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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



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**UNIVERSITY OF MITROVICA “ISA BOLETINI”**

***FACULTY OF MECHANICAL AND COMPUTER  
ENGINEERING***

**PROGRAM EVALUATION  
BSc in MECHANICAL ENGINEERING**

**Re-Accreditation**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

**06.2024 / MITROVICA**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Context**

**Date of site visit: 16 May 2024** (Hybrid site visit; 2 online 1 on-site)

#### **Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Piotr Grudowski*
- *Dr. Yilmaz Ozmen*
- *Marija Vasilevska, Student Expert*

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

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

#### **Sources of information for the Report:**

- KAA Accreditation Manual (2021)
- KAA Manual for external evaluation of higher education institutions (2021)
- KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the program submitted by authorities
- Documents and annexes provided by the program/department head
- Course syllabi
- CVs of the staff
- Accreditation report of the expert team (21 March 2021)
- Additional information requested after site visit (Internship Documents, Financial Documents, Diploma Topics)

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

- The experts team followed the program re-accreditation assessment areas and respective performance indicators, developed by Kosovo Accreditation Agency that are presented in Accreditation Manual – 2021
- The European Qualifications Framework
- The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

## 1.2. Site visit schedule

<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<b>09:00 – 09:45</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
<b>09:45 – 10:25</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
<b>10:30 – 11:30</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme <b>Economic Engineering, BSc, 180 ECTS</b> (room 1) Dr. Piotr Grudowski Marija Vasilevska,
<b>10:30 -11:30</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme <b>Mechanical Engineering (Production Engineering) BSc, 180 ECTS</b> (room 2) Dr. Yilmaz Ozmen Marija Vasilevska
<b>11:30 -12:30</b>	Lunch break
<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	Visiting Facilities
<b>13:30 – 14:10</b>	Meeting with teaching staff
<b>14:10 – 15:00</b>	Meeting with students
<b>15:00 – 15:40</b>	Meeting with graduates and external stakeholders
<b>15:45 – 15:50</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
<b>15:50 – 16:00</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

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

The BSc in Mechanical Engineering program, offered by the Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering, has a long and rich history. Over time, the program has adapted to keep up with the changing needs of the mechanical engineering field and the education system in Kosovo.

The program's curriculum gives students a strong base in the main ideas of mechanical engineering. This includes topics like math, engineering drawing, computer programming, communication skills, materials science, mechanics, fluid mechanics, thermodynamics, manufacturing processes, and automation.

During the program, students learn both theory and practical skills through labs, projects, and internships. The program focuses on important abilities like problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, and communication, which are all necessary for a successful career in mechanical engineering.

The program's faculty members are well-educated and have a lot of experience in their areas of expertise. This makes sure that students get high-quality teaching and guidance. The program also has access to modern facilities and resources, such as specialized labs and workshops. These help improve the learning experience and let students get hands-on practice with the latest engineering tools and equipment.

The program has been accredited by respected organizations like the Agency of Accreditation and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in the past. These accreditations show that the program is of high quality and meets established standards and benchmarks.

The upcoming reaccreditation review will look at how relevant and effective the program is and how well it matches the needs of the industry and best practices. The review process will include getting feedback from students, graduates, faculty, and industry partners.

The BSc in Mechanical Engineering program at UMIB's Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering is dedicated to providing a high-quality education that gets students ready for successful careers in mechanical engineering. The reaccreditation review will give useful insights and suggestions for making the program even better and more effective.

## **2. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

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

The vision of the University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini” is to be a leading Higher Education Institution in the region, in education and scientific research and in preparing competitive professionals in areas unique to Kosovo and the region, in order to meet the requirements of the present and project the needs of the future, for the scientific-academic needs, the needs of the market economy, and institutional and diplomacy needs, focused on sustainable development and social welfare.

The mission of UIBM, is to provide quality teaching for the preparation of cadres in fields unique to Kosovo and the region, dedicated to providing scientific research, professional counselling and other professional activities that ensure well-being and social advancement.

The values underlying the UMIB activity are:

- Mutual responsibility and respect
- Justice and honesty
- Integrity and accountability
- Diversity and wellbeing
- Creativity and intellectual freedom

The mission of the Program is to provide quality teaching of students with theoretical and practical skills in the Mechanical Engineering field, so they are able to compete in the job

market and contribute to the community in the sectors of economic, scientific, research and social development of society. This is a mission in line with the UIBM mission stated above. The program has been designed in cooperation with various stakeholder groups, including staff, students and employers related to Mechanical Engineering. Procedures are based on internal regulations, and the program has been approved by the management of the faculty after taking into consideration the feedback from the quality assurance office.

According to the Kosovo Skills Barometer 1.0, a significant challenge is evident in the labour market, particularly for Technicians and Associate Professionals with Bachelor's degrees, where 67.3% of companies find it difficult to fill vacancies in these roles.

Projected growth in employment by 2025 for Technicians and Associate Professionals with Bachelor degrees is expected to increase significantly, reaching an estimated 51.4%. The study program has been subject to a reviewing process with a number of universities which operate in Kosovo, the region and beyond, including public and private universities. The universities which have been consulted are the following:

- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering – Prishtina <http://fim.uni-pr.edu/>
- Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering <http://fiek.uni-pr.edu/>
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering – Skopje
- University of Vienna
- University of KENT
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering - Zenica
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering-Ljubljana
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, Zagreb.

The study program has an adequately defined overarching didactic and research concept to meet the labour market demands of local and regional industries with rapid growth as a part of the Industry 4.0 revolution. There are opportunities for students to engage in research activities such as projects, papers, and thesis work. Students are required to apply their knowledge to solve problems and complete projects related to the field of mechanical engineering.

There are formal regulations on typical procedural or academic issues publicly available. However, there was no objective evidence of widespread awareness of these regulations, especially among students. This is even more true of awareness of the ethical aspects of teaching, research and assessment.

Due to the very extensive, or even too extensive in relation to the actual needs, amount of formal regulations accepted at the university, there is a risk of lack of proper supervision over the validity and adequacy of the relevant arrangements regarding the curriculum.

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, and 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 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. *It is necessary to ensure greater awareness of staff regarding the importance of ethical issues in acquiring knowledge and scientific research, avoiding plagiarism, etc.*
2. *Simplification of elements reflecting the direction in which the UIBM and the Faculties intend to go should be considered, so as to ensure their mutual coherence and at the same time to emphasize the specificity of individual organizational units*
3. *Administrative and technical staff should also be involved in the activities for quality improvement at UIBM*

**2.2. Quality Management**

It can be cautiously assumed that all academics participate in the self-assessment process and cooperate in reporting and improvement processes within their competencies. It is difficult to confirm this about administration and service employees. At the end of each semester, all teachers will complete a self-assessment survey, which is submitted to the Dean of the Faculty. Data provided by employees through self-assessment, data collected from students and the

dean's evaluation of employees are included in a report that is made publicly available on the UIBM website.

It is also possible to accept the thesis that the assessing activities and planning improvement activities are integrated with the normal planning process in the unit.

However, it seems that the issue of the process approach to the QA area, not to mention the implementation of process management in relation to university management, does not occur in practice. Rather, we have an example of a typically bureaucratic approach focused on actions without understanding their systemic context. The presented regulations describing the quality assurance system at the University and the Faculty lack, among others, identifying groups of main processes that create the management system of a university/its unit, presenting their mutual relations, determining process owners, or identifying key improvement mechanisms that effectively enforce the continuous improvement process.

It would also be worth considering whether the adopted forms of periodic evaluation/self-evaluation regarding the quality of education correspond to the real needs of the University and the Faculty. It is about as many as 8 measurement tools adopted:

- Students' evaluation of the academic staff is 2 per year at the end of each semester.
- Self-assessment by the academic staff - 2 per year, after each semester,
- Alumni questionnaire - 1 per year, with all graduates under the Alumni association, to measure whether their studies have complied with their working positions and to obtain suggestions regarding changes to the study program and roll-out of new programs.
- Dean's evaluation of the academic staff - 2 per year, after each semester, whereby a report on each academic staff member individually is submitted.
- Deans' self-assessment - 1 per year.
- Evaluation of services by students and professors - 1 per year concerning services and conditions provided by UMIB and each of the faculties
- Assessment of study programs by senior students - 1 per year,
- External stakeholder questionnaire – 1 per year, with all external stakeholders.

An important issue is whether the university can effectively use all the information obtained in this way to continuously improve the quality of education. Moreover, it is necessary to prevent unnecessary, skeptical actions from becoming a source of cynical attitudes among stakeholders. This will happen if they perceive a lack of connection between these activities and the associated effort and actual positive effects of process improvement within the quality assurance system. The university ensures that survey results are sent to all academic units. The dean of the academic unit informs employees about the conclusions contained in the report and their recommendations at the meeting of the Faculty Council. The Dean discusses the results of academic teachers' evaluations separately with professors, if necessary, to introduce necessary improvements.



Meetings with students are also organised, during which the survey conclusions are presented, highlighting the specific issues they raised and the planned or implemented improvements. Assessment results are presented on the UMIB website.

A suggested improvement solution in relation to the documentation describing the mechanisms of the Quality Assurance System in UIBM is its radical simplification, which will prevent negative phenomena such as duplication of the same content in several documents, problems related to the supervision of changes in documentation, difficulties in updating related to the change of national law, inconsistencies of the semantic convention.

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 program planning and delivery aspects, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.		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 collected from students, graduates, and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> The internal quality assurance system results are considered for further study program development. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.		X
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall program quality are prepared periodically (e.g. 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 regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Introduce a real process approach to quality assurance /management in the UIBM /Faculty. The basis can be ISO 9001 or ISO 21001 standards and PDCA cycle.*
2. *Consider significantly reducing the number of regulations, documents and evaluation tools used regarding QA at the central level of the university and in its units. Ensure the consistency of these regulations.*
3. *Encourage stakeholders in a creative way to express their authentic opinions on the quality of the Faculty/Programme.*
4. *Establish an effective way of providing feedback on actions resulting from opinion surveys.*
5. *Consider introducing modern concepts for improving the quality of management in higher education, such as Lean Management (Lean-in-Higher Education).*

**2.3. Academic Staff**

Staff recruitment is based on an employment contract following the relevant legislation act in force in Kosovo, the University Statute and other internal regulations. Recently, two employees have completed doctoral studies. They were granted a one-year sabbatical. A new professor was admitted - a doctor of technical sciences in mechanical engineering. According to conversations of the Assessment Team with employees, especially those representing the younger generation, it would be useful to provide greater material support to their efforts to obtain a doctoral degree, especially since they are pursuing it outside Kosovo.

During the recruitment process, because of the accreditation committee's suggestions, it was taken into account that new employees should have a good knowledge of English.

The table presented in SER accurately reflects the number of academic teachers (24 people), their positions and forms of employment.

According to the information provided to the Assessment Team and the information contained in the Self Evaluation Report, some academic staff have only one primary place of employment: the Faculty being assessed – Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering (FMCE). Another part of the staff works as a primary employee in FMCE and part-time in other academic units of University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini” (UMIB) or another institution outside UMIB. A small proportion of staff are employed part-time. 83% of academic staff are full-time employees and cover 80% of the classes of the study programme.

For each group of students and every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, FMCE has employed more than one full-time professor with a PhD degree.

FMCE has developed a comprehensive three-year academic staff development plan that supports staff involvement in further studies, publications, conference attendance, and the creation of materials relevant to students. The strategic plan includes provisions for training

academic staff in teaching methods and syllabus revision. Financial support is provided for staff to attend at least one conference in their field of study each year, and UMIB has consistently supported staff participation in local and international scientific conferences. Academic staff members also have the opportunity for a one-year paid sabbatical leave and paid breaks for academic mobility or doctoral studies.

The responsibilities of academic staff encompass teaching, learning, scientific research, student consultations, and other contract-related duties. Staff are required to hold weekly consultation hours, assess students, mentor diploma works, participate in university structures, apply for grants, and contribute their expertise to the community.

Regular student evaluations of academic staff are conducted at the end of each semester. The evaluation process aims to identify and address problems, with results and statistical data handled by the faculty council and program advisors. The Dean of FMCE conducts an additional evaluation of academic staff. Individual results are discussed with each staff member by the Dean, Quality Coordinator, and Department Head to ensure personalized feedback and support.

Quality improvement activities at FMCE positively influence various aspects of the educational process, including effective teaching, student needs, flexible delivery, research-teaching links, infrastructure, access and inclusiveness, external engagement, employability, staff development, eLearning, and organizational changes. The faculty has developed a clear staff development plan that is updated annually.

In accordance with the Law on Labour, academic staff at FMCE retire at the age of 65. Full-time staff are defined as those who have not reached retirement age, and upon reaching this threshold, their employment status automatically shifts to part-time.

The additional information provided in the 'site visit' supports and reinforces the findings from the self-evaluation report. The answers given by the program officers demonstrate a strong commitment to staff development, clear understanding of staff responsibilities, and adherence to the evaluation and retirement policies.

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	
<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:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The faculty should provide targeted support for staff members facing challenges in their professional development.*
2. *The faculty should make staff evaluation results more accessible to the public to enhance transparency and accountability.*
3. *It is necessary to start internationalisation processes at UMIB, among other things, by establishing cooperation and employing at least part-time academic teachers from abroad.*

## **2.4. Educational Process Content**

The Mechanical Engineering program at FMCE, UMIB offers a curriculum integrating subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects, disciplinary, methodological, and generic skills and competencies. The program aims to prepare students for employment in various sectors, including industry, maintenance, research, and teaching in technical sciences.

The curriculum is designed to comply with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) framework, ensuring that it meets the specified qualification objectives and provides adequate forms of teaching and learning. The curriculum follows a logical flow and aligns with the definition of general and specific competencies. The program has identified nine learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve.

Course syllabi include objectives, thematic content, learning outcomes, class distribution, assessment methods, and a minimal bibliography. Full course descriptions are provided electronically in the additional documents. The language of instruction is Albanian, but staff fluent in English are available to teach in other official languages if required.

The student-teacher relationship is viewed as a partnership, with both parties sharing responsibility for achieving learning outcomes. Syllabi are discussed with students during the first lecture to ensure understanding and relevance. The program employs various teaching strategies to accommodate different learning outcomes, such as small group teaching, flipped classroom, active learning, problem-based learning, work-based learning, and blended learning.

Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively and are appropriate for different forms of learning. Assessment strategies are communicated to students at the beginning of each course. The program uses appropriate, valid, and reliable mechanisms to verify standards of student achievement, with success reports generated for each subject and analyzed by the Head of Department and Dean.

The Regulation on Bachelor Studies outlines specific steps for students to address inadequate or inconsistent assessment. The study program includes practical phases with specified learning outcomes and effective processes. Practice stages are awarded ECTS credits, and students' work is monitored through activity reports. UMIB has signed cooperation agreements with public institutions and private businesses to facilitate practical stages.

The 'site visit' findings provide further details on the curriculum development process, involvement of stakeholders, and improvements made since the last accreditation. The answers also shed light on the teaching methodologies, assessment mechanisms, and integration of research activities into teaching. This additional information strengthens the program's compliance with the standards and partially addresses some of the previously identified deficiencies, particularly in relation to Performance indicators 4.1 and 4.3.

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 competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	
<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.	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.	X	
<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.	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.	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.		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.	X	

*\*To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)*

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The program should provide more detailed information on how its learning outcomes align with the specific competencies defined in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).*
2. *The program should consider providing more structured language support to enhance students' and staff's English language skills, which would facilitate access to international resources and improve opportunities for international collaboration.*
3. *The program should provide more information on how it maintains standards of student achievement over time and how these standards compare to those of other study programs at highly regarded institutions.*
4. *The program should explicitly address Performance Indicator 4.2, which focuses on the use of new IT resources and auxiliary materials by teachers.*

## 2.5. Students

During the site visit, the Expert Team met with highly motivated students who openly discussed and shared their experiences in this study program. Many chose this program due to its opportunities and the fact that it is one of the highest-paid professions today. However, they emphasized the need for programs to be regularly updated based on market demands. Additionally, the students recommended incorporating more practical experience into the curriculum. Finally, it must be highlighted that the drop out rates are high as the Expert Team learned during the site visit.

The Faculty has clear, formally adopted, and widely promoted procedures for student enrollment. The regulations for Bachelor studies detail these procedures specifically. Interested candidates must possess a high school graduation diploma or another relevant document.

During the site visit and meetings with the students, the expert team learned that each study group comprises 20-30 students. The size of these groups varies depending on whether the subject is theoretical or practical. However, according to the Self-Evaluation Report, the maximum number of students in a group can reach up to 80. This indicates that the management aims to establish study groups that foster effective and interactive teaching and learning processes. Smaller students' groups for exercises is also pointed out as one of the programme's opportunities.

Various assessment methods are employed, including weekly evaluations, homework, classwork, colloquiums, individual and group projects, and seminars. At the beginning of the year, staff members are required to specify deadlines for task delivery, data collection, and announcement of marks. Based on conversations with students and graduates, the Expert Team concluded that these assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, and are appropriate for different forms of learning.

The records and all necessary information for students are stored and shared via the University's e-learning platform (SMU). The Vice Dean for Teaching analyzes and evaluates student performance data. In collaboration with the Head of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty, the Vice Dean intervenes when necessary. A certain level of flexibility is provided, including the opportunity for students to have a second deadline for taking exams.

The faculty management is trying to keep the students informed about their rights and obligations. However, there are many regulations and documents and the Expert Team has the opinion that these regulations should be reduced for ensuring a more effective structure at all levels. In addition, student empowering policies and procedure are listed as one of the programme's opportunities.

The student-academic staff relationship is viewed as a partnership, with both parties sharing responsibility for achieving learning outcomes. Academic staff are required to hold weekly consultation hours, 2-6 hours consultation per week, assess students, mentor diploma works, participate in university structures, apply for grants, and contribute their expertise to the



community. In addition, during the site visit the Expert Team learned that the students are satisfied from the feedback they are receiving from the academic staff, since the academic staff are always free to ask and contact professors. However, during the meeting with the Heads of programmes the Expert Team learned that students are enrolling in this programme with a little background of technical sciences. The academic staff are providing one on one consultations, but there is no a tutoring system ensuring the continuous and systematic support to students that really need this.

There are certain opportunities for students to engage in research activities, including projects, papers, and thesis work. Students are expected to apply their knowledge to solve problems and complete projects related to the field of mechanical engineering.

The Faculty has implemented effective procedures to ensure the originality of student work. As part of the Research Calt project, the Plagiarism Checker program was purchased, providing staff and students with access to this tool. All diploma topics and other student works are checked for originality before they are defended, with no more than 15% similarity allowed. For papers, dissertations, and other works written in English, the Plagiarism Checker software is also utilized. Regular discussions about academic integrity and resources for proper citation practices are provided. Lecturers illustrate the real-world consequences of plagiarism through case studies, making the issue more tangible for students. However, the Expert Team did not receive specific insurance that these systems are used regularly in practice.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at the institutional level that the study program respects when organising student recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied to all students.	X	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent study document, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned 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:** Substantially Compliant

**ET recommendations:**

*1. The Faculty should establish a tutorial system to support first-year students, aiming to address any potential gaps in their knowledge of the technical sciences. The tutorial system should also address the high percentage of the dropouts.*

**2.6. Research**

The Mechanical Engineering program at FMCE, UMIB conducts basic and applied research aligned with the university's strategic objectives. Efforts have been made at both the institutional and faculty levels to improve the quality of scientific research and related activities. Academic staff are required to conduct research and publish in internationally recognized journals, with promotion and appointment criteria for academic titles including minimum requirements for the publication of scientific papers.

The institution follows European recommendations for defining research profiles and levels of independence for researchers. Currently, academic staff mainly carry out individual research related to their teaching activities. The staff has published books, scientific articles, and research findings in their respective teaching and research areas.

Academic and research staff publish their work in specialty journals, present at conferences and symposiums, and provide expertise and consultancy services. Publications are evaluated based on the indexing of the journals in which they appear, with different platforms and databases being assigned specific coefficients.

While the self-evaluation report provides information on how the program meets the main standards in Area 6, it does not specifically address the performance indicators related to research collaboration, organization of scientific events, support for junior staff, community engagement, attracting financial resources, and cooperation with local industry and research agencies.

The 'site visit' findings offer valuable insights into the program's plans for continuous improvement and innovation in research, as well as the integration of research activities into teaching. The answers also mention establishing research groups and efforts to increase cooperation with industry partners. However, these additional details do not fully address the identified deficiencies and recommendations, particularly in relation to the performance indicators. The program should work on providing more specific information and implementing concrete measures to address the recommendations and align more closely with international best practices in research.

Each academic staff member has published at least one scientific/applied research publication for the past three years. The Evaluation Team was assured that it was necessary to raise this standard, namely the required number and quality of publications. This is necessary because, with such lenient accountability of researchers for their research activities, it is difficult to expect any progress in the development of the University and Faculty. Of course, these plans should also be supported by an appropriate system of rewarding and promoting the most active employees. This will not be possible without increasing the level of internationalization of universities and activating academic exchange and mobility processes. The Evaluation Team received adequate evidence that the results of scientific research of academic staff of the FMCE are published under the name of the university as well as the name of the Faculty.

Property rights and intellectual property are regulated by the Law on Copyright and Other Intellectual Property Rights in Kosovo. The relevant regulation on conducting scientific research in Kosovo contains detailed provisions regarding academic integrity, protection of intellectual property and support provided to scientists by the UMIB legal service.

Despite the fact that the SER contains information about "an attempt to involve students in scientific research" at FMCE, the Evaluation Team did not find material confirmation of the positive effects of these activities.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<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.	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.	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:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *The program should provide details on the mechanisms to facilitate collaborative research arrangements for teaching staff.*
2. *The program should include information on the organization of scientific events and the publication of proceedings.*
3. *The program should outline the support provided for junior staff members in developing their research programs.*
4. *The program should develop strategies to engage staff and students in community service activities.*
5. *The program should establish mechanisms to track and support staff members in securing external funding for research.*
6. *The program should foster collaboration with local industry and research organisations to enhance research opportunities and resources.*
7. *The level of internationalization of the Faculty should be raised and the mobility of the Academic Staff should be ensured to improve the effects of scientific and research activities.*
8. *It is necessary to actively involve students in the Faculty's research activities and enable them to publish the effects of these activities.*

## **2.7. Infrastructure and Resources**

The Mechanical Engineering program at FMCE, UMIB benefits from the university's modern infrastructure and excellent study conditions. The campus meets European standards and is well-equipped to support the program's long-term implementation.

The University's budget is overseen by the Governing Council and is structured to ensure the sustainability of financial resources.

UMIB owns all its premises, eliminating any obligations to third parties regarding infrastructure. There are amphitheatres, classrooms, computer labs, electronic lab, mechanical engineering lab, library and administrative and staff premises.

The Governing Council of the University is responsible for approving and overseeing the budget for fiscal years, as stipulated by the Statute. During the site visit, the Expert Team learned from the program management that they are financially stable. The provided financial plan for the next three years shows variations in the planned funds, with 2025 projected to have the lowest budget. However, an Institute for Research Projects has been established and is awaiting accreditation from the Ministry. This institute is expected to secure additional funds through increased research projects.

However, no specific information is provided on performance indicators relating to formal plans for infrastructure improvement, the appointment of a senior member of staff to oversee infrastructure, or the regular monitoring of the effectiveness and relevance of infrastructure and resources through student surveys and feedback.

During the site visit, students noted that the libraries are well-supplied with books and literature, providing ample space for study. Most books are available for check-out and home study. The University has an agreement with the National Library of Kosovo, granting students access to about 700,000 book titles and improving access to online libraries. Additionally, students have access to the university's Francophone library (link: <https://bneuf.auf.org>).

The Self Evaluation Report highlighted the lack of access to important scientific databases as a weakness. Students also mentioned having access to useful software for teaching and learning, such as AUTOCAD. However, the insufficient number of software licenses available to academic staff and students was also identified as a weakness in the report.

The findings and documents of the site visit provided additional insights into the financial sustainability of the programme and the efforts made to provide internships. However, they do not address the recommendations related to performance indicators 7.1-7.3. These recommendations should be addressed to ensure full compliance and continuous improvement.

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	X	

included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.		
<p><i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution’s libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <p>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p>	X	
<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:**

1. *The faculty should develop and monitor formal plans for infrastructure improvement to ensure continuous enhancement of the learning environment.*
2. *The faculty should assign a senior staff member to oversee the development and maintenance of infrastructure and resources.*
3. *The program should implement regular student surveys to assess the effectiveness of infrastructure and make necessary improvements based on the feedback received.*
4. *The management should plan more funds for software licenses that will be available to academic staff and student.*

**3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET**

*(Insert all comments or observations, commendations and suggestions relating to this general area and its allocated standards, as specified in the KAA Accreditation manual. Consideration should be given to the adequacy of processes and results achieved in each of the standards.)*

Based on the detailed analysis, all data and information collected the Expert Team is proposing the following recommendations:

1. It is necessary to ensure greater awareness of staff regarding the importance of ethical issues in acquiring knowledge and scientific research, avoiding plagiarism, etc.
2. Simplification of elements reflecting the direction in which the UIBM and the Faculties intend to go should be considered, so as to ensure their mutual coherence and at the same time to emphasize the specificity of individual organizational units
3. Administrative and technical staff should also be involved in the activities for quality improvement at UIBM
4. Introduce a real process approach to quality assurance /management in the UIBM /Faculty. The basis can be ISO 9001 or ISO 21001 standards and PDCA cycle.
5. Consider significantly reducing the number of regulations, documents and evaluation tools used regarding QA at the central level of the university and in its units. Ensure the consistency of these regulations.
6. Encourage stakeholders in a creative way to express their authentic opinions on the quality of the Faculty/Programme.
7. The faculty should provide targeted support for staff members facing challenges in their professional development.
8. The faculty should make staff evaluation results more accessible to the public to enhance transparency and accountability.
9. It is necessary to start internationalisation processes at UIBM, among other things, by establishing cooperation and employing at least part-time academic teachers from abroad.
10. The program should provide more detailed information on how its learning outcomes align with the specific competencies defined in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
11. The program should consider providing more structured language support to enhance students' and staff's English language skills, which would facilitate access to international resources and improve opportunities for international collaboration.
12. The program should provide more information on how it maintains standards of student achievement over time and how these standards compare to those of other study programs at highly regarded institutions.
13. The program should explicitly address Performance Indicator 4.2, which focuses on the use of new IT resources and auxiliary materials by teachers.
14. The Faculty should establish a tutorial system to support first-year students, aiming to address any potential gaps in their knowledge of the technical sciences. The tutorial system should also address the high percentage of the drop outs.
15. The program should provide details on the mechanisms to facilitate collaborative research arrangements for teaching staff.
16. The program should include information on the organization of scientific events and the publication of proceedings.
17. The program should outline the support provided for junior staff members in developing their research programs.
18. The program should develop strategies to engage staff and students in community service activities.



19. The program should establish mechanisms to track and support staff members in securing external funding for research.
20. The program should foster collaboration with local industry and research organisations to enhance research opportunities and resources.
21. The level of internationalization of the Faculty should be raised and the mobility of the Academic Staff should be ensured to improve the effects of scientific and research activities.
22. It is necessary to actively involve students in the Faculty's research activities and enable them to publish the effects of these activities.
23. The faculty should develop and monitor formal plans for infrastructure improvement to ensure continuous enhancement of the learning environment.
24. The faculty should assign a senior staff member to oversee the development and maintenance of infrastructure and resources.
25. The program should implement regular student surveys to assess the effectiveness of infrastructure and make necessary improvements based on the feedback received.
26. The management should plan more funds for software licenses that will be available to academic staff and student.

Overall compliance:

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

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for program re/accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a **substantial compliance** level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure in meeting at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation.

In conclusion, in line with the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends **to accredit/ not to accredit** the program.

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**Student quota recommended** Three Years

**Expert Team**

**Member**



Prof. Piotr Grudowski

16.06.2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

**Member**



Dr. Yilmaz Ozmen

16.06.2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

**Member**



Marija Vasilevska

16.06.2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)