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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA "HASAN PRISHTINA"
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY
M.Sc. VETERINARY MEDICINE

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

December 2024, Prishtina

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INTRODUCTION

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):	17 December 2024
Expert Team:	Prof Reiner Doluschitz Prof Luc Hittinger Prof Jasna Novak Prof Kiriaki 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

Time	Meeting	Participants
08:30 – 09:30	Meeting with the management of the faculty	Arben Musliu Sali Aliu Altane Kryeziu Fatgzim Latifi
09:30 – 10:10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Ardita Kastrati Shkumbin Tafilaj Iliriana Miftari Gezim Hodolli
10.15 – 11.15	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
10.15 – 11.15	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 Goga Prof Fatgzim Latifi
11:15 – 12:15	Lunch break	
12:15 – 13:15	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
12:15 – 13:15	Visiting Farm of FAV –Veterinary Medicine Prof. Reiner Doluschitz	Prof Fatgzim Latifi Prof Driton Caushi

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	Prof. Luc Hittinger Prof. Nadia Manzoni	Prof. Vahid Avdiu
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff	Afrim Hamidi, Endriti Hasani, Kaltrina Berisha, Fatjona Fejzullahu, Mimoza, Lediona Gorqaj , Bekir Bytyqi, Mentor Thaci, Mimoza Jakupi, Erenesa Gorqaj, Njomza Gashi
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff - Veterinary Medicine	Driton Caushi, Imer Haziri, Kurtesh Sherifi, Afrim Hamidi, Arben Sinani, Bardhyl Noci, Blerta Mehmedi, Driton Sylejmani, Mentor Alishani, Hamdi Aliu dhe Nexhat Mazreku
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with students	Blerton Sinani, Ariana Muqa, Lejla Hasani, Erjonë Bresa, Shqiprim Banushi, Rinesa tasholli, Leonit Muqolli, Shkurtesa Hamiti, Blerton Sinani, Arijana Muqa, Majlinda Avdiu. Ermal Sopjani, Arnesa Rudi, Jehona Rrahmani, Ibadet Bajrami, Mjellmë Gashi. Ermal Latifi, Samuel Berisha, Erlind Llapashtica. Kadrita Mehmeti, Ardita Bakia,
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with students - Veterinary Medicine	Aulona Belegu, Melisa Nimani, Edit'h Cena, Krenare Haxhiaj, Eugen Haxholli, Agron, Gjonbalaj, Magbule Kallaba, Njomza Krasniqi, Marigona Xhakli, Edis Krasniqi, Sara Janina, Arblina Pacolli, Zebura Shabani, Fran Nulleshi, Patrik Nulleshi, Ana Munishi
14:45 – 15:25	Meeting with graduates	Rina Demiri, Bajram Jakupi, Krenar Terstena, Xheneta Zekaj, Diana Rexhepi, Rinora Bublaku, Edona Ibrahimimi, Zana Lika, Blerina Mahmuti, Elona Tahiri, Vlera Vladi Diellza Osmani
15:30 – 16:10	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Urim Guta, Bledion Rushiti, Bled Zhuri, Kushtrim Ajvazi, Zenel Bunjaku, Zana Sahiti, Driton Sylejmani, Ervin Ibrahimimi.
16:10 – 16:20	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:20 – 16:30	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Arben Musliu, Sali Aliu Altane Kryeziu Fatgzim Latifi Gezim Hodolli
16:30 – 17:00	Visiting Facilities at FAV	Arben Musliu, Salih Salihu Driton Caushi

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 statistics for students at Bachelor programs, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary grouped by programs and academic years (from 2016/17 up to 2024/25)

Table 1: Number of students enrolled in Bachelor's degree programs at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine divided by Department:

Department	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25
Agricultural Economics	145	133	125	76	66	26	26	16	19
Veterinary Medicine	57	43	52	41	27	18	13	9	14
Plant Production	124	124	117	56	52	27	34	35	48
Food Technology	105	99	97	78	91	81	68	66	44
Business Management in Zootechny	56	31	21	8	4	/	/	/	/
Animal Production	/	/	/	/	/	5	1	11	8

The program under evaluation for reaccreditation is a 5-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine study program with 300 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

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specific to this faculty and to this programme 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. The agricultural sector in Kosovo is still under development and an important element of the national economy. Therefore, agriculture-related study programs are of especially high importance for Kosovo.

A particular positive aspect of the study program under evaluation is the close collaboration with local and national agribusiness-enterprises. This is generally of high relevance in order to provide internships, topics for BSc.-theses and to foster subsequent job opportunities of students. This is of extraordinary importance in Kosovo due to the difficult situation of its labor market. The SER confirms that the study program 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 accordance with the requirements of the labor market in Kosovo, as well as with regional and European integration in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary, Food, and Agribusiness.

The program under evaluation is based on a rudimentary analysis of the labor market, including employment prospects for graduates, further elaborated in standard 4.1. This analysis was developed in cooperation with actors from the labor market and agricultural organizations.

The intended learning outcomes of the study program are in line with the missions of FAV and UP as stated in the SER, with some important deviations further outlined in the evaluation of standard 4.1.

It is stated in the SER that based on the information of informal sources nearly 70% of graduates with the agriculture economics profile are employed and practicing their profession. This can be counted as a sufficient rational argumentation.

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. 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 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 about the appropriate steps to follow after a positive result from the software appeared.

Ethical standards are published on the university website, included in student packs and handbooks for staff and students, and are rigorously monitored. This is confirmed by the SER. In summary it can be concluded that there are clear ethical regulatory standards that govern teaching and research.

According to the following statement in the SER it can be confirmed that the Ethics Commission and other structures are active in monitoring and dealing with cases of unethical behavior, and their decisions are distributed anonymously to ensure transparency and fairness. Based on the Statute, the Regulation, and the Code of Ethics, the Department of Agroecconomics continually shows the rights and obligations of the students.

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 information management system (SEMS) includes relevant, updated and reliable information. Furthermore, concrete action plans are in place to monitor the implementation of the study program).

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

Recommendations for improving the study program, given by previous quality assurance procedures are analysed whoever there is no evidence that the follow up and implementation of measures is done effectively. There is no indication that there is a nomination of a person who is formally given responsibility for this follow up and no special committee that would meet regularly to discuss the progress.

It is not explicitly mentioned in the SER about student involvement. Additionally, the SER is somehow structured differently in the section of standard 1.4.

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)

All study program activities and operations are subject to a policy and review process that ensures adequate and efficient administrative staff and budgetary support.

This is confirmed in the SER.

The SER also confirms that the administrative staff is subject to continuous professional training, which is important for the performance of their duties. Staff trainings are held 3 times a year, which are organized and financed by the rectorate. This has been confirmed by the on-site-visit discussion.

The study program has sufficient administration to support the teaching and learning needs of students and academic staff. This is confirmed in the SER. It is mentioned in the SER that the administrative staff is subject to continuous professional training as mentioned above, including training in foreign languages, computer and other important skills.

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)

Recommendations for improving the study program, given by previous quality assurance procedures, are analysed and partially implemented (SER). Action plans have been developed to address issues identified by experts and concrete improvements have been made based on these recommendations. Examples include increase the number of staff in the department, Action Plan for gender equality. However, these activities should be increased and improved.

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.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Increase student involvement in the respective quality assurance procedures*
- 2. External comments and recommendations should be considered more intensively and efficiently and a team should be designated for following up on expert recommendations regularly.*
- 3. Specific budget allocation to additional professional development of teaching staff is recommended*
- 4. Intensified exchange with comparable programs in international level is recommended*

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

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)

UP Senate in February 2007 decided to establish the Office for Quality Assurance. By the Law on Higher Education and the Statute of UP University of Pristina "Hasan Prishtina" has developed its internal system for quality assurance. The position of a quality assurance coordinator has been installed. The quality of education provided is monitored and reviewed by the Office of Quality Assurance (OFQA). This is confirmed in the SER and in the on-site-visit discussion.

There is a quality assurance policy. However, it is not mentioned explicitly in the SER whether this is publicly available and fully implemented.

Internal quality assurance procedures for the study program are defined by the internal regulations of HEI (for example, quality assurance regulation, quality assurance guideline, etc.).

The policies and processes of the internal quality assurance system which form a cycle for continuous improvement (PDCA) should become further elaborated and more efficiently used.

The position of a quality assurance coordinator has been installed. However, it is not mentioned explicitly in the SER whether this coordinator has been relieved of their teaching obligations. SER indicates that the program must have a dedicated staff to oversee and ensure quality, independent of other teaching obligations.

The SER confirms that UP each year prepares electronic questionnaires for students through which it measures quality, complaints, suggestions or student requests. Aspects of academic staff performance are included as well.

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

It has been repetitively confirmed that the study program fulfils this request. It aligns with the institution's/academic unit's mission and strategic goals.

The study program under evaluation here underwent an adequate and transparent internal quality assurance process and was formally approved by the designated strategic management bodies of the institution. Its continuous improvement is planned. Such a process is explained in the SER in detail. A continuous improvement system should be further elaborated and implemented.

The process for the development and approval of the study program is well-defined by internal procedures as well as external procedures, e.g. submission of the program description to KAA and there undergo an evaluation and accreditation procedure including international experts from suitable fields of expertise.

From the SER it can be quoted that Principal Performance Indicators for this level of study program have been set up. These performance indicators are measured through the forms set

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out in the respective regulation. However, key performance parameters should be highlighted more prominently.

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)

There is a Stakeholder Board established at the faculty. Discussions with members of this board have been taking place during the on-site-visit. International experts and evaluators had the impression that this board is quite active and engaged. The monitoring includes surveys of employers to determine the competences needed in the labor market, analyzes carried out in collaboration with stakeholders and examples of improvements based on stakeholders' evaluations of the study program.

The study program undergoes regular checks to establish whether the estimated workload (ECTS) allocation of students and the defined learning outcomes are achievable, realistic and adequate.

As already mentioned before, the course syllabus determines regular assessments of students' achieved results in the course. (see also SER).

There is a stakeholder survey established. Each academic year, the University of Prishtina through SEMS assesses the academic staff. The assessment results are made public.

In the SER it is announced that processes for monitoring and improving the quality of student placements are clearly defined, consistently implemented and include stakeholder assessments such as student, mentor and employer questionnaires.

The collected information is analyzed and concrete actions are taken to ensure that the program is up to date. Concerning this request the SER can be quoted as follows: "The information collected from all internal and external actors is used for updating. Texts and materials used as references for lectures are constantly updated and systematically published in the SEMS."

All monitoring results and action plans are publicly announced on the website of UP, and all stakeholders are kept informed of changes or improvements in the program.

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

All policies, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the study program are publicly available and such information is easily accessible by all interested parties.

Information on admission criteria, recognition of qualifications, enrolment quotas, syllabuses, learning outcomes, credits, assessment methods, and final qualification are published in a respective regulation (<https://dokumente.uni-pr.edu/>).

It is mentioned in the SER that pass rate and dropout rate information can be found through SEMS. Students who decide to leave the faculty are obliged to deregister as detailed in the respective regulation.

The responsible units for the maintenance of publicly available information on the study program is accurate and is in place and it provides reliable, objective and updated information. It is convincing and the ET trust that UP and FAV regularly update all published information and make it accurate according to the needs of the program and society. This information is easily accessible on the website of the faculty and the website of the University. This is confirmed by respective statements in the SER as well as it has been reported during the on-site-visit discussions.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Reports of surveys and evaluations should be exemplarily provided as documents in the Appendix of the SER.*
2. *A monitoring system for measuring continuous progress of students should become further elaborated.*
3. *Key quality parameters of the study program such as number of applications, enrolment, completion rate, duration of the study and grade overview should be included into the QA mechanism on a regular basis and also provided in the SER.*
4. *Aggregated results of the course evaluations should be provided to the teaching staff, the FAV management and included in the SER.*
5. *Office for Quality Assurance should be better staffed on UP and FAV level*

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

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)

In the SER it is indicated that “*All academic staff from the Department of Veterinary Medicine possess proper documentation as required by applicable regulations approved by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).*” It is however, difficult to determine, whether or not the vacancies are advertised nationally and internationally. It is also not clear from the SER to determine whether or not the processes are clear, objective and transparent and whether or not the best candidates for each position are selected. Finally, from the SER it is also difficult to

determine whether or not the description of the position and employment conditions are clearly indicated for the candidates.

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) (YES)

In the SER it is reported in table 1 that the veterinary program has currently 17 permanent staff, and 8 temporary staff." This can be considered as a correct number of academic staff to conduct the program. In addition, academic staff 'CVs are good. It is also clearly indicated that "UP does not allow academic staff to cover within an academic year more than two teaching positions, one full-time and one part-time". In the SER it is also indicated that "the academic staff respects fully the working hours". This allows the veterinary medicine to have a little less than 50% of their full-time academic staff involved in delivering the study program and a ratio of students to full time academics far lower than the 1:30 which is the usual appropriate ratio for the student's successful achievement of the program's learning outcomes. In addition, as indicated in the SER "besides teaching, each of the academic staff at least twice a week has consultations with students".

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)

This point is partially stated in the SER "*The selection, re-election, and promotion of academic staff at the University of Pristina is determined by the regulation for selection procedures related to the appointment, reappointment, and promotion of academic personnel. For more details about the regulation and the selection and promotion procedures, see the link below. <https://dokumente.uni-pr.edu/>. "However, this document is essentially in Albanian and therefore, difficult to analyze. Considering the advancement of academic staff, in the SER it appears that research activity is an important point as indicated in the following sentences of the SER: "The study program in Veterinary Medicine pays great attention to research activities for academic staff and students. According to the regulation (no. 886, date 27. 04 2022) for promotion of academic staff adopted by the senate of University of Pristina, one of the main criteria for promotion of the academic staff, are the number of scientific articles published in various scientific international journals, indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science. Therefore, promotion of the academic staff provides great incentive to increase the focus on research for all academic staff." Another important point is the evaluation of the academic staff through the questionnaires that are distributed to students... The evaluation results are scored in the regulation for the promotion of academic staff. "*

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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)

Based on the academic staff's CVs it appears that the management of PU allow professional development. It is also indicated in the SER *"The Department of Veterinary Medicine continuously supports the needs of academic staff for academic development, such as exchange of teaching, research projects, participation in scientific conferences, etc."* and also in the sentence *"In addition, the teaching staff attend other training courses, organized by the University of Prishtina and other institutions"*.

It is also mentioned in the SER: *"The head of the Department of Veterinary Medicine invites/holds regular meetings (frequency: monthly) with the academic staff involved in teaching courses of the study program in Veterinary Medicine. The organized meetings offer the possibility for the academic staff to discuss and report on the progress of implementing the syllabus and when the need arises, discuss topics related to the research work of the department."*

However, it should be noted that the newly employed teachers for the delivery of the study program do not appear to undergo adequate training to strengthen teaching competencies before starting their teaching activity at PU, nor to familiarize them with PU's standard operating practices, most importantly QA standards and procedures standards of ethical behavior. In contrast, for research activity, PU and the veterinary medicine department ensure support to the academic staff in the development of their research programs through, for example, the research projects supporting unit that aims to facilitate research activities and the knowledge transfer".

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)

In the annex of the SER, it is indicated that several MOUs have been signed with different companies that are clearly in relation with the veterinary medicine. During the meeting with the stakeholders, the ET could appreciate the quality and the qualification of the external associates. Most of them were happy with their relations with the veterinary medicine and the quality of the students within the study program but also the postgraduates. During that meeting it has been mentioned that if the students of the study program had important theoretical knowledge, their ability to write a research protocol needed to be improved. It was also mentioned that the training for companion animals should be further developed.

It should be mentioned that the participation of external associates in the supervision of final and graduation theses does not appear in the SER. Similarly, the workload and expectations

from the external associates to ensure that the teaching performance is of high quality is not clearly stated in the SER.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Advertise vacancies nationally and internationally*
2. *Set up clear objective and transparent processes for staff recruitment and employed conditions.*
3. *Establish adequate procedures for the selection of the best candidates for each position*
4. *Increase to 50% the number of full-time academic staff who are involved in delivery of the study program*
5. *Improve the transparency and the objectivity of the teacher advancement procedure engaged in the study program*
6. *Set up procedures to ensure that newly employed staff members undergo adequate onboarding aimed to familiarize them with PU standard operating practices, most importantly QA standards and procedures standards of ethical behaviour.*
7. *Encourage external associates engaged in the study program to participate in the supervision of final and graduation theses*
8. *Verify that the workload and expectations from the external associates are clearly agreed to ensure that the teaching is performed at high quality*

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

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 overall objectives of the study programme are formulated in the SER as following:

“The mission of this study program is to prepare specialists and scientists in the field of veterinary medicine, capable of contributing to the improvement of animal health, including food producing animals, accompanying animals that have now become a more integral and social part of society especially in urban areas, to support the prevention of highly pathogenic diseases in food-producing animals, to support the prevention of transmissible diseases (zoonotic), to contribute to food safety and security.”

The intended learning outcomes are formulated in the SER as the following

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- Adequate knowledge on the normal structure and function of the normal health of food animals, companion animals, wild animals in human supervision, fishes and other sea products as well as bees
- Knowledge about animal reproduction, animal hygiene, animal nutrition including the applied technology in production of feed
- Adequate knowledge in animal behavior, animal welfare and animal protection
- Adequate knowledge of causes, nature, course, effects and diagnosis of the diseases as well as treatment of animals from relevant disease as well as transmissible disease (zoonosis)
- Special knowledge of preventive veterinary medicine, protecting animal health and human health
- Adequate knowledge of hygiene and applied technology in production of food by animal origin to be consumed by humans
- Knowledge about forensic veterinary medicine
- Laws, regulations and administrative instructions relevant to above mentioned subjects

While these objectives are aligned with the mission/overall objective of the study programme, they list only the knowledge to be acquired by students which suggests an overreliance on knowledge and an underdevelopment of skills and competences, at least on paper. This is not according to the best practices of writing learning objectives of a programme, which is to formulate them in terms of what the students/graduates will know but also what they will be able to do and what they will be skilled at the end of the programme. In addition, while the overall objectives of the course mention “wild animals in human supervision, fishes and other sea products” as being subject of this veterinary medicine course, in practice the curriculum does not cover these elements, so these inconsistencies need to be corrected.

The labour market analysis of the sector, on which these outcomes are based, has recently not been updated, and while the expert team acknowledges the shortage of statistical data on the Kosovo employment market, it is nevertheless crucial that the programme holders find ways of monitoring the needs of the labour market and aligning the programme objectives to it, either through graduate surveys, through the Advisory board consisting of employer representatives or through close collaboration with the partners in the labour market and alumni.

Comparability with other EU programmes: The curriculum of this study programme has been modelled on the Budapest veterinary sciences programme so the overall learning outcomes of the programme are comparable with similar study programs in EHEA, however this adaptation to the Budapest curriculum took place 13 years ago (in 2012) and requires a re-evaluation and a revisiting in line with latest developments and advances in science and technology in the field. There are many key differences with other Veterinary medicine programmes around the EU. To start with, the Budapest programme is divided in pre-clinical part (4 semesters) and clinical part (6 semesters) and already the first two years include a practical work experience

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in Animal Husbandry and the second part contains weekly clinical hours in Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Surgery, Obstetrics and Animal Reproduction, which this programme does not contain. Also, this study programme is very much focused on the health of farm animals and on supporting the agricultural sector, whereas programmes abroad are much more comprehensive and broad in terms of range.

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 this 5-year integrated study programme in Veterinary Medicine are correctly attributed to EQF level 7, as per EQF and the national qualification standards related to Veterinary Medicine. As it is an integrated study programme, the 4th and 5th year learning outcomes build on the learning outcomes acquired in the first three years of the programme. As the programme is the only such programme in Kosovo, there is no overlap with other study programmes.

However, this study programme ends with the qualification “Doctor of Veterinary Medicine” and it is 10 semesters long. It is not clear to what extent this is harmonised across the EHEA, but many universities have 12 semester long study programmes in veterinary medicine and at the end use titles like the one used for instance in Veterinary University Vienna - “Mag.med.vet.”, which is in line with the Bologna qualifications framework.

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)

The 10-semester long study programme offers a large number of theoretical courses, some of which have practical components, stacked up and leading to a thesis worth 10 ECTS in the final semester of the study programme. Each semester offers a 2ECTS elective course. The overall curriculum content is coherent flowing from more general disciplines to more specific and applied courses in the later semesters. However, the intended learning outcomes in the syllabus are neither presented in a way that would separate general from specific competences nor are they presented in a way that would distinguish between different *levels* and gradations of complexity of knowledge, skills and competences as the students progress through the course. As an example, the learning outcomes of Anatomy I and Anatomy II which follows it are both expressed in an identical way as “1. Explain the meaning of the anatomy of animals, 2. Possess knowledge base to tissues, organs and body entirely.”

The curriculum has a major shortcoming and that is the lack of practical work experience and appropriate arrangements and facilities for students to gain practical experience with animals. For an applied medical study programme, this is a major drawback. The learning outcomes of individual courses are most frequently expressed in terms of knowledge with verbs like “demonstrates knowledge, understanding, defines, describes, articulates, is familiar with”, even in courses that have practical components in the laboratories. Only occasionally transferable skills like independent work, ability to use different lab equipment and similar skills are mentioned as learning outcomes.

The curriculum mentions only in general terms practical work in laboratories and the syllabus estimates the number of classes dedicated to lab work, however, the learning outcomes of the laboratory work are almost never defined nor do evaluation methods reflect this practical work, at least not on the paper.

The course meets the criteria set out in the EU directive 2005/36/EC, for recognition of professional qualifications across EU Member States.

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)

While the SER states that the program is aligned with the relevant EU directives and national qualification standards, no mapping of the program content has been demonstrated to the expert team and it is not clear to what extent the professional associations have been involved in the design of the curriculum.

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)

There is no internship or student practice period in the curriculum for Veterinary Medicine. It is an elective subject only, worth 2 ECTS.

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

The syllabus of individual courses lists a variety of learning activities, ranging from theoretical lectures, to practical lab work, to field trips and group projects, though it is not possible for the team to assess to what extent the program is delivered using all these types of activities.

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)

While the syllabus lists the different examination periods and grading methods, it does not indicate a crucial aspect of evaluation and that is the exact knowledge, skills and competences that are being evaluated and assessed. In most cases and for most subjects, the expert team, therefore, does not know in what form exams are administered (questions and answers, essays, presentations, group work, practical demonstration etc) and therefore cannot claim whether or not assessments evaluate that learning outcomes that are achieved.

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

Yes, the learning outcomes are expressed in terms of student workload and ECTS for every subject in the curriculum.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Revise the objectives of the study programme to reflect the goal of fostering not only knowledge but also skills and competences of students and to correct inconsistencies with the mission of the FAV (e.g. reference to wild animals)*
- 2. Enhance significantly the practical elements and add work experience in farms and veterinary clinics to the curriculum as well as assign ECTS credits to them.*
- 3. Revise the evaluation and assessment of individual subjects in the syllabus to reflect what learning outcomes are being assessed in each exam and how.*

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

5. STUDENTS

In the academic year 2024/2025, there was no open call for admission in the summer phase, only in the autumn phase, because the study program did not have accreditation during the summer of 2024. This meant that there was extremely low enrolment (14 students), considering that the program is seeking accreditation for the enrolment of 70 students per year. This academic year may have been an exceptional year due to unfavorable circumstances, however it reflects also a wider downward trend in enrolments, as exhibited in this table:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
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57	43	52	41	27	18	13	9	14
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The enrolments should be carefully monitored continuously in the years to come as they are decreasing steadily, and such low numbers may make the program unsustainable in the future.

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)

Conditions for admission of students are set by the University of Prishtina, which announces the competition for enrolment of students publicly. The procedure is open to all interested students. The students admitted to the program possess a high school graduation diploma, as per UP regulation.

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)

There is no evidence of neither student progression monitoring practice nor student completion incentives in this program. Delays in students passing exams are common and the student union has recently fought for increasing the number of examination periods per year from 3 to 5. This reflects a broader problem that goes beyond lack of monitoring tools for progression and completion rates and that is the tolerance of protracted study times.

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

The program has no incoming international students and therefore also no conditions in place to welcome them or support them, nor measures in place for offering foreign language training, such capacities do not exist. On the other hand, the outgoing students are supported by one professor and secretarial staff and report very positive feedback in terms of facilitation of their international exchange. Many students take advantage of strategic partnerships with several universities abroad and report good experiences. Precise numbers or statistics were not provided. The level of English of student representatives was also advanced. However, the conditions are not in place for upscaling or mainstreaming such support for international mobility and too much hangs on the shoulders of one academic staff member, their availability and willingness to provide support and advice.

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 resources for student support beyond academic support are very limited. Students do not emphasize the importance of any support staff beyond their academic mentors, meaning that academic professors are also career counsellors, work experience matchmakers, academic exchange counsellors, mental health counsellors and have many other hats on. Students do not demonstrate a high level of awareness of student rights or disability/learning difficulty rights/mental health support/counselling. They do, however, report a good chain of reporting via the class student representatives who take up their concerns and issues with the right committees in the faculty. The main topic which these student representatives seem to deal with is ensuring that enough exam retake dates are provided to students, which shows the lack of awareness of other student rights.

Students are provided with information about vacancies, internships and international exchanges via a centralized newsletter of the University of Prishtina's career development center, however, many work opportunities are found through informal contacts.

Student life outside of lectures and practical lessons is not centered around the faculty, as most students are working students and the limitations with infrastructure and dislocated facilities do not allow for a campus life to thrive. Extracurricular activities and contribution to the social life of the faculty are therefore not in the scope of activities of this faculty.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Mainstream support and counselling for international exchange/mobility and make it less dependent on the engagement of academic staff.*
2. *Regularly collect, analyse and act upon student progression and student completion data, for the purpose of internal quality improvement.*
3. *Introduce student support services dedicated to improving the quality of university life and learning of students and empower the student union to monitor and enhance this process.*

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

6. RESEARCH

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

If the research objectives appear here and there in the SER, defined scientific/applied research objectives do not clearly appear in the SER in a research development plan for the veterinary medicine. It should be noted also as indicated in the SER that *"In general, financial and logistical support for research is limited..."* It is also important to mention that *"clear policies are specified in regulation no. 465, dated 03.02.2018 of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" and Administrative Instruction 1/2018 of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the recognition of platforms and international journals with peer review"*.

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.

This is clearly indicated in the SER: *"The Veterinary Medicine Research Program pays great attention to research activities for academic staff and students. According to the regulation on promotion of academic staff no. nr. 886, date 27. 04. 2022 , approved by the Senate of the University of Prishtina, one of the main criteria for the promotion of academic staff is the number of scientific articles published in various international scientific journals, indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science. Therefore, the advancement of academic staff provides a major boost to increasing focus on research for all academic staff. "*

It is also indicated that *"The academic staff of the Veterinary Medicine department is consistently committed to publishing its research work in international scientific journals, which are indexed in the platforms that are also recommended and accepted by the University of Prishtina (UP). "* However, it should be noted that when looking at the CVs, this does not appear so clear for all academic staff, all CV's not being up to date.

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.

This standard is fulfilled as shown by SER that stated *Through various scientific publications and active participation in conferences, sessions, international symposia, members of academic staff testify the results of their research activity in their professional field. "* and also *"The staff members of the Department of Veterinary Medicine have implemented joint projects in the field of scientific research with professors from interdisciplinary fields of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary as well as professors from other international universities. In addition to this, staff members participate in scientific conferences organized in different EU countries. "*

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.

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This standard is fulfilled as stated in the SER *“Through various scientific publications and active participation in conferences, sessions, international symposia, members of academic staff testify the results of their research activity in their professional field.”*

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Define scientific/applied research objectives in the study program that are reflected in the research development plan of PU.*
2. *Clarify that the implementation of the study program is ensured through sufficient financial, logistic and human resources provided by the institution for achieving the proposed research objectives.*

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

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, requiring assistance from fellow students for those 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

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correspondence that the endangering power lines would be relocated in the foreseeable future, however it is highly unlikely that the works on the displacement of the electricity line and the internal refurbishment will be finished by the start of the academic year 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.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 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.*

2.

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

Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
Quality management	Substantially compliant
Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
Educational Process Content	Partially compliant
Students	Partially compliant
Research	Substantially compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Substantially compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

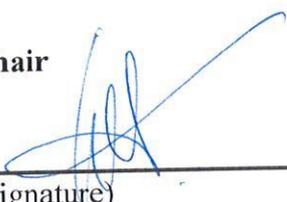
OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program M.Sc Veterinary Medicine 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 a number of **50 students** to be enrolled in the program per year.

However, the Expert team strongly recommend that the faculty invest all efforts in improving material conditions - renovation and moving to the new building should be top priorities.

Expert Team

Chair


(Signature) **Prof. Dr Luc Hittinger** **10.02.2025**
(Print Name) (Date)

Member


(Signature) **Prof. Dr. Reiner Doluschitz** **10.02.2025**
(Print Name) (Date)

Member


(Signature) **Nadia Manzoni, Student Expert** **10.02.2025**
(Print Name) (Date)