PUBLIC UNIVERSITY "KADRI ZEKA" GJILAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Master's Programme ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Accreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Prishtina, May 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 30.04.2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri
- Prof. univ. dr. habil. Anca Greere (Online)
- PhD. Cand. Giga Khositashvilli, Student Expert

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA
- Arianit Krasniqi, KAA

Sources of information for the Report:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (2021)*
- *KAA Manual for external evaluation of higher education institutions (2021)*
- *KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report*
- *Self Evaluation Report "TEACHING OF ALBANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE RE-ACCREDITATION" provided by PUBLIC UNIVERSITY "KADRI ZEKA" GJILAN FACULTY OF EDUCATION*
- *Study Program*
- *Course syllabi*
- *CVs of the Academic Staff*
- *additional materials provided on request of the expert team*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *The experts team followed the program accreditation assessment areas and respective performance indicators, developed by Kosovo Accreditation Agency that are presented in Accreditation Manual – 2021*

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1.2. Site visit schedule

2. Program Accreditation Procedure at University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan	
Programs:	**Teaching in Albanian Language and Literature, MA, 60 ECTS (Re-accreditation)** **Teaching in English Language, MA, 60 ECTS (Accreditation)**
Site visit on (hybrid):	**30 April 2024**
Expert Team:	Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri Prof. univ. dr. habil. Anca Greere (Online) PhD. Cand. Giga Khositashvilli, Student Expert
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Arianit Krasniqi, KAA

Site Visit Program

	Time	Meeting	Participants
1)	09:30 – 10:10	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	
2)	10.10 – 10.50	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	
3)	10:55 – 11:55	Meeting with the heads of the study program **Teaching in Albanian Language and Literature, MA** (room 1) Prof. Dr. Dhurata Shehri	Merxhan Avdyli
4)	10:55 – 11:55	Meeting with the heads of the study program **Teaching in English Language, MA** (room 2) Prof. univ. dr. habil. Anca Greere (Online) PhD. Cand. Giga Khositashvilli, Student Expert	Teuta Agaj Avdiu
5)	11:55 – 12:55	Lunch break	
6)	12:55 – 13.25	Visiting Facilities	
7)	13:25 – 14:15	Meeting with teaching staff	
8)	14:15 – 15:05	Meeting with students	
9)	15:10 – 16:10	Meeting with graduates and external stakeholders	
10)	16:10 – 16:15	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
11)	16:15 – 16:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

2.1. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

UKZ was founded by the decision of the Government of Kosovo number 118/03 dated March 6, 2013, which was approved by the KK on May 30, 2013. The decision of the Assembly of Kosovo realized the goal and several decades of work that has been done in Gjilan with higher education, since 1958 when the Teacher Training Center (teacher training school) was founded.

In UKZ, the organization of curricula (study programs) is implemented based on the system of three cycles of higher education, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and implements all the recommendations of the Bologna process. UKZ has 6 (six) faculties and 1 Organizational Unit (University Library) and currently, these faculties offer 12 study programs: 6 BA level programs and 6 MA level programs. Currently, 5 bachelor's programs and 5 master's programs are accredited, i.e. 10 study programs in total. UKZ has 12 study programs in the new/accreditation process, of which there are six programs in the new accreditation process: Primary and Preschool (BA), Computer Science (BA), Finance and Applied Accounting (BA), E-Government (MA), Local Government and Democratic Society (MA) as well as six new programs are in process for accreditation: Teaching Albanian Language and Literature (MA), Teaching Curriculum (MA), Systems Control and Artificial Intelligence (MSC), Management and Entrepreneurship (MSC), Criminal Law (MSc), Administration and European Union Law (BSc).

3. PROGRAM EVALUATION
The institutional evaluation consists of 7 subheadings through which the administration, organisation and management of the institution, as well as teaching and research are assessed.

Important note: As the program for accreditation is not yet running, the ET understands that the practices described for the MA program Teaching of Albanian Language and Literature will generally hold true on implementation of the English Language Teaching program, and has made its judgement as an anticipatory principle by comparisons with the Albanian MA implementation.

3.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

The goals and mission of the study program are in line with the orientation of the university. Specifically, the program sets out "to provide English language graduates and teachers with

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advanced practical, theoretical and critical knowledge for contemporary English language teaching methodologies, strategies, and approaches and prepare to apply them in diverse teaching contexts." As the University is seeking to accredit this program, the ET can only anticipate that all efforts will be made to meet this mission once students are admitted; however, the ET appreciates that the mission, as formulated, can be achievable, although there might need to be some adjustments and further planning to the way the program is designed.

The SER did not include the learning outcomes. Upon request, the ET was presented with learning outcomes for the program. These show a preoccupation for developing higher-order thinking skills, critical analysis, evaluative practices and use of IT-infused pedagogical methodologies, although some of the LOs outlined are less measurable and may be more difficult to demonstrate achievement of. For example: "Develop their lifelong learning by constantly updating their skills and knowledge in this field" may prove difficult to include in assessments directly and may be more a consequence of some of the other LOs or the attitudes developed during the program, which relate to maintaining a moder outlook on professional development, especially for EFL pedagogy which is extermely dynamic. Similarly, "demonstrate a deeper understanding and sensitivity to the nature of language, language use and language development" can pose measurability issues in relation to the notion of 'sensitivity'. There are 14 LOs in number, which may prove difficult to administer and monitor acros a one-year programme, and these may prove problematic for students to achieve in such a short time-span; therefore, some strealimining will be helpful to the program.

The didactic concept of the study program was demonstrated. Regarding the research concept, this is underpinned by the Research methodology course and the graduation thesis; however, it is not sufficiently clear how these may serve holistic research aims. There are also further organizational details which are yet to be agreed; these contribute both to the didactic and the research concept and once determined will give more stability to the overarching vision for the program. The ET discussed the admission requirements for the entrance exam and the master's graduation thesis considerations and it was evident that insufficient thought had been placed to gain clarity in these areas. The further clarifications provided, upon request, still prove insufficient as there is no clarity over what English language proficiency level might be required and what components the entrance examination may pose, nor is there sufficient planning having been afforded to the practical applicability of the graduation theses, beyond a few titles which were presented to the ET. It remains unknown how much practical research will be conducted, how and where this may be conducted, as a satisfactory measure for the graduation thesis. The ET also found the concept of internships to be insufficiently planned. Overall, the ET recommends that the Program needs to plan more and become explicit about these aspects from the design phase. The view that some of these aspects are still to be designed and developed once accreditation is obtained and the program has the authorization to admit students, is found to be unacceptable for the ET as it demonstrates insufficient planning

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investment for what should be a fully functional program when presented for accreditation. And this insufficiency will render risks to the teaching, learning and assessment experiences for the first cohorts of students.

In regards the program design, the ET also looked into the suitability of the one-year duration. As far as it understands that Kosovar graduates of 4-year BA programs will be reluctant to take on two further years of education, the ET believes that a two-year program or a one-year-and-a-half (as allowed by the University's Regulations for Master's Studies Regulation art.13(1)) will enable better practical opportunities, with lengthier, more meaningful internships, more time for a high-quality graduation project and, importantly, more likelihood of *Erasmus+* engagements, which can relevantly support the internationalization agenda of the University.

All relevant guidelines, as well as important information and organizational matters, particularly with regard to students, are publicly accessible. The existing electronic system also offers important information options. Still the English language webpages are far from functional. A click on the Faculty of Education/Study Programs goes into "orem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor", making it difficult for prospective non-Albanian-native students to access information and be interested in study programs offered. This affects internationalization ambitions. Of course, for this particular program submitted for accreditation, the ET does not expect to find, already on the website, any anticipatory information about its potential admission.

There are regulations for ethical issues. The handling of plagiarism is also regulated. During the discussions, the ET was able to ascertain that these regulations are generally known and understood. Their validity for staff and students is generally recognized. As the program for accreditation is not yet running, the ET expects that the practices described for the MA program Teaching of Albanian Language and Literature will generally hold true on implementation of the English Language Teaching program. Although the ET emphasizes that the approach taken is one mainly focused on detection of unoriginal work rather than prevention of plagiarism and promotion of academic integrity practices, which students can develop a constructive attitude for. The ET was presented with conflicting views about the practical applicability of these regulations, with staff saying they do regularly check for plagiarism, whereas students were unaware that this was happening. If students are to develop a positive attitude they must be involved in discussions regarding their own work and be able to consciously appreciate the efforts made by staff to instill academic integrity principles, this even more so as the program is intended to function in the Faculty of Education and the graduates are intended to become teachers. (see Recommendation under S3)

The regulations regarding management are clearly defined but the ET was no presented with conclusive evidence to demonstrate a cyclical review at least once every two years, nor did the ET have a demonstration of amendments implemented in the light of changing circumstances observed via any regulation review activity.

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Internationalisation opportunities are found by the ET to be underutilized and this will take a toll on the promotion of the program. On the other hand, the ET recognizes the difficulty of organizing student exchanges within a one-year program.

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

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *The Program should streamline the learning outcomes, by reducing in number and maintaining only those which can be measured for student achievement.*
2. *The Program should be further developed for clarity on admission requirements, entrance testing, research integration, internship logistics and graduation thesis expectations to ensure that any communication to prospective students and the wider public is relevant and complete.*
3. *The Program may wish to consider if a lengthier program duration may be more suitable for the objectives it proposes.*

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4. *The efforts to strengthen international cooperation should be intensified. The number of ERASMUS+-opportunities has to be increased.*

3.2. Quality Management

As the submitted documents state primary focus of the Faculty of Education is to conduct high-quality studies across all academic activities. This goal is achieved by adhering to the formal guidelines set by the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo, the UKZ Statute, and other relevant normative acts concerning quality assurance in higher education. The university's quality assurance system relies on three main components: documents, assessment bodies, and evaluation instruments, all of which support the objectives aligned with the UKZ mission.

As it was identified during the interviews a regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation has been developed, and the Office for Academic Development and Quality was established. UKZ has strengthened its capabilities by appointing a Vice-Rector for Academic Development and Quality. Additionally, in 2022, the Office for Academic Development and Quality recruited officials for Accreditation and Career Development and Alumni. The regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at UKZ was revised in 2023 and approved by the Senate. This regulation outlines the quality assurance and evaluation system, mechanisms and instruments, actors involved, and their duties and responsibilities.

During the interviews the expert team tried to identify to what extend the academic staff was involved in the program development, as it turned out the faculty members focused only on their syllabus mostly. It was seen that they were not engaged in designing the learning outcomes of the program, rather focusing only on the learning outcomes of their own courses. Moreover, the interviews did not show any evidence of the academic staff contributed in designing the SER. The expert team recommends the university enhances the participation of the teaching staff in preparing the SER, as well as in program development.

As the submitted documents state since 2020, UKZ has also implemented the regulation for the Supervisory Council for Quality and Evaluation (SCQA) which defines the operation of this advisory body. In collaboration with other professional bodies at UKZ, the SCQA plans, designs, monitors, analyzes, and manages the evaluation procedures for teaching, research, and other university activities.

The performance evaluation of academic staff at UKZ is guided by the Manual for Planning and Evaluation of Performance (MPEP). A crucial element of quality assurance at UKZ involves various instruments used for data collection. This includes employing different types of questionnaires, conducting interviews, and monitoring academic staff during their lessons. During the site visit the expert team had a possibility to meet the alumni (from relevant program) and employers. Alumni confirmed that had basic information about the program, but could not name/remember any survey they filled, neither any discussion with the university

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representatives about the given study program. Moreover, the employers said that due to the fact of having personal contacts with some of the program heads, they do not have any official meeting, or survey regarding the program. Although they provide feedback informally, the expert team recommends the university formalize the engagement of the alumni and employers in the program designing and development, collecting data with pre-defined, timely manner.

The quality assurance cycle at UKZ mostly encompasses all activities related to the quality of studies. Since 2020, academic staff have used the Individual Development Plan to outline their work at the start of each academic year, focusing on four key objectives: the learning/teaching process, scientific/artistic work, managerial services, and community services.

Additionally, UKZ, in collaboration with the Office for Academic Development and Quality, has appointed Quality Coordinators in each academic unit. These coordinators have significant responsibilities in quality assurance within their respective units and act as liaisons between the academic unit and the Office for Academic Development and Quality. They report to management and the Faculty Council (FC).

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.		X
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.		X
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are considered 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. *The university should enhance the participation of the teaching staff in preparing the SER, as well as in program development.*
2. *The university should formalize the engagement of the alumni and employers in the program designing and development, collecting data with pre-defined, timely manner.*

3.3. Academic Staff

The ET was presented with the plans for staffing the new program. The majority of staff members planned for teaching are full time employed in the Faculty of Education and have qualifications in the field of education. Whereas this allows for the educational/pedagogical elements to be well covered, it does not sufficiently address the EFL specificities, as only a limited number of full-time staff members (2 members out of 7) have qualifications also in English. The Program indicated that there would also be part-time staff engaged for the program, with some having English language qualifications, however the ET could not ascertain if part-time staff have already been secured and what the measure for securing their involvement may need to be. The ET also did not receive the CVs of part-time staff.

It is the understanding of the ET that the program is intended to be with delivery in English, but it was established during the visit that many staff members do not have proficiency levels of English to be able to competently deliver the program. There might be the option to have some elements of teaching innovations in Albanian, but the currently designed program does not explicitly indicate this. Also, it must be remembered that EFL comes with its own peculiarities and different EFL-native language combinations (in this case EFL-Albanian) may generate different elements of difficulty in teaching and may be underpinned by different pedagogical strategies. As immersion is widely promoted, the value of staff being able to deliver the full program in English so as to demonstrate EFL understanding and capacity is believed by the ET to be of paramount importance.

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

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As the program is not yet accredited, the ET can only go on anticipated workloads and cannot test the reality of cumulated teaching load for individual teachers, which, of course, needs to be correlated with hours for assessment, graduation thesis coordination and general consultations availability.

In the Albanian program, job descriptions were found to be available for the full-time positions and it is anticipated that this will be a comparable situation for the English program.

There are 5 obligatory courses each semester and 1 out of 5 is proposed to be delivered by a part-time staff member. Regarding the electives, these are covered 50% in the first semester and 25% in the second semester by part-time staff. As such the distribution privileges full-time staff, which is a positive design, and in the distribution of courses, students will be getting more exposure to staff who do have English-language affiliation, however those members of staff who do have English qualifications and are a more substantive contact with the students (50% or more each semester) have not received any induction to master's level education.

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

In the ET's discussions with members of the teaching staff as well as with students and graduates of the Albanian program, it became very clear that, in addition to their commitment to the academic community, the teaching staff are also available for consultations and advice with students, which is anticipated to continue for the English program.

The regular evaluations of academic staff were explained in detail to the expert team. Teachers are aware of the importance of regular evaluations.

Efforts to improve quality are recognizable, but not yet sufficient in the view of the ET. Particularly in the area of teaching materials, the ET was unable to demonstrate any convincing development steps. Further efforts are needed here, in which international cooperation can be helpful. It would also be conceivable to develop special teaching material that focuses more strongly on the qualification requirements and needs of the students.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No

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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**	
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. *The Program must clarify the language of delivery and where courses are to be fully taught in English, staff members need to have qualifications for English language*

competences and/or experience for working with English as a Foreign Language so that they can relate to EFL specificities.

2. *All staff intended to engage with the program must have some exposure to master's level teaching and understand Level 7 requirements or must receive induction/training to this effect.*

3. *The Program should ensure improved teaching strategies with the support of new infrastructure that is missing.*

4. *The Program should increase the variety of provided opportunities for professional development for the teaching staff especially related to research and involvement in international projects.*

3.4. Educational Process Content

The ET took a close look at the content of the curriculum. This was discussed with the teaching staff in terms of concrete implementation and adaptation to current requirements and circumstances. The ET also discussed the curriculum and its relationship to the requirements of professional practice in detail with students and graduates of the Albanian program and prospective employers who had had some level of engagement in the planning of the English program. Generally, the appropriateness of the curriculum content was confirmed.

The SER, the submitted syllabi and the teaching staff comments indicate that the study program has a qualification-related orientation; although, more attention could be given to the specificities of English as a foreign language. The ET noted that some of the electives may be better suited as compulsory components, for example 'Assessment in education' and would clearly benefit from orientation towards EFL specificities.

The ET identified that some learning outcomes are not convincingly expressed to meet Level 7 requirements, with critical thinking and evaluative analysis only inherent rather than explicitly stated via the verbal constructions chosen. It was revealed to the ET that the University was working on a manual for LO development according to Bloom's taxonomy and EHEA tools but its implementation had not yet been initiated. Further improvement of the formulation of LOs is recommended.

Additionally, some of the program LOs were noted to not always be achievable or measurable. For example, "use and evaluate different literary materials for teaching English thus developing students' critical thinking skills" may only be achieved by students opting for the elective on Literature in English Language Teaching and hence cannot constitute a general PLO. The ET also noted that the PLOs don't fully align with the objectives of the program and the curriculum content does not address all of the objectives directly. For example, the objective: 'to enable students, future English teachers, to prepare a clear curriculum that

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includes the main topics of the English language such as grammar, vocabulary, expressions, reading different texts, essay writing, etc. Also, to develop and use continuous or formative assessment methods including student presentations, research papers, online quizzes, and interactive assignments that promote interactivity in the classroom' presupposes that students will have taken the elective courses on Curriculum Development and Course Design and the one on Assessments, which only some, not all, students, are likely to opt for. A further refinement is necessary to ensure alignment between objectives, learning outcomes and curriculum design.

The ET checked the content of the syllabi provided. The course learning outcomes are observed to not always be set at Level 7 requirements, with many, not all, indicating to aim to achieve "recognition, description, understanding" rather than "application, analysis or evaluation", thus promoting lower-order skills. Additionally, for some courses, the bibliography list contains one title only, which would be insufficient to allow students to gain a comprehensive and analytical perspective on the topics discussed.

The language of instruction is English, however the ET noted that there is no clear requirement for entry for competence level by students nor any proposed support for language enhancement. Additionally, 5 out of 7 full-time staff do not hold qualifications in English and it has been confirmed to the ET in interviews that their teaching in English is not always without problems. Still, no English support was noted for staff, either.

The ET was able to ascertain via the Albanian program that in the survey of students and graduates, the content of the lessons is explained transparently. A clearly competence-oriented, partnership-based relationship between teachers and students was evident. It is expected that this practice will be upheld for the English program, as well.

The expert team identified a good focus on varying teaching strategies. Nevertheless, a greater use of digital technologies must be seen as a good way to involve the new generation in a new teaching strategy. The ET will expect that this will become more evident on the implementation of the English program, but would expect that the course on Learning English through IT will be supportive of this requirement.

In discussions with academic staff, students and graduates, the ET was provided with information on how academic performance is assessed for the Albanian program. It is expected that this will carry across to the English program in a comparable manner.

As became clear in discussions with students, graduates and academic staff, internships are an important mandatory component of the study program and the Albanian program has been delivering them successfully for a few years now. Contracts are in place with schools to ensure that students are well supervised and internship providers have expressed their interest to work with students on the future English program.

The ET looked into the deatils of the graduation thesis and what requirements would be made and found that these were yet to be designed by the Program management.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.		X
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.		X
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.		X
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.		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.	**X**	
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	**X**	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed.	**X**	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	**X**	
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units. *To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)*	**X**	

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *The Program may should re-evaluate the relevance of the distribution of its courses between compulsory and electives and ensure that EFL specificity is marked across all components of the study program.*
2. *The Program should re-draft its program learning outcomes in line with Level 7 descriptors and aim for alignment between the program objectives, learning outcomes and compulsory curriculum content.*
3. *The Program should revise its course learning outcomes to ensure they promote higher-order thinking skills, as commensurate with Level 7 requirements.*
4. *The Program would benefit from conducting a mapping exercise between Programme learning outcomes and Course learning outcomes to determine how they interact and where the overlap is, so that it can become obvious how and to what extent programme learning outcomes receive input from the course learning outcomes.*
5. *The Program should ensure that the syllabi produced recommend more than one bibliographical title to ensure a broad ranging perspective which students can reach*

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by critically analysing various authors and their individual stances regarding the topics being studied.

6. *The Program should articulate the requirements for the graduation thesis, beyond the general regulations from a specific perspective and one which can serve the content and the learning outcomes of the programme.*

3.5. Students

As the submitted documentations state the procedures and criteria for admitting students to the master's program in English Language Teaching are governed by the UKZ Statute and the Regulation for Master Studies, both of which are available on the university's website. Applicants eligible for this program must hold a bachelor's degree (240 ECTS) in English language and literature and must aim to work as English language teachers. As it was explained the program plans to admit 40 students, ensuring greater efficiency in lectures, seminars, internships, and group work. Classes are held regularly, and at the beginning of the program, each professor is required to present and discuss the syllabus with students, including providing their contact information to facilitate communication on academic matters. Throughout their studies, students will receive support from administrative staff who record exam results and track progress until graduation. The regulations for master's studies outline the procedure for writing the master's thesis and the criteria for its content.

The interviews with the students (from similar program) confirmed that they are organized into student organizations and are involved in all university structures, including the senate, learning committees, and quality assurance committees. According to the UKZ Statute, two student representatives are voting members of the Senate, and there is a student observer on the Steering Council. Two students have voting rights on the Study Committee and faculty councils.

The site visit confirmed that UKZ management mostly supports student activities by providing necessary space and logistics. Scholarships are available for students with high grades, as determined by the UKZ Steering Council. Students with an average grade of 8 or higher, who have completed all exams on time, are eligible for these scholarships. The UKZ administration serves students by carefully processing and archiving all institutional and student-related documents. This includes handling documentation for enrollment, exam progress, lecture schedules.

As stated in the SER a key part of academic staff duties is maintaining a consultation schedule, which is posted on their office doors. The expert team double checked how the academic staff is providing the feedback to students when having the mid-term or final exams. The students (from the similar program) said that the teachers are usually speaking about the common

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mistakes on the next meetings. On the same question the academic staff responded that they are hosting students individually in consultations and explaining their results. As the expert team did not saw any evidence of teachers providing timely and individual feedback, it is recommended that the university enhances the mechanisms to support teachers enhance their skills in providing feedback to student's assignments, to further guarantee the quality of teaching and learning.

As it was stated students can take advantage of opportunities to continue their education at other European universities through ERASMUS and other projects. Through these collaborations, UKZ students have benefited from study mobility at various universities outside Kosovo. However, as the given program is only 60 ECTS credits, it is unclear how the students will be giving chance to benefit from the program, as according to the Erasmus regulations, student need to spend at least one semester at home university and the second semester in case of the given program is already the final one, during which students are unable to conduct mobility. The same goes with the transfer within the university or between the universities in Kosovo. The expert team recommends the university designs clear procedure under which students of the English Language program can benefit from international mobilities.

In the Master's program for English Language Teaching, a three-week teaching practice is organized in the second semester. Supervision and evaluation during this practice follow the Manual for Teaching Practice for master's students in the Faculty of Education.

During the interviews academic staff mentioned that they are using text matching software when grading student's papers. However, students from similar program said that in the majority of the cases they either write the assignments on paper, or sending them via email to their teachers, thus they were not sure if the papers were checked against the plagiarism. During the interviews the academic staff mostly focused on checking the unoriginal content in the thesis. The expert team positively evaluates the fact that the final thesis is being checked, however as the best practices show, it is not effective enough. As the final thesis is the final work of the students, checking plagiarism only in this case speaks about the plagiarism detection, not the prevention. The expert team recommends, the university design an academic integrity policy, that will be focused on plagiarisms prevention, rather than detection, by checking the unoriginal content in the students continuous/formative assignments, or mid-term and final exams. In addition to the feedback that teachers will provide, this will guarantee students are familiar with the principles of the academic integrity.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising	X	

students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.		
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	**X**	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	**X**	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.		**X**
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	**X**	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	**X**	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	**X**	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		**X**
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	**X**	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, 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: Partially Compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The university should enhance the mechanisms to support teachers enhance their skills in providing feedback to student's assignments, to further guarantee the quality of teaching and learning.*

2. *The university should design clear procedure under which students of the English Language program can benefit from international mobilities.*

3. *The university should design an academic integrity policy that will be focused on plagiarisms prevention, rather than detection, by checking the unoriginal content in the students' continuous/formative assignments, or mid-term and final exams.*

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3.6. Research

In the area of research, the ET certainly acknowledges the efforts of the academic staff to date. Nevertheless, the ET sees research as an area for further improvement if the study program is to fully benefit as a master's with potential to be a platform also for PhD education. Further intensive efforts are required here to improve expectations, quality and results. A significant improvement is most likely to be achieved by strengthening international cooperation and carrying out ambitious research projects.

The research objectives of the degree program were not convincingly presented to the ET. There is a lack of a clear focus that is also aligned with the profile of the university and the degree program. There is a lack of clear plans for advancing research in the department in a structured manner. As noted in the SER, the financial resources are clearly inadequate for research purposes.

In the discussions with academic staff, the ET was not able to identify that there are clearly defined research expectations of teaching staff. Still, staff did talk about performance reviews considering this component and the ET found that the research output presented for staff who are planned to teach on this program is satisfactory and does cover areas which are likely to be of interest and can be included in the teaching demonstrations across the various courses.

Both from the SER and from the discussions with members of the academic staff, it became clear that the definition of research and research results that are important in the context of the study program is generally known. This definition clearly meets international requirements.

The academic staff have demonstrated research results on topics aligned to their teaching activity. However, as already mentioned, there is considerable room for improvement in the research performance of some members of academic staff with regard to the scope and volume of research output. 2 out of 7 full-time staff members and 1 out of 3 part-time staff members have fewer than 3 research publications in the last 3 years. Indeed, the ET appreciates that SCOPUS-indexed journal articles take considerable amount of time to reach publication and there will be situations when a neat count of 1 article per year may be less achievable; still, the average output must be consistent and relevant across all staff teaching on a program, especially a master's program.

Research is validated through scientific and applied research publications as demonstrated to the expert team by the SER and the further evidence received.

As far as it could be verified via the list presented as evidence, staff publish under the name of the University.

As became clear from the syllabi submitted with the SER and from the discussions with academic staff, the networking of research and teaching is still partially realized for the Albanian program and it is anticipated that unless major facilitation is realized which can encourage research to be embedded into teaching, this will remain a shortcoming in the English

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program. Still, the ET was able to determine that approaches have been made by some of the members of the staff, but not by all and this is an individualized approach rather than an institution-supported objective.

The protection and use of intellectual property is anchored in the awareness of academic staff and is adequately guaranteed.

The SER does not provide sufficient information on the participation of students in research. However, the ET found some limited evidence that for the Albanian program there is some involvement of students. However, the activities in this area still have considerable room for improvement, as do those in the area of research, in general. It is expected that for the English program this may become more of a strategic preoccupation, especially if the graduates are to be prepared for PhD research, also. The current design of the program indicates a course on Research Methodologies and a graduation thesis requirement which the ET would expect to be implemented as conductive to intensifying research contributions from students.

Overall, with this program proposed as a master's program with possible links to PhD, future intensification of research activities becomes an imperative and requires not only a research-friendly environment, but also methodological development and qualification, which will ultimately also benefit teaching and the quality of the study program as a whole. On the part of the management of the study program, significantly more attention must be paid to the topic of research with regard to all members of the academic staff and in relation to how research can be correlated with and brought into teaching.

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

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products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.		
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 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. *Provide the formal framework to ensure that the research outputs of staff are relevantly embedded as part of teaching so they can be disseminated to students.*
2. *Support staff to consistently publish at the average rate of one publication per year.*
3. *Try to introduce more current research results into the education process.*

3.7. Infrastructure and Resources

The infrastructure and resources supporting the learning and teaching processes, as well as other activities within the Master's program in English Language Teaching, adhere to the Faculty of Education's Action Plan. UKZ operates on a campus that houses all its faculties. The university owns this space and does not rely on rental facilities. The Faculty of Education has a computer lab equipped with computers and software tailored to professors' requirements for their subjects.

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As the submitted documentations state UKZ has implemented the University Management System (SMU), a data management software used for student information from admission to graduation, allowing for unlimited data storage. Additionally, UKZ has adopted learning management system, which students and academic staff use for learning, teaching, consultations, homework, and other academic communications.

The University possesses a library containing literature in Albanian, English, Serbo-Croatian, as well as a smaller collection in Turkish and Greek, totaling 54,000 copies. This literature aids existing programs and those undergoing accreditation or re-accreditation. Besides the university library, students have access to materials at the "Fan S. Noli" city library in Gjilan. Additionally, UKZ has a partnership with the National Library of Kosovo, providing electronic and physical access to its collection. The National Library also supplements the UKZ library with relevant copies. To expand its book collection, UKZ collaborates with the Kosovo Electronic Libraries Network and exchanges experiences for easier access to international electronic libraries. The expert team visited the library at campus to double check the reading halls and printed resources were on place. During the interviews the academic staff, as well as administrative staff mentioned that the university id providing access to academic databases, that are key when it comes to searching for scientific sources that are needed for student when working on the academic papers. As it turned out the library does not offer access to such databases so far, during the site visit it was not possible to have such access from the library. Students (from similar study program) during the interview mentioned that they have never used such resources and mostly using the texts their teachers are providing. That said, the students do not have sufficient knowledge in using academic databases. The expert team recommends, the university subscribes to relevant academic database and provide access to full texts of the scientific journals, in addition to this, the library should provide trainings to further enhance the usage of the recourses.

The institution presented the financial plan designed for this program delivery. The financial document is based on this income, while the biggest expenditure comes to salaries of the staff. There is certain amount devoted to library resource development in the budget. With this being a new program, the ET believes that it is important that the University also plans out its risks more evidently as part of the strategic approaches it may take to program design and implementation. Here, the financial planning is missing the risk and the way the institution will overcomes the risks, to facilitate a guarantee for the processes not to be interrupted and for students to have continuity, once the program is launched. It is advised, the risk management strategy is included in the budget planning of the next 3 years to guarantee the sustainability of the given study program. With the faculty outlining some budgetary challenges as part of the SER and the interviews conducted, the ET believes that existing funding may need to be carefully balanced across initiatives and would see tye University prioritize programs which are in operation, while ring-fencing a budget for new programs.

The university infrastructure is adapted to students with special need. During the interview's student mention that although the infrastructure in the building is quite good, they wish it to be even improved.

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

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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: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The university should subscribe to relevant academic database and provide access to full texts of the scientific journals, in addition to this, the library should provide trainings to further enhance the usage of the recourses.*

2. *Financial planning should also include the risk management strategy with regards of incomes and expenditures, otherwise financial sustainability will lack monitor triggers and is unlikely to be achieved.*

4. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

The ET finds that there are multiple shortcomings which will need to be resolved before the program can receive accreditation and can admit students. The efforts made so far are appreciated, however more planning and investment is required for sustainable implementation. The overall judgement is "partially compliant", therefore the program will not be accredited.

The ET has carefully analysed the response received from the program to its draft version of the report and notes that any changes being proposed after the accreditation visit was completed and once final evidence was submitted cannot be considered for revisions to the report and its overarching judgements. As per KAA procedures, the compliance judgements relate to the program as originally presented to KAA for accreditation. The ET appreciates the response of the program and notes the University's willingness to engage with the recommendations formulated to give the program a more consistent design and more stability in implementation so that any future students can benefit from a better student experience and one which can underpin future employability. These changes will need to be reflected in a future accreditation re-submission. The overall judgement remains "partially compliant" for now.

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(Signature)   Prof. dr. Dhurata Shehri   08.06.2024

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