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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

KADRI ZEKA GJILAN

FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

MASTER'S LEVEL (MA):

e-GOVERNANCE

Re-Accreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

May 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Online site visit on: 24.04.2024

Expert Team:

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

Coordinators of the KAA:

- Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER) sIncluding attached documents (CV's Academic Staff, Work Plans 2024, Syllabuses, etc.)*
- *Information obtained during the site visit with the management of the faculty, teaching and administrative staff, students, external stakeholders and employers of graduates*
- *Website n*
- *Visits of on-site facilities*
- *Additional documents from the University, sent by KAA*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluation

- *Standards for evaluation as outlined in the Accreditation Manual 2022 of the KAA*

1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting
09:30 – 10:20	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
10:20 – 11:10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
11:10 – 11:20	<i>Short break</i>
11:20 – 12:10	Meeting with teaching staff
12:10 – 13:10	<i>Lunch break</i> (provided at the evaluation site)
13:10 – 14:00	Meeting with students
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: Control Systems and Artificial Intelligence, MSc, 120 ECTS, Prof. Peeter Normak;
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: E-Governance, MA 120 ECTS, Prof. Peter Parycek;
15:00 – 15:10	<i>Lunch break</i> (provided at the evaluation site)
15:10 – 15:50	Meeting with graduates
15:50 – 16:30	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
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
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 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*

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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 (some of them are labs) 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, and initially (academic year 2014/2015) there were only 50 students; in the academic year 2023/2024, there are 305 active students.

In addition, through education at FSHK, there is a goal to improve individual awareness in 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 *E-Governance* study program was accredited 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.

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.**

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' opinion also need to be taken into account more. For example, at the meeting a number of proposals were made regarding study programs, teaching, and the university in general:

- study programs should include subjects taught in English;
- 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. At the same time, they 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.

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 are reviewed in 2023.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
<i>Standard 1.2.</i> 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
<i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X	
<i>Standard 1.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
<i>Standard 1.6.</i> All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program	X	

are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.		
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Compliance level: substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- *The ET recommends forming 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 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.*

2.2. Quality Management

UKZ has established a quality assurance system that involves various assessment instruments and bodies. Quality Assurance Committee and a designated Quality Coordinator are in place to support and implement these quality assurance standards. Quality management is supported by a robust framework of policies and assessment instruments. The academic staff participates in regular self-assessments and contributes to continuous reporting and improvement processes, which are well described in the SER and were mentioned in several meetings during the site visit. The report lacks detailed examples or evidence of actual self-assessment documents or outcomes. Providing specific examples or case studies of self-assessments that led to significant improvements; this issue is, in general, a potential for improving the SER. Overall, Standard 2.1 is fulfilled.

The SER describes a robust framework for continuous improvement. The structured approach aligns with quality standards. 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. Standard 2.2 is fulfilled.

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" 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 report 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. Standard 2.3 is partially fulfilled.

The quality evaluation framework covers multiple data sources, including students' regular assessments of academic staff, self-assessments by academic staff, managers' assessments, and assessments of administrative services. It includes different perspectives from students, faculty management, academic staff, and external stakeholders like employers and alumni. Evaluation and assessment tools and methodologies are updated based on feedback and recommendations. Measures include sanctions for non-improvement and rewards for outstanding performance (e.g., student scholarships). Standard 2.4 is fulfilled.

The quality assurance cycle covers all essential dimensions of academic life—teaching, research, service, and management. Adjusting the curriculum and teaching methods to match labour market trends ensures the program remains relevant and competitive. While student evaluations of staff are mentioned, further engagement of students in the planning and review processes could enhance the quality assurance measures. Standard 2.5 is fulfilled.

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. Standard 2.6 is fulfilled.

The SER emphasises systematic evaluations of academic staff, using a wide array of assessment tools and measures to measure teaching effectiveness; this contributes to the program's development, but the standard focuses on the program's development, which is much broader and not covered by the SER. Standard 2.7 is not fulfilled.

Positive curriculum development measures include strategically incorporating market trends and stakeholder feedback. The SER also provides two examples for further curriculum development. Nevertheless, the standard is more focused on an institutional process of comprehensive evaluation every three years, which is not covered by the SER. During the site visit, the commitment to ongoing program development was evident. Overall, the Standard 2.8 is just barely fulfilled.

The SER provides a summary of the quality assurance measures but does not offer any information about further developing the quality management process. The introduction to the quality management chapter outlines the additional roles created and new measures established to enhance the program's quality. This section should have described these points and further elements from the program perspective in detail. Unfortunately, these descriptive elements' absence means Standard 2.9 is not met.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
<i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
<i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	½ X	
<i>Standard 2.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes		X

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evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.		
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.		X

Compliance level: Substantially Compliant

ET recommendation:

1. *The ET recommends that the SER expand on how the evaluations of academic staff contribute directly to program development. Linking staff assessments to broader program enhancements for a more integrated approach to quality improvement.*
2. *The ET recommends the introduction of structured feedback loops where evaluation outcomes from academic staff assessments directly influence curriculum updates and teaching methods.*
3. *The ET recommends including specific examples or illustrations of how quality control measures are implemented in daily academic and administrative processes to better demonstrate the application and effectiveness of these measures.*
4. *The ET recommends developing a comprehensive evaluation process for the program every three years to ensure continuous alignment with institutional goals and market trends.*
5. *The ET recommends that the university provide case studies or specific instances demonstrating the impact of quality management practices on program outcomes. This will help in illustrating the practical effectiveness and integration of quality controls.*

2.3. Academic Staff

The faculty in the Master Program in E-Governance at the Faculty of Computer Sciences appears well-qualified and capable of covering the essential domains necessary for e-governance education. All mentioned faculty members hold PhD degrees in relevant fields from recognised universities, ensuring a level of expertise and theoretical understanding essential for delivering an e-government curriculum. Whilst computer science and law are well covered, an expert in digital public management or an expert in legal informatics with a focus on the public sector could strengthen the faculty; furthermore, enhancing the curriculum with

more e-governance practical experiences could further strengthen the program's applicability and relevance. Overall, Standard 3.1 is just fulfilled.

The faculty members hold appropriate academic titles such as Assoc. Prof. Dr. and Ass. Prof. Dr. indicates they meet the educational qualifications required for their positions. The defined teaching load (6 regular hours per week for professors with additional hours available and up to 10 hours for assistants) ensures that staff are not overburdened, potentially enhancing the quality of education delivered. Mandatory consultation hours (two per week) and regular training programs for teaching skills are part of the framework. Standard 3.2 is fulfilled.

The SER states that academic staff does not cover more than two positions within one academic year. Based on the information provided, Standard 3.3 is fulfilled. However, it would be beneficial if KAA verifies Standard 3.3.

The SER states that the faculty employs a total of 21 individuals. Out of these, 17 are mostly professors who have regular employment contracts with the university, which results in more than 80% having regular contracts. The SER states that 5 assistants or instructors are engaged part-time, which leads to the question of how this is calculated – 17 + 5 would be 22 staff members. However, the result is well above the standard. Regarding curriculum delivery, the regular staff members are responsible for teaching over 60% of the subjects across all study programs, which is also met. For future reports, a higher accuracy of the information is recommended. Nevertheless, Standard 3.4 is fulfilled.

The SER mentions that the university employs a full-time professor with a doctoral degree relevant to the study program, but it lacks detailed explanations regarding the number of study groups currently being taught and how many full-time professors with doctoral degrees cover the various areas. Given the size of the faculty, as indicated by previous information, the standard is likely fulfilled. For better evaluation in future reports, the ET strongly recommends providing more comprehensive details; it is essential for future reports to include more robust argumentation and evidence demonstrating compliance with the standards. Based on the current details for Standard 3.5, the standard is not met.

The SER does not provide sufficient information for Standard 3.6. The ET recommends that future reports should include detailed evidence to support compliance with this standard. Specifically, the reports should detail the number of trainings conducted, the percentage of participating faculty members, and other relevant data. Based on the current lack of detailed evidence, Standard 3.6 is not fulfilled. For more effective future evaluations, providing comprehensive and quantifiable information is crucial.

Like the previous standard, the SER claims that the elements of Standard 3.7 are met but fails to provide further details to substantiate this claim. Specifically, it lacks information on research activities, community contributions, or participation within the university, areas where examples from the existing faculty could have been illustratively provided. During the

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site visit, some examples were mentioned. Standard 3.7 is just barely fulfilled, based on the site visit only. The quality of the SER needs to be improved substantially.

The SER provides minimal content concerning Standard 3.8. The elements of evaluation presented within the report are very briefly described. However, when combined with the site visit and the information from the quality management chapter, Standard 3.8 can be assessed as met.

The information provided for Standard 3.9 in the SER is notably insufficient, consisting only of a single sentence and a bullet point list. This level of detail does not offer enough information to evaluate the standard properly. Critical aspects such as how strategies are improved, and the measures taken to ensure the quality of teaching materials are enhanced are not addressed. Standard 3.9 is not fulfilled.

According to the SER, teachers retire at the age of 65. Standard 3.10 is fulfilled.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 3.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
<i>Standard 3.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.4.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.5.</i> 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
<i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		X
<i>Standard 3.7.</i> 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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<i>Standard 3.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.		X
<i>Standard 3.10.</i> 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 (70%)

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends the recruitment of specialized faculty in digital public management and legal informatics focused on the public sector to fill existing gaps and enhance the curriculum's relevance and depth in e-governance.*
2. *The ET recommends engaging professionals from the field as guest lecturers or part-time instructors to provide practical insights and current practices in e-governance, enhancing the applicability of the program.*
3. *The ET recommends increasing support for faculty research activities to facilitate stronger connections with the local and international e-governance community through collaborative projects and conferences.*
4. *The ET strongly recommends development and implementation of a system for preparing high-quality reports, including SERs.*

2.4. Educational Process Content

The program aims to prepare students for roles in innovation and technology application, particularly supporting local, regional, and national public administration. The curriculum is structured to enhance technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and leadership qualities while also providing knowledge in economics and law. This interdisciplinary approach ensures the acquisition of both discipline-specific and generic skills. During the site visit, meetings with current students, alumni, employers, and regional stakeholders confirmed the achievement of the program's objectives. Feedback indicated that graduates are well-prepared and have successfully transitioned into their professional roles, contributing significant value to their organisations. Stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the program's content and methods, affirming their alignment with job market requirements and organisational needs. The ET raised questions regarding the adequacy of foundational knowledge in legal aspects and public management. While the program's strong technical focus on e-Governance is seen as a legitimate approach, there is a suggestion that a more robust understanding of how government

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and public administration function could further strengthen the program. The program is interdisciplinary, combining elements from Computer Science, Law, and Management. This has been effectively implemented, with students from these three disciplines integrating well into the program, as current students and alumni reported. Generally, like in the previous sections, it is again noted that the descriptions and presentations in the SER are kept very brief. Due to the positive discussions during the site visit, Standard 4.1 can be evaluated positively.

The study program complies through its adherence to the NQF and EHEA frameworks, structured ECTS credit system, and balanced curriculum that integrates theoretical and practical elements. The encouragement for practical experience further aligns with the qualification objectives, aiming to prepare students effectively for the workforce. Standard 4.2 is fulfilled.

The curriculum and its learning outcomes are designed in accordance with the NQF. The program provides a curriculum with a logical flow and defines the necessary competencies. The learning outcomes are tailored to equip students with the skills required for careers in E-Governance and related fields. Standard 4.3 is fulfilled.

While syllabi are generally present for the courses in the MSc in E-Governance program, some discrepancies and inconsistencies must be addressed.

- The number of submitted syllabi differs from the total number of courses listed in the curriculum. This raises concerns about the completeness of the documentation and the overall coverage of the educational content.
- The quality of these syllabi varies significantly. The learning outcomes presented in the syllabi are especially inconsistent and, in some cases, do not align with the expected master's level standard. This inconsistency can impact the program's effectiveness and its recognition at a national and international level.

Preparing templates based on the latest European discussions on educational standards is advisable. These templates should be utilised in training sessions to standardise the formulation of learning outcomes across all courses. Given that the formulation of learning outcomes is a central theme at Bologna Discourse and critical for validation processes, this step is also strategic in the context of internationalisation. The current state of the syllabi, with their varied quality, is an issue that needs to be urgently solved. Standard 4.4 is partially met.

Through its initial communication strategies, the program appears to align with the basic requirements of Standard 4.6, but as in the previous section, it offers very limited information. Based on the positive on-site discussion with students and alumni, the standard is fulfilled.

During the site visit, it was evident that the interactive classes and problem-based learning within interdisciplinary student groups were effectively implemented. This hands-on approach aligns with the educational goals of fostering practical and collaborative skills among students. Consistent descriptions from management, faculty, and students underline a unified

understanding and implementation of these educational strategies. However, it is noted that the information provided in the SER remains rudimentary. There is a significant need for better documentation and detailed reporting to meet the expectations of this standard in future assessments. Therefore, the program meets Standard 4.7 only due to positive first-hand observations during the site visit.

The faculty has partially addressed Standard 4.8, student assessment mechanisms. While the core mechanisms are briefly described, there appears to be a notable lack of detailed processes for resolving disagreements related to assessments or, in addition, an adequate description of ensuring their implementation within the faculty. Standard 4.8 is partially fulfilled.

The information provided in the SER for Standard 4.9 and 4.10 does not address critical criteria such as "grading criteria for different grades," focusing solely on employability and employer satisfaction. While these aspects are important, they do not directly pertain to Standard 4.9's core focus, which emphasises the need for clear grading criteria. Standard 4.9 is just partially met.

The information on Standard 4.10 in SER is comprehensible but remains very general. It covers aspects from Bachelor to Master programs without delving into the crucial matter of practical phases. The details regarding the practical phases are absent Standard 4.10 is just partially met.

The information presented in the SER is generally described and only rudimentarily available. The details provided after the first paragraph seem to lack direct relevance to the specific standard under review, such as the organization of a Bachelor's program, the fundamental structure of a syllabus, or the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy. These elements, although valuable, do not directly address the core requirements of the specific standard concerning the practical phases and their integration into the curriculum. Therefore, the report fails to meet Standard 4.11 as it does not provide sufficient, detailed, and directly relevant information to substantiate compliance fully.

The provided information indicates that the University of Kosovo (UKZ) and the Faculty of Computer Sciences (FCS) have established cooperation agreements with a number of public and private institutions and businesses, such as Fluidi, Flexograf, Meridian, Hymeri-Kleman, etc., where students are sent for practical work. The complete list of these agreements is made accessible in the appendix of the Self-Assessment Report. Standard 4.12 is fulfilled.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 4.1.</i> 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	X	

competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.		
<i>Standard 4.2.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.4.</i> 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.	½ X	
<i>Standard 4.5.</i> 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.	-	
<i>Standard 4.6.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.7.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 4.8.</i> 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.	½ X	
<i>Standard 4.9.</i> 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.	½ X	

<i>Standard 4.10.</i> Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed.	½ X	
<i>Standard 4.11.</i> 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
<i>Standard 4.12.</i> In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units. <i>*To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)</i>	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant (70%)

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends enhancing the curriculum components that cover foundational public management and legal aspects, to provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the public sector's operations, thereby strengthening their readiness for roles in e-governance.*
2. *The ET recommends expanding the documentation in future self-evaluation reports by including more detailed descriptions and analyses of program strategies and outcomes. This will help provide a clearer picture of the program's impact and effectiveness.*
3. *The ET recommends enhancing the consistency and quality of the syllabi, particularly the learning outcomes. This is imperative to meet accreditation standards and strengthen the program's strategic positioning in an international context.*
4. *The ET strongly recommend development and implementation of a system for preparing high-quality reports, including SERs.*

2.5. Students

The admission procedure of new students is conducted according to the clauses set in Regulation for Master Studies and in accordance to the legal regulations established by MEST and KAA. For

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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 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, but also through other electronic services such as Moodle and the T-EDU platform. The teacher is obliged to submit the exam report together with the student list and the physical copies of the applications downloaded from the university management system to the service officer within 48 hours after the end of the exam. If a student is not satisfied with their grade then they have the right to make a written complaint to the Dean within two days of their 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 from 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 authorize 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 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 via phones.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
<i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
<i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
<i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
<i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
<i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.		X
<i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	

<i>Standard 5.9.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	
<i>Standard 5.11.</i> 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

SER offers information about the university's strategic initiatives and support mechanisms for research activities, including financial support for publications, access to research databases, and the organisation of scientific conferences. The university also maintains a science fund to stimulate research activities annually. Besides these positive aspects, it is unclear how individual research activities are integrated into or reflect the institution's overarching research development plan. The connection between individual academic staff research objectives and the institution's strategic research goals needs clearer articulation. Furthermore, the SER offers no research objectives for the study program E-Governance. In the SER is also stated that the UKZ offers staff and students access to EBSCO and ScienceDirect databases to support their research activities. However, during the site visit, it was mentioned that the university currently does not offer access to EBSCO or ScienceDirect. This discrepancy indicates a potential gap between the university's stated policy or strategic initiatives and the actual resources available to the academic staff and the students. Standard 6.1 is not fulfilled because of the generic text and the missing research objectives.

UKZ has established clear criteria for the academic advancement of staff based on the number of research publications required for different academic ranks. Still, UKZ should further specify the expectations for involvement in broader research and academic activities, like research projects, contributions to conferences, and other scholarly activities. Standard 6.2 is partially fulfilled.

While the SER mentions policies for publication in indexed journals, it does not offer explicit detail on the policies for other forms of research recognition, such as criteria for evaluating the

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quality and impact of conferences, monographs, and other scholarly contributions. UKZ should provide information on how these activities are measured, and for more transparency, this information should be documented in policies. Standard 6.3 is partially fulfilled.

The faculty demonstrates a robust and interdisciplinary approach to research, focusing on applying advanced technologies in various fields such as education, robotics, network systems, cloud computing, and public administration. The research conducted is relevant to current technological and educational challenges. Faculty members consistently address issues such as integrating technology in education post-COVID-19, implementing AI in public services, and protecting data privacy in digital environments. The faculty maintains an active and consistent publication record, contributing to peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and workshops. Their works are timely, align with current trends and needs in their respective fields, and align with their teaching activity. Unfortunately, the SER offers no details for the professors from the fields of Economics, Law, Mathematics and English, which are provided in the CVs. For future reports, please provide overall information on the whole faculty. The table should also include the respective course, and for a better overview, 3 to 5 selected publications for the field of the course would provide a much better overview for the evaluation process. Overall, Standard 6.4 is fulfilled.

Based on the publication list, the faculty's contributions are recognised within the local academic community and extend internationally. Their active participation in the broader scientific and professional communities through publications, consultations, and collaborations is given. Standard 6.5 is fulfilled.

Their research is frequently published in respected journals, and they actively participate in conferences, contributing to the scientific community. Additionally, several faculty members are involved in projects that apply their research findings in practical settings, such as educational technologies and digital infrastructure improvements. Standard 6.6 is fulfilled.

Faculty members have contributed at least one publication per year over the past three years. Standard 6.7 is fulfilled.

There is no direct evidence from the publication table, but based on common academic practices, the institutional affiliation is provided for scholarly outputs, and a quick check for selected publications and profiles, Standard 6.8, is fulfilled.

The information presented in the SER concerning Standard 6.9 reflects the moderate quality of the SER. The SER lacks specific information directly related to Standard 6.9. Instead, irrelevant information has been copied and pasted into the text. The ET strongly recommends that improvements be made to enhance the quality of the SER, ensuring that relevant and specific information is provided for each standard. Standard 6.9 is not fulfilled.

Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property. Standard 6.10. fulfilled.

Based on the SER and the site-visit, students are engaged in research projects and other activities. Standard 6.11 is fulfilled.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> 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
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> 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.	½ X	
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> 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.	½ X	
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
<i>Standard 6.7.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	X	
<i>Standard 6.9/6.8.</i> 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
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
<i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant (81%)

ET recommendations:

- 1. ET recommends defining clear research goals for the program and enhancing transparency on how individual research projects align and support the university's strategic research objectives.*
- 2. The ET recommends defining clear research and academic activities, including clear evaluation methodologies and criteria for diverse academic contributions, to ensure comprehensive understanding and accessibility for all faculty members.*
- 3. The ET recommends that future reports include a comprehensive table detailing the entire faculty, the courses they teach, and 3 to 5 key publications relevant to each course for a clearer and more effective evaluation.*
- 4. The ET strongly recommends that improvements be made to enhance the quality of the SER, ensuring that relevant and specific information is provided for each standard.*

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. Student-teacher ratio of about 20:1 is acceptable. The university has four computer labs with 30 seats in each lab, as well as other 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, which is why some students prefer to work somewhere else 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.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> 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
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> 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 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:	X	

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a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.		
<i>Standard 7.6.</i> 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:

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.

Prepare a detailed financial plan for the acquisitions required for the implementation of the study program

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

As shown above, the compliance levels per general areas are:

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

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Overall compliance	
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According to the expert team's evaluation, the "MA "E-Governance" is "Substantially compliant" with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, the expert team recommends accrediting the programme for the duration of three years and admitting maximum 30 students to the programme per year.

Expert Team

Chair



Prof. Dr. Peter Parycek, PhD.

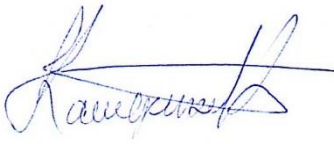
4-5-2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Katarina Klimoska

4-5-2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)