



***UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA “HASAN PRISHTINA”
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY***

Plant Production, BSc., 180 ECTS

Re-accreditation

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

15 April 2024, Vienna

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1. Context.....	3
1.2. Site visit schedule	4
1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation	5
2. PROGRAM EVALUATION	6
2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration.....	6
2.2. Quality Management.....	8
2.3. Academic Staff.....	10
2.4. Educational Process Content.....	13
2.5. Students.....	17
2.6. Research.....	20
2.7. Infrastructure and Resources.....	23
3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET.....	26

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 03 April 2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Univ.Prof. Dr. Hans Peter Kaul (BOKU University, Vienna, AT)*
- *Prof. Dr. Reiner Doluschitz (Hohenheim University, Stuttgart, DE)*
- *Nadia Manzoni, Student Expert*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

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

Sources of information for the Report:

- *SER*
- *Syllabi*
- *Staff CVs*
- *Several web links and Annexes (partly in Albanian language or not accessible)*
- *On-site interviews*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (dated 2021)*
- *Four-level compliance scale:*

CL	Compliance level	%
A	Fully compliant	> 90
B	Substantially compliant	70-90
C	Partially compliant	30-70
D	Non-compliant	< 30

Abbreviations

EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ET	Expert team
FAV	Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary
HEI	Higher Education Institution
KAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency

OFQA	Office for Quality Assurance
SER	Self-evaluation report
SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UP	University of Prishtina

1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:40	Meeting with the management of the Faculty where the programme is integrated	
09:40 – 10:10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	
10:15 – 11:15	Meeting with the heads of the study programme Plant Production, BSc., 180 ECTS (room 1) Dr. Hans Peter Kaul Nadia Manzoni	Sali Aliu Gëzim Hodolli Imer Haziri
11:20 – 12:20	Meeting with the heads of the study programme Pomology and Viticulture, MSc, 120 ECTS (room 1) Dr. Hans Peter Kaul	Vahid Avdiu Bedri Dragusha
12:20 – 13:20	Lunch break	
13:20 – 14:20	Visiting Facilities	
14:20 – 15:05	Meeting with teaching staff	Skender Kaciu, Imer Rusinovci, Dukagjin Zeka, Salih Salihu, Iliriana Miftari, Esad Behrami, Jehona Shkodra, Saranda Musa, Dafinë Millaku
15:05 – 15:50	Meeting with students	Visar Haliti, Orneida Krasniqi, Rexhep Cena, Florent Hoxha, Kaltrinë Selimi, Xheneta Isufi, Laureta Ajvazi, Lorika Sadikaj, Djellorita Lushaku, Erita Mani, Venera Berisha, Xhentina Zeka, Driton Pajaziti, Learta Kovaqi, Adni Islami, Endrit Istogu, Adhuron Hoti, Krenare Kasabaqi, Jonida Osmani, Donjeta Fazliu, Alban Sherifi

15:55 – 16:55	Meeting with graduates and external stakeholders	Dardan Kavaja, Betim Zymberi, Besnik Sadriu, Burim Ahmeti (AVUK), Naim Delijaj (AVUK), Burim Ismajli (PhD candidate), Muhamet Demolli (Serra), Diana Blakqorri, Qendrim Selimi (Agroelita), Liridon Mustafa (Barnatorja Joni), Arben Zoga (Semenarna), Drilon Blakaj (Boost berries), Egzona Hajra (IADK), Lirim Karpuzi (Shoqata Arra & Lajthija), Xhavit Alija (Prilli 98), Zenel Bunjaku (IADK), Besnik Lila (Boost berries shpk), Naimi Rrahmani, (Shoqata e Arrave & Lajthia), Xhavit Alija (Prilli 98), Donjeta Fazliu, Alban Sherifi
16:55 – 17:00	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
17:00 – 17:05	Closing meeting with the management of the Faculty and program	

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The Faculty of Agriculture was founded on August 26, 1973. The aim of this foundation has been the faster development of the agricultural sector in Kosovo by graduating well educated people with superior qualifications in agriculture. In 2001, the Senate of the University of Prishtina approved curricula based on the Bologna Declaration for Bachelor Degree. In 2006 the Faculty Council and its academic staff pro-posed expanding the Faculty of Agriculture to the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV). The proposal became approved by the Senate of the University of Prishtina (UP) and subsequently the Minister of Education, Science and Technology issued an amending Decision no. 883/01-B, on December 2006. In the academic year 2022/23 at FAV, the lessons are taught by in total 50 permanently employed teaching staff (16 full professors, 17 associate professors and 17 assistant professors and teaching assistants). In addition, there are 38 temporary teaching staff engaged. According to the report of the Student Services of FAV for the academic year 2022/23, in all directions at the Bachelor and Master level there are 874 and 297 active students, respectively.

The program under evaluation for reaccreditation is a 3-year B.Sc. study program with 180 ECTS and in the academic year 2022/23 179 students. It has been designed based upon an equivalent program at the University of Ljubljana, SLO.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

1 Mission, objectives and administration	CL
<p><i>Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.</i></p> <p>The mission of the study program is in line with the missions of FAV and UP as stated in the SER.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER claims that this study program is based on the National Qualification Framework, according to which this study program belongs to its 6th level, which includes the preparation of students specializing in the field of Plant Production. In addition, this field of study is also in line with Erasmus Subject Area Code (ESAC) 01.1 - Agriculture (and not 01.2 as indicated in the SER). The learning outcomes in the SER for this programme are inconsistently defined, sometimes they refer to the learning outcomes and other times they refer to the strategic objectives of the department, other times as lists of knowledge areas.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.</i></p> <p>Such a concept is not particularly and in detail mentioned in the SER and it also did not become completely clear in the discussions with the Faculty management and the academic staff. The SER claims that the program has a clearly defined didactic and research-related concept, but it mentions only learning objectives. There is comparatively much emphasis put on research orientation of the program, which is not so much reflected in the syllabi, but also not that much required for a BSc program.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p>	A

6

Formal policies, guidelines and regulations are established and referenced in the SER. They are made available by the UP-website (but we were not able to access the pages).	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>University statutes and a Code of Ethics are in place and referenced in the SER. The ET trusts that staff and students are acting accordingly. The SER indicates that “Internal regulations and other acts that regulate relationships between staff and between student and staff as well as research ethics are accessible to everyone on the Faculty and university web site”, but again access failed. Yet, we assume that staff and students are acting accordingly.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>It is claimed in the SER that reviews of policies and regulations are monitored on a regular basis. However, no fixed schedule for a regular review is indicated.</p>	B
Overall	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *A well-defined overarching didactic and research concept for the study program should be explicitly described in the next SER.*
2. *Formal policies, guidelines and regulations, including internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities should be updated periodically on a regular basis.*
3. *The electronic learning-platform SEMS has been used intensively, also driven by the restrictions due to the pandemic. Further intensification in a sustainable way is recommended, which might also help to implement and demonstrate a comprehensive overarching didactic concept.*

2.2. Quality Management

2 Quality management	CL
<p><i>Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.</i></p> <p>The SER states and discussions during the site visit confirmed that in each semester each of the academic staff members reports to the department on the progress of the implementation of the syllabus. The Department of Plant Production holds regular meetings at certain times each semester. When the need arises, topics related to the academic work of the department will be discussed.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.</i></p> <p>The FAV has established an Office for Quality Assurance (OFQA) for structured improvement procedures in line with the legal framework such as the Law on Higher Education, the Administrative Instruction on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). There is an assessment procedure on course level based on anonymous electronic questionnaires that students are required to complete as a prerequisite for taking the exam. Teaching staff has access to the results, but direct feedback to the students would be desirable. The dean intervenes in problem cases. A further element of the evaluation process is the self-evaluation of teaching staff members. No information is given about the way the results are translated into adaptation measures.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>It is indicated in the SER that “the Department of Plant Production constantly supports education quality development through program planning and through accessing support services from other units within the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary ... and hierarchy up to the highest management of the University of Prishtina.” The on-site evaluation meetings gave the impression that the internal quality assurance system is functional, with clear responsibilities divided among institution’s levels. The OFQA is involved in all steps of the design of study programs.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p>	B

<p>The SER states that the Plant Production department has continuously conducted internal research on the course quality achieved with bachelor students. The output of quality evaluations is constantly integrated. Further quality parameters of the study program, such as number of applications, enrolment, completion rate, duration of the study and grade overview should be more intensively included into the QA mechanism and also provided in the SER. No specific information is provided how learning outcomes of students or their workload (ECTS) is given attention.</p>	
<p><i>Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.</i></p> <p>The Plant Production department claims that in each reaccreditation has achieved its objectives and has respected the suggestions of international quality assurance experts. The study program is designed to provide students with the latest scientific and technical knowledge in this field, in an interdisciplinary and comprehensive manner. However, there are no indications whether and how continuous improvement in performance is guaranteed and measured. The ET trusts that the OFQA is adequate to ensure that standards are met and an improvement in performance is stimulated.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.</i></p> <p>Survey data from students and teaching staff members are systematically collected by questionnaires (cf. Standard 2.1, 2.2). Feedback of employers is collected in meetings with the Advisory Board. However, results are neither publicly available nor presented to the ET.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER states that FAV provides on an annual basis an internal self-evaluation report through the collection of information from the departments in relation to quality in teaching, learning, student engagement in practical teaching, seminar work, extra-curricular learning, and participation in mobility. The discussions with graduates and employers during the on-site visit indicated that the study program is well matched to the labour market. Further information on the employment rate should be provided. The expert team was informed that, in theory, updating the curriculum up to 20% is allowed in between reaccreditation cycles without bureaucratic barriers. This is positive and should be used, as it allows adjustments based on student evaluation or labour market.</p>	B

<p><i>Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (e.g. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.</i></p> <p>Annual self-evaluation reports are prepared by FAV (cf. Standard 2.7). A SWOT analysis is included in the SER.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.</i></p> <p>The quality assurance processes are regularly evaluated by the KAA and updated according to KAA requirements. The ET trusts that the OFQA is monitored by the UP management. During interviews with the academic staff, however, there was not much engagement felt to improve quality assurance processes.</p>	B
Overall	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Additional quality parameters of the study program such as number of applications, enrolment, completion rate, drop outs, duration of the study and grade overview should be collected and included into the QA mechanism and also provided in the next SER.*
2. *Aggregated results of the course evaluations should be provided to the teaching staff, the FAV management and included in the next SER.*

2.3. Academic Staff

Academic staff	CL
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The employment procedures seem in general adequate. It is indicated in the SER and confirmed during the on-site visit meeting with staff that the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV) currently has 50 permanent staff, of which 16 serve as full professors, 17 as associate professors, 14 as assistant professors and 2 as teaching assistants. Fortunately, some new staff members were recruited recently. To implement all study programs offered by FAV, 38 additional academic staff is engaged as part-</p>	A

time staff. 9 full professors and 17 other teaching staff have been assigned to implement the proposed study program in Plant Production.	
<p><i>Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching.</i></p> <p>The SER states that “all academic staff from the Department possesses proper documentation as required by applicable regulations approved by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). All the academic staff of the BSc. level studies has completed the online forms of the Accreditation Agency (e-accreditation).” The ET does not see itself in a position to validate this, but we trust that the Faculty management controls the compliance of staff with this standard.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER states that “all academic staff has primary job lecturing at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary. This can be verified in online staff form at KAA (Kosovo Accreditation Agency).” We trust that this is true.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The Table 1 of SER does not necessarily confirm that the standard is met, but when cross-checking the staff mentioned for standard 3.4 with that table, the standard seems to be fulfilled. This was also confirmed by the management of FAV during the on-site visit.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER states that the criteria of Standard 3.5 are met. The number of employed full-time staff with PhD title is at least 14. But a clear declaration of staff (full-time vs. part-time; permanent vs. temporary) and affiliation of that staff to the individual study programs is not given.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.</i></p> <p>The Faculty supports teaching staff in professional development. Several teaching staff members participated in various trainings as presented in their CVs in the Appendix. Special activities for those facing difficulties are not mentioned.</p>	B

<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER claims that “academic staff respects fully the working hours and besides teaching, each of the academic staff at least twice a week has consultations with students. Each academic year, the University of Prishtina through SEMS makes the assessment of the academic staff.” And it has been confirmed during the on-site visit meeting with staff and students that teaching staff is engaged in student consultations and community services.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>A system of regular evaluation of teaching staff by students is established via the SEMS platform. No information is provided about peer and supervisors’ evaluations. The results are visible for the management but are not made publicly available. Publishing individual results for the open-public would also not be acceptable due to privacy rights. During the on-site visit meetings it was also revealed that no feed-back of the survey is provided to the students. The ET strongly recommends that this process in future becomes more transparent.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.</i></p> <p>The SER states that “the Department in advance planning enables full implementation of the teaching and adaptation strategies for relevant literature.” Strategies and procedures for improving the quality of teaching and learning materials are not presented in the SER. However, the ET assumes that such strategies are available and become applied.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>In on-site discussions it could be clarified that academic staff, including professors, retire at the age of 65, but they can teach up to the age of 70. Based on the Statute of the UP, if the professor is elected "Professor Emeritus", he/she will have the right to teach and engage in scientific work in accordance with his qualifications and the requirements of the special academic unit up to the age of 70. According to the SER, the department of Plant Production has employed one retired professor.</p>	B
<p>Overall</p>	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Specific budget allocation and respective incentives to foster professional development of teaching staff is recommended. Intensified staff exchange with comparable programs at neighboring institutions, also from abroad, is recommended.*
2. *Even if there are improvements visible compared to earlier evaluations, the ET recommends that the staff evaluation should become more transparent, particularly from the viewpoint of feedbacks to students. The results should always be provided to the respective teaching staff as well. Staff should reflect on the results of the questionnaire and provide feedback to the students.*
3. *The academic staff should be continuously supplemented by young academics, male and female at equal quota, who are proficient in English and have experience with scientific publications.*

2.4. Educational Process Content

Educational process content	CL
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER indicates distinct qualification objectives/learning outcomes of the BSc. program Plant Production. The study program is balanced between theoretical and practical instruction. Students of this study program during the educational process acquire competences in theoretical and practical fields and qualifications that enable them to carry out practical and / or scientific activities. Courses with interdisciplinary contents could be more pronounced.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Cf. standard 1.2. The SER indicates that the study program is in compliance with the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Area, which we can confirm, and the National Qualifications Framework, according to which this study</p>	B

<p>program belongs to its 6th level, which includes the preparation of students for such levels of study. Also, this field of study is in compliance with Erasmus Subject Area Codes (ESAC) points 01.1 (not 01.2!).</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The curriculum as presented in the SER provides a logical flow of subjects. It has been developed based on a program running at the University of Ljubljana. The disciplines of this study program create the opportunity for students to gain the necessary knowledge and skills in the field of Plant Production, which are covered by the content of proposed subjects. An introduction of elective courses to allow students creating an individual study profile, would be a good improvement. The learning outcomes definitions need improvements. Best practice in defining learning outcomes includes using a variety of active verbs to describe as accurately as possible the knowledge, competences and skills that students acquire upon completion. As it stands, too many of the learning outcomes in the syllabus start with the word “describe” which is symptomatic of a passive way of reproducing knowledge rather than engaging with it and challenging it.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Full subject descriptions/syllabuses for each subject are provided as an attachment to the SER. Syllabus for each subject individually regulates issues of the thematic contents, the way of learning and expected results, the distribution of obligations including the form of evaluation. The ET was irritated when during the interview session with staff it seemed that the authorship of syllabi is not always with the teacher of the individual course.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p>	n.a.

<p>The SER clearly indicates that teaching in this program is held in Albanian language, as defined by the Statute of the University of Prishtina. In order to prepare students for their later profession, it would be good to confront students increasingly with academic English, first maybe in individual classes, later in (few) completely English taught courses.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>This is comprehensively assured in the SER and was also confirmed during the on-site interview session with students.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER claims that “teaching strategies are tailored to each subject, and are explained through syllabuses and professor flexibility based on their experience.” This has been confirmed in the on-site visit. For the lecture format, the attendance must not be necessarily mandatory, which could add additional flexibility for students.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Obviously, such mechanisms are developed fairly and objectively, they are suitable for different forms of learning and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of the courses by introducing the syllabus online (SEMS platform) and in the classroom. It is claimed that student evaluations are based on the “Bologna Charter”, but we feel not able to judge, of all European standards and guidelines are met. The ET assumes and trusts that students under special circumstances (illnesses, disabilities, family situation) would be treated with appropriate flexibility.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>“The student grading system is determined on the basis of Article 109 of the Statute of the University "Hasan Prishtina" and is offered in this form: 10 and 9 (excellent); 8</p>	B

<p>(very good); 7 (good); 6 (enough); 5 (insufficient).” The SER claims that “the workload required to achieve a passing grade is consistent, as grades in this study program are evaluated and are built throughout the semester and as such are applied within subject syllabi.” However, no mechanism to verify the student workload based on students’ perception seems to be implemented.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER includes clear statements for respective regulations: “In case of insufficient achievements to pass the exam, according to the Statute of the University of Prishtina, Section 115, the student has the right to retake an examination which did not pass the exam. According to the Statute, the student has the right to enter three times the exam which has not passed. While the procedure followed in these cases is this student after placing a strong reasoning complain, can be allowed by the dean of the academic unit to take the exam for the fourth time. Then the exam can be held in front of the three-member commission appointed by the dean of the academic unit.” During the on-site interview with students, no complains were made.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.</i></p> <p>In opposite to the statement in the SER, no internship is included in the curriculum. Yet, students told during their interview about practical work in industry, mainly in connection with their thesis work. And exercises comprise up to 50% of the courses within the study program.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.</i></p> <p>Several cooperation agreements with main stakeholders exist and are presented as Annex of the SER. The interview session with stakeholders confirmed that these contracts are also actively effectuated. Stakeholders, employers and graduates mentioned during the on-site visit that they would be willing to cooperate with students and teaching staff of the study program.</p>	A
<p>Overall</p>	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Introduction of interdisciplinary as well as some elective courses is recommended.*
2. *Slight confrontation of students with academic agricultural English is suggested.*
3. *Introduction of an internship, maybe among elective courses, is suggested.*
4. *It is suggested to think about adaptation of course contents with regard to the increasing importance of the food processing industry within Kosovo, preferably based on more recent labour market statistics.*

2.5. Students

Students	CL
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Conditions for admission of students are set by the University of Prishtina, which announces the competition for enrolment of students publicly. The procedure is open to all interested students. The SER states that the admission of students includes a contest published through national media.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The admission process guarantees that students admitted to the programme possess a high school graduation diploma, as per UP regulation.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.</i></p> <p>The size of the student groups in the program is manageable and conducive to effective and interactive teaching and learning. According to the application for re-accreditation, the maximum number of students enrolled in the first year shall be reduced from 120 to 100.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.</i></p>	A

<p>The course syllabi are distributed in a timely manner at the beginning of the semester and syllabi contain information about the expectations from students and the evaluation methods. The expert team was not able to assess in detail to what extent the assessment is given promptly and discussed with the students, but we heard no complaints from students.</p>	
<p><i>Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.</i></p> <p>The results are recorded and available to the student and potential employers in the Diploma Supplement. Students during the studying process constantly are evaluated for their academic achievements. The best students are honoured by scholarships and acknowledgements. The final result of their entire academic appraisal includes the collection of 180 credits and the graduation degree at Bachelor level.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>There are reportedly measures in place that allow students to apply for additional exam repetition dates, should they not be able to attend the examinations or should they need to retake exams for justifiable reasons. However, the expert team is unable to assess to what extent these measures meet the needs of students in special situations. The ET recommends to improve support of students in special situations.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The process of monitoring progress and completion rates and using this information for strategic planning does not appear to be established or used in internal quality assessment. The ET expects that the FAV and the study program will continue to work on establishing this process and next time be able to provide evidence about its implementation.</p>	C
<p><i>Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.</i></p> <p>There was some awareness of the implication of new AI software tools on academic and educational work. No evidence has been provided, however, to support the claim that there is a software in use at the university to check the originality of the work submitted by students. Addressing copyright issues in the syllabus is insufficient. No procedures are in place to guarantee the originality of the submitted work. The institution is relying that it will be the teachers themselves who can identify</p>	C

<p>plagiarism in students' work, projects and theses. As confirmed during the meeting with teaching staff, they did not implement a clear plagiarism prevention strategy in their teaching processes. While softwares like chatGPT may not be as effective in Albanian at the moment, this does not provide a good enough justification for not meeting this standard.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>According to the SER, the rules around student rights and obligations are publicly accessible and equitably enforced. Based on the Statute of UP, the Regulation and the Code of Ethics, the FAV continually shows the rights and obligations of the students. In certain situations, students also use the legal opportunity for academic appeals, respectively, to undergo a specific examination before the members of the commissions set by the academic unit. On the day of the site visit, the student union elections took place, however very few students that the expert team met had voted. Other students expressed support for the work of the student union, suggesting that they feel well represented, supported and that the student voices are heard and taken seriously.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.</i></p> <p>The transfer of students between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is regulated at University level, with Regulation 2/111 of 14.7.2017, which is publicly available on the University web site. The ET considers this statement compliant to the Standard.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The academic staff publishes materials and information related to the teaching process in the Electronic Management System for Students SEMS, however the expert team was not able to verify to what extent the system is utilised by students and staff for communication and learning processes. The communication seems to run via closed Facebook groups, which is not an ideal platform for this purpose. Students report to the expert team that professors are readily available for consultation and feedback, in case required by the students.</p>	B
<p>Overall</p>	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The number of students on FAV degree programs is generally declining. One important reason for this is the demographic development in Kosovo and the decreasing interest of the young generation in agriculture. This is a threat for all programs and the Faculty should develop a strategy how to cope with that development by modernising their teaching methods.*
2. *The Faculty should organise workshops for the staff and students raising awareness about dangers of plagiarism and unethical behaviour in the academic setting.*
3. *Student progress and completion rates should be reported by program regularly to the quality assurance bodies of the Faculty and used in decision-making and curriculum adaptation.*
4. *Promote inter-institutional agreements with universities abroad in order to facilitate and encourage international incoming mobility of students from abroad.*

2.6. Research

Research	CL
<p><i>Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.</i></p> <p>The SER indicates that “policies for promoting scientific research within the university are included within the Strategic Education Plan in Kosovo, the National Science Program in the Republic of Kosovo, the Strategy for scientific research and development, etc.” but “financial and logistic support for research ... is lacking.” No specific research objectives or a research strategy related to the study program have been presented.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER claims that “inclusion of teaching staff in research activities and their performance in relation to academic promotion are specified in” a regulation of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" and an administrative instruction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the recognition of international publication platforms and journals. Obviously, research activities are also considered in staff evaluation and promotion. No details, however, are communicated, and during</p>	B

<p>the interview session with staff, the fairness of promotion was questioned. To encourage staff participation in research and participation in conferences, the university has established an “Office for Research and Sponsored Projects of UP”.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Cf. standard 6.2. Clear policies are established containing definitions and measures. The SER refers again to the regulation of the university and national legislation.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.</i></p> <p>The data can be found on the CVs of the academic staff also declared electronically in Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). However, several information contained in the CVs is not available in English language. Therefore, it was not easy to verify them. A complete and carefully prepared list of publications of teachers involved in the program for the evaluation period is missing.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.</i></p> <p>Cf. standard 6.4. The academic staff involved in the program Plant Production is consistently committed to publishing its research work in international scientific journals, which are indexed in the platforms that are also recommended by the University of Prishtina (UP), i.e. mainly WoS and SCOPUS. Yet, a complete list of publications of teachers involved in the program for the evaluation period is missing.</p>	B
<p><i>Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.</i></p> <p>Cf. standards 6.4 and 6.5. Research reporting is part of the ongoing activities of academic staff and associates, published in journals in accordance with MEST and university regulations. However, the SER does not provide sufficient respective information for seriously evaluating this standard.</p>	B

<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>A (very sloppy prepared) appendix lists in total 90 publications, which are sometimes only submitted, in doubtful journals or conference contributions. The list is presumably a complete list for the Faculty, that allows no evaluation on program level. Based on a sample review of academic staff CVs, it must be stated that NOT each individual regular staff member has published on average more than two scientific research publications in the last three years.</p>	C
<p><i>Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.</i></p> <p>As also confirmed in the SER, there is no suspicion that on scientific papers of academic staff or in their entries on online platforms they would not declare their affiliation to the University of Prishtina.</p>	A
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The standard is not commented in the SER. During the interview sessions with students and staff, we got the impression that some of the teachers, usually those who have a good scientific record, do also include their own research results and the latest scientific developments in their courses.</p>	B
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>“In Kosovo, the intellectual property aspect is protected by the Law on Copyright and Related Rights adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo. The aspects of this law include the intellectual property of UP staff and students.” This is reported in the SER and has been confirmed during the on-site visits discussions. On the other hand, cf. standard 5.8, awareness of the implication of new AI software tools on academic and educational work should be raised.</p>	A
<p><i>Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.</i></p> <p>The SER indicates that “the study involves student work..., which is realized through various research projects either within the university or other relevant organizations.” During the on-site visit participants stated that there were opportunities for students to</p>	B

participate in research activities. The SER has not provided any additional evidence supporting this standard.	
Overall	B

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Prepare for the next evaluation a complete and correctly formatted list of publications, with all papers published in WoS/SCOPUS clearly marked as such and affiliated to members of the academic staff teaching in the program.*
2. *Each academic staff member should have developed their own plan of research and teaching activities, implement it and monitor its implementation. The plan should include no. of papers planned to publish, no. of workshops attendance with presentations and participation per year and the planned trainings for professional advancement. A cumulative plan for the academic staff should be available for the next reaccreditation.*
3. *Research activities should be increased in order to fulfil the requirement for at least one publication per academic staff and year.*
4. *Efforts of academic staff and students to get engaged in international research projects and international collaborations with private business and to undertake applied research should be systematically encouraged, supported and promoted for the benefit of both staff, students and the Faculty itself.*

2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

In terms of infrastructure, FAV is in a critical, ongoing exceptional situation. Lectures are currently being temporarily relocated to the building of a mathematical secondary school, as the former building is being converted for other purposes and the new building is not ready for occupancy. Due to official safety requirements, modifications to the building are necessary. FAV expects the building to be completed and ready for occupation by September 2024. Respective progress became visible to one member of the ET comparing the situations end of Feb. and beginning of Apr. 2024. However, the ET cannot evaluate the standard on the basis of expected future conditions, but solely on the basis of the actual situation as it was found on April 3, 2024 during the site visit.

7 Infrastructure and resources	CL
<i>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.</i>	C

<p><u>Premises (D)</u> The mathematical secondary school, which serves as emergency accommodation, does not fulfil the requirements of university teaching and research in terms of room layout and technical equipment. The staff is currently accommodated in temporary offices with two to four desks for two to four persons per room as it has been reported at the meetings during the on-site visit. The laboratories are still at the former location, which means longer journeys through the city between laboratory exercises and lectures. Furthermore, the laboratories are too small in general.</p> <p><u>Human resources (B)</u> Permanent teaching staff is available and accomplished by a high number of temporary staff members. The number of permanent staff members should be increased to ensure long-term continuity of the programs.</p> <p><u>Equipment (C)</u> In general, the laboratories have basic equipment that is suitable for training students. In some cases, state-of-the-art analysers are available, they were provided by international cooperation programs. A well-equipped computer room for PC-based practicals is available.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The SER does not contain a detailed recent financial plan at the level of the study program, the Table 13 on p. 47 is outdated (and indicates 0 budget for teaching material). Figures on Table 2 (p. 62) are very general. Investment and financial budgets and policies are regulated at higher levels of the management at FAV and UP. A budget plan of FAV in the Annex (p. 61) indicates a serious reduction in investment capital (-77%), which is not explained. However, it is indicated in the SER and confirmed during the site visit that budget allocated is sufficient for delivering the study program.</p>	C
<p><i>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:</i></p> <p><i>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</i> cf. Standard 7.1 (Premises)</p> <p><i>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</i> cf. Standard 7.1 (Equipment)</p> <p><i>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</i></p>	C

<p>The SER provides information about basic software usually used in higher education institutions. The learning platform (SEMS) deserves a further expansion in new applications and widespread use.</p> <p><i>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</i></p> <p>UP provides adequate and easily accessible support services through Central University Library with reading rooms and book stock according to the disciplines included in the curriculum. It is not confirmed yet, whether FAV still has its own library and where this currently is accommodated. As mentioned by the students at the meetings, there are sufficient desk places in the library for concentrated learning.</p>	
<p><i>Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.</i></p> <p>Cf. Standard 7.1</p>	D
<p><i>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</i></p> <p><i>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</i></p> <p>The library situation is only briefly addressed in the SER. The time scheduled for the site visit did not allow to verify the standard of the libraries. Furthermore, the ET does not see it as its task to verify the quality of the library according to the listed in-depth criteria. This would be a task for librarians.</p>	n.a.
<p><i>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</i></p> <p>The buildings currently in use are not suitably adapted for students with physical disabilities. Learning resources for students with special needs are not available.</p>	D

Compliance level: Non-compliant

ET recommendations:

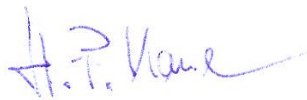
1. *Infrastructure has to be improved in a sustainable way, particularly permanent buildings, rooms and laboratories.*
2. *A detailed budget for the study program is desirable.*
3. *Laboratory equipment has to be improved.*
4. *Electronic access to scientific literature has to be provided comprehensively (databases like SCOPUS, WoS).*

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program BSc Plant Production offered by the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, is *substantially compliant* with Standards 1-6, but *non-compliant* with Standard 7 (Infrastructure and resources) as included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *not to accredit* the study program before the new premises are completed and occupied.

Expert Team

Member



Univ.Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Kaul 06 May 2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Prof. Dr. Reiner Doluschitz 06 May 2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Nadia Manzoni 06 May 2024

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)