



**Republika e Kosovës**  
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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



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***UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA “HASAN PRISHTINA”***  
***FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY***  
***M.Sc. FOOD SCIENCE***

***REACCREDITATION***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*December 2024, Prishtina*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Sources of information for the Report:

- SER
- Syllabus
- Staff CVs
- Annexes
- Info acquired during the visit

### Abbreviations

EHEA: European Higher Education Area

ET: Expert team

FAV: Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary

HEI: Higher Education Institution

KAA: Kosovo Accreditation Agency

MEST: Ministry of Education Science and Technology

OFQA: Office for Quality Assurance

SER: Self-evaluation report

SWOT: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

UP :University of Prishtina

Programme Accreditation Procedure at UP Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine	
Programmes:	Food Technology and Biotechnology, BSc 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation) Food Science, MSc 120 ECTS (Re-accreditation) Veterinary Medicine, DMV 300 ECTS (Re-accreditation)
Site visit on (hybrid):	<b>17 December 2024</b>
Expert Team:	Prof Reiner Doluschitz Prof Luc Hittinger Prof Jasna Novak Prof Kirjaki Zinoviadou Ms. Jadranka Pelikan, Expert Student Ms. Nadia Manzoni, Expert Student
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ms. Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer Ms. Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer

### Site Visit Programme

AKA | Qendra e Studentëve, kati 2-të, 10000 Prishtinë, Kosovë  
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<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>08:30 – 09:30</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty	
<b>09:30 – 10:10</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	
<b>10.15 – 11.15</b>	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme Food Technology and Biotechnology, BSc; Prof Jasna Novak Prof Kiriaki Zinoviadou Ms. Jadranka Pelikan	Prof Xhavit Ramadani Prof Salih Salihu Prof Driton Sylejmani
<b>10.15 – 11.15</b>	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme Veterinary Medicine, DMV; Prof Reiner Doluschitz Prof Luc Hittinger Ms. Nadia Manzoni	Prof Agim Rexhepi Prof Behlul Behluli Prof Avni Robaj Prof Izedin Gogaj Prof Fatgzim Latifi
<b>11:15 – 12:15</b>	Lunch break	
<b>12:15 – 13:15</b>	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme Food Science MSc; Prof Jasna Novak Prof Kiriaki Zinoviadou Ms. Jadranka Pelikan	Prof Arbenita Hasani Rexhepi Prof Rreze Gecaj Prof Hysen Bytyçi
<b>12:15 – 13:15</b>	Visiting Farm of FAV –Veterinary Medicine	Prof. Reiner Doluschitz Prof. Luc Hittinger Prof. Nadia Manzoni
<b>13:20 – 14:00</b>	Meeting with teaching staff	
<b>13:20 – 14:00</b>	Meeting with teaching staff - Veterinary Medicine	
<b>14:00 – 14:40</b>	Meeting with students	
<b>14:00 – 14:40</b>	Meeting with students - Veterinary Medicine	
<b>14:45 – 15:25</b>	Meeting with graduates	
<b>15:30 – 16:10</b>	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	
<b>16:10 – 16:20</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
<b>16:20 – 16:30</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	
<b>16:30 – 17:00</b>	Visiting Facilities at FAV	

#### **Overall instructions for HEIs:**

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

## A brief overview of the programme 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. By decision of the Senate of University in Prishtina in 1996, the veterinary section was established with the aim of educating professionals in veterinary medicine that would serve animal health, food industry, food security and food safety in general. 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 proposed 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 2023 a total of 2239 students (BSc and MSc) graduated according to the report of the Student Services of FAV

The FAV has a long-term vision of fulfilling its function and mission, in creating a perspective for the new generation, modernizing and reforming the education system in Kosovo, and Regional and European Integration in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary, Food, and Agribusiness. The main mission of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary lies in the transfer of knowledge and competencies to future experts in all branches of the agro-food chain as Production of raw materials of plant and animal origin and food security; Processing of raw materials of plant and animal origin; Implement best practice during plant and animal production, preservation of the environment; Strategies for financing and trading of food products with animal and plant origin; The implementation of good agricultural practices in animal breeding, animal and human welfare, food safety, Veterinary, and Public Health focusing on the treatment, prevention of diseases in animals and humans.

The statistics for students in M.Sc. programs, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, grouped by programs and academic years (from 2016/17 up to 2024/25) are provided below.

Table 1. Number of students enrolled in M.Sc. study programs at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine divided by Departments:

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Agriculture and Food Economics	24	19	19	19	19	17	20	19	19
Plant Protection - phytomedicine	12	14	10	10	10	10	9	8	5

Pomology and Viticulture	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
Urban Agriculture	/	/	/	/	/	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	/	/
Crop Science	/	/	/	/	/	/	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>
Horticulture-Fruits and Vineyards	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	/	/	/	/
Food Science	/	/	/	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	/	/	/
Public Health	<b>11</b>	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

The program under evaluation for reaccreditation is a 2-year M.Sc. study program in Food Science with 120 ECTS. 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, however there are other reasons specific to this faculty that will be identified in this report and which require attention.

## **PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

### **1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Standard 1.1 The study program is in line with the higher education institution's mission and strategic goals, needs of society and it is publicly available. (ESG 1.1)**

The mission of the study program is in line with the missions of FAV and UP as it is stated in the SER and confirmed in the on-site-visit discussion. Kosovo's agriculture sector has historically been important for household income. Most of Kosovo's population (60%) lives in rural areas and for a considerable part of households' agriculture provides the primary source of income. The development of agricultural activities from the start to the implementation in the agriculture fields inevitably undermines the available natural resources and the environment.

A particular positive aspect of the study program under evaluation is the close collaboration with local and national agribusiness-enterprises. The Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry has signed a cooperation agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with Private Agribusiness Companies Food Science studies offer a wide spectrum of employment opportunities and a list of those is provided. Experts with this level of professional and scientific preparation are lacking in the Kosovar market. The program offering is based on a thorough analysis of the labor market, including employment prospects for graduates. This analysis was developed in cooperation with actors from the labor market and agricultural organizations and it is indicated that graduates of this specific program can be employed in various sectors.

The intended learning outcomes of the study program are very clearly in line with the missions of FAV and UP as stated in the SER.

The infrastructure, in particular the provision of premises has improved somewhat compared to the former situation from springtime 2024 when the last evaluation took place. It is stated in the SER that there are 3.2 m<sup>2</sup> available space for each student. However, since FAV has still no permanent solution for the infrastructure, it is hard to estimate the relation between students and space.

#### **Standard 1.2 The study program is subject to policies and procedures on academic integrity and freedom that prevent all types of unethical behaviour. The documents are publicly available, and staff and students are informed thereof. (ESG 1.1)**

It is indicated in the SER that the program has written procedures in place to address plagiarism and academic dishonesty, through a Code of Ethics and the use of plagiarism control software. The Ethics Committee and the Students' Ombudsperson are responsible for

handling these cases. However, it is not clear how the use of AI is addressed and certain policies should be developed for this aspect as well.

The study program follows specific procedures for handling cases of plagiarism, informing staff and students about the course of the process. Students and staff are informed of the appropriate steps to follow after a positive result from the software. During the visit the team was convinced that these procedures are followed.

As stated there are clear ethical regulatory standards that govern teaching and research. These standards are published on the university website, included in student packs and handbooks for staff and students, and are rigorously monitored. Whenever the regulations undergo changes or come into effect, staff and students are notified through official e-mails. This is confirmed by the SER.

The Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine uses an advanced digital information management system, which collects up-to-date and reliable data on the performance of the Food Science program. This system ensures a regular monitoring, presentation of exams, grading, implementation of the learning process, distribution of literature (lectures, student results, etc.).

Data protection policies are strictly adhered to, protecting the privacy of students and staff. In the electronic system for the management of students, the staff can only be accessed with personal credentials and any activity (setting or changing the grade) is accessible but limited in advance for others who are not competent. These policies are known to everyone and are public. Through the SEMS platform, a system of regular evaluation of teaching staff by students has been created. No information is provided regarding peer and supervisor evaluations. The results are visible to management but not available to the public. However it would be beneficial if the outcomes are provided to the student Council.

Discussions with representatives from all levels of the study program confirmed that the information management system (SEMS) includes relevant, updated and reliable information. Furthermore, concrete action plans are mentioned during the on-site-visit to monitor the implementation of the study program. This is not explicitly confirmed in detail in the SER.

**Standard 1.3 Relevant information is collected, analysed and used to ensure the effective management of the study program and other relevant activities and such information is publicly available. (ESG 1.7)**



The Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine uses an advanced digital information management system, which collects up-to-date and reliable data on the performance of the Food Science program. However, the implementation of all changes is not effectively performed. The Plan of implementation that is provided is outdated and certain milestones, deadlines as well as people in charge are not provided

Students and staff are actively involved in the processes of data collection and analysis, contributing to the continuous improvement of academic activities. This cooperation is achieved through the representation of students in the governing bodies of the faculty, the students through voting select their representatives in the Faculty Council but also in the UP Senate.

It is confirmed in the SER that there are clear ethical regulatory standards that govern teaching and research.

**Standard 1.4 The delivery of the study program is supported by appropriate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its goals in teaching, learning, research, and community service. (ESG 1.6)**

The program has a clear policy for reviewing and supporting administrative staff, ensuring that human resources are sufficient to support the needs of the program. Budgetary support is also adequate for the successful operation of the program. However, there is always a need for improvement, currently the faculty has requested additional funds for the administration, but this is centralized since the rectorate decides on the allocation of the budget

As stated in the SER the administrative staff is subject to continuous professional training as mentioned above, including training in foreign languages, computer and other important skills for the realization of their tasks. Staff trainings are held 3 times a year, which are organized and financed by the rectorate, they are divided into different levels depending on the work tasks within the administration. The trainings also include visits abroad, depending on where they are organized. During the visit the team did not meet with any members of the administrative team but trusts that this is true.

**Standard 1.5 The recommendations for quality improvement of the study program from previous internal and external quality assurance procedures are implemented. (ESG 1.10)**

As mentioned in the SER, recommendations for improving the study program, given by previous quality assurance procedures, are analyzed and implemented effectively. Action plans have been developed to address issues identified by experts and concrete improvements have been made based on these recommendations. However, the provided plan for recommendation is

not updated (it refers to the period of 2021-2022) and certain information is lacking. It is important to define in the action plan milestones and deadlines for the completion of each task as well as to officially assign a person in charge. Moreover, it is required to define a mechanism that will monitor the progress and design corrective actions in case things do not go as originally planned.

It is claimed in the SER that reviews of policies and regulations are conducted “as appropriate in the circumstances of the change”, however, there is no fixed schedule for a regular review. It is mentioned in the SER that in December 2023, the University of Prishtina approved an Action Plan for gender equality. In addition, in 2023 the University of Prishtina established a center for students with various disabilities. The center aims to facilitate and provide services for students with various disabilities. The Department of FTBT in each reaccreditation has achieved its objectives and has respected the suggestions of international quality assurance experts. However, links to the relevant documents are missing.

### **ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1. Increase student involvement in decision making on topics relevant to the program*
- 2. External comments and recommendations should become considered more intensively and efficiently and a team should be designated for following up on expert recommendations on a regular basis.*
- 3. Specific budget allocation to additional professional development of teaching staff is recommended.*
- 4. A concrete action plan should be designed*

## **2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

**Standard 2.1 The study program delivery is subject to an established and functional internal quality assurance system, in which all relevant stakeholders are included. (ESG 1.1)**

An internal quality assurance system has been established at the UP level in accordance with national regulations and international standards. The domain of quality assurance is concentrated within the established Academic Development Offices operating within the academic unit. Based on the SER, the execution of the study program is subjected to internal quality assurance system. The importance of the FBV Industrial Board in the advancement of the program is particularly emphasized.

**Standard 2.2 The study program is subject to a process of design and approval established by the HEI. (ESG 1.2)**

According the MSc in Food Science program is in line with the mission and strategic goals of FAV and UP. However, no specific information is provided how the design and approval is established by either FAV or University. The discussions with graduates and employers during the on-site visit showed that the study programs are well aligned and recognised in the labour market, but the opinion of the stakeholders, who have experienced academic mobility, is that it needs to be improved in order to be more competitive at least with related study programmes conducted at Faculties of the region.

**Standard 2.3 The study program is periodically monitored and reviewed to ensure its objectives are achieved. The monitoring of the study program involves stakeholder participation. (ESG 1.9)**

At the University of Pristina "Hasan Prishtina" level, an electronic questionnaire has been organized for students on an annual basis, through which the quality, complaints, suggestions or requests of students and the performance of academic staff are analysed and subsequently communicated to the academic unit. During the onsite meeting, academic staff highlights the importance, support and contribution of the external partners from industrial sector who even support the study plan by offering laboratories due to the long-term lack of the infrastructure.

According to the SER, there are obstacles to implementing internal quality assurance in higher education institution from academic staff perspective what could be mitigating by providing education of the importance of the QA while focusing on the analysis of the capacities on communication and collaborations within various departments of FAV.

**Standard 2.4 All relevant information about the study program is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and is publicly available. (ESG 1.8)**

The SER should provide a direct link to the information about the study program, applied for the evaluation, translated into English for easier catch-up and orientation. Important data including duration of studies, dropout rate, and employment of students, are to be updated and published in the next SER.

**ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1. It's recommended that SER elaborates and addresses more details on the involvement, of not only students but also other stakeholders in implementing an internal quality assurance system in the delivery of the study programme.*

2. *The academic unit should enhance the involvement of academic staff in the quality management process by organising workshops, trainings etc. On this point FAV could be more proactive and extend the range stakeholders to include students (more actively), recent alumni and international peers.*
3. *Annual plan for the professional development of the academic staff engaged in the study program and evidence of their participation in the development activities must be presented for the period of the next three years.*
4. *It's recommended to ensure proper functioning of the web page and public accessibility of all the regulations and information demanded under 2.4. substandard.*
5. *ET recommends improving the learning outcomes of individual modules as they are very generic. it is highly recommended to follow Bloom's Taxonomy when creating the learning outcomes to reflect the changes. Training on the preparation of learning outcomes is also proposed.*
6. *In general, reports should be supported by concrete data and direct links when needed.*

### **3. ACADEMIC STAFF**

**Standard 3.1 The study program delivery is supported by teaching staff who are recruited in line with national legislation, and internal regulations in effect, and it is based on objective and transparent procedure. (ESG 1.5)**

As SER reports, staff hiring competitions are transparent and job vacancies are advertised for example at Official Gazette of Kosovo. For ET it is hard to assess the proofs since majority of the documentation is in Albanian and in the supporting files there is so evidence or link to HEI website or similar that the vacancies were advertised vacancies nationally and internationally. Additionally, in order to move closer to the good practice of renowned European higher education institutions, FAV should consider what is needed to achieve an improved recruitment policy in terms of encouraging the employment of a greater number of talented doctoral candidates and teaching assistants. It seems that the ratio of teaching assistants to professors is not optimal, but it should be taken into account in terms of the number of students to create an effective recruitment plan in the coming periods. Also, as the SWOT analysis in the self-assessment document highlights, a weakness is the lack of laboratory assistants and laboratory technicians.

**Standard 3.2 The study program is supported by sufficient permanent academic staff who are adequately qualified to deliver the study program. (ESG 1.5)**

The qualifications of the academic staff engaged in the study program are adequate and suitable for the subjects being taught. CVs should be improved in terms of a list of publications and other academic contributions that demonstrate the level of expertise and experience of the staff.

According to SER, it should be noted that the average teacher-student ratio is 1:10, which seems adequate to achieve established learning outcomes. During the on-site meeting, staff reported that teaching assistants are employed on a one-year contract basis and as noted in the SER, there appears to be a trend of migration of younger professors. Although it is a human resource policy linked to general recruitment restrictions that apply throughout Kosovo's higher education system, initiatives for improvement should be initiated. Also, the syllabi only list the teaching workloads of professors who are course leaders. It is suggested that in the coming period, until the next reaccreditation, the workloads of other associates are listed as well, in order to provide better insight into teaching performance. A review of the CVs shows that most professors have experience in advanced training at eminent European research and university institutions such as BOKU, Gießen, University of Zürich/ETH, Brain Research Institute etc. This is certainly significant from the aspect of strengthening and developing research capacities, and contributing to the quality of the teaching process. However, there is place for improvement and a highly readable, updated, well-organized CV would be valuable for assessing whether the qualifications of academic staff elected to a position in the relevant field and/or area are adequate for carrying out the study programme and for performing scientific/professional activities at the required level.

As clearly stated in the SER, The University of Pristina (UP) in coordination with KAA and the Tax Administration of Kosovo does not allow UP academic staff to cover within an academic year more than two teaching positions, one full-time and one part-time.

Unfortunately, relatively limited information has been provided via the SER and a number of indicators had to be evaluated during the visit. It can be declared that at least 50% of the academic staff who are involved in delivering the study program are full-time HEI employees (employment contracts). However, despite the fact that table 4 provides the names of permanent and temporary academic staff at Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary as well as their expertise, it is not possible to identify the names of the staff that is directly involved in this MSc program. This can be achieved only by studying the tables provided for Standard 4.

The academic staff respects fully the working hours and besides teaching, each of the academic staff has weekly consultations with students.

During the visit it was observed that a number of staff members are involved in more than one program delivered in FAV. Despite the fact that this is a common practice in a large number of International Institutions, it creates confusion when it is required to calculate the total workload of the members. Moreover, the fact that only the name of the permanent staff appears on the curriculum provided in Standard 4 can lead to the conclusion that only two full-time faculty are providing most of the compulsory courses. Despite the fact that it is not stated in the SER, the visiting team trusts that the distribution of faculty responsibilities - including

student mentoring, teaching, research professional development, administrative duties, and community service - is well balanced and responsibly managed.

**Standard 3.3 The study program is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence. The advancement of staff arises from the higher education institution's strategic goals and is in line with the legislation and internal regulations in effect. (ESG 1.5)**

Promotion and employment procedures and criteria are regulated by university promotion policies. For newly opened positions, candidates are selected based on their excellence according to their CV, while in the case of selection for a higher position within the framework of academic advancement, they are selected based on the evaluation of achievements in the previous four-year period from the signing of the valid contract, which is assessed by academic Promotion Committee. in accordance with legislation and the relevant University regulations.

CVs should be updated with information about the professor's involvement in mentoring final diploma, master's and doctoral theses, a list of collaborative and scientific projects they lead or are collaborators on, and a clear overview of published scientific articles with a separate list of participation in national or international conferences. There is room for the improvement in terms of project submissions, which in turn stimulates and reflects the scientific productivity of teaching staff. Supporting data relating to scientific performance e.g. list of the projects, submitted as additional documentation is cumulative.

**Standard 3.4 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study program is entitled to institutional support for professional development. (ESG 1.5)**

The SER claims that either University or Faculty supports the professional development of academic staff engaged in the study program and demonstrates their participation in development activities. The forms of support, through which the professional development of the staff is stimulated, are approved and described in the relevant documents of the University. However, for ease of verification, this should be clearly shown in the SER and supported with evidence, such as various certificates of attendance. Through the CVs of teaching staff, it can be concluded that FAV is open to offering scientific-teaching staff good possibilities for educating themselves at conferences abroad. As SER claims, FAV also offered specialized training in testing and assessment, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching methods and assessment standards, but it is difficult for ET to assess the relevance of these initiatives as no details were provided regarding the type of workshops, but the fact that these are training on the ECTS system and teaching methods. Also, no other details or any evidence about their organization, organizer, number of participants, etc. are provided. In the self-evaluation report and supporting documents the development of teaching competencies of teaching staff could be more systematically addressed.

**Standard 3.5 External associates who teach at the study program have adequate qualifications and work experience for the delivery of the study program and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (ESG1.5)**

According to SER, external collaborators from industry occasionally participate in teaching in the study program, but since their workload is not shown in the teaching credentials as well as CVs, it is difficult for ET to assess the relevance of their qualifications and expertise for engagement in the teaching program. SER emphasizes the importance of including industry experts due to their practical expertise and considering the requirements arising from the latest research on the labor market trends, and believes that their involvement significantly contributes to the teaching process and the achievement of expected learning outcomes. During the meeting, academic staff emphasized the support from their alumni and industrial stakeholders who are open even to lending their laboratories for student work and are engaged in mentoring students during the performance of the experimental part of their BSc or Master thesis, due to the lack of the infrastructure. The list of the external associates engaged in the supervision of final and graduation theses (co-supervision activities) must be submitted in the next SER.

**ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1. The total workload of all faculty should be clearly demonstrated and the involvement of temporary staff in each course should be declared.*
- 2. Faculty should be constantly trained on the use of AI and other technologies so that they will be able to evaluate student work more effectively.*
- 3. In the future the SER should include more information and links to inventories that include all the required documents should be provided.*
- 4. The number of permanent staff should be increased as FAV relies greatly on a number of faculty that are occupied temporarily and this fluidity can negatively affect the overall quality.*
- 5. Develop a concrete guide including assessment criteria that will be used by any stakeholders that are involved in thesis or internship supervision.*
- 6. The relevant links and certificates should be provided and implemented in the self-evaluation report as a proof of certain activity*
- 7. The next SER should mandatorily and transparently document comprehensive teacher recruitment procedures, copies of vacancy advertisements, appointed members of selection committees, reports of selection committees, and decisions of relevant governmental institutions.*
- 8. CVs of academic staff members must be more structured and must precisely indicate that title of the PhD thesis, name of the supervisor, institution and date of the defence*

#### **4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT**

**Standard 4.1 The study program intended learning outcomes are formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices; they are aligned with the published institution's/academic unit's mission and strategic goals and are publicly available. (ESG 1.2)**

The intended learning outcomes for this study program are designed to reflect the mission of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, as well as the strategic goals of the University of Pristina. The mission of the faculty is to prepare skilled professionals in the agriculture sectors including food sciences, contributing to the economic development of the country. The learning outcomes support this mission by ensuring that students acquire knowledge and skills directly related to agri-food processing and food science sector. However, a table demonstrating the mapping of each intended learning outcome with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution is lacking.

The curriculum designers have used good practices from an international project when devising the learning outcomes. However, the learning outcomes are in few cases phrased in terms of “knowledge” and there is insufficient emphasis on competences and skills that students are expected to acquire through the study programme.

In defining the intended learning outcomes, the faculty has drawn on examples from international best practices, including guidelines from the ECTS Guide 2015 and standards used by prestigious universities in the EU and the USA. This includes the formulation of outcomes that are measurable and clear for all stakeholders, including students and academic staff. For example, the program incorporates the use of formative and summative assessment methods to support the learning process, as described in these best practices. Moreover, the faculty has conducted a detailed comparison of the curriculum and learning outcomes with those of similar programs at universities such as the University of Ljubljana.

**Standard 4.2 The study program intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. (ESG1.2)**

The learning outcomes of the "Food Science" study program are tailored to comply with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).



It is mentioned in the SER that the level that is expected of students is higher than that of the Bachelor studies. In the Food Science MSc program, students are expected to develop advanced skills in food science. No overlap with other Master programmes is evident.

**Standard 4.3 The content and structure of the curriculum is coherent and enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and to progress smoothly through their studies. (ESG 1.2)**

Although it is stated that The courses in the "Food Science" program are logically structured, following a specific flow that ensures the gradual progression of students in acquiring knowledge and skills certain drawbacks have been observed. For example, it would be more beneficial to move the course Structural properties of food to the first semester and the one in Sensory evaluation in the second since it is required to have a solid background in food structuring in order to grasp the impact that these properties have in sensory analysis. Moreover, the presence of a course in 'Technology of meat and meat products II' is not valid since part I is not offered in the MSc level. It could be renamed to 'Advanced topics in Technology of meat and meat products'. As the flow of courses is therefore not clear and the distinction between general and specific competences is not made. As a result, it is also not evident that the learning outcomes of previously passed courses are sufficient prerequisites for next courses in the curriculum, at least not on paper. It is crucial to point out that these issues have been previously highlighted but no corrective actions have been made.

The structure of the curriculum includes almost of the courses each semester being mandatory and one elective.

The rules for student progression are clearly defined. For example, to enroll in advanced courses in second year, students must have successfully completed foundational courses. Also, in order to be qualified to commence working in diploma thesis they must finish all the exams of two first semesters.

The literature assigned for courses is often very outdated, up to 20 years old or older in some cases. Many of the assigned literature pieces are in English, which is not necessarily a drawback but no English language course is provided to students as part of the study programme and it is questionable how good the student's English skills are.

All required course information is provided in a well-arranged format in the syllabus found in Annex of the SER, comprising course objectives, learning outcomes, thematic content, teaching methods, students' assessment system and bibliography. However, the format of the descriptors is not homogeneous. The number of the learning objectives for each course of 5 ECTS should range between 4-6. More importantly the verbs that are used are not always appropriate for level 7. In Level 7 students are expected to develop analytical skills and critical thinking so the use of verbs such as describe, list etc should be avoided.

**Standard 4.4 If the study program leads to degrees in regulated professions, it is aligned with the EU Directives and national and international professional associations. (ESG 1.2)**

The study program has been developed in line with the recommendations of national and international professional associations, which are key for accreditation and equipping students with qualifications recognized in the labor market.

**Standard 4.5 The intended learning outcomes of the student practise period are clearly specified, and effective processes are followed to ensure that learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students (if applicable). (ESG 1.2)**

Although the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary has developed clear regulations for the student internship period this course is only elective for the MSc in Food Science program. It would be beneficial to make it compulsory and increase its duration.

It is very beneficial that the delivery of the study program is supported by cooperation agreements and contracts with institutions and organizations offering practical training. These agreements formalize the roles of the involved parties and ensure the necessary support for internships.

- Employer feedback from those offering internships to students is documented and regularly analyzed to improve the quality of practical training.
- Evaluations from supervisors at the institutions where the internship is conducted, as well as student internship reports, are used to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Unfortunately examples of such evaluations were not provided

**Standard 4.6 The study program is delivered through student-centred teaching and learning. (ESG 1.3)**

The study program has a clear didactic concept that places the student at the center of the learning process, supporting the development of competencies and the achievement of intended learning outcomes. This concept helps students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for success in the field of Food Sciences, integrating theoretical and practical lessons in a harmonious way. The department has collaboration agreements with many organizations and private agribusinesses where students can gain practical experience in agro-economic fields.

**Standard 4.7 The evaluation and assessment used in the study program are objective and consistent and ensures that intended learning outcomes are achieved. (ESG 1.3)**

Although it is stated that the program implements systematic assessment methodologies that ensure a comprehensive evaluation of individual learning outcomes in practice the evaluation methods are heavily reliant on written and oral exams, according to the detailed syllabus. Where courses have a heavy component of skills development and practical knowledge, the assessment methods should be adapted accordingly, and students' applied knowledge and skills should be assessed through applied and practical tests, both in group teamwork assignments and individual assignments.

As stated the study program ensures objective and reliable grading through clear and standardized assessment methods. Techniques are used to eliminate personal bias and subjectivity, ensuring that students receive a fair evaluation of their performance. During the visit the team had the opportunity to meet with students and graduates and they were pleased with the current policies.

**Standard 4.8 Learning outcomes are evaluated in terms of student workload and expressed in ECTS. (ECTS 1.2)**

ECTS credits are assigned to each module based on the number of hours of engagement required by students to achieve the learning outcomes. For example, a module with 6 ECTS involves approximately 150–180 hours of total student work (including lectures, exercises, individual preparation, and assessments). The calculation for 1 ECTS is based on 25 hours of student activities.

**ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

1. *Revise the study programme objectives according to latest advances in technology and scientific discovery and ensure alignment of learning outcomes with the overall study programme objectives.*
2. *Revise the intended learning outcomes in a way that ensures inclusion of competences and skills including research skills, critical and creative thinking and other competences relevant to the labour market. It is suggested to use the BLOOM taxonomy in order to use the appropriate wording for level 7.*
3. *Allocate more permanent teaching staff to the programme to ensure that there is continuity and that the students experience is enhanced year per year.*
4. *Increase of the number of ECTS for the Practical work/Internship course to a minimum of 12 instead of 5. Additionally, there should be official and direct involvement of an*

*Academic supervisor to the project in order to reassure the standards that are required for a level 7 student are met.*

5. *Since nowadays the use of AI is increasing it is recommended to increase the number of oral presentation as a means of assessment in order to enhance students soft skills and critical thinking as well as to indirectly evaluate the originality of the work.*

## **5. STUDENTS**

### **Standard 5.1 Clear admission policies, including requirements, criteria and processes for the study program are clearly defined and are publicly available. (ESG 1.4)**

Although the requirements and criteria for admission to the MSc Food Science program, as well as the procedures for admission, selection, and enrolment, are clearly defined and published, the SER lacks detailed elaboration. It specifies (p.34) that a public announcement for the admission contest is published annually through national media and on the University's website. This has been confirmed through a review of the official web pages.

The Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV) adheres to the University of Prishtina (UP) regulations and procedures, developed in accordance with the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo (2011). Article 99 of the UP Statute (2024) outlines the admission process for master's studies. Students are admitted based on a competitive process that evaluates prior academic achievements and equivalence of qualifications, as well as entrance exam results.

The criteria and processes, from application to appeal, are determined by the Senate upon the proposal of the academic unit (FAV) and are detailed in the Regulation for Master Studies (2022). Article 3 of this regulation specifies that candidate selection is based on the public call criteria, and the preliminary list of successful applicants is published on the academic unit's websites.

Applicants are required to hold a Bachelor of Science degree or an equivalent qualification issued by a national or international higher education institution. The selection process is competitive ensuring that prior academic achievements and grades are considered for ranking candidates. The criteria are strictly applied to all applicants, guaranteeing a fair and non-discriminatory process.

However, the HEI does not provide information on the recognition of periods of study, which is a notable gap in the current admission framework.

### **Standard 5.2 Student progression data for the study program are regularly collected and analyzed. Appropriate actions are taken to ensure the student's completion of the study program. (ESG 1.4)**

The University of Prishtina (UP) Statute, Article 231, mandates that the General Secretary maintains records on various aspects, including applicants for admission, enrolled students

across all study programs, graduates, contracted staff, property, financial accounts, and academic performance reports. Additionally, records are kept on research, artistic, and consultancy projects, evaluations, and other matters required by the Steering Council, Rector, or Senate.

Article 4 of the Regulation for Master Studies at UP stipulates that master's programs culminate in the public defense of a thesis, awarding students a diploma with 120 ECTS upon successful completion. Despite these provisions, the system for systematically monitoring student progression is not fully operational, beyond basic data collection. While the UP Statute and Regulation for Master Studies allow for the implementation of support mechanisms for students facing difficulties, there is limited evidence in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of active measures or structured counselling systems for those at risk of academic challenges.

Although the drop-out rate does not appear significant, a considerable proportion of long-term students with unregulated statuses remains a concern. Regular monitoring of student progression rates and completion rates is not explicitly addressed in the SER, and it is unclear whether results are consistently shared with staff and students.

The FAV and UP do, however, provide sufficient information regarding progression opportunities, whether for continuing studies or advancing in their careers. The new Regulation for Mobility of Students (2024) establishes clear policies for the recognition of qualifications gained at other higher education institutions, supporting both mobility and academic progression.

### **Standard 5.3 The study program ensures appropriate conditions and support for outgoing and incoming students (national and international students). (ESG 1.4)**

This standard primarily falls under the responsibility of the University of Prishtina (UP) and its Office for International Cooperation. Information about mobility opportunities is published on the official UP website and is accessible to all interested parties in both Albanian and English language. However, the SER (p.74) does not provide specific details on activities aimed at attracting or supporting foreign students. Notably, UP offers free Albanian language courses for foreign students enrolled in its study programs, which is a positive step in fostering inclusivity.

The recently adopted Regulation for Mobility of Students (2024) establishes a solid framework for the recognition of ECTS credits, ensuring that students' academic achievements during mobility programs are appropriately acknowledged. Despite this, there is no evidence in the SER of feedback collected from students returning from exchange programs. Such feedback could be valuable for evaluating and improving the international mobility experience. Moreover, the SER does not provide data on the number of students participating in mobility programs over the past five years, whether for periods shorter or longer than three months.

This lack of information hinders a full assessment of the program's effectiveness in promoting international exchange.

Although the university has mechanisms in place for providing mobility information and support, there is no evidence of active measures to attract foreign students beyond the provision of language courses, despite the SER statement) p.74). Additionally, there is no information on whether the university offers guidance in application procedures or admission conditions for foreign students in other languages beyond Albanian and English. During the site visit, the attendees confirmed that the teaching staff is flexible and provides guidance to foreign student on their non-formal request.

Efforts to collect and analyse feedback from both national and international students regarding mobility programs could further enhance procedures and contribute to the continuous improvement of international exchange initiatives.

**Standard 5.4 The study program delivery is ensured through adequate resources for student support. The needs of a diverse student population (part-time students, mature students, students from abroad, students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.) are taken into account. (ESG 1.6)**

The number of professional, administrative, and technical staff at the University of Prishtina (UP) is sufficient to meet the needs of students and ensure the quality of their academic experience confirmed at the site visit. Information for students is readily accessible both through the university's official website and the Office for Student Administration. Additionally, student support is provided by the Student Council at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV) level and the Student Parliament at the UP level, offering guidance and information related to academic life and overall quality of life at UP.

However, systematic support throughout the course of study is limited. The primary form of support identified is the guidance provided by tutors for students working on their final-year thesis. Beyond this, there is no evidence of a structured system to offer consistent academic or career support during earlier stages of study, at least not formally. The teaching staff is available to the students during the consultation hours (2 h /weekly) and by e-mail.

The procedures for appeals and complaints are clearly defined in several policy documents, including the UP Statute (2024), the Regulation for Master Studies, and other relevant regulations. Students are informed about these procedures during enrolment and receive further guidance through the Student Council and Parliament. These processes are transparent and accessible to all students.

The UP encourages student engagement in extracurricular activities, particularly cultural events, and provides spaces and opportunities for such participation. However, there is no mention of dedicated spaces for sports, recreation, or volunteer activities at the FAV level. On

the positive side, FAV actively informs students about job opportunities announced by the industrial sector, supporting their transition into the labour market.

To further enhance student support, introducing a more systematic approach to academic and career guidance throughout the program, as well as expanding opportunities for extracurricular activities, would be beneficial.

### **ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1) The HEI should implement a functional system to regularly monitor student progression rates, completion rates, and other relevant performance indicators. This system should include mechanisms for identifying students facing academic challenges and providing timely assistance or counselling to support their progress.*
- 2) Results from the monitoring of student progression and completion rates should be analysed and shared transparently with both staff and students. This practice will ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the study program's performance and areas for improvement, fostering accountability and engagement.*
- 3) The HEI should design and implement targeted support systems to assist students who are at risk of dropping out or facing academic difficulties. This could include counselling services, academic workshops, and mentoring programs tailored to meet the needs of diverse student groups, such as peer-to-peer or similar.*
- 4) The HEI should ensure that future SERs include detailed and specific data on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as enrolment numbers, graduation rates, dropout rates, and average study duration. Clearly defined threshold indicators and progress toward achieving them should also be provided to enable a thorough assessment of the study program.*
- 5) To strengthen international exchange, the HEI should require students returning from mobility programs to provide feedback, which can be shared with their peers to encourage participation. Additionally, peer-to-peer mentoring for students applying for mobility programs could be introduced to ease the process and increase involvement.*
- 6) The HEI should actively promote student engagement in extracurricular and community activities by providing adequate funding, facilities, and organizational support. Participation in such activities can contribute to a well-rounded educational experience and enhance students' sense of belonging and personal development.*

## **6. RESEARCH**

**Standard 6.1. The study program aligns with the institution's/academic unit's mission and the research strategic goals.**

The University of Prishtina (UP) Strategic Plan 2022–2025 clearly defines overarching goals and objectives, including specific objectives, indicators, and target values for scientific and applied research. However, at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV) level, no specific research development plan or documentation detailing the faculty's research objectives is provided. Furthermore, this information is not available on the FAV website, limiting transparency and accessibility.

According to the UP Statute (2024), institutional support for research depends on the performance of the academic unit. While improvements in financial, logistic, and human resources have been noted, the support remains insufficient to fully meet the proposed research objectives and ensure the comprehensive implementation of the study program.

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER), on page 85, briefly mentions adherence to international standards but lacks detailed explanations or concrete evidence to support this claim. Notably, there is no indication that the laboratories used by the study program are certified by recognized international standards such as ISO or other norms. The absence of such certifications raises concerns about the alignment of the research infrastructure and practices with international norms and standards.

The fact that UP has established “RESEARCH PROJECTS SUPPORTING UNIT” In order to support research projects highlights that commitment to enhancing research activities and this was also highlighted during the meeting of the visiting team with the Senior management team.

**Standard 6.2. The academic staff engaged in the study program is committed and supported to achieve high-quality research work and/or professional activity.**

The academic staff of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV) actively participate in scientific activities in collaboration with national and international partners. Their contributions to research are validated through publications indexed in SCOPUS, demonstrating adherence to recognized standards for scientific research.

The Master’s study program is delivered by 13 professors who collectively teach 23 courses, including both mandatory and elective ones. However, the substantial teaching workload limits the time available for research activities. Despite this, 12 out of 13 academic staff members have published more than one paper on average over the past three years and participated in numerous conferences, indicating ongoing engagement in research. Moreover, it is crucial that the h index of the faculty increases as this is an indicator of research quality. It is important to point out though that the quality of the journals is not equal and the faculty has to put more effort in publishing in peer reviewed journals with high impact factor.

The FAV has provided a list of SCOPUS-cited papers authored by their staff, showcasing their contributions to high-quality scientific literature (SER, p.85-86).



While the evidence of publications is commendable, there is limited information about the participation of staff in other professional activities, such as involvement in technological transfer, consultancy, or participation in scientific parks.

**Standard 6.3 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study program is encouraged to participate in different aspects of cooperation with national and international partners.**

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) indicates that the academic staff engaged in the study program publishes their work in high-ranking scientific journals and presents research findings at international scientific events, in accordance with national and international research promotion requirements.

The Department of Food Technology, as part of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV), plays an active role in scientific projects, particularly in the field of market economy research for agricultural products and their competitiveness. The academic staff members regularly contribute to scientific publications and participate in international conferences, meetings, and symposia to present the results of their research activities in their respective areas of expertise.

The teaching staff maintains strong connections with local industries, as confirmed during the site visit with stakeholders, including representatives from local NGOs and businesses that employ graduates of the study program. These connections facilitate ongoing collaboration between the university and the business sector.

Additionally, the academic staff participates in official knowledge transfer initiatives. The FAV has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with several local industries, formalizing partnerships that promote joint research projects and the transfer of knowledge to the industry and public sector. This collaboration also supports the shared use of equipment and facilities where applicable.

**Standard 6.4 The teaching staff engaged in the study program has a proven record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.**

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER, p. 88), the main objective of the curriculum is to prepare graduates to meet the needs of businesses, professionals, and infrastructure development for the market economy in Kosovo. As part of this goal, the teaching staff integrates their research findings into the courses they teach, ensuring that students are exposed to the latest developments in the field. This approach supports the program's dedication to professional education, fostering an understanding of interdisciplinarity and using contemporary methodologies.

Students in the Food Science program are involved in research activities alongside academic staff. Some students are directly engaged in research projects led by the department's academic staff, and many have the opportunity to work on their theses through these projects. However, student involvement in publishing research papers or participating in international research

publications remains limited. There is no evidence of papers published with the students co-authoring.

### **ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1. It is essential that the Faculty of Agriculture and Food (FAV) provides a detailed research development plan that is publicly accessible, aligning with the HEI's broader research strategy. The FAV should develop a comprehensive research plan that clearly defines specific goals, objectives, and target outcomes aligned with the strategic direction of the institution instead of relying on the UP Strategic document. The plan should include key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress and achievement. The research plan should also be periodically reviewed and updated to remain relevant to both national and international research trends.*
- 2. The HEI should encourage academic staff to integrate their research findings and scholarly activities more systematically into their teaching, ensuring that students are consistently exposed to the latest research in the field. This could be achieved by offering regular seminars or workshops on research topics and methodologies relevant to the courses being taught. Students should also be encouraged to participate in research projects and collaborate with staff on scholarly activities, with a stronger emphasis on producing publishable results.*
- 3. To better prepare students for careers in academia and research, the HEI should create more opportunities for students to publish research papers, participate in international research conferences, and engage in collaborative research with faculty members. Efforts should be made to connect students with research projects that have a high potential for international publication, offering mentorship to guide them through the process.*
- 4. A position of Vice Dean of Research and Extension should be created in order to enhance research efforts as well as the collaboration with the industry.*

## **7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES**

### **Standard 7.1. The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research. ESG (1.6)**

As the new teaching, research and office building of the FAV is still not completed and the recent provisional accommodation in a secondary school was no longer acceptable, the UP has provided lecture halls at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering (FME) on Rruga Agim Ramadani Street, near the city center. This current temporary solution is much better than the one encountered by the ET during the on-site visit in spring 2024.

The lecture halls, provided by FME on a temporary basis, are adequate in number and quality for the study program under evaluation. The rooms are located in the basement of the building and are accessible by stairs and via elevators for students with walking disabilities.

As the FAV laboratories are still located on the previous premises and the research farm is located on the premises of the new FAV building, the students have activities at three distant locations, which requires time consuming traveling through city traffic. The FAV management is making an effort to cluster the teaching activities in a way to reduce traveling during the day. The current situation is not optimal but temporarily acceptable until the new FAV building is ready for occupancy. FAV management was able to credibly demonstrate through correspondence that the endangering power lines would be relocated in the foreseeable future, and the move to the new building is unlikely to take place within the years 2025/2026.

The FAV laboratories, still located on the previous premises of the FAV, are in good structural condition and well equipped. The computer training room is well equipped with student workplaces. State-of-the-art software is available with valid licences.

#### **Standard 7.2 The HEI ensures adequate library resources for study program. (ESG 1.6)**

According to the SER, the Central University Library and the FAV Library offer reading rooms with a sufficient number of seats and easily accessible support services. The FAV Library provides good internet coverage, enabling students to access electronic resources. Additionally, the opening hours extend beyond regular lecture times. The book collection includes a sufficient amount of Albanian and foreign professional literature, and the libraries maintain an adequate number of subscriptions to both domestic and international journals.

#### **Standard 7.3 The study program is appropriately funded to deliver its intended educational activities and research. (ESG 1.6)**

According to the SER, funding for basic infrastructure and operational expenditures related to the study program is incorporated into the overall UP budget, which is allocated by the Assembly of Kosovo through the national budget law, in conjunction with revenues generated by the institution. The FAV operates with an annual budget designated for materials and services. Beside this regular budget, equipment is occasionally purchased through acquired projects.

#### **ET recommendations:**

Timeline: Immediate start and completion before the end of the summer semester 2027

- 1. The move to the new FAV research, teaching and office building has top priority. While the power lines are being moved, the building must be renovated and completed simultaneously.*


## OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program M.Sc. Food Science offered by the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary is substantially compliant with all Standards as included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for 3 years with an intake of 20 students. However, the Expert team strongly recommend that the faculty invest all efforts in improving the curriculum, material conditions - renovation and moving to the new building should be top priorities.

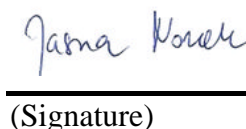
Standard	Compliance level
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially Compliant
2. Quality management	Fully Compliant
3. Academic staff *Mandatory	Substantially Compliant
4. Educational process content	Substantially Compliant
5. Students	Partially Compliant
6. Research	Substantially Compliant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

### Expert Team


#### Chair

	Prof. Dr. Kyriaki Zinoviadou	12/02/2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

#### Member

	Prof. Dr. Jasna Novac	12/02/2025
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