



**Republika e Kosovës**  
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo  
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



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***UNIVERSITY “ISA BOLETINI” IN MITROVICA  
FACULTY OF GEOSCIENCES***

**HYDROGEOLOGY  
AND ENGINEERING GEOLOGY (MSc)  
Re accreditation**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*May 2024, Kosovo*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Dr. Ana Cornelia Badea*
- *Marko Komso, Student Expert*
- *Giga Khositashvili, Student Expert*

**Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):**

- *Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA*
- *Lenda Hyseni, KAA*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self-Evaluation Report, Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology, MSc*
- *Information posted on the University's and Faculty's Websites: <https://www.umib.net> , <https://www.umib.net/en/faculty-of-geosciences/>*
- *Syllabuses*
- *Staff CVs*
- *Kosovo Mining Strategy 2012 - 2025*
- *European qualification framework*
- *Examples of workshops: Report – Horizon Europe Info Day, The roundtable “Earthquakes, seismic areas and seismic activity in Kosovo”*
- *List of Labs - Faculty of Geosciences*
- *List of Spaces available for the learning process - Faculty of Geosciences*
- *Cooperation Agreement between UMIB and the NGO “Little People of Kosovo – Mitrovica”, to promote and affirm the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*
- *Regulations of UMIB and FG:*
  - *Statute and Strategic Plan*
  - *Package of Quality Measurement Instruments*
  - *Strategic Plan of University of Mitrovica Isa Boletini 2022-2025*
  - *National qualification framework handbook*
  - *Regulation on the procedures and criteria of promotion and selection and appointment of UMIB academic staff*
  - *UMIB Research Regulation*

- *Tables of publications*
- *Intellectual Property Regulation*
- *Students Handbook*
- *SMU Platform – University Management System*
- *Full Time (FT) and engaged (PT) academic staff*
- *Evaluation of students*
- *Self-evaluation questionnaire*
- *Summary report on questionnaires conducted with the students of the Faculty of Geosciences*
- *Quality assurance packages*
- *List of cooperation agreements with national and international institutions and organisations*
- *Code of Ethics*
- *National Qualification Framework Handbook*
- *Decision to establish the Advisory Board*
- *FG-Regulation for bachelor study*
- *Regulation on internal organization and systematization of jobs at UMIB*
- *Internal Regulations. Recruitment-appointment of candidates*
- *Human Resources Handbook*
- *Regulation on the UMIB Library*
- *Additional documents required by the ET:*
  - *Ethics Committee Members*
  - *Ethics Committee Reports*

### **Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations**

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, updated 2021.*

### **1.2. Site visit schedule**

| Programme Accreditation Procedure at University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini” |  |
|---|--|
| Programmes:   | <b>Geology, BSc, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</b><br><b>Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology, MSc, 120 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</b><br><b>Materials and Metalurgy, BSc, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</b><br><b>Materials and Metalurgy MSc, 120 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</b> |
| Site visit on (hybrid):   | <b>16 May 2024</b>   |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Expert Team:             | Dr. Ana Cornelia Badea<br>Dr. Mauro Zarelli<br>Marko Komso, Student Expert<br>Giga Khositashvilli, Student Expert |
| Coordinators of the KAA: | Ilijana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA<br>Lenda Hyseni, KAA   |

### Site Visit Program

| Time                 | Meeting   | Participants   |
|----------------------|---|--|
| <b>09:00 – 09:45</b> | Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated  | Festim Kutllovci, Dean<br>Afrim Osmani, Vice Dean<br>Muhamedin Hetemi, Vice Dean<br>Gzim Ibishi, Head of Institute |
| <b>09:45 – 10:25</b> | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff   | Natyra Misini<br>Shkumbin Imeri<br>Arber Blakqori  |
| <b>10:30 – 11:30</b> | Meeting with the heads of the study programme<br><b>Geology, BSc, 180 ECTS</b> (room 1)<br>Dr. Ana-Cornelia Badea<br>Marko Komso, Student Expert                              | Islam Fejza<br>Bexhet Shala<br>Naser Peci  |
| <b>10:30 -11:30</b>  | Meeting with the heads of the study programme<br><b>Materials and Metalurgy, BSc, 180 ECTS</b> (room 3)<br>Dr. Mauro Zarelli<br>Giga Khositashvilli, Student Expert           | Muharrem Zabeli<br>Zarife Bajraktari Gashi<br>Nazmi Hasi   |
| <b>11:30 – 12:30</b> | Lunch break   |  |
| <b>12:30 – 13:30</b> | Meeting with the heads of the study programme<br><b>Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology, MSc, 120 ECTS</b> (room 2)<br>Dr. Ana-Cornelia Badea<br>Marko Komso, Student Expert | Sabri Avdullahu<br>Festim Kutllovci  |
| <b>12:30-13:30</b>   | Meeting with the heads of the study programme   | Nurten Deva<br>Izet Ibrahimimi   |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
|                      | <p><b>Materials and Metalurgy, MSc, 120 ECTS</b><br/>(room 4)<br/>Dr. Mauro Zarelli<br/>Giga Khositashvili, Student Expert</p> |   |
| <b>13:30 – 14:10</b> | Visiting Facilities  |   |
| <b>14:10 – 15:00</b> | Meeting with teaching staff  | <p>All the professors and assistants of the reaccreditation programs, and:</p> <p>Nurten Deva<br/>Muharrem Zabeli<br/>Sylejman Hyseni<br/>Bedri Durmishaj<br/>Ahmet Tmava<br/>Flurije Sheremeti, Kabashi<br/>Gani Maliqi<br/>Afrim Osmani<br/>Bastri Zeka,<br/>Mimoza Kovaçi<br/>Arber Zeqiraj</p>  |
| <b>15:00 – 15:40</b> | Meeting with students  | <p><b><u>Geology Bsc,</u></b><br/>Anita Idrizi, student<br/>Arber Salihu, student<br/><b><u>Hydrogeology and Engineering</u></b><br/><b><u>Geology Msc</u></b><br/>Jashar Fejzullahu<br/>Ramadan Peci<br/><b><u>Materials and Metallurgy, Bsc</u></b><br/>Ndriçim Jashari<br/>Ledion Haxha<br/>Erza Qarkaj<br/>Leartha Kutillovci<br/><b><u>Materials and Metallurgy, Msc</u></b><br/>Dafina Mehmeti<br/>Valmire Smajli</p> |

|                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|
|                      |  | Erolinda Rukolli<br>Asllan Aliu<br>Arbnor Leku   |
| <b>15:45 – 16:25</b> | Meeting with graduates and external stakeholders               | <b><u>Geology Bsc</u></b><br>Enes Muzaqi, alumni<br>Faton Hetemaj, alumni<br>Edmon Pllana, industry/business<br>Burim Asllani, industry/business<br><b><u>Hydrogeology and Engineering</u></b><br><b><u>Geology Msc</u></b><br>Luljeta Hajra alumni<br>Bahri Sinani, alumni<br>Ramiz Krasniqi, industry/business<br>Bujar Bilalli, industry/business<br><b><u>Materials and Metallurgy, Bsc</u></b><br>Erard Morina, alumni<br>Sabri Mehmeti, alumni<br>Muharrem Kadriu, alumni<br>Erars Morina, alumni<br>Arlinda Qarkaj, alumni<br>Faruk Beqiri, industry/business<br>Agron Arifi, industry/business<br>Lulzim Dibrani, industry/business<br>Gezim Mustafa, industry/business<br><b><u>Materials and Metallurgy, Msc</u></b><br>Lulzim Tahiraj, alumni<br>Rifat Latifi, alumni<br>Burim Halili, alumni<br>Enver Bublaku, industry/business<br>Shukri Gashi, industry/business<br>Elona Idrizi, industry/business |
| <b>16:25 – 16:30</b> | Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts                      |  |
| <b>16:30 – 16:35</b> | Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program |  |

**Overall instructions for HEIs:**

1. *No presentations of any kind are allowed, as the meetings are intended to be free discussions*
2. *The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc.*
3. *The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc.*
4. *The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution.*
5. *Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA, and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session.*
6. *Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.*

**1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation**

The foundations of higher education studies in Mitrovica began with the opening of the Technical High School in 1961. In 1974, the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy was established with three Departments: Mining, Technology, Metallurgy. In 1980 the Department of Geology was opened.

The University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica (UIBM) is a public institution of higher education, which develops high quality academic education, scientific research, professional counselling and other fields of academic activity. It consists of 6 academic units, with 22 programs of bachelor and master studies: Faculty of Geosciences, Faculty of Food Technology, Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Education.

Geoscientists of the next decades will face local, national and global issues related to the reduction of mineral and energy resources, water resources, natural hazards, as well as the assessment of spaces for infrastructure projects and residential areas. Their efforts must be related to the environmental challenges to protect the quality of life, managing a development in an increasingly populated world.

The Faculty of Geosciences is committed to provide educational programs and research for the benefit of students, science, society and the state of Kosovo. The Faculty of Geosciences is the only institution of higher education in Kosovo which educates competent experts and carries out scientific and professional research in the field of geology, mining, and material and metallurgy.

The Faculty of Geosciences organizes two levels of study: Bachelor (three-year studies), and Master of Science (two-year studies).

The Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology (MSc) program aims to meet the needs of the relevant sectors of the geological industry in the country but also the global geological and mining industry, aiming to provide a graduates who understand the processes that take place on Earth.



The graduates should have the ability to provide problem solving in interdisciplinary work environments. They must communicate effectively with engineers, environmental scientists, and planners while educating the public about the connections between the solid part of Earth and its hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere.

The importance of the faculty and its study programmes lies in the country's development strategy based on the development of mineral resources requires geological, mining and material/metallurgical framework. The graduates, in addition to knowledge in research, discovery, mining and processing of resources, should also possess the skills to deal with various environmental problems. The development of spatial plans, the securing and sustainable management of mineral resources, protection from natural hazards and the provision of environmental conditions are very important segments for the country.

## **2. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

### **2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration**

*Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.*

The overall mission of the University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini" is to provide high-quality theoretical and practical concepts in higher education, in order to prepare graduates committed to developing research, professional projects, professional advising and to serve better on sustainable development, wellbeing, and social advancement.

The Faculty of Geoscience's mission is to be a higher education in Kosovo which is training competent experts and carries out scientific and professional research in the field of geology, mining, and material & metallurgy, and also to increase research activities in accordance with national and international interests and standards for the application of geological-technical principles in the study of rocks, soils and water.

The program's mission is to be developed in accordance with the best practices and standards, applying scientific and professional research. The program aims to provide a stimulating environment to improve MSc graduates' knowledge to study in the field of Geology, through the provision of scholarships, financial support through their involvement in research projects; Commitment towards financial resources for supporting scientific research programs by working closely with the Rectorate, Government institutions, and Independent Regulators.

From the technical viewpoint, the program's graduates should find the solution of problems from theory to practice related to the implementation of knowledge gained during the study.

The research and scientific work and prioritizing of the development of students can be identified as the main priorities in the missions of the University, Faculty and the program.

The mission of the program is aligned with the mission of the Faculty and the University.

The institution has set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the level of the study program, however the KPIs are not fully defined in a measurable and quantifiable way, so it is partially clear how the data they provide is reviewed at least annually with overall performance reported to the decision-making structures.

*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.*

The learning outcomes are aligned with the National Qualifications Framework, and Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

The MSc in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology program corresponds to level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework.

The MSc in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology program is compatible with level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework. Students receive the MSc degree by demonstrating knowledge, skills and competencies for each subject in particular and the entire program in general, within the study period of two years.

The following activities linked with the MSc in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology program are implemented in order to achieve learning outcomes in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area: the use of new methodologies, the development of academic staff with participation in teacher training, in training for applications in scientific and professional projects, attending conferences, writing scientific research publications, updating study programs to adapt to labor market demands, consultation with the advisory body, discussions between parties within FG and collaborations with external parties (public, private, local and international institutions, companies and organizations).

The UMIB has implemented a computer system, used by all faculties and study programs, in order to assure a central recording and analysis of course completion, program progression, completion rates and program evaluations.

*Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.*

The didactic concept of the MSc in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology programme is partially defined, including the theoretical part and the practical part. Although the FG taken measures and actions to address the challenges related to a certain lack of a complete didactic concept of the programme, things can be improved in more detail.

Academic staff have partially introduced student-centered learning and included students in their research projects. During the discussions, it was stressed that more practical work was needed as this was one of the program's weaknesses.

There are mentioned in the SER the following ways to present information to the students: mix of lectures, interactive activities, group discussions, hands-on experiences, or a combination of these.

In the SER are outlined that the students are involved in knowledge creation, various academic committees, including curriculum design, but there is no measurable evidence regarding these.

There is no evidence in the SER of e-learning and digital media used in the study process. There were highlighted in the meetings that several teachers use some e-learning tools, however, this approach was not mentioned at all in the didactic concept.

Policies and procedures partially include action to be taken to deal with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed, an improvement of existing internal rules should be implemented.

*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.*

The Faculty as part of the University is following all procedural documents, such as the Code of Ethics, the Strategic Plans, Regulation of the quality assurance and evaluation at the University of Mitrovica, and all other regulations.

Statistical data on indicators, including grade distributions, progression and completion rates are retained in an accessible central database, called SMU (University Management System).

These indicators should be regularly reviewed and reported in periodic program reports. The staff are trained in the use of SMU. SMU is used as a tool for introducing online teaching and learning, as well as for information, communication and to make publicly available all policies, guidelines, and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues.

The students and the academic staff confirmed that they are using it and they are obtaining the needed information through it. However from discussions it emerged that students did not always find interim results on SMU.

The ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities is regulated in the Code of Ethics.

Overall the degree of transparency provided is adequate, the information relevant for students and for staff and outside parties being found on the website.

The posts on FG website are divided according to the Bachelor and Master level of studies. For each level of study, relevant information is provided about regulations, documents, general information, on graduate students, results, literature, schedule of lectures and exams, as well as certain required forms that are relevant for that level of studies.

*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.*

The concepts of gender justice and the promotion of equal opportunities for students in special situations such as, for example, students with health-related impairments, students with children, foreign students, students with an immigrant background and/or students from educationally disadvantaged families are put into practice at the level of the study program.

*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.*

It is stated that UMIB has yearly reviewed and improved the policies, regulations, terms of reference, and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program.

| No. | Standard   | Compliance |    |
|-----|--|------------|----|
|     |  | Yes        | No |
| 1.1 | The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.  | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 1.3 | The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.  |            | x  |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 1.6 | All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances. | x          |    |

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

### **ET recommendations:**

1. *The study program KPIs should be defined in a measurable way.*
2. *The inclusion of some evidence as synthesis or graphs in the SER.*
3. *It is strongly recommended that the teachers involved in the study programme to create resources and develop course materials in Albanian and/or in English language.*
4. *The content of the disciplines in the Master's degree programme should be based less on fundamental elements and more on the presentation of relevant national and international case studies.*

### **2.2. Quality Management**

*Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.*

Based on the requirements of the quality assurance office, all FG staff participates in self-assessments and is part of the reporting and quality improvement processes in teaching and learning. There is a quality management package that sets out the main procedures applied in the evaluation.

The general report is discussed in the Faculty Council.

*Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.*

The results generated from the evaluation serve as recommendations and are an integral part of the planning for the next academic year to increase the quality.

According to the SER, the vice-dean for quality issues monitor the implementation of these recommendations, so the reports are provided to program administrators on the delivery of each course and these include details if any planned content could not be dealt with and any difficulties found in using planned strategies. Appropriate adjustments in teaching plans are possible after course reports are considered.

*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.*

Based on the recommendations received, quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of planning and delivery of programs, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.

The program offered based on the intellectual resources (senior staff with extensive academic and industry experience) as well as other logistical resources (labs, halls, offices, cabinets) provide an adequate basis for quality enhancement in teaching and learning.

Based on SER information, FG yearly evaluates the implementation of the program for that specific academic year. The data collected, along with the results from tools used to assess services and resources at UMIB, are taken into consideration when planning improvements to the curriculum content for the next academic year.

*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.*

Evidence of QA processes was sought during the site-visit. During the site-visit, both academic staff and students gave examples of the process of QA in relation to improvements.

A comprehensive reassessment of the program is conducted at once every five years. Policies and procedures for conducting this reassessment are published. Outputs encompass the percentage of graduates, graduates on time, students who dropped out, and those repeating the year.

Program review involves experienced people from relevant industries and professions, and experienced faculty from other institutions to ensure that acquired competences align closely with market demand, as Advisory Board, comprising industry experts. The Advisory Board is involved in analyzing and improving existing programs or drafting new ones.

*Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.*

During the site-visit it was confirmed that some improvements were implemented: realignment of syllabi, some refocusing of course content, some adjustment in course ECTS awarded, technical equipment and infrastructure, SMU, the feasibility of interactive teaching methods.

There is mentioned in the SER that it was implemented an Electronic System for Quality Assessment (SEVC), managed by the Office for Quality Assurance, as part of SMU.

*Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.*

During the site visit it was confirmed that survey data is collected from students, graduates (alumni) and employers. An Alumni of Graduates program has been established to maintain relationships and correspondence with former graduate students. Alumni stated that they had kept close contact with the academic staff of FG and some had contributed expert advice on the courses.

Information about the teaching staff and the study programme is publicly available on the UIBM website. It is not clear whether items containing criticism of the degree programme are published on the website.

*Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.*

From the discussions during the site visit meetings, student attendance is monitored, and there is some mid-term evaluation to provide timely review allowing any issues to be addressed.

However, it is not a homogeneous practice and there is not a clear difference between the students who participate in the mid term assessments and those who participate only in the final assessment, and there are different responses from them.

*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.*

The ET has received a detailed report (SER and additional documents) indicating the overall quality of the Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology MSc degree program. Reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared annually as well as the recommendations issued are incorporated into the SER (SER) as part of the re-accreditation process which takes place every three years for the respective programs, although they may contain more evidence.

*Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.*

Quality assurance is carried out iteratively and improvement proposals are implemented as far as possible, taking into account existing external constraints.

| No. | Standard   | Compliance |    |
|-----|--|------------|----|
|     |  | Yes        | No |
| 2.1 | All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.  | x          |    |
| 2.2 | Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.   | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 2.5 | Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.   | x          |    |

|     |  |   |   |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 2.6 | Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.   |   | x |
| 2.7 | Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates. |   | x |
| 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 |   |
| 2.9 | The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.  | x |   |

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Examples of improvements resulting directly from QA questionnaires should be better documented in the SER, using measurable and specific descriptors.*
2. *A clear and homogeneous practice of differentiated assessment of students taking part in mid-term assessments in relation to those taking part in the final assessment must be implemented,.*
3. *A staff peer review model should be implemented.*

**2.3. Academic Staff**

*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.*

Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. Data is presented in tabular form and complies with MEST guidelines, Labor Law, UMIB Statutes and UMIB Internal regulations.

All UIBM staff are recruited through competition procedures, where with the announcement of competition all requirements for the advertised position and job descriptions are presented.

The regulation outlines the procedures and criteria for the selection, promotion, and appointment of academic staff, including the publication of a specified number of scientific papers in international journals, depending on the academic position. These requirements are



based on various activities associated with the academic call: research activity, scientific activity, professional activity.

*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.*

The FG is supporting the academic staff in studies and academic and scientific advancement, teacher training, etc.

The teaching staff comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions and accreditation requirements.

*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.*

The academic staff are not allowed more than two teaching positions, one full-time and one parttime. This is carefully monitored by UBIM Human Resources Department.

Most academic staff have only one primary job at FG. Some academic staff also have part-time commitments at other institutions and some staff are employed part-time at FG.

*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.*

Academic staff in this MSc program are 92% full-time employees and only 8% part time employees, in the calculations being an oversight with the percentage declared in SER.

*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.*

There are two employees who hold the doctorate degree, who have been designated as the coordinators of this program. For each group of students defined by the UBIM statute and for each 60 ECTS credits in the study program, one full-time employee with a doctoral degree is employed in the department.

*Standard 3.6 Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.*

There has been an improvement in the organisation of academic staff evaluation since the last site visit. UMIB offers opportunities for additional professional development to the teaching staff, with special assistance given to any person who encounters difficulties. Within The University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica, the academic staff are obliged to have at least two

teacher trainings. During the academic year 2020/2021, all academic staff members acquired certification at both the basic and advanced levels of teaching methodology.

The staff is also supported and encouraged in terms of scientific advancement and mobility. The FG management is organizing the schedule that enables the proper professional development of the teachers.

*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.*

Academic staff is responsible for teaching and learning, including scholarly research activity, student consultations and other responsibilities related to their contract, such as FG committees, departmental committees or university-wide committees.

According to evidence on the website, academic staff are involved in organising workshops, joint seminars on topical issues related to geology, geohazards, environment, etc.

A range of student supervisions and assessments are carried out. Activities together with the local community consists of research collaborations and advising with local industry and government agencies. Engagement with schools to promote geosciences is beginning to take place.

*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.*

The evaluation of the academic staff is carried out regularly, through self-evaluation, evaluation of students, and the evaluation of supervisors.

It is mentioned in the SER that at the end of each month the evidence reports that are submitted by the teaching staff to the administration, where they are checked by the vice-dean and heads of departments. This procedure may burden the work of those who have this responsibility and a longer time frame can be considered when this takes place.

*Standard 3.9 Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.*

There has been an improvement in the organisation of academic staff evaluation since the last site visit, however there is room for continuous improvement of the study materials, including the development of updated courses/books by the teachers involved in teaching in this degree programme.

*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.*

Teachers retire at 65 years of age. If deemed necessary, teachers can continue working until the age of 70 years old.

| No.  | Standard   | Compliance |    |
|------|--|------------|----|
|      |  | Yes        | No |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 3.6  | Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.  | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 3.9  | Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.  | x          |    |
| 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:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *UBIM should develop and facilitate their own staff development opportunities for academic staff.*
2. *Creating a database with grant research applications.*
3. *Where important texts are not available in the Albanian language, FG should consider translating short extracts for teaching purposes.*
4. *Improving e-resources of the library.*

**2.4. Educational Process Content**

*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.*

The Master of Science in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology program aims to provide students with a comprehensive and specialized academic and scientific education in the geological-technical field in the study of rocks, soils, and water, including interdisciplinary subjects and the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and disciplines.

The study programme addresses academic skills, the ability to obtain a suitable job to meet the needs of the labour market, the ability to obtain a suitable job by combining theoretical and practical aspects and by developing the student's personality in the fields of specialisation.

*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.*

The program complies with the stated 120 ECTS requirements outlined in the Bologna protocol.

The development and monitoring of the programme are in accordance with the requirements and standards defined in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) under Qualification Level 7, as well as in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework to ensure general educational requirements.

The SER states that the programme has a lifecycle to ensure that it is fit for purpose, viable and up-to-date with market trends and research and practice in the field.

*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.*

The subjects studied in the programme are logically organised to ensure the achievement of general and specific competencies.

There are listed at least seven learning outcomes per discipline in the most cases.

*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.*

Writing learning outcomes has been improved for almost all courses. The module descriptions have improved since the last ET report and recommendations.

The syllabus of each module offered in the program was attached in an Appendix to the SER.

A homogeneous approach to the section on learning outcomes across all curricula would be welcomed to allow informed comparisons.

The curriculum for the master's level must be thought superior to the bachelor's curriculum and as a natural continuation of it. Bibliographic resources must be diversified and contain international references. The teachers' lecture notes must be included in the minimum bibliography as they must reflect the latest trends in the field.

In most subjects, participation in lectures and exercises is mandatory and the students are encouraged to always ask for clarification during lectures and exercises.

From the discussions with teachers, as well as with students, they said that are available for additional clarification and consultation of students during a fixed schedule of up to 4 hours per week.

*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.*

The SER states that all teaching is in Albanian. The students have the option of English language classes, but from the discussions with teachers it emerged that almost all students attend English classes.

The staff who know the English language very well are ready to contribute to interactive activities with students participating in Erasmus + mobility.

*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.*

Teachers are available for additional clarification and consultation of students.

During the site-visit the students confirmed that they have the opportunity to discuss the progress with learning outcomes with the teacher.

*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.*

Teaching strategies are adapted to the specifics of the Master of Science in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology program, with appropriate courses to meet the needs of the labor market in Kosovo and abroad. The improved teaching strategies are to be welcomed and can be considered as a result of staff development in teaching and learning.

However, teaching strategies should be more finely chosen according to the curriculum, apparently the same strategies have been taken, more or less considering the discipline.

The on-site visit revealed that the laboratories of the faculty are equipped with the necessary technological tools for the delivery of lecture sessions and interactive exercises. Each classroom is equipped with a computer, internet and digital projectors.

The teaching staff of UMIB use information technology resources, including email and the SMU system, etc. as methods for interaction with the students, This system allows the communication with all students by sending them all learning materials (slides, papers, presentations, additional materials, syllabus, results, announcements, etc.), This aspect was also confirmed in on-site discussions by students and teaching staff.

*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.*

Students are clearly informed by the teacher about the continuous methods of their assessment and this is concretized in the syllabus of each subject of this program, which is public and in SMU. Student assessment is done continuously throughout the semester, through tests, seminary papers, research projects, laboratory work, etc. In SMU, students are graded electronically.

*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.*

The grading standard is consistent for each subject in this program and by each teacher. There are clear assessment criteria and good quality feedback for students.

Specifically the grading policies are defined through the syllabuses.

*Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.*

FG has regulations to deal with cases where students may have been inconsistently or unfairly graded, as students have the right to file a complaint, which will then be reviewed by the relevant committee.

The final decision in each case will be made by a commission composed of professors in the field of the given subject.

*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 organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.*

The procedures for the internship initiation and completion are in line with international good practice. There is a two-week professional internship. There is stated a clear workflow to offer to the students the possibility to do an internship outside the FG.

A list of laboratories in the FG in which students can carry out their student internship is an integral part of the structure of the Faculty.

*Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.*

There are mentioned in the SER the existence of signed cooperation agreements, contracts, or other documents with public institutions, private businesses, social enterprises, and mining companies, within which academic staff and students can carry out research and professional internships.

| No. | Standard | Compliance |    |
|-----|----------|------------|----|
|     |          | Yes        | No |

|      |  |   |   |
|------|--|---|---|
| 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 |   |
| 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 |   |
| 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 |   |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |   |
| 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 |
| 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 |   |
| 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 |   |
| 4.10 | Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.  | x |   |
| 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  | x |   |



|      |  |   |  |
|------|--|---|--|
|      | develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program. |   |  |
| 4.12 | In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.  | x |  |

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *To reduce passive lecturing, and increase opportunities for students to engage in their own learning, using modern e-learning interactive possibilities.*
2. *To implement English learning courses, prior to the commencement of the program.*
3. *Bibliographic resources must be diversified and contain international references.*
4. *The teachers' lecture notes must be included in the minimum bibliography as they must reflect the latest trends in the field.*
5. *Teaching strategies should be more fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop.*

**2.5. Students**

*Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.*

The admission process is defined by admission procedures. The admission procedure is clear and transparent and is applied in a non-discriminatory way to all students. Students are informed about evaluation criteria, grading, and exam structures through course syllabuses and in talks the with professors. Before the academic year starts the students are informed about their obligation and rights at the start of the class.

*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.*

All students have been enrolled in the Master of Science in Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology study based on the selection of candidates for the Master program at the FG, according to the following criteria: the maximum number of points according to the following criteria is 100 points: success in basic studies up to 30 points; Success in the entrance exam up to 70 points,

During the meetings with ET, the students outlined that they chose the particular Faculty and program because of its good positioning in the region, the students' awareness that the program will be requested in the labor market in the near future and the overall Faculty's value.

There is established a system for monitoring and coordinating student workload, monitoring the progress of individual students with assistance and/or counselling is given to those facing difficulties. The progression rates and program completion rates are yearly monitored and analyzed, in order to identify and provide assistance to any categories of students who may be having difficulties.

*Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.*

Study groups are sized appropriately to facilitate effective and interactive teaching and learning experiences. Lectures at Master Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology are held in small groups. Arrangements are made within the institution for training of teaching staff in the theory and practice of student assessment.

*Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.*

Timely feedback on student performance and assessment results is provided, accompanied by support mechanisms if necessary. There are support services and also subject-related and interdisciplinary guidance are implemented.

*Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.*

Student achievements throughout the study cycles are documented and certified in academic records.

*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.*

Provision for flexible treatment of students in special circumstances is ensured, including accommodation of deadlines and formal requirements for program participation and examinations. There is an improvement.

*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.*

Records of student completion rates for individual courses and the program overall are maintained and considered as part of quality assessment.

*Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.*

Effective measures are implemented to uphold the originality of student work submissions.

There is a plagiarism detection program that checks submitted work and students are aware of this. Until September 2023, an anti-plagiarism software, provided within the ResearchCult project was used. UMIB is now in the process of procuring anti-plagiarism software.

So far there have been no cases of plagiarised papers, as the teachers have said during the meetings that they discuss with the students and inform them about the consequences if they send a plagiarised paper. There is an improvement.

*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.*

Students are informed about evaluation criteria, grading, and exam structures through course syllabuses and in talks with professors. Before the academic year starts the students are informed about their obligation and rights at the start of the class. There is also a physical box of complaints where students can insert their complaints or suggestion. During the meeting the faculty staff said they cannot remember any complaints.

*Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.*

Transfers between higher education institutions are governed by formal documents which can be found online or being handed to by the office dealing with students. There is an improvement.

*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.*

The academic year includes regular exam periods, with mandatory evaluations conducted before an exam. In talks with the students, they confirm that professors are explaining them the importance of evaluations and how it can help them improve the faculty. Professors are accessible via email or in person for consultations, arranged as needed. The academic staff works 40 hours a week, where a part is for teaching, a part for consultations and the rest is for other activities such as projects, administrations, etc.

Faculty bodies such as the Senate or Ethics Committee include at least one student member who is contributing and is there for the students. A student parliament on the university level is active and they are holding regular elections, every faculty has its member in it. Student rights and obligations are publicly available on the website or can be inquired about with

faculty staff or office dealing with students. Students mentioned because it is a smaller University that the professors are there all the time for them and that is one of the reasons there wasn't a student case of breaking the Code of Ethics.

| No.  | Standard   | Compliance |    |
|------|--|------------|----|
|      |  | Yes        | No |
| 5.1  | There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students. | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 5.3  | The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.   | x          |    |
| 5.4  | Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.   | x          |    |
| 5.5  | The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.   | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 5.8  | Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.   | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 5.10 | The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.  | x          |    |
| 5.11 | Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.                                   | x          |    |

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The ET recommends updating the library with newer book titles and having more subscriptions to specialised magazines that can help the students.*

2. *The department should report to students what has been done to address their concerns and recommendations.*

## **2.6. Research**

*Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center 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.*

The scientific research objectives of FG are linked to the UMIB research development plan and in harmony with the objectives set by MEST.

On the basis of the SER and the consultations, the teaching staff develop scientific research work as an integral part of all of the academic activity. The current staff of the program is qualified and consists of a DSc, PhD Candidates and MSc graduates, who have published a number of books, scientific articles and have attended conferences. All academic staff should be actively engaged in current research, and demonstrate how these research activities impact on undergraduate student learning, integration of research into teaching being a must.

FG has established the Research Institute in which policies for open access to research infrastructure have been adapted, according to the European best practices.

*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.*

FG applies the basic criteria for promoting and advancing academic staff in relation to research and developed UBIM Status and Regulation on promotion. This approach is in line with MEST regulations. The number of publications in indexed scientific journals is defined, this is mentioned in SER. The SER states that Open access publications are targeted.

The performance of staff regarding research is discussed in staff evaluations. The Department of Geology plans to establish its own Journal for the publication of scientific research papers in the field of Geology and other relevant fields, in order to facilitate the publication activity.

*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.*

The research recognition process is in line with international practice. Policies and descriptors are available through the procedures that define the levels at which a researcher is placed in accordance with international descriptors.

UMIB has developed the draft regulation on research ethics and academic integrity and the researchers of the FG are expected to adhere to the principles and standards of conducting professional and ethical research.

Most staff have professional profiles that can be accessed online.

*Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.*

Academic staff mainly carries out individual research, and some of them do applicative research with impact in the community and relate to their teaching activity.

At undergraduate level, not all subjects may be research-based, but where staff have research expertise, this should help students to achieve research-based learning through practical projects. During the site visit, students told ET that this was the most beneficial learning experience for them. This form of teaching requires good electronic resources, modern learning platforms.

If students can see the purpose of the research in the interest of the community, this is particularly beneficial and can increase motivation and interest in the study programme.

*Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in specialty 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.*

The academic staff are in process of publishing books and scientific articles in publishing houses respectively in special journals with indexes on the platforms recommended by MEST and UMIB.

An immediate applicability is that during the evaluation of the candidates for promotion, it is required that papers should be published in the candidate's field, in the journals that are indexed on the respective academic platforms.

A good point, according with SER, is that most of these publications have open access and are available to all users within the country and abroad.

*Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation.*

In SER is stated that FG professors served on the editorial boards of two journals, for one as a board member and for one journal as a member of the international supervisory board. Staff members who are on the editorial boards of journals should give tutorials to peers and students as to the criteria and success factors for publishing in those journals and, according to SER,

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FG staff is making efforts to inform and train academic staff for writing and applying to international projects, such as the projects of the Erasmus+ program, COST, Horizon Europe.

Any research conducted by the teacher must be peer reviewed, scientifically validated. Scientific research is available through scientific and applied research publications and participation in consultancy for geological and mining companies in Mitrovica and other parts of Kosovo and the wider region. In the process of knowledge and technology transfer, FG benefits from the support of the local community through active involvement in the organization of scientific and professional conferences and in the form of useful donations for the organization of various workshops.

In addition to their core duties in teaching, research and professional activities, FG employees are involved as members in the professional boards of public or private sector, as well as in the geological-mining companies.

*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.*

The trend of publications by academic staff, especially in international indexed journals has been slightly increasing in recent years.

*Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.*

The full-time staff of the Geology Department, publish their scientific and professional work under the faculty name, as required by the University policies, and the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation.

*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.*

The academic staff includes in course and application materials and scientific and research elements from papers in which they have participated.

*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.*

There are internal department policies, as well as legal policies, relating to ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures are set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.

*Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.*

Discussions with students revealed that they are involved in projects developed in collaboration with industry.

| No.  | Standard   | Compliance |    |
|------|--|------------|----|
|      |  | Yes        | No |
| 6.1  | The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center 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  |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 6.4  | The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.  | x          |    |
| 6.5  | The academic and research staff publish their work in specialty 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          |    |
| 6.6  | Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation.  | x          |    |
| 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  |
| 6.8  | Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.   | x          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 6.11 | Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.  | x          |    |

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant



### **ET recommendations:**

1. *New forms of research dissemination should be considered, such as online publishing on the FG website.*
2. *In the new journal that is currently being prepared, arrangements must be made for strict peer review of contributions.*
3. *It would be good for all teaching staff to have up-to-date professional profiles on internationally used platforms.*
4. *Consideration should be given to the appropriate journal, or other dissemination channel, according to the intended audience.*
5. *The actual context regarding developments in the geosciences, such as in environmental, conservation and sustainability issues, as well as SDGs, should provide an opportunity to channel students' and academic staff's scientific research also in this direction.*
6. *Implementing of a special department dedicated to the identification of open project calls, the analysis of specific conditions of the call, the identification and contact of potential partners and the writing of research applications.*

### **2.7. Infrastructure and Resources**

*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.*

The faculty provides adequate premises and learning facilities for all candidates. Classrooms and laboratories are equipped with a projector, internet, equipment and necessary supplies. The curriculum of the programme contains courses requiring applications from core subjects such as physics, chemistry, computer science as well as professional subjects and these take place in the laboratories.

Based on the SER and on site visit, the FG has 3980,37 m<sup>2</sup> (second floor, ground floor and fifth floor) and 2262,00 m<sup>2</sup> of basement space. Overall, there are 14 laboratories, 20 offices for professors and the management staff, 6 classrooms, one computer room, one software room, one meeting room, one library, one large amphitheater and one small amphitheater. The academic staff have their own offices where they can prepare their lectures and organize their research work and are equipped with computers, and the internet.

The University Campus infrastructure, also available for FG, is composed by a Dormitory B+P+4 (7896 m<sup>2</sup>), a Canteen (P+1), Sports grounds (2800 m<sup>2</sup>)

*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.*

The main funds are received by the Faculty from the MEST and Ministry of Finance through the University. The Faculty is not an independent financial entity. The SER explains that the Governing Council of UMIB decides on the percentage of the academic unit budget, according to the proposal of the rector.

UMIB, based on the documents approved by the central level with the approval of the Assembly of Kosovo, has determined the budgetary chapters for 2023 and estimates for 2024-2025, according to the law in force. The financial resources are sustainable and the budget is structured according to economic categories.

From the information provided above can be concluded that the Faculty has managed to ensure adequate long-term implementation of the study program.

*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 utilization license;*
- d. library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.*

During the site visit ET observed the spaces used by FG academic staff and students.

The library study hall allows at least 100 persons to study simultaneously and there are about 30 computers in the library that can be used by students during their studies. The software room is equipped with licensed software useful for geosciences fields (Surfer Golden Software, ArcGIS 10.5, RockWork, MinePlan 3D, NetProMine).

FG owns consumables, software, inventory items, hardware, etc. from the university.

There are laboratories for physics, chemistry, computer science, a room with appropriate software for the subjects of study included in the curriculum, with license for use, a room for geomechanics, microscopes, functional for supporting exercises, as well as a library equipped with reading rooms and its own book fund.

All of these meet the standards necessary to conduct the educational process at an appropriate level.

*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 specialty disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.*

During the site visit ET observed the spaces dedicated to the educational process, as follows: each classroom (lecture room) - up to 60 students, the small amphitheater - up to 140 people, the large amphitheater - up to 350 people.

ET found that the size of the halls and amphitheatres are more than sufficient for the organization of lectures and exercises, in accordance with the number of students. The computer room has a sufficient number of computers to organize lectures and exercises for subjects and applications based on the software possibilities.

*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 specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized 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.*

UMIB library is equipped with books and other materials from the subject areas taught at the University.

Students have access to the EBSCO online library, as a service provided by the Research Cult project, from Erasmus+, being used by all academic staff and about 750 students at any given time in the two libraries, where they have 24-hour Internet access, as well as from their homes.

During the site visit, the ET was informed that the FG management is going to increase funds for the e-library and for the digitalisation process, since they are seeing the importance of it.

*Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.*

The Faculty's facilities that are adapted to students with special needs, including three elevators and ramps at the entrance to all buildings.

FG has taken measures starting from marking the parking lot, where these categories are assigned a special space, then the large amphitheater is equipped with sound and the possibility of moving wheelchairs to the amphitheater.

An example of good practice is that UMIB has signed a Cooperation Agreement with the NGO "Little People of Kosovo - Mitrovica", to promote and affirm the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with the concept of creating an inclusive society for persons with disabilities in all areas of work and life.

| No. | Standard  | Compliance |    |
|-----|---|------------|----|
|     |   | Yes        | No |
| 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          |    |
| 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          |    |
| 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:<br>a. owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;<br>b. owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;<br>c. adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilization license;<br>d. library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula. | x          |    |
| 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 specialty disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.  | x          |    |
| 7.5 | The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:<br>a. a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;   | x          |    |

|     |  |   |  |
|-----|--|---|--|
|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>c. their own book stock from Albanian and foreign specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized publishers, from the last 10 years;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>e. a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</li> </ul> |   |  |
| 7.6 | The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.  | x |  |

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Intensifying efforts to digitize bibliographic resources – the library*
2. *Implementing e-learning methods by using an e-learning methodology, practice and tools.*
3. *Including in the SER some relevant graphs regarding the percentage of the available digital resources from the total number of printed resources.*

**3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET**

*The ET welcomed the SER which was improved on previous versions. It has addressed some of the issues raised during the last accreditation and also a synthetic table focused on the main improvements and the way in which the observations from the previous external evaluation report were approached.*

*The academic staff involved in this study program improved the course syllabi. During the on-site visit, a group of dedicated professionals was observed, proud of their work and the profession they practise. Individual development efforts were observed.*

*There is still a need to go further as described in the sections above. In the current context of research on pollution, subsidence, meeting the SDGs, solving environmental problems, the efforts to write project proposals in consortia must be intensified. A continued move towards Earth Systems Science, requiring some interdisciplinarity, will further increase the attractiveness of the degree program. The implementation of such projects would bring many*

benefits, and as the main element would be able to really highlight the experience and dedication of these professionals.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Geology B.Sc. offered by University 'Isa Bolitina' Mitrovica is **Substantially compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **20 students** to be enrolled in the program.

| No. crt. | Standard                               | Compliance Level               |
|----------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1        | Mission, objectives and administration | Substantially                  |
| 2        | Quality management                     | Substantially                  |
| 3        | Academic Staff                         | Fully                          |
| 4        | Educational Process Content            | Substantially                  |
| 5        | Students                               | Fully                          |
| 6        | Research                               | Substantially                  |
| 7        | Infrastructure and resources           | Fully                          |
|          | <b>OVERALL COMPLIANCE</b>              | <b>Substantially Compliant</b> |

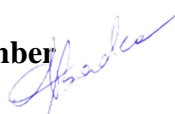
**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**Student quota recommended/Three or Five Years – THREE YEARS**

**Expert Team**

**Member**

(Signature)



**Ana Cornelia BADEA**

(Print Name)

**01/06/2024**

(Date)

**Member**

(Signature)



**Marko KOMSO**

(Print Name)

**01/06/2024**

(Date)

**Member**

(Signature)



**Giga Khositashvili**

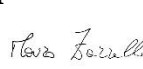
(Print Name)

**01/06/2024**

(Date)

**Member**

(Signature)



**Mauro Zarrelli**

(Print Name)

**01/06/2024**

(Date)