University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"
Faculty of Architecture

PROGRAMME: Bachelor of Science in Architecture

TYPE OF EVALUATION: REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

29/05/2024, Prishtinë

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 15th May 2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Philippe Bouillard (Expert)*
- *Prof. Ivana Milicevic (Expert)*
- *Dr. Nadia Manzoni (Student Expert)*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Director of Department at KAA*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (2021)*
- *KAA Manual for External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions (2021)*
- *KAA Manual Annex 4.3. Template of the External Review Report*
- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the 'Bachelor of Science in Architecture' programme submitted by the Faculty of Architecture from the University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina'*
- *Annex: Evolution and recent development registered from the previous assessment*
- *Annex: Scientific activity of academic staff*
- *Annex: Interinstitutional cooperation – Bilateral agreements – Networks and Associations*
- *Annex: Courses taught in English and other foreign languages*
- *Module descriptors (course syllabi)*
- *CVs of the staff*
- *The University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina' website https://uni-pr.edu/ (accessed on 15th May 2024).*

Requested Documents or Information

1. Regulation on the selection procedures of the academic staff
2. Job-description Dean
3. Job-description Coordinator for academic development
4. Sample of Contract of Academic Position
5. Current Workload of Academic Staff related to Current Payment Regulation
6. Regulation for Salaries of academic staff
7. Extract of Statute of UP related to students

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8. Student evaluation for teaching and courses
9. KPIs on staff performance extracted from a draft prepared by Heras on behalf of the University of Pristina
10. Course description for the VI-6 Internship - Study Visit Trip
11. Strategic Plan of the FA for the period 2024-2028
12. Action Plan of the FA for the period 2024-2028
13. Regulation on evaluation procedures of part-time staff
14. Regulation on selection procedures
15. A Short Guide for Reviewing and Revising Syllabi for Teaching Staff and for Staff Supporting and Supervising Curriculum Development (2018)
16. Brochure and Flyer 'Centre for Teaching Excellence' (n.d.)
17. Code of Ethics for the Academic Staff (2013)
18. Regulation on Establishment and Functioning Principles of the Advisory Board of Academic Units at the University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina' (2015)
19. Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Prishtina (2016)
20. Guidelines for Student Evaluation of Courses and Use of Their Results
21. Guide on the Funding of Research - Scientific, Artistic and Sports Activities in UP (2020)

Criteria used for programme evaluations:

The expert team (ET) followed the programme accreditation assessment areas, developed by Kosovo Accreditation Agency that are presented in the Accreditation Manual (2021).

1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
09.55 – 10.35	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
10:40 – 11:50	Meeting with the heads of the study programme
11:50 – 12.50	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)
12:50 – 13:30	Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure
13:30 – 14:20	Meeting with teaching staff
14:25 – 15:10	Meeting with students
15:15 – 16:00	Meeting with graduates
16:05 – 16:50	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
16:50 – 17:00	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
17:00 – 17:10	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and programme

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1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina' (hereafter, UP) is a non-profit public higher education institution founded in 1969. Its main campus is located in Prishtina and the UP has several branches throughout the country. The UP includes fourteen faculties among which the Faculty of Architecture. Overall, around 45,000 students attend the UP.

As a part of UP's vision, the University 'aims to deliver a higher education provision grounded in quality assurance, programmes of study that respond to the needs of the job market; to support students and staff international mobility within EU exchange programmes; to increase cooperation with European higher education institutions. Furthermore, the UP aims to promote research in key areas that are crucial to Kosovo's scientific, cultural and economic development.'

The UP's mission stems from 'the need to achieve academic development, scientific research, and artistic innovation aligned with strategic objectives and interests of the Republic of Kosovo.' In pursuing its mission, the UP also defined 8 goals related to leadership, capacity building, excellence in research and teaching, efficiency, collaboration, sustainability, and the Bologna process.

The Faculty of Architecture (hereafter, FA) organises and delivers the following study programmes:
- Bachelor of Science in Architecture (180 ECTS)
- Master of Science in Architecture (120 ECTS)
  with specialisations in Architectural Design, Sustainable Architecture, Urbanism and Spatial Planning, Cultural Heritage, and Architecture and Technology
- Master of Science in Energy Efficiency (120 ECTS)

Other study programmes are still delivered: an integrated Master of Science in Architecture (300 ECTS) ending with the generation enrolled in 2020/21, a Professional Master in Energy Efficiency (60 ECTS) developed during a European Tempus project, ending with the generation enrolled in 2021/22. About 700 students attend the FA and about 100 students graduate each year across these programmes.

The programme under evaluation is a Bachelor of Science in Architecture, NQF/EQF level 6, of a total duration of 3 years, with 60 ECTS credits per academic year. This is the first time that this programme has been submitted for accreditation separately from the corresponding Master of Science in Architecture. This is a reaccreditation as the Integrated Master of Science in Architecture (300 ECTS) included the present Bachelor's degree.

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2. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

The aim of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture programme (hereafter, BScA) is to have a leading role in the development of education, science, society, and economy in Architecture and Urbanism. Although this overall aim is relevant, it does not sufficiently highlight the programme's specifics and is identical to the MSc aims, which is inappropriate. The programme's mission adequately covers the three traditional duties for higher education related to education, research and services to the community. It is very well aligned with the FA mission which is based on 'the aspirations of the citizens of the country through quality assurance in higher education, academic, scientific development, artistic creativity, professional counselling or even disciplines of national interest for the Republic of Kosovo in the field of architecture' (SER p. 5).

Although not properly analysed in the SER, the programme is clearly compliant with the institutional mission statement aiming to achieve academic development and scientific research aligned with the strategic objectives and interests of the Republic of Kosovo. However, the ET encourages the FA to better refer to UP's mission and aims in future documentation about the programme. This would also support the development of the UP community.

Architecture studies at the FA have a coherent continuity in UP, for 45 years in a row. The SER states that the 'development of study programmes at the FA has always followed the actuality of the development of architectural practices at the regional and international levels' (SER p. 9) but this is insufficiently substantiated. The only clear corresponding argument refers to the benchmark with TU Wien which is based on the analysis of the organisational and content structure of their bachelor's degree in Architecture (180 ECTS). Although this analysis is positive, the SER insufficiently provides a comparative analysis and is limited to the curriculum structure. The ET recommends the FA extend the academic benchmark and comparative analysis to the learning outcomes and methods.

The ET learnt during the site visit that an Advisory Board is required at each academic unit (here, the FA) but found limited evidence of its active and formal role. Instead, the FA relies mostly on informal contacts and feedback. Although it is clear that the FA is well-embedded in their professional community and this is positive, it is not sufficient to ensure reliable and rigorous feedback from the whole professional sector. Additionally, during the meeting with the external stakeholders, it clearly emerged that the learning outcomes were not formally discussed, in particular during the major change of splitting the integrated master into a two-cycle curriculum. The ET recommends that the FA maintain close and formal relationships with the external stakeholders through the Advisory Board to seek their professional advice on future programme reviews and possible revisions as adequately described in the

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Regulation on Establishment and Functioning Principles of the Advisory Board of Academic Units at the University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina' (2015).

The programme learning outcomes are defined in the SER (pp. 31-32). Except by referring to the field of architecture, they are very vague and not instrumental in supporting the programme learning consistency. They are not complying with the ECTS User's Guide and the FA is recommended to urgently seek advice and support to appropriately define the programme learning outcomes, as they did for their MSc of Energy Efficiency. The SER states that the learning outcomes are consistent with the NQF (SER p. 31) but this is insufficiently substantiated. In their current formulation, the ET cannot confirm that the programme learning outcomes are compatible with the NQF/EQF level 6 although it is well demonstrated from the analysis of the educational content (see Standard 4).

The programme has defined three goals related to *(i)* educating generations of architects, so that they address the challenges related to the different fields of architecture, *(ii)* seeking, creating, developing, and spreading new knowledge in the field of architecture, and *(iii)* playing a leading role in providing interdisciplinary education, to solve the professional problems in the field of architecture, with which the society is facing. These goals constitute a good basis and a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.

The SER (p. 14) provides useful links to relevant UP policies applicable to this BScA programme. These documents are publicly available in Albanian on the institutional website. An English translation of most of them has been provided to the ET and it shows that the expected academic policies, guidelines, and regulations are relevant and well in place.

During the site visit, a reference was made to the Code of Ethics for the Academic Staff (2013). The intent of this Code of Ethics is 'to protect academic freedom, to help preserve the highest standards of teaching and knowledge, and to advance the mission of the University, as an institution of higher education and a committed supporter of cultural, social, and economic development of the Republic of Kosovo'. The Code of Ethics applies to all academic staff employed at UP. The ET did not find any evidence of incompliance with this Code. However, it is currently ignoring major possible academic misconduct related to plagiarism, the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, and evaluation bias or unfairness. It also applies only to the Academic Staff and the ET could not find similar Codes applying to other internal stakeholders (Management, Administration or Students) except for a few articles in UP Statutes related to students and information about cheating and plagiarism. Therefore, the ET recommends UP *(i)* enhance the current Code of Ethics by covering academic issues related to plagiarism and fair evaluation, *(ii)* extend the scope of the Code to all internal stakeholders (management, administration and students – see also Standard 7). The latter is a straightforward change that can be implemented promptly as the current situation does not comply with KAA and international standards.

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Although the ET has been told during the site visit that the policies and regulations are regularly reviewed, there is no mention of such procedures in the SER or any provided documents, and the frequency of reviewing has not been confirmed. Additionally, most of the policies shared with the ET are dated before 2022, which makes the two-year cycle revision unlikely. The ET recommends FA make clear references to reviewing policies and recent examples of successful revisions in future SERs.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends elucidating the specific aims of the bachelor's programme.*
2. *The ET encourages the FA to better refer to UP's mission and aims in future documentation about the programme.*
3. *The ET recommends that the FA maintain close and formal relationships with the external stakeholders through the Advisory Board to seek their professional advice on future programme reviews and possible revisions.*
4. *In particular, the ET strongly recommends reviewing and revising the programme learning outcomes as they are currently not instrumental.*
5. *The ET recommends that the FA extend the academic benchmark and comparative analysis to the learning outcomes and methods.*
6. *The ET recommends that the UP enhance the current Code of Ethics by covering academic issues related to plagiarism and fair evaluation.*
7. *The ET recommends that the UP extend the scope of the Code to all internal stakeholders (management and administration).*
8. *The ET recommends that the FA make clear references to reviewing policies and recent examples of successful revisions in future SERs.*

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2.2. Quality Management

The quality assurance mechanisms and procedures in FA are compliant with the policies of the UP for quality assurance and evaluation (2016) and the guide for the evaluation of courses by students and the use of their results (2018). The quality management system puts the student feedback and council at the centre of the entire quality assessment process, which is very positive. The achievement that 100% of students fill in the satisfaction surveys is highly valued. However, this is achieved by collecting them before the exams and the ET learnt from the students that they are concerned with the possible breach of anonymity and influence on the exam results. Besides, collecting them before the exams does not allow the FA to get feedback on the exams themselves as expected to cover the whole learning process. The ET also had the opportunity to review the questionnaires for graduates, academic, and administrative staff showing that all staff is involved in self-evaluations.

The evaluation processes and planning for improvement are well integrated into normal planning processes and each body is empowered with some responsibilities as depicted in Figure 2 (SER p. 18). Although the list of responsibilities is clear and adequate, the figure could be improved to elucidate the approval processes and the data collection (who should be surveyed, and when).

According to the SER, the study plan is reviewed by a working group for the revision of programmes made up of representatives of all stakeholders. It is positive that employers and practitioners from the sector are invited, although this needs to be further concretised with formal meetings of the Advisory Board (see also Standard 1.2).

The questionnaires to the students and staff show that UP is looking for feedback about all aspects of the programme delivery. Specifically, the FA pays valuable attention to the continuous evaluation on an annual basis of the quality of teaching, student service, scientific activity and studies, administrative services, international cooperation and teaching resources. (SER p. 17).

The quality of the student's learning process is measured through different tests that serve to determine if, by completion of the degree, the student achieves the learning outcomes corresponding to the bachelor's degree. In the process of data collection, the Advisory Body of the FA contributes with suggestions arising from market needs, as well as alumni students with their experience from the market for the field of architecture. However, the ET noted that the FA insufficiently identifies and monitors key performance indicators related to the programme. The SER itself, for instance, does not contain any clear indicators or analysis based on indicators. Therefore, the ET recommends defining the programme KPIs, and targets, and including their analysis in their annual discussion. Better attention should be paid in this regard to the learning outcomes, at the programme and subject levels.

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Although the FA is referring to the KAA standards, the ET noticed that they were inadequately or insufficiently reported or documented in the SER. This does not demonstrate that the quality assurance processes and improvement loops are currently operational and constantly updated. This is also confirmed by inappropriate SWOT analysis that does not sufficiently introduce the differences between internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats). The ET recommends enhancing the quality assurance processes in order to systematically address the KAA standards and adequately report accordingly.

The recent major change to move from an integrated master's to a two-cycle BSc-MSc degree is a very good illustration of inadequate quality assurance processes. The decision has been taken as instructed by the previous accreditation panel without properly looking for a large discussion and approval across the various stakeholders. During the interviews, the ET realised that most of the stakeholders were against the new format, but a few were in favour. A clear pros and cons analysis has not been performed. The splitting into two cycles did not lead to major curriculum changes either. Currently, in Europe, both models (integrated master vs. two-cycle BSc-MSc) exist, depending on national legislation. Both have their pros and cons, the latter offering more opportunities for student exchanges. In any case, the most important goal at this moment is to take full benefit of the format. The FA should reopen the discussion with the stakeholders to determine how to fully profit from the current BSc-MSc format to the benefit of the students and the Kosovar society. Simultaneously, the ET recommends not contemplating the (re)creation of a concurrent integrated master as proposed by the FA Action Plan as the coexistence of both models does not make sense, would introduce confusion, and lead to a waste of valuable resources.

Statistics from the survey data collected from students, graduates and employers have been shared with the ET. It is necessary that these data are updated annually and that they are subject to improvement processes as well. However, the ET did not find evidence that they were made publicly available and recommends making it so to contribute to enhancing the quality culture.

During the site visit, the ET realised that the results of internal quality assurance are rarely communicated to internal or external stakeholders. This requires better communication of the improvement plans associated with the programme, and a channel to submit complaints/feedback and how they are addressed. The ET recommends strengthening the communication strategy to establish an effective quality culture.

According to the SER (p. 19), the 'method of quality assurance and evaluation is ensured through the involvement of the staff in the processes of the main bodies within the FA, at the level of the Department, the Studies Committee and at the level of the FA Council.' The discussion in these bodies is adequately based on collected data, not sufficiently on KPIs (see also Standard 2.4). Figure 2 (p. 18) does not clearly elucidate which body is actually in

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charge of identifying areas for improvement and proposing programme changes. The ET recommends UP clearly entrust the study committee with the programme revision, subject to further approval by the Faculty Council. Additionally, the SER suggests (see the quote above) that only the staff is involved in this process and the ET strongly recommends involving representatives from the students and external stakeholders in the study committee.

According to the SER, the study plan is reviewed and updated every year. UP is planning to regularly make public evaluation reports at the level of the study programmes, every three years but this has not been concretised yet. Despite previous recommendations about this, UP has not yet been able to resolve this issue and the ET recommends UP resolve and implement this urgently to comply with KAA Standard 2.8.

The ET could not find evidence that the quality assurance arrangements for the programme are regularly evaluated and improved. The ET recommends UP add a section to the Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the University of Prishtina (2016) to explain how the quality assurance arrangements are regularly evaluated and improved.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends surveying the students <u>after</u> the exams to ensure full anonymity and collect feedback on the exam process as well.*
2. *The ET suggests updating the roles and responsibilities in the quality assurance process by elucidating the approval processes and the data collection (who should be surveyed, and when).*
3. *The ET recommends defining the programme KPIs, and targets, and including their analysis in their annual discussion.*
4. *The ET strongly recommends that the FA does not contemplate the recreation of an integrated master programme in architecture but instead takes full benefit of the current BSc-MSc format for the students.*
5. *The ET recommends enhancing the quality assurance processes in order to systematically address the KAA standards.*
6. *The ET recommends making the statistics from the survey data collected from students, graduates and employers publicly available.*
7. *The ET recommends strengthening the communication strategy to establish an effective quality culture.*
8. *The ET recommends that the UP clearly entrust the study committee with the programme revision and appoint representatives from the students and external stakeholders in this committee.*
9. *The ET recommends that the UP define how the quality assurance arrangements are regularly evaluated and improved.*

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2.3. Academic Staff

The ET has been provided with the Regulation on Selection Procedures regarding Appointment, Reappointment and Advancement of the Academic Staff at the University of Prishtina (2022) which ensures fair and public selection procedures. Examples of job descriptions for management positions have also been provided.

In the BSc study programme, there are a total of 48 teaching staff (professors and assistants), of whom 32 are in a regular employment relationship at the UP and 16 are in the capacity of external collaborators. The SER provides a table (SER Table 2) showing that all academic staff is composed of four Full Professors (Prof. Dr.); 8 Associate Professors (Assoc. Prof. Dr.); 11 Assistant Professors (Ass. Prof. Dr.); two Lecturers, one Lecturer (MSc) and one Lecturer (Dr. Sc.); one Lector (MSc); 21 teaching assistants of whom four are Dr. Sc. and 9 PhD candidates.

The UP has subsequently provided a table (SER Annex 3_1) with the actual workload of teachers in BSc and MSc programmes in Architecture - full-time staff. According to the data provided in the table, their teaching load is 2 to 10 hours per week according to their contract with UP. The same table indicates that the administrative activities are available in the internal communication system (SEMS) whose access has not been provided to the ET. The ET recommends that the administrative activities be detailed in future SERs. The research activities are detailed in each staff's CV and will be analysed in Standard 6 of this report.

A problem remains the issue of the teacher's workload for the thesis and/or practical work that is not counted for the academic staff. From discussions with the heads of the study programme, it is evident that efforts are being made to address this issue through the new statute, specifically by trying to fix this through the criteria set out in the performance card.

The Academic staff comply with the legal requirements regarding the occupation of teaching positions. The Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.

The Academic staff is composed of 32 full-time and 16 part-time staff, largely complying with the standard requesting that 50% of the academic staff in the study programme are full-time employees (here, 67%) and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study programme.

Twenty-three full-time academic staff hold a PhD degree which largely ensures the corresponding minimal requirements to run the study programme: one PhD (or equivalent title) for 60 ECTS per student study group.

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The teaching excellence is supported by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching (CET) of the University of Prishtina, which through various trainings aims to promote the culture of academic excellence and provide opportunities for the professional development of professors and teaching assistants, directly affecting the quality of teaching. All academic staff are invited to the CET activities but the initial training in teaching and learning methods is compulsory for young academic staff. This is positive and should be commended.

Academic staff is available for sufficient time to offer advice to students when they need it in relation to a specific course. The teachers provide students with consultations both at fixed times and by appointment. Consultations are available in person, through social media, and via WhatsApp. The teacher offers the students the text, the basic teaching literature, instructions for the seminar work, as well as other forms for teaching and learning within the subject he develops. Other literature is offered as additional literature by the teacher for students who express interest in more detailed study during studies in the field of interest. Also, in the programme, there are teachers, who are representatives in the leading role in public environmental, economic, etc. sectors at the country level.

Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly, including self-evaluation, student evaluations, peer evaluations, and evaluations by superiors. This process occurs on a formal basis at least once each year, which is highly commendable as an excellent strategy for quality enhancement. According to the Guidelines for Student Evaluation of Courses and Use of Their Results, academic staff are required to produce an annual evaluation report analysing module outcomes, providing quality measures, and outlining a plan for enhancement. The ET recommends that the FA enforce clear policies regarding the quality enhancement of learning methods and materials. This should include detailed guidelines on how to conduct evaluations, analyse outcomes, and implement improvements. Additionally, to ensure full compliance with KAA standards, the ET suggests organising an annual appraisal meeting with line management. This meeting should start with the academic staff's self-evaluation, followed by a thorough review and discussion of their performance by peers and superiors. This structured and multi-faceted approach will not only help maintain high teaching standards but also promote continuous improvement and professional development among the academic staff. The results of this evaluation are not made public as this would conflict with GDPR, which is a reasonable justification.

UP's Short Guide for Reviewing and Revising Syllabi for Teaching Staff and for Staff Supporting and Supervising Curriculum Development provides excellent and clear recommendations on how learning methods and materials should be detailed in the module descriptor (syllabus). Although this document serves as a valuable guide to good practices, it is recommended by the ET to establish clear regulations on how and when reviews and possible revisions should be undertaken. This will ensure a consistent and systematic approach to maintaining and improving the quality and relevance of the content. By defining

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specific procedures and timelines, FA can better manage the implementation and effectiveness of these practices.

The ET is not aware of any instances where retired academic staff have retained their full-time status against expectations.

During the site visit and meeting with the management of the FA, the ET can confirm that there are no cases where teachers who have retired, either due to reaching the age limit or for other reasons, have retained their status as full-time teachers. All retired teachers are considered part-time teachers and do not hold full-time positions.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends addressing the issue of teachers' workload for thesis and/or practical work, which is not currently counted, by including it in the criteria set out in the performance card*
2. *The ET recommends that the FA enforce clear policies regarding the quality enhancement of learning methods and materials.*
3. *The ET recommends that an annual appraisal meeting should be organised with the line management starting with the academic staff's self-evaluation.*
4. *The ET recommends that the CET, together with the Office for Academic Development, organise training sessions on quality enhancement and how to write an effective self-evaluation report.*

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2.4. Educational Process Content

The BScA curriculum at the FA is designed with clear qualification goals, encompassing both subject-specific and interdisciplinary elements, as outlined in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). This programme also facilitates the development of disciplinary, methodological, and general skills and competencies. One notable advantage is that the courses can be conducted in English, promoting student mobility among faculties in the region and across Europe.

The curriculum includes fundamental courses in mathematics, natural sciences, and humanities, along with professional foundations tailored to various profiles such as construction, design, urbanism, architectural history/theory, and visualisation. Moreover, it offers elective courses that aim to integrate foundational and professional knowledge. Interdisciplinary elective courses are also available, covering areas such as humanities, urban sociology, phenomenology, and the English language, which reflects a focus on global connectivity and relevance.

Additionally, the option to study in English and the content aligned with global standards further affirm that the programme addresses modern educational and professional challenges in architecture. From discussions with students, the ET concludes that it is necessary to ensure that all courses taken at a foreign institution (e.g., through the ERASMUS+ programme) are fully recognised. It is evident that some professors consider their subjects fundamental and do not allow students to take exams outside their institution, insisting that they be taken at the home faculty. This practice should be urgently changed, and professors should adopt a more flexible approach.

Although the programme learning outcomes are insufficient in this regard (see Standard 1), the study programme meets the standard and is fully aligned with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications. Each component of the programme is thoughtfully integrated to effectively achieve the defined qualification objectives. The programme ensures that appropriate teaching and learning methods are employed, thereby confirming its compliance with the established frameworks and standards.

The subjects are structured as compulsory, elective and the defence of the final thesis, as well as the practices in the company/internships. All of them flow logically with the passing of the semesters. A minimum of 7 learning outcomes are listed; however, it is not clear how the learning outcomes of individual courses contribute to and form the learning outcomes of the study programme. The ET suggests that the FA create a matrix to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of individual courses contribute to the overall learning outcomes of the study programme.

As recommended in the Short Guide for Reviewing and Revising Syllabi for Teaching Staff and for Staff Supporting and Supervising Curriculum Development, the learning outcomes

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should be short and precise, contain only 1-2 active verbs, and be measurable. Some course learning outcomes are to be urgently revised as they do not fit this recommendation. The module descriptors (syllabi) are clear and include a description of competencies, methodologies and evaluations. The bibliographical sources should be updated for some courses, and the ET recommends standardising the number of mandatory and elective literature across courses. The programme learning outcomes do not fit UP and ECTS Users' Guide recommendations. The ET suggests that academic staff undergo additional training with guidelines for properly writing learning outcomes, and subsequently, the learning outcomes should be reviewed and standardised. They require further attention and urgent revision.

The programme is taught in Albanian. Based on discussions with academic staff and the SER, it is evident that the faculty is prepared to teach in English. However, there is no clear plan to accommodate foreign students, which would foster international experiences and better prepare them to work in an international environment. The mechanisms to ensure that students are proficient in the language of instruction are insufficiently described. The ET recommends creating a professional platform for cooperation of the FA with international partners.

The student-teacher relationship is indeed a partnership in which both parties take responsibility for achieving the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students to highlight their importance for the student's development. However, it has been noted that students are not fully aware of what the learning outcomes mean. Therefore, it is recommended to dedicate more attention to explaining the learning outcomes during the initial presentation of the syllabus at the beginning of the course. This approach will ensure that students better understand the significance of these outcomes for their academic and professional growth.

The teaching strategies are well-suited for the various types of learning outcomes that the programme aims to develop. The strategies for teaching and assessment outlined in the programme and course specifications are adhered to with flexibility, effectively meeting the needs of different groups of students. This ensures that all students are supported in achieving their learning goals. A correct balance between theory and practice is observed, with numerous tutorials complemented by subjects to assess the student's learning skills. The new IT resources that teachers use in their subject (e.g. whiteboard, flipchart, video projector), are not included in the SER. However, in the meeting with the academic staff, they stated that they do have these skills to teach their classes and that the university offered them specific training. Based on the SER, syllabi, and discussions with graduates and employers, the ET recommends that courses in the field of civil engineering be thematically and content-wise adjusted to the field of architecture.

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Graduates lack some soft skills such as Communication, Teamwork, CV writing, and how to apply and present themselves to employers. It is necessary to add and update new subjects, for example, 3D printing, and provide additional training for working with technologies such as 3D printers.

The ET could not find evidence that FA systematically collects feedback from graduates and employers regarding suggestions for changes to the study programme, and graduates and employers have not confirmed that they formally participate through commissions, quality committees, etc. The ET recommends that in the future, alumni members and employers should be formally included in changes to the study programme.

In the module descriptors (syllabi), the student's competencies and responsibilities are explained, as well as the grading system for tests and practical work. The student knows, at all times, the progress of his/her learning.

Appropriate, valid, and reliable mechanisms are employed to verify student achievement standards. The criteria for different grades are defined, ensuring comparability within courses offered in the programme. This consistent approach guarantees that students' achievements are accurately and fairly assessed.

Art. 154 of UP Statutes allows the students to appeal against decisions. During the meeting with the academic staff, it was explained that the students have 72 hours after the delivery of the exam results to review them and complain. They could also request a second review by other professors in the same department if they did not agree with their final grade. This is commendable.

The BSc in semester VI includes an internship for the Diploma work (6 ECTS). During the site visit, the ET learnt that an academic tutor is monitoring the internship and that it is properly evaluated. The ET was also provided with the forms for the evaluation of the Diploma work, also in additional documents FA provided Praktika profesionale with a description of the internship duration and the reporting procedure. There is no corresponding module description (syllabus) and the ET recommends urgently elaborating on it.

A list of public and private places where the student can do his/her internship is included in the 05_Annex. The ET suggests extending the internship opportunities to international placements.

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ET recommendations:

1. *It is recommended to ensure that all courses taken at a foreign institution (e.g., through the ERASMUS+ programme) are fully recognised.*
2. *The ET suggests that academic staff undergo additional training with guidelines for properly writing learning outcomes, and subsequently, the learning outcomes should be reviewed and standardised.*
3. *The ET recommends that the FA create a matrix to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of individual courses contribute to the overall learning outcomes of the study programme.*
4. *The ET recommends that courses in the field of civil engineering be thematically and content-wise adjusted to the field of architecture.*
5. *The ET recommends that alumni and employers should be formally included in changes to the study programme.*
6. *The ET suggests FA introduce the teaching and evaluation of students' soft skills, which are highly demanded by employers.*
7. *The ET recommends creating a professional platform for cooperation of the FA with international partners.*
8. *The ET recommends urgently elaborating on module descriptions (syllabi) for the Diploma work with Internship.*
9. *The ET suggests extending the internship opportunities to international placements.*

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2.5. Students

In the academic year 2023/2024, there are precisely 200 students enrolled in the 180 ECTS BSc under evaluation in this report, three-quarters of which are female. A further 448 Bachelor students remain enrolled in the integrated 300 ECTS programme but it is unclear how many of them are still enrolled in the first three years of the integrated programme (the equivalent of the BSc). The fact that these two programmes run in parallel and that students are combined into classes regardless of which of the two programmes they are enrolled in, creates difficulties for assessing the 180 ECTS programme in isolation and for getting a sense of the class size and the efficiency of the programme (progression and dropout).

The admission of students to the BSc programme runs via a public call which invites applicants to sit the entrance exam at the Faculty of Architecture (FA). The preliminary criteria for applying consist of a high school diploma and a successfully passed admission exam, which includes mathematics, spatial perception and free drawing. The current ratio of applied and enrolled students is 3:1 and the programme is in high demand and enjoys a relatively high reputation among the University of Prishtina programmes. The level of mathematics of admitted students is reportedly sufficiently high. Admission requirements appear to be consistently and fairly applied to all students.

The large auditorium in the FA allows for large lectures and events for entire cohorts of students while the modelarium is spacious enough to host large groups of students. According to Table 6 (page 35) of SER, the BSc programme enrols around 100 new students per year. This large group is split into smaller groups of 20 students each are formed for more interactive classes taught by teaching assistants. The size of student groups in courses and the capacity of classrooms therefore offer a satisfactory learning environment.

Teaching staff is available for consultations with students, as confirmed by the students during the site visit, and often teaching staff communicate with the students via WhatsApp messaging or social media like Facebook. Interaction via more formal platforms would be more appropriate to keep a record of conversations in an academic setting and also to respect the boundary between the private and professional lives of both professors and students.

Students confirmed that, among the teaching staff, there are those who are available not only for academic but also emotional support, yet no institutionalised channel and procedure for addressing and discussing mental health concerns in confidentiality is available to students.

Assessment methods of student performance are announced in the course syllabi and students feel that they are sufficiently aware of the assessment methods and grading schemes. They report being encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness of assessment methods during class. Thanks to the particularity of studio evaluations, students occasionally take part

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in grading their own peers. Students do not evaluate teaching assistants and the ET recommends doing it.

All academic records are stored in the Student Electronic Management System (SEMS) that has been operational at UP for a few years. This makes the certification easy and reliable.

It is very positive that there is a system of attention to disability / functional diversity. The academic staff are prepared to meet these needs and to adapt their teaching methods and evaluation tests. According to the UP procedures/protocols, the students with special needs have priorities in the following issues: advantage and priority in the enrolment process, flexibility in the schedule of the exams and consultations, within long syllabuses are descriptions regarding the flexibility related to evaluation and task performance, the main building is equipped with accessible ramps and the ground floor is accessible for wheelchair users. Moreover, UP offers scholarships for students in emergency situations.

Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the programme as a whole, however as there are no quality indicators or KPIs for the programme, student completion rate is not used as a quality indicator in the quality assurance processes.

Students are insufficiently aware of the risks of plagiarism involved in the use of artificial intelligence software and there is currently no software in active use to check the authenticity of the submitted work. There is also no Code of Ethics for students and no policy in place on the sensible use of generative AI software such as ChatGPT.

Awareness of students' rights appears to be satisfactory. Students are active in the Students' Council and engaged on matters of scheduling exams, opening hours of the facilities, study trips and quality of the learning space, where they also lately got some concessions.

The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programmes is regulated in UP-level policy documents.

The tutoring action plan is robust. Each study programme has a defined responsible programme management team and/or individual meetings upon request with the Chair of the Department or Dean, who, among other tasks, are responsible for resolving any type of issues related to student's requirements or obstacles to the respective programme.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends developing a Code of Ethics for students, including rules around the use of artificial intelligence and implementing Turnitin systematically for all submitted written work in the study programme.*

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2. *The ET recommends that student progression rates (% of students progressing from one year to another in time) and completion rates (% of students graduating in time) be included among the quality indicators for the quality assurance of the study programme.*
3. *The ET recommends that the UP and the FA ensure that student questionnaires include a possibility to evaluate teaching assistants and not only professors.*

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2.6. Research

In the Draft Strategic Plan of encouraging the FA for the period 2024-2028, it is visible that FA supports faculty members to carry out research-scientific and professional activities of high international quality and standard and to secure financial resources for research, professional, cultural, and social activities. The study programme has defined the objectives of creating, developing and spreading new knowledge and practices in energy efficiency, and having a leading role in solving related research and practical problems. In connection with the scientific and professional research, respectively the expansion of the infrastructure and the laboratory, as well as the creation of the Institute for scientific and professional research in the field of Architecture and Urbanism, the development projects of the FA campus, as well as the regulatory mechanisms, as stated in SER are in the process of being drawn up. These documents and projects are related to decision-making at the institutional level of the UP.

The expectations for Academic staff to be involved in research and other scholarly activities are clearly specified in the Regulation on Selection Procedures regarding Appointment, Reappointment and Advancement of the Academic Staff at the University of Prishtina by stating the cumulative level of scientific production to be reached to be promoted. Although these criteria define clear milestones in the academic career, it does not ensure continuous involvement in research activities. The ET recommends UP define research output objectives as part of the expected annual appraisal procedure.

In Appendix II, the same Regulations are clearly stating how the research outputs are defined and appreciated. This classification is fully consistent with international standards in the field of study.

When reviewing the CVs, the ET was able to confirm that the academic staff is or has been active in topics related to their teaching activity. The academic staff is publishing their work in various journals, additionally, the CVs show some participation at national and international conferences, symposiums and seminars. The number of published papers in journals and conferences is very low.

The FA should define an Academic research support system to further motivate academic staff in their scientific research endeavours. For instance, through such a reward system for faculty members with the highest scientific contributions (e.g., publication of papers in high-quality international journals indexed in WoS and Scopus within Q1 and Q2 quartiles, successful implementation of research projects, etc.), academic staff would be encouraged to achieve more, rather than engaging in research only to the extent necessary for promotion. There is an opportunity for financial support for research through projects offered by the UP (around 25 k€), which is certainly a positive example. Faculty members should be encouraged to apply for such incentives in greater numbers. From the end of 2020, the Guide

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on the Funding of Research - Scientific, Artistic and Sports Activities in UP (2020), provides funds for research and publication in international journals for UP staff.

When reviewing the CVs, the ET found evidence that some academic staff are active in consultancy or expert groups, which is positive. There is currently no clear technological transfer strategy, but this should be improved by the creation of an Institute for scientific and professional research. There is also insufficient cooperation with businesses, industry, decision-makers, and the employer community for research and professional projects.

Collectively, the academic staff managed to publish about 49 papers in international journals and about 54 communications to conferences in the last three years. On average, this gives less than one paper and one communication per year and per staff, which is fair and below KAA standards. Additionally, some imbalance can be observed across the teaching where the scientific production of some staff is quite limited. One of the possible reasons is the priority given to other duties, teaching workload or services to priority, the minimal support to develop research activities and the lack of a dedicated PhD programme. The ET recommends FA academic staff increase their scientific outputs and create a PhD programme within the Faculty.

When reviewing the scientific outputs, the ET could confirm that the academic staff are adequately publishing under the name of UP.

During the site visit, the ET learnt that many academic staff are sharing information about their recent research or consultancy activities with the students, which is positive.

It has been observed that the FA does not have established policies for the ownership of intellectual property, nor are there clear procedures in place for the commercialisation of ideas developed by staff and students. This lack of defined policies and procedures means that there is no formal framework to support and protect the intellectual property rights of the academic community, nor to facilitate the process of bringing innovative ideas to market. Based on the subsequently provided document 'Action Plan 2024-2028' it can be concluded that the UP is working on establishing and managing the Intellectual Property Office during the period from 2024 to 2028. This initiative will ensure the creation of the Intellectual Property Committee within the FA, which will develop policies and regularly review and evaluate research results to identify potential intellectual property assets.

At the request of the ET, the FA provided a list of research activities, publications, collaborations and student participation, which shows the collaboration between students and academic staff in research. Students are involved in research work, which is evidenced through the wide participation of students in scientific conferences.

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ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends UP define research output objectives as part of the expected annual appraisal procedure*
2. *The ET recommends FA academic staff improve their scientific outputs.*
3. *The ET suggests that the FA define an academic research support system to further motivate academic staff in their scientific research endeavours.*
4. *The ET recommends UP urgently develop and implement a policy for the ownership of intellectual property.*
5. *The ET recommends UP/FA designing and submitting for accreditation a PhD programme in Architecture.*

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2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

The FA is located at the address Rr. Architect Karl Gega, no. 1, 10000 Pristina. Four buildings are rented from the Municipality of Prishtina: the main building, the dean's office, the 'modelarium', and the amphitheatre. These buildings have an area of 3.637 m². Study spaces for one student are currently, on average, 5,6 m². During the site visit, the ET could also confirm the availability of a computer room for learning purposes with about 30 seats.

Plans for the building of a new annexe connecting two of the existing buildings have been presented to ET during the site visit. The current status of the project is that the architectural building plans have been completed, but there are no concrete plans for the financing and building of the new building. As it stands, the Faculty has a significant shortage of working spaces for students as well as storage spaces for their studio products and models. Students largely improvise with both. There is also a significant lack of space for laboratory equipment and the current arrangement of storing it in the "modelarium" is suboptimal and may negatively affect students' and researchers' use of the available equipment. Therefore, without a concrete financial and building plan for the new annexe, the adequate long-term implementation of the study programme in terms of premises is not ensured.

The UP has a centralised budget, particularly regarding human resources and infrastructure investment, meaning that the FA is not autonomous regarding these aspects. This is usually the case for public universities. The ET was not provided with a further working cost budget to run the programme.

The UP rents the plots to the Municipality of Prishtina and the ET did not notice any risk related to this contract.

Students are provided with free access to the required software by the institution, at least AUTOCAD. However, during the discussion with external stakeholders, it appeared clearly that this should be upgraded to REVIT and the ET recommends implementing this upgrade.

The FA does not own a proper library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and an appropriate book stock because of lack of space. Students are provided access to printed and electronic materials by the teaching staff, which may affect their autonomous learning skills.

The infrastructure is only partially accessible to wheelchair users. The more modern buildings, such as the modelarium and the amphitheatre as well as the ground floor of the main building are accessible for wheelchair users (except for the toilets), whereas the upper floors of the main building are not.

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ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends UP urgently support and concretise the project to build a new annexe to host, among others, laboratories and the library.*
2. *The ET recommends upgrading the software AUTOCAD to REVIT and providing licences to the students.*
3. *The ET recommends boosting access to printed and electronic resources to compensate for the lack of a book stock in the library.*
4. *The ET recommends the FA audits the facilities and ensure that a sufficient number of spaces and amenities are available to students with disabilities.*

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3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The Faculty of Architecture (FA) of the University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina' (UP) is applying for the re-accreditation of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture (180 ECTS, NQF/EQF level 6) as it was formerly part of the integrated Master of Science in Architecture. The aim of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture programme is to have a leading role in the development of education, science, society, and economy in Architecture and Urbanism and the Expert Team (ET) fully supports the statement that this programme is the core business of the FA for decades. The Mission, Objectives and Administration are partially compliant with better attention to be paid to the actual involvement of external stakeholders in the programme revision and to enforcing ethical policies to all staff and students like already implemented for the academic staff. The Quality Management is partially compliant as well, with further attention to be paid to the quality of the Self-Evaluation report which should systematically address all KAA standards, define and monitor KPIs and a procedure to evaluate the quality arrangements. The Academic Staff is substantially compliant, with enough qualified staff but further attention is to be paid to a systematic regular staff appraisal and clear strategies for learning strategies and material enhancement. The Educational Process Content is substantially compliant with a curriculum that is well designed with attention to be paid to the learning outcomes (which require significant improvement) and the language skills. The aspects related to the Students are very good and substantially compliant with attention to be paid to plagiarism and IA prevention. The Research standard is fair but substantially compliant with attention to be paid to extend the scientific production and to design an intellectual property policy. The creation of a Research Institute is urgent together with offering a PhD programme in Architecture. Finally, the Infrastructure and Resources are substantially compliant. Although the human resources and budget are adequate, clear and urgent attention should be paid to building new premises to host, among others, a library and laboratories, and to make the infrastructure more inclusive for students with special needs as the current amenities are minimal. In conclusion, the ET is reasonably positive about this programme, which is substantially compliant but requires urgent and significant improvements in various aspects. In particular, the FA and the UP should prepare an action plan to address current and past recommendations to achieve compliance with all KAA standards. The ET, however, recommends its accreditation for three years.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant
Student quota recommended: 150 seats **- Three Year Accreditation**

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