27 of the SER of CSAI)
- 10. Syllabus of the subject Practical Work.
- 11. List of research projects financed by other institutions (the title, partner institutions, coordinator, total budget, budget for UKZ, participating staff from UKZ).
- 12. SER, P74: "In UKZ, there is a guide (Guide-PI) that outlines the University's stance on the intellectual property ownership developed by staff, students, and others, along with the procedures established for commercializing IP in the University's ownership".
- 13. Regulation for intellectual property ownership policy (cf page 74 of the SER for CSAI).
- 14. The membership list and minutes of the two most recent meetings of the master program council (cf page 19 of the SER for CSAI).

Received documents:

- 1. Updated lists of participants on the interviews.
- 2. The minutes of the two meeting of the Industrial Board.
- 3. Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Computer Science 2023-2028.
- 4. Detailed budget of the University for years 2022-2026.
- 5. The following data for academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024: Total number of students, Number of applications, Number of students admitted, Number of graduates.
- 6. An example of an Individual Development Plan and of a report.





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- 7. Summary Report for Supervision of the Individual Development Plan 2022/2023.
- 8. Syllabus of the subject Practical Work.
- 9. List of projects financed by other institutions (the title, coordinator ,activity description).

Additionally, some documents in Albanian language were provided.

Criteria used for program evaluation:

• Standards and performance indicators for external quality assurance (Re/accreditation of bachelor and masters study programs) set in the Accreditation Manual.

1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:30 – 10:20	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	 Prof.Asoc.Dr.Lindita Nebiu Hyseni – Dean Prof.Ass.Dr.Aferdita Ibrahimi – Vice-Dean MSc. Blerta Dushica – Secretary of Academic Unit
10:20 - 11.10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	 Fitore Malaj – Director of QA Office Luljete Berisha- Quality Coordinator Valon Syla – Head of IT Arlinda Selmani – Career and Alumni Officer Vjosa Baftiu – Accreditation Officer
11:10 – 11:20	Short break	





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11:20 - 12:10	Meeting with teaching staff	E-Goverance - academic staff: 1. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Basri Ahmedi 2. Prof.Ass.Dr. Fatmire Krasniqi 3. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Xhevat Sopi 4. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Arben Mustafa 5. Prof.Ass.Dr. Arben Sahiti SKIA - academic staff: 1. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Ragmi Mustafa 2. Prof.Asoc.Dr. Kastriot Dermaku (medical leave) 3. Dr.Sc. Lindita Loku
12:10 – 13:10	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
13:10 – 14:00	Meeting with students	E-Governance, students: 1. Adelina Nura Rexha 2. Qendresa Muji 3. Gresa Krasniqi 4. Arbresha Tahiri SKIA, students: 1. Donat Dalipi 2. Blend Kurti 3. Endrit Rexhi
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence, MSc, 120 ECTS, Prof. Peeter Normak	 Prof.Asoc.Dr. Artan Dermaku Prof.Asoc.Dr. Ekrem Alimi
15:00 – 15:10	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
15:10 – 15:50	Meeting with graduates	 Xhejlane Behluli Ilir Halili Premtim Shabani





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15:50 – 16:30	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	 Alban Hyseni – Mayor of the Municipality of Gjilan Eroll Morina – Represenative of the Municipality of Kamenica Arsim Vranovci – Director of the Industrial Board Delvina Krasniqi – GCDA-KS.BIZ/Industrial Board Ardian Krasniqi – GCDA-KS.BIZ/Industrial Board Albana Demiri – Director of Education in Gjilan Ardian Shehu – Director of ASSECO Arijeta Kabashi – Manager of Banking Department at ASSECO Besarta Xani – Represenative of Beetroot
16:30 – 16:40	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:40 – 16:50	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	 Prof.Asoc.Dr.Lindita Nebiu Hyseni- Dean Prof.Ass.Dr.Aferdita Ibrahimi – Vice-Dean MSc. Blerta Dushica – Secretary of Academic Unit
16:50 – 17:20	Visiting Facilities	

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

The Public University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan (*University* or UKZ) was established as a public university by the Decision of the Government of Kosovo No. 118/03 of 6 March 2013, which was approved by the Assembly of Kosovo on 30 May 2013. The provision of higher education in Gjilan goes back to 1958, when the Teacher Training Centre was established. In 2002, the Faculty of Education of University of Prishtina was established in Gjilan (based on the former





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Higher Pedagogical School). In 2010, the University of Prishtina opened in Gjilan two more faculties: the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Law. In 2013, all these academic units were merged into a new independent university.

The Assembly of Kosovo approved the Statute of UKZ on 10.12.2020.

According to the Statute, the mission of UKZ is to be "the temple of knowledge, which cultivates human love and affirms the principles of fair competition; prepares responsible young people professionally capable of being part of a modern and global society, part of a wider market than traditional labor markets and at the same time, a model for other members of our society; fosters critical thinking and the spirit of entrepreneurship."

The vision statement is formulated in the Strategic Plan 2023-2028: "Institution of higher education that aims academic quality, innovation, advances knowledge and is prepared to contribute and adapt to dynamic, social and economic developments in the country and beyond."

The University has 23 halls and 4 computer labs, in total of at least 1462 seats. There are 33 offices for academic staff and 27 offices for administrative and other purposes (including for Student Parliament). UKZ employs 74 full-time and 70 part-time academic staff.

UKZ has five faculties (Applied Sciences; Computer Sciences; Economy; Education; Law).

The Faculty of Computer Science was established on 01.10.2014. Initially (academic year 2014/2015) there were only 50 students; in the academic year 2023/2024, there are 305 active students. In addition, through the education, the goal is also to improve students' awareness of society. The Faculty runs three study programs: *Computer Science* BSc and two MSc programs – 1) *E-Governance* (the latter jointly with the Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Law) and 2) *Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence*. There are 381 students on these study programs. Studies are conducted in Albanian. As priority research areas, software engineering, systems control, e-governance and artificial intelligence were named.

The *Computer Science* BSc study program was accredited in 2021 for five years (until 30.09.2026) and both MSc study programs for three years.

In total 141 (+36?) students have been registered to the program *Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence* in 2020-2023. There were 48 + 11 students in 2023 on the study program.





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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

What follows are the comments on each standard, numbered according to the numbering of the standards in the *KAA Accreditation Manual*. There is a table at the end of each section that lists the compliance assessment for each standard.

As an introduction, it should be mentioned that some parts of the self-evaluation report (SER) were copied from a former self-evaluation report of 2021. For example, an incorrect sentence "The FCS has tried to reflect the 6th level descriptors of NQF" (page 48 of SER) was also in the 2021 SER. Another example: the sentence "In accordance with Article 127 of the UKZ Provisional Statute, students have the right to complain about the quality of the teaching process or the university's infrastructure" was adequate in the 2021 SER (page 60 in the 2021 SER), but not in the 2024 SER (the university had in 2024 already a Statute instead of a Provisional Statute).

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The university's mission statement does not specify any focus area of the university, stating only that the university aims to establish and support the highest standards in the field of teaching and learning, scientific research and artistic creativity. The Faculty has three focus areas: Software Engineering, Web Design, System and Control Technology. The mission of the Faculty is to prepare new generations who contribute to the field of Information Technology by working for Kosovo, Europe, and America, always with a focus on remote work from Kosovo for different states. Thus, the study program is consistent with the profile of the university and with the mission of the Faculty.

University lecturers were primarily involved in the development of the study program. However, during the meeting with employers of graduates, some significant recommendations on the content of the study program were made. For example, it was mentioned that the university should pay more attention to developing students' team-work skills, as well as the ability to apply theory into practice. Students' opinions also need to be taken into account more. For example, at the meeting a number of proposals were made regarding the study programs, teaching, and the university in general:

study programs should include subjects taught in English;





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- the number of IT laboratories should be increased;
- Cooperation between the university and local companies and municipalities should be closer;
- access to scientific articles should be improved;
- the number of exchange students should be increased;
- etc.

The fact that there were several recommendations indicates that stakeholders could be more involved in study program development.

The overall didactic concept of the study program is based on Bloom's taxonomy. As a scientific concept, the project-based nature of the subjects is introduced, according to which the student presents an original project idea on the topic of the subject in the 4th week and a completed prototype in the 13th week of a semester. At the same time, students document the entire development process. During the meetings, academic staff explained that students also prepare assessments, analyze research papers and the level of digitalization of various institutions.

The academic processes are very well regulated. The main document stating the structure and administration is the detailed (88 pages) *Statute of the University*. There are a number of additional regulating documents, such as *Regulation for Master Studies, Regulation on Disciplinary Measures and Procedures for the Academic Staff and Students, Regulation for the Scientific Research Activity at the Public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan, Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the Public University "Kadri Zeka Gjilan, Regulation on Student Engagement in Internships at Administration of the Public University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan, etc. All these documents are made publicly available.*

There is a separate regulation on ethical issues at the university (*Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*). This document covers on its 13 pages all aspects of ethical conduct, including prohibition of discrimination and harassment, plagiarism, conflict of interest, transparency and confidentiality etc. A separate document is dedicated to research, *Regulation on Code of Ethics and Integrity in Research*. Bodies are created for the implementation of the principles stated in these documents: the *Ethics Council* and the Disciplinary Committee. Actions in cases of violations are set out in the *Regulation on disciplinary sanction and procedure for academic staff and students*.





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According to the Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan, "At the end of each academic year, the Faculty shall organize a periodic review of the study program and its teaching regulation". Concrete aspects are listed that should be reviewed. The majority of documents submitted to the ET were reviewed in 2023.

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

Compliance level: *substantially compliant.*

ET recommendations:

1. Form a permanent council of the study program, which includes representatives of employers, partners, students, graduates and key academic staff, including other heads of the study program. The task of the council will be on annual bases to develop recommendations for further improvements of the study program based on surveys of all stakeholders, international development trends of the academic area and the needs of society.





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2.2. Quality management

UKZ has established a quality assurance system that involves various assessment instruments and bodies. Academic staff composes each semester the *Individual Development Plan*, in which they present a detailed plan for the upcoming semester. At the end of each academic year, the teachers provide a written report on all aspects of the teaching process, identifying issues and proposing solutions including control procedures for knowledge and results achieved. Then a review of the study program is composed, which determines "changes to be carried out in the study program and in its teaching regulation, in the implementation process, in the material and didactical basis, in academic staff, in the control procedures of students' assessments, and in the feedback process from students" (*Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*).

The SER describes a robust framework for continuous improvement and is structured according to the *Accreditation Manual*. The main planning document is the annual *Action Plan* for implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 of the University. Based on that, an Action Plan of the Faculty, and of the study program are composed. Quality assurance relies on three pillars: documents, instruments, bodies. The main documents regulating the evaluating processes and planning for improvement are *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* and *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*. The Office for Academic Development and Quality coordinates the quality assessment of study programs. This office consists of the Director, an official for Accreditation, and an official for Career Development and Alumni Affairs. There is an internal quality assessment group as well as the quality and accreditation coordinator in each Faculty. The duties and responsibilities of the Faculty's quality coordinator are explicitly determined. The regulations mentioned above determine quality instruments and prescribe concrete duties of all parties involved.

The quality assurance processes at the university are unified and regulated on two levels: 1) the quality assurance and evaluation system (the pillars described in the previous section), quality assurance mechanisms and instruments, quality assurance stakeholders and the duties and responsibilities of the parties involved in this process are defined in the *Regulation on quality assurance and evaluation at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan* and 2) the basic priorities of the quality assurance and the way of its implementation, that are determined in the *Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka"*





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Gjilan. These documents regulate – among other aspects – also design and approval of new study programs, continuous review of study programs, external evaluation, evaluation of teaching process, etc. However, there are no specific examples or case studies that illustrate how quality control measures are implemented concretely during various stages of program design and execution. The SER makes claims about the effectiveness of the quality control systems without providing concrete data or analyses to support these claims, leaving questions about the actual depth and efficacy of the quality assurance processes.

The quality assurance of study program is divided into seven stages (that are conducted every year), starting with the composition/reviewing of syllabi of subjects and ending with the composition of the Evaluation Report. It is commendable that quality issues are on a separate pop-up menu on the homepage of the university website that gives a detailed overview of the quality system on the university, lists the quality coordinators of the faculties, selfevaluation reports of study programs, etc. According to Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan the periodic reviews should consider the following aspects: allocation of credits to respective disciplines or group-disciplines; teaching programs for specific subjects; constituent elements of disciplines and allocation of credits among them (lectures, seminars, assignments, projects, labs, etc.); the study program regulation; the necessary didactic basis for the implementation of the study program, identifying deficiencies and undertaking necessary measures for the successive year; literature used, deficiencies observed and measures undertaken to improve the situation; study program implementation in the respective academic year; control procedures of knowledge/exams and analysis of control outcomes; feedback from students. The review report must determine changes to be carried out in the study program and in its teaching regulation, in the implementation process, in the material and didactical basis, in academic staff, in the control procedures of students' assessments, and in the feedback process from students.

The SER presents an overview about the regulations, instruments, actors and principles of quality assurance. The responsibilities are determined: from an academic staff and Quality Assurance Coordinators of faculties until to the Rector who supervises university-level quality system. Another important factor that supports continuing improvement is the fact that the University has adopted Key Performance Indicators for monitoring and measuring performance.





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There are six questionnaires developed for internal quality evaluations: 1) The Dean shall assess the academic staff; 2) Self-Assessment of Academic Staff; 3) Students shall assess the academic staff and courses; 4) Students shall assess the administration; 5) The employer shall assess the academic and administrative staff; 6) The graduates (Alumni). According to the *Manual for Planning and Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance*, every academic staff is assigned a score which is composed from three components: 1) students' assessment (30%), 2) self-assessment (30%), 3) dean's assessment (40%). Students assess the teachers at the end of each semester. The results are shared with the teaching staff. Students' assessment for the teaching staff is internal and shared only with the teacher, with the Program Director and the Dean of the faculty as well as with the university's senior management. Summarized reports are made public on the UKZ website and reported to the University Senate.

The procedure for further development of the study program is described under section 2.4 above. The University Management Digital Systems (SMU) has options for collecting data on students work load, student achievement etc. that allows to take immediate actions when necessary. In case when objectives are achieved to a degree of less than 40%, specific monitoring and re-evaluating is conducted. If an employee underperforms repeatedly, employment relationship can be terminated. The assessment results are taken into account in promotion. However, while individual subjects are systematically evaluated, the university does not have a system of an annual evaluation of the overall study programs.

The Standards on Internal Quality Assurance in the University "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan states that the review of study programs and the teaching regulation is conducted at the end of each academic year. Although the Regulation for Quality Assurance and Evaluation and the Manual for Planning and Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance are renewed in 2023, many other important documents including Regulation on Procedures for Quality Assurance are more than 5 years old.

		Compliance	
Standard	Yes	No	
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X		
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X		





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Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.		X
Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.		X

Compliance level: substantially compliant.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Appoint **one** academic staff member of the Faculty as the responsible head/curator of the study program, who has full responsibility for the quality of the study program.
- 2. Determine the authority and responsibilities of the curator explicitly in the University regulations.
- 3. Considering the suggestions made in both the institutional and curriculum evaluation, review all university regulations including developing a comprehensive evaluation process for the program to ensure continuous alignment with institutional goals and market trends.





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2.3. Academic staff

UKZ as a public university follows strictly all regulations concerning employment. Personal data of academic persons are presented in tabular form. The courses taught are listed in the SER.

Legal requirements set for teaching staff are met: according to the study program in SER, all 7 lecturers have a PhD degree and are elected by open competition.

According to the CV-s submitted, the formal requirements concerning employment of academic staff by other institutions are met.

100% of all teachers have full-time employment, and consequently, they cover all courses.

There are seven full-time lecturers on the study program who all hold a PhD degree. Although almost all teachers also teach on *e-Governance* master program, the total amount of staff with a PhD is sufficient for both study programs.

According to the *Regulation to Support Mobility and other Activities of the Academic Staff of the University*, the university supports full-time academic staff for active participation in conferences and for scientific mobility. Although the university provides some resources to publish research papers and attend conferences, there is a lack of resources to support long-term sabbaticals abroad, or for inviting high-level professors from abroad.

Concerning community services, several concrete activities were listed: development – with students' involvement – web sites for hospitals, primary and secondary schools, digitalization of bus stations etc. To determine the activities, the needs of the local municipality and the region are analyzed. Concerning students, they rated teachers positively in terms of their availability for consultations.

The university regulations foresee conducting academic staff yearly self-assessment and assessment by the dean. Students assess the staff at the end of each semester. The evaluations will be made publicly available. However, no regular development discussions are conducted with the immediate superior.

The UKZ Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (page 23) declares that "Our university engages in the application of advanced teaching methodologies that aim to increase interactivity with students, emphasize the individuality of students and take into account the demands and needs of students during the learning process, which is achieved through the training programs that UKZ staff attend on the methodology of teaching". The document sets a





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number of indicators for measuring teaching quality. According to the *Manual for Planning* and Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance, development of teaching materials is set as one of the indicators for evaluating the academic staff. On the other hand, there are no effective instruments implemented – small number of written materials in the Albanian language was stated as a weakness in the SER. The fact that there is a lack of teaching materials in Albanian was also confirmed by the students. Also, none of the KPIs of the university is about teaching materials.

There are no retired teachers – the average age of teaching staff is about 48 years.

		liance
Standard	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		X
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	





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Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.		X
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	X	

Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Find resources for long-term training of academic staff abroad.
- 2. Introduce mandatory annual individual development discussions of the academic and non-academic staff by their superiors, based on the annual staff self-evaluation reports. The main purpose of development discussions will be to identify problems that are hindering the employee's professional growth and plan measures to solve them.
- 3. Determine the quality indicators for evaluation the quality of learning materials and implement their usage in the holistic quality system on the university.

2.4. Educational process content

There was a confusion with the learning outcomes of the study program. The SER presents learning outcomes in three locations: on page 19 ("some of the main learning outcomes", 8 items), on page 46 ("some of the main learning outcomes", 11 items) and on page 47 ("The students should be able to", 11 items). These are pairwise different from each other, so the factual set of learning outcomes remains unclear. Remark that a similar confusion was in the SER of 2021 accreditation. There are some more aspects that are either inadequate or at least questionable:

As the title of the study program indicates, the study program has two focuses – control systems and artificial intelligence. However, the general conception of the study program is not explicitly stated. For example, the concepts of *Industry 4.0/5.0* or *Digital transformation* are not mentioned in the SER. It is not explained how the synergy between control systems and AI is supposed to be achieved. Such vagueness complicates





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the marketing of the study program and may also be the reason why the interest of potential students in this study program is extremely low (only 7 applications in 2023).

- There is no internship in the study program. According to the syllabus of the subject "Practical work", the students should carry out a project based on some real life need or problem. At the same time, the syllabus does not stipulate that the work is done in the premises of a company or of a public institution; the weekly classes take place at the university.
- The SER states that "After completing the expected exams in Semesters I-IV, the student in the final semester submits a request for permission to complete the degree by proposing the mentor who guides the candidate for the master's work". If the subject of the master's thesis is only dealt with in the last semester, then there is a high risk that its quality will suffer there will be too little to get acquainted with the scientific literature in the subject area and to validate the obtained results. There is also no possibility to consider the topic of the thesis when choosing electives in previous semesters.
- There is a confusion on the status of some subjects: marked as electives in the study program, but as mandatory in the syllabus or vice versa (PLC Programming, Mathematics for Machine Learning, Dynamics and Motion Control, Energy Management, Advanced Artificial Intelligence Methods and Applications, Intelligent Control Systems, Measurement Systems and Metrics, Mathematical Logic and Set Theory, Model Predictive Control, Optimal Control and Linear Systems, Theory and Methodology of Science with Applications, Speech and Audio Processing). Remark that similar confusion was in the SER of 2021 accreditation.

It is claimed in the SER that the study program is designed in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. However, no correspondence or even a general discussion on the correspondence is presented. Nevertheless, analysis of the study program as a whole and the subjects allows to conclude that the study program in fact largely complies with the frameworks mentioned above. On the other hand, a correspondence analysis between the learning outcomes of the study program and of the learning outcomes of the subjects is not conducted. For example, the question is how the learning outcome "Design and control robotic systems, considering kinematics, dynamics, and trajectory planning for diverse robotic applications" can be guaranteed when there is no compulsory course in robotics (*Introduction to Robotics* is an elective course).

There are listed 11 learning outcomes that cover also some general competences. The whole study program corresponds well with the title of the program. What was not quite clear were





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the principles of dividing the subjects into mandatory and electives, especially for the first semester. At the beginning of the studies, one of the important tasks of the electives is to reduce the problems arising from the difference in the prior knowledge and skills of the students. The relatively wide range of bachelor study programs the students have graduated – computer science, electronics, mechatronics – means that the competencies that need to be leveled can vary a lot.

The syllabi contain all the necessary components and were submitted in electronic form. They are detailed enough to get an adequate understanding on the content and other aspects of the subjects.

The language in which the study program will be offered is Albanian.

The student-teacher relationship seems to be a partnership. Students highlighted the helpfulness and good availability of the lecturers by e-mails and sometimes even by phones at the meeting with the expert.

The teaching methodology and assessment methods are described in detail in the syllabi.

Learning outcomes and other aspects of modules are described in the syllabi and are supposed to be discussed already on the first class.

The grading system that is used in all Balkan countries is used. The grades are 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 where 5 marks failing and 6-10 are positive. The passing level is 50% as widely used in Europe.

Students who are not satisfied with the evaluation of their work have the right to submit a written complaint to the Dean. The procedures are described in the Statute of UKZ (article 109).

The document *Regulation on student engagement in internships at the university* describes the purpose, scope, arrangement and other aspects of the internship in very general terms. The study program does not contain a mandatory internship. The Practical Work course is actually a a project that is carried out at the university under the supervision of a university professor. The recommendation of the Expert Report of 2021 to upgrade the Practical Work subject by introducing an internship has not been implemented.

Cooperation agreements are signed with several public and private institutions.

		liance
Standard	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the		X
acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and		





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





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

Compliance level: *substantially compliant.*

ET recommendations:

- 1. Develop a study program concept that describes how its two foci control systems and AI meet technology development trends in a synergistic and innovative way.
- 2. Add mandatory internship to the study program, either as a separate subject or by changing the content of the subject Practical Work.
- 3. Introduce changes in the university regulations, according to which the supervisor of the master's thesis is confirmed for the student in the 3rd semester at the latest.
- 4. Review the outcomes of the study program and of the subjects to ensure their harmony.





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2.5. Students

The admission procedure of new students is conducted according to the clauses set in the *Regulation for Master Studies* and in accordance to the legal regulations established by MEST and KAA. For example, the complaints are handled by the Complaints Review Commission. Following the decision of the Complaints Review Commission, the Commission for admission of new student announces the final results.

The general enrollment conditions are set in the *Regulation for Master Studies*. All students enrolled have a bachelor's degree or another equivalent education. There are two admission deadlines for new students (in June and September). Special quotas are for admitting students from small communities (serbs, turks, roma) and from outside Kosovo (Serbia and North Macedonia).

According to the university regulations, one group of students consists of maximum 50 students for compulsory subjects and up to 30 for elective subjects and exercises. Due to the small number of students studying the curriculum, these conditions are met.

The communication of the student evaluation results is made through the University Management System (SMU), but also through other electronic services such as Moodle and the T-EDU platform. The teacher is obliged to submit the examination report along with the students list and physical copies of applications downloaded from the university management system to the service officer within 48 hours after the end of the examination. If a student is not satisfied with his grade, then he has the right to make a written complaint to the Dean within two days of its publication and request an evaluation through a commission.

The electronic University Management System retains all records for each student, including assessments, colloquium scores, final exam scores etc. The students are provided with the appropriate transcripts, statistical reports, certificates (Grade Certificate, Diploma and Diploma Supplement), etc.

The exam in the same subject can be repeated up to 4 times (the 4th to a commission). At the student's request – in reasonable and justified cases – the dean may allow the student to take the exam at a different time.

Completion rates for student registries are maintained for all courses and the program, and they are included in the quality indicators. However, these are not discussed neither in the





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Strategy of the university nor in the quality assurance regulation documents. After completing the expected exams in Semesters I-IV, the student in the final semester submits a request for permission to complete the degree by proposing the mentor who guides for the master's work.

Clauses concerning academic plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) form a whole article in the *Regulation on the Code of Ethics in UKZ*. SMU contains an anti-plagiarism option. Other platforms used are antiplagiarismcheck.org and *Google Classroom*. All diploma topics in UKZ are verified for anti-plagiarism. UKZ is in the process of implementing Turnitin.

Students' rights and obligations are stated in the Statute of the University that contains also a detailed description of submission and processing students' appeals (Article 109). In accordance with the *Regulation for Master's Studies*, students' rights are addressed through their admission process at UKZ. The *Regulation* is a publicly available document.

The transfer of students – both bachelor and master students – between the faculties of the university is regulated in *Regulation on Basic Studies-Bachelor at the Faculty of Computer Sciences*. Transfer from other universities is possible only for those who have completed at least 50% (in ECTS) of studies in their home/sending university.

Academic staff are required to be available to students on a regular basis (at least two hours a week), for both academic and advisory purposes. Additional hours of consultations with academic staff may be organized. Consultations can be organized in individual or group form. As students explained, teachers are available via email and even vie phones.

	Comp	liance
Standard	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	





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Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.		X
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

Compliance level: Fully compliant.

ET recommendations: include students' completion rates in KPI's and update the quality assurance regulations with appropriate clauses.

2.6. Research

The study program does not have clearly stated scientific/applied research objective; ability to conduct research is not mentioned in no learning outcome of the study program. Moreover, no strategic objective in the *Strategic Research Plan* considers students' research.





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Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are specified in the employment contract, in the *Statute of the University* and in the *Regulation on Selection Procedures on Appointment and Promotion of Academic Staff.* The performance in relation to these expectations is considered in the self-assessment reports.

Research objectives and action lines are determined in the *Strategic Research Plan* and research activities are determined in the *Regulation for the scientific research activity at the public university "Kadri Zeka" Gjilan*. These are fully consistent with international standards and established norms. Research is one of the main scopes also in the document *Development Strategy for Internationalization and IRO Action Plan* 2020-2025. Research activities are also at the focus in the *Strategy for International Cooperation and Project Management*.

The scope of research of the academic staff harmonizes only partially with the scope of the study program. The main keywords and acronyms characterizing the scope of the research are: e-learning, algorithms, programming, WAN, digital information systems, cloud computing, computer science, robotics. Research is conducted primarily on individual basis, no acting research groups are formed. This fact inhibits involvement of academic staff involvement in international research projects (the list of projects provided did not contain any real research projects like Horizon Europe financed projects).

The SER contained a thorough (8 pages) list of publications of the academic staff. However, more than half of the publications were from 2020 and earlier. The research of academic staff is internationally visible (for example, in *Google Scholar, GS*): all academic staff has publication record in GS, and citations to the publications. On the other hand, no academic staff has the GS h-index higher than 5. Moreover, research and development activities are unacceptably poorly described on the university's English website: sections *Institute for training and educational research* and *Publications* were just empty, and section *Investigative Projects* contained the "Lorem Ipsum ..." text. During meetings with ET, teachers complained about the difficulties of cooperation with leading foreign universities, caused primarily by financial reasons.

Research is basically validated by scientific publications. No information was provided about technological transfer. This is not facilitated by the salary system either, as salaries are unified and do not depend on cooperation with companies. A Research Institute is planned, one of the tasks of which is supposed to be technology transfer.





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According to the list of publications submitted, the majority of full-time teachers has published at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication per year for the past three years.

The regular academic staff within the Faculty publishes papers on behalf of the University.

As the research scope of the teachers harmonizes only partly with the scope of the study program, including in the teaching information about the teachers' research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach is certainly a challenge.

The university has not yet established policies for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.

The prerequisites for involving student in research are there – the study program contains a course *Theory and Methodology of Science with Applications*. However, the fact that this subject is planned to be taught on the final semester, makes this involvement problematic. Remark that this recommendation was done already in the Expert Report of 2021 accreditation.

	Comp	liance
Standard	Yes	No
Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.		X
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.		X
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc.	X	





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and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.		
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	X	
Standard 6.9/6.8. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	X	
Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		X
Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	

Compliance level: substantially compliant.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Define priority research areas in which functioning research groups are formed and in which participation in international cooperation projects is planned.
- 2. Develop and implement a motivation system that supports technological transfer and cooperation of academic staff with companies.
- 3. The university is recommended to establish an intellectual property ownership policy.
- 4. Move the subject "Theory and Methodology of Science with Applications" to an earlier semester.





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2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The university has for satisfying current needs enough premises, human resources and financial resources. The FCS has about 400 students, 18 full-time and 3 part-time academic staff. The student-teacher ratio of about 20:1 is acceptable. The university has four computer labs with 30 seats in each lab, as well as necessary equipment. The total number of computers for students is 125. Although the university needs more premises and human resources for expanding its academic activities, the university has enough resources due to the small number of students on the study program.

The study programs of the university do not have separate financial plans, the financial needs of the study program are covered by the central administration of the university. The budget of the university is planned in coming three years with the annual 2-4% increase. The Faculty of Computer Science has a Strategic Plan for 2023-2028. However, the Strategic Plan consists of general statements only, with no concrete figures. Concrete infrastructure development plans are necessary, as it was repeatedly emphasized during the conversations that there could be more IT laboratories and their equipment could be better.

As a public institution of higher education, University's financial sustainability is guaranteed by the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework for the next three years. The University is the owner of the space it uses.

Considering the number of students (about 1500 active students in the whole university), the number and size of teaching classrooms is adequate.

There are 180 places for reading in the Library, about 52 thousand copies of books and about 15 thousand book titles. The university has agreement with the Association of Electronic Libraries of Kosovo to access online digital libraries. The university itself admits that library services are insufficient, both in terms of the availability of educational literature and access to electronic databases. Wi-Fi is also unsatisfactory, so some students prefer to work somewhere else rather than in the library.

The facility possesses electrical stairs, elevators, emergency exits as well as the entire infrastructure which is needed for students with special needs.





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	Comp	liance
Standard	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.		X
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years:	X	
a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;		
c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;		
d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.		
Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
<i>Standard</i> 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:		
a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;		
b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;	X	
c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years;		





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d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.		
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	X	

Compliance level: substantially compliant.

ET recommendations:

- 1. In cooperation with other academic institutions in Kosovo, seek a significant expansion of access to scientific journals through the Association of Electronic Libraries of Kosovo.
- 2. Prepare a detailed financial plan for the acquisitions required for the implementation of the study program.





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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The main challenges remain the same as in 2021:

- 1. To be competitive internationally, it is necessary to define research priorities and actively pursue them.
- 2. In research and development (R&D), the main goal should be participation in European R&D programs.
- 3. In the further formation of academic staff, special attention should be paid to the following aspects:
 - a. The intensity and quality of R&D depends largely on the presence of a **leading** scientist capable of establishing a research group and conducting high-level research.
 - b. For the quality and sustainability of study programs, it is important that academic staff conduct research in the area of the study programs, and vice versa, that the **scope of study programs** harmonizes with the research scope of academic staff.
- 4. Significant development is only possible if the necessary resources are available.

Overall compliance:

Standard	Compliance level	
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant	
2. Quality management	Substantially compliant	
3. Academic staff	Substantially compliant	
4. Educational process content	Substantially compliant	
5. Students	Fully compliant	
6. Research	Substantially compliant	
7. Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant	
Overall compliance	Substantially compliant	





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In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the *Master in Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence* study program offered by University of Gjilan is **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the *Accreditation Manual* and, therefore recommends to accredit the program for a duration of **three years** with 30 students to be enrolled on the study program.

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Mbuan		
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