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UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA ''Hasan Prishtina''

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

26 Novemeber, 2024



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INTRODUCTION

Institutional Reaccreditation Procedure at University of Prishtina

Date: 18th and 19th of November, 2024

Sources of information for the Report:

- SER
- Additional documents
- Site visit interviews

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

Accreditation Manual

Site visit schedule

Insti	itutional Re-accreditation Procedure at University of Prishitna
On site evaluation:	18 and 19 November 2024
Expert Team:	Prof. Dr. Melita Kovacevic
	Prof. Dr. Magdalena Platis
	Dr. Mauro Zarrelli
	Ms. Marija Vasilevska
	Arianit Krasniqi
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ilirjanë Ademaj Ahmeti
	Milot Hasanxhekaj

Agenda 18 November

Time	Meeting	Participants/Comments
08:30 – 09:30	Meeting of the expert panel at KAA office	
		 Prof. dr. Arben Hajrullahu, Rector - University of Pristina Prof. ass. dr. Naim Jerliu, Vice-Rector for Teaching, Academic Personnel Affairs, and Publications - University of Pristina
10:00 – 11:15 institution (no slide presente	Meeting with the management of the institution (no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion)	 Prof. ass. dr. Albana Berisha Qehaja, Vice Rector fo Budget, Finance, and Public-Private Sector Cooperation - University of Pristina Prof. dr. Avni Hajdari, Vice-Rector for Scientific Research, Projects, and Innovation - University of Pristina
		5. Prof. ass. dr. Rozafa Basha, Vice-Rector for Internationalization and Academic Exchange - University of Pristina
		K.D. Arbresha Turjaka, Deputy head of Steering Council - University of Pristina
11.20 – 12.20	Meeting with Quality assurance representatives and Administrative services	Besnik Loxha, Acting Generaly Secretary – University of Prishtina
		2. Lumnije Bajrami, Director of International Relations Office - University of Pristina
		 Qazim Tahiri, Acting Director of Information and Communication Technologies Office – University of Prishtina
		4. Fitim Seferi, Acting Director of the Office for Research and Sponsored Projects – University of Prishtina
		 Shkumbin Tafilaj, Career Advisor - Career Development Center - University of Pristina

	6. Nazime Hasani, Acting Director of Student Affairs Office – University of Prishtina
	 Dhurata Hyseni, Coordinator of ECTS - University of Pristina
	8. Emanuel Gjoleka, Acting Secretary of Faculty of Philology - University of Pristina
12:20 – 13:20 Lunch	
	Prof. dr. Blerim Rexha, Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Pristina
	2. Prof. dr. Mimoza Ibrani, Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Pristina
	3. Prof. ass. dr. Blerta Perolli, Faculty of Education - University of Pristina
	4. Prof. dr. Kreshnik Hoti, Faculty of Medicine - University of Pristina
13:25 – 14:25 Meeting with the teaching staff	 Ass. dr. Dren Gërguri, Faculty of Philology - University of Pristina
	6. Prof. dr. Arta Basha Jakupi, Faculty of Architecture - University of Pristina
	 Prof. ass. dr. Gentrit Berisha, Faculty of Economics - University of Pristina
	8. Prof. ass. dr. Donikë Qerimi, Faculty of Law - University of Pristina
	Berat Fazliu, Student PhD - Faculty of Medicine - University of Prishtina
	2. Roni Veseli, Student MA - Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina
14:30 – 15:20 Meeting with students	3. Rrezarta Thaqi, Student MA - Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina
	4. Malsor Krasniqi, Student MA - Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary - University of Prishtina, SNV

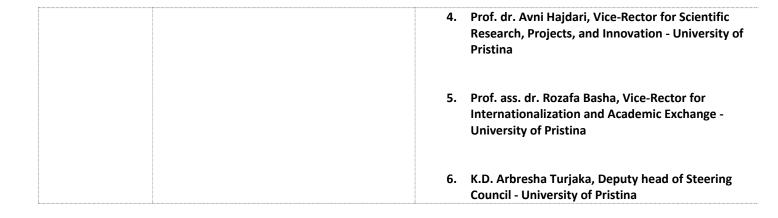
		5. Gent Bunjaku, Student BA - Faculty of Law - University of Prishtina
		6. Erina Blakiqi, Student BA - Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina
		7. Leart Damoni, Student BA - Faculty of Architecture - University of Prishtina
		8. Korab Latifi, Student BA - Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences - University of Prishtina
		 Florentina Dushi, Alumni - Faculty of Philosophy - University of Prishtina
		2. Kaltrina Fejzullahu, Alumni - Faculty of Economics - University of Prishtina
		3. Almira Ljaiç, Alumni - Faculty of Economics - University of Prishtina
15:25 – 16:15	Meeting with graduates	4. Olti Pireva, Alumni - Faculty of Economics - University of Prishtina
		5. Arnisa Aliçkaj Berisha, Alumni - Faculty of Philosophy - University of Prishtina
		6. Valentina Gara, - Faculty of Philosophy - University of Prishtina
		7. Yllkë Hoxha, Alumni - Faculty of Philology - University of Prishtina
		8. Alba Hajdini, Alumni - Faculty of Philosophy - University of Prishtina

Agenda 19 November

Time	Meeting	Participants/Comments
		1. Ardiana Pajaziti, Director of KultPlus
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	2. Klevis Vaqari, Program Manager · Coalition of NGOs for Child Protection in Kosovo
		3. Albina Metaj, Head of Human Resources and Training Department – ProCredit Bank

		4. Zenel Bunjaku, Executive Director of Initiative for Agricultural Development of Kosovo
		5. Vjollca Çavolli, Executive Director - Kosovo ICT Association
		6. Lulavere Behluli, Technical Expert in Education - Save the Children
		7. Blerand Stavileci, President of BC "Sigal Prishtina"
		8. Agron Shala, Direcor of Hidrometeorological Institution of Kosovo
	10:05 – 11:05 Meeting with Deans of Faculties	Prof. dr. Kajtaz Bllaca, Dean - Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences - University of Prishtina
		2. Prof. asoc. dr. Avni Puka, Dean - Faculty of Law - University of Prishtina
		3. Prof. dr. Hazir Haziri, Dean - Faculty of Art - University of Prishtina
10:05 – 11:05		4. Prof. dr. Bekim Baliqi, Dean - Faculty of Philosophy University of Prishtina
		5. Prof. dr. Arben Musliu, Dean - Faculty of Agricultur and Veterinary Medicine - University of Prishtina
		6. Prof. ass. dr. Florian Miftari, Dean - Faculty of Physical Education and Sports - University of Prishtina
		7. Prof. asoc. dr. Blerim Saçipi, Dean - Faculty of Education - University of Prishtina
		8. Prof. dr. Violeta Nushi, Dean - Faculty of Architecture - University of Prishtina
		Melita Kovacevic & Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti:
11:10 – 13:10	Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure	Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences - University of Prishtina
		2. Faculty of Philosophy - University of Prishtina
		3. Faculty of Philology - University of Prishtina

		4. Faculty of Physical Education and Sports - University of Prishtina
		5. Faculty of Education - University of Prishtina (administration)
		Magdalena Platis and Milot Hasanxhekaj
		1. Faculty of Law – University of Prishtina
		2. Faculty of Economics – University of Prishtina
		3. Faculty of Arts – University of Prishtina
		4. Faculty of Architecture – University of Prishtina Mauro Zarrelli, Marija Vasilevska and Arianit Kransiqi:
		Midulo Zarreni, Marija Vasnevska and Arianic Kransiqi.
		Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina
		2. Faculty of Mechanical Engineering - University of Prishtina (spaces for FAV)
		3. Faculty of Civil Engineering - University of Prishtina
		4. Faculty of Medicine - University of Prishtina
		5. New building of Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences - University of Prishtina
13:20 – 14:20	Lunch and Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA	
		 Prof. dr. Arben Hajrullahu, Rector - University of Pristina
14:20 – 14:35	Closing meeting with the management of the institution	 Prof. ass. dr. Naim Jerliu, Vice-Rector for Teaching, Academic Personnel Affairs, and Publications - University of Pristina
		3. Prof. ass. dr. Albana Berisha Qehaja, Vice Rector for Budget, Finance, and Public-Private Sector Cooperation - University of Pristina



A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

University of Prishtina (UP) is the main national higher education institution in Kosovo. It was officially established by the Assembly of the KSA of Kosovo on November 18, 1969, following the approval of the Law on the establishment of the University of Prishtina (UP). The university began its operations on February 15, 1970. University of Prishtina provides education, research and serves to the society. It provides artistic creativity, professional counselling and other areas of academic activities. The Statute of the UP specifies the rules and processes at the University. The new Statute has been updated in July of 2024 and it opened new possibilites for the institutional development.

Initially, the University of Prishtina consisted of a few foundational faculties, including the Faculty of Philosophy, the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Engineering, and the Faculty of Law. Over the decades, the university expanded its academic offerings. The UP consists of 14 faculties/academic units, it has around 1200 employees of which around 900 are academic staff. The UP has more than 40 000 students, studying at all levels, bachelor master and doctoral.

INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

The institutional evaluation consists of 11 standard areas through which the institution is evaluated.

1. PUBLIC MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES (ESG 1.1)

Standard 1.1 The higher education institution has a well-defined mission statement that comprises three main pillars: teaching, research, and community service and it is publicly available.

The University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina," defines itself as a higher education institution through its statute and official documents. As also reported in the provided SER document, the mission of the University of Prishtina (UP) as defined in its new Statute (2024 revision), emphasizes its role as an autonomous public institution of HE. This mission incorporates several critical elements, reflecting the university's dedication to education, research, community service, and societal development.

The mission reflects UP's distinct position within Kosovo's higher education system and teaching at UP is identified as one of the institution's primary roles, reflecting its commitment to providing high-quality education preparing students for the national labor market needs and global competitiveness. UP emphasizes its role in integrating European standards and promoting regional and international engagement. The development and revision of UP's mission statement but also other changes of the University organization have involved a transparent and inclusive process, seeking input from internal and external stakeholders during revisions, demonstrating inclusivity although not completely alignment with some specific expectations.

Form the on-site visit has clearly emerged that adopted changes still could be refined nevertheless, as the University Statute must be approved by the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, likely revision and needed refinements appear almost impossible or at least very complicated to achieve due to bureaucratic processes. This is an issue although not depending by the University Organization and operating Staff, nevertheless the issue still persists because, as also in other EU countries, the University organization should be formally envisaged with a written enactment falling within the framework of the national legislation, serving as guideline but, indeed, not approved by an external body and even less by a political although elected representatives.

Standard 1.2 The institutional mission is clearly reflected in the strategic plan, decision making and long-term institutional objectives.

UP has developed a Strategic Plan for 2023-2025 to address current challenges and meet labor market demands in Kosovo in collaboration with the Governing Council and Rector, the plan aims to improve UP services through five primary pillars:

- 1. Enhancing Educational Quality and Learning Outcomes: this focuses on improving education quality and learning outcomes via curriculum enhancement, teaching method improvements, and ongoing assessments.
- 2. Promoting Research and Innovation: fostering a suitable research environment, supporting innovative projects, and enhancing the University's scientific and artistic contributions.
- 3. Contributing as Community Service and Societal Impact: social development, foster civic democracy, and address community needs through outreach initiatives.

- 4. Boosting Internationalization and Global Competitiveness: aligning programs and research with international standards and forming partnerships with international institutions.
- 5. Strengthening Institutional Development and Operational Excellence: streamlining administrative processes, ensuring effective governance, and upgrading infrastructure and resources.

The mission and objectives of this University is very generally e broadly defined and this comes to normal for a big university as UP for Kosovo likely adaptable to virtually any university context and open to accommodating multiple specific missions as the new Statute does for UP. This flexible approach can be viewed as both pragmatic and practical to account for all the different Faculties and their individual and specific missions/objectives. On the other side, this approach can lead to a lack of unity within the institution, leading to the creation of a mere "envelop" and thus missing or at least pauperising the University mission.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Refine the mission to emphasize UP's distinctive role in Kosovo's higher education;
- 2. The mission and the objectives of the single Faculties should concur to the mission of the whole University, this is still not clear and the single Faculty seems not fully integrated with a specific position within the global mission of the UP.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (ESG 1.1, ESG 1.6)

Standard 2.1 The HEI has developed a comprehensive strategic plan that covers all aspects of its operations for a minimum of five years. This plan includes teaching, learning, research, artistic work, quality assurance, student services, investment in infrastructure, and community service initiatives, leadership, HR, internationalization etc. The plan was created in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure it meets the needs of all parties involved.

The University of Prishtina's strategic plan is comprehensive and reflects a clear commitment to institutional development addressing critical domains such as teaching, research, quality assurance, and community engagement while incorporating stakeholder input and monitoring mechanisms. However, certain areas, such as long-term planning, financial integration, and governance cohesion, require further attention to be fully compliant.

The developed strategic plan is for 2023–2025, covering teaching, learning, research, quality assurance, student services, infrastructure investment, leadership, human resources, and internationalization. While the three-year timeframe reflects medium-term priorities, it may fall

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short of the five-year minimum recommended by the standard. A stated in the SER the adopted strategy is informed by previous planning cycles (e.g., 2017–2019 and 2020–2022), suggesting a commitment to continuity and regular updates, nevertheless as also reported in the previous Expert Report this timeframe is not consistent with an overall long-term approach of the University in relation with the strategy and the mission of the single Faculties.

The adopted strategic plan outlines the main strategic objectives, operational plans, financial considerations, and monitoring mechanisms, building and implementing a structured approach for this University to growth and to achieve the stated mission to educational quality, research advancement, community engagement, and infrastructure development. Nevertheless, some objectives appear ambitious given UP's constraints in terms of governance, financial resources, and external dependencies (e.g., regulatory approval for statutory changes).

The strategic plan that has been adopted delineates key strategic goals, operational strategies, financial aspects, and evaluation methods, establishing a systematic framework for this University to expand and fulfil its stated mission in terms of educational, research, community involvement and improving infrastructure. However, certain objectives seem over optimistic considering UP's limitations in governance, financial capacity, and reliance on external factors (such as regulatory approval for statutory amendments).

The absence of a clearly defined long-term vision beyond 2025 limits the strategic plan's ability to address future challenges and also some critical issues for certain Faculty such as in particular the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary. The reliance on short planning cycles could severely limit the effective capacity to implement initiatives requiring sustained, long-term investment.

From the onsite visits has clearly emerged that some improvements are on the path mainly in terms of administrative labour forces and the many refurbishments works are ongoing in the different visited Faculty, but e.g. for Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary location in terms of lessons rooms, laboratory and working space, they are still questionable and showing critical issues. The new location should be available soon to staff and students and it seems unrealistic the current status being postponed for more than one year.

Standard 2.2 The strategic planning is supported by the annual and long-term budgeting process, allowing for frequent updates and adjustments.

The UP has made progress in establishing systems for reporting, managing and monitoring the institutional performance, as well as incorporating risk assessment into financial planning. A structured reporting and management system that supports operational efficiency and provides evidence of progress toward its institutional goals has been implemented and further used for data collection tracking, and reporting across academic and administrative units. The system lacks of full integration across all units and still need to be optimised also because

generating regular reports for faculties, administrative units, and governing bodies to provide evidence of progress on strategic goals, quality assurance processes, and financial management can overload the daily work of all these operative units.

The PU incorporates risk assessment into financial planning, particularly in areas of budget allocation and external funding dependencies. The declared efforts to diversify funding sources through partnerships, research grants, and international collaborations demonstrate proactive risk management.

Standard 2.3 The HEI has established a responsible, efficient, and effective internal organization structure, procedures and policies, with the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making.

The UP demonstrates a commitment to transparent governance and active stakeholder participation, this is supported by developed internal policies based on new Statute, regulations and an organogram, which define the institution's internal structure and responsibilities. These documents are publicly accessible, ensuring transparency and participation. The new adopted Statute clearly outlines governance structures, offering a clarified and novel frame of job and responsibilities which likely will ensure accountability at all institutional levels.

The roles of external owners (e.g., government authorities and particular the Parliament) is somehow controversary, and the approval of the new Statute by the Parliament likely pose some unclear issue for the academic governance autonomy in compared to other EU Universities which define their own organization and regulation within the framework of the national laws voted by the Parliament. This approach safeguards academic freedom and institutional independence remaining obviously within the limits of the national laws.

UP involves academic staff, administrative staff, and students in its consultative and decision-making bodies including representatives from multiple stakeholder groups, staff and students,

UP encourages student participation in committees such as quality assurance and ethics councils as active contributors to institutional governance. Mechanisms are in place to solicit student feedback and takes them into account for further decision-making processes. Form the on site visit, some students may feel underprepared to engage in committee discussions or hesitant to assert their opinions, thus promote their aware representative roles will strengthen their participation and effectiveness contribution within such committees. The election process for student representatives is designed and regulated by internal policies

Standard 2.4 The HEI has appropriate and sufficient administration that demonstrates effectiveness and supports the HEI in daily operations.

The UP's administration effectively supports the institution's daily operations and strategic objectives through structured policies, digital transformation efforts, and targeted services for students and staff. UP has a structured administrative framework likely ensuring specialization and clarity in roles across its operational units and the daily support to the

different Faculties. Administrative responsibilities are distributed among centralized offices and faculty-level units ensuring that the needs of both academic and non-academic stakeholders are addressed. While role definitions are clear on paper, improved coordination and communication between central and faculty-level units could be envisaged. Although increase labour force has been indicated in the SER reported, in certain departments, limited number of staff, such as research administration or IT services, can affects the institution's efficiency in handling new challenges and issues. The University has taken significant steps toward digital transformation, using digital platforms to streamline communication and administrative processes such as the Information Management System (IMS) likely enhancing operational efficiency and timely access to information for students, faculty, and staff. More training is envisaged to better expand the functionality covering the need for from academic and administrative. The University has implemented performance evaluation mechanisms for administrative staff, which include feedback from students and academic staff.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Ensure that strategic goals are realistic, with a balanced consideration of institutional capacity and external constraints.
- 2. The Institutional Strategy is still covering a short-to-medium timeframe which may limit the definition of needed short needs for some of the Faculty.
- 3. The current process to internationalise the University should be more supported by specific professionals such as expert in EU call and project proposal.
- 4. The strategic plan should be distributed in terms of responsibility and monitoring process at all levels rather than management only.
- 5. Provide training for administrative staff to ensure the effective use of digital tools, emphasizing uniformity in platform usage across units.
- 6. Provide training and orientation sessions for representatives to enhance their understanding of governance processes and empower active participation.
- 7. Develop a centralized digital repository where all internal regulations and policies are consistently updated and easily accessible.
- 8. The critical issue related to the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Unit is mandatory to be solved within one year time or valid alternative should be planned and put in action

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (ESG 1.6)

Standard 3.1 The HEI demonstrates that it has sufficient financial resources in the short and medium term to reach its mission and objectives set out in the strategic plan and can demonstrate financial sustainability.

The University of Prishtina is a relevant national public university and is fully aware of the importance of sound financial planning and adequate budget allocation. Its activities are planned in accordance with the existing strategic plan, but at the same time the new governing body is already considering changes and further needs that will need to be addressed in a new institutional strategy. Mission and strategy are aligned, and budgeting is sufficient to ensure institutional sustainability.

According to the SER, the University of Prishtina operates its financial planning and management within the guidelines of several key legal frameworks, both national and institutional. They have a budget structure from 2020 to 2026, including income from different sources, such as government and institutional income.

Unfortunately, in 2024 the budget was reduced by approximately €1 million, and although this reduction did not jeopardize institutional activities, it required adjustments to maintain financial stability.

Capital investment and modernisation of infrastructure are of paramount importance for improving overall institutional and educational performance. Although there is a significant budget allocation for these purposes, which tends to increase over time but still varies from year to year, it is obvious that an even stronger financial injection is and will be needed to keep up with the challenges and demands that universities are facing. To mention just one challenge, the digital transformation that is becoming a must for modern universities and the context that academic staff and students are facing.

Another serious issue is the building and infrastructure for the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary. This is an expensive facility that requires adequate infrastructure and modern equipment, but it is not clear at this stage whether the planned budget is sufficient and whether it will allow the project to be completed.

Standard 3.2 The HEI ensures appropriate funding for educational activities

Planned and implemented educational activities are part of budgeting and financial planning, and educational activities receive adequate financial support. However, the way in which the budget is distributed is not fully transparent in terms of the categories given. Although this is

not solely the responsibility of the institution, it would require a modernisation of the presentation of the budget.

University allocates funding for acquisition of literature, students services and development of related equipment with an aim to support good quality educational process.

Standard 3.3. The HEI has officially approved a research budget that is sufficient to support its institutional research objectives, including funds for research equipment and facilities.

The allocated budget is sufficient for educational purposes and ensures financial sustainability. However, a weakness of Kosovo higher education as a whole, and this does not exclude the University of Prishtina, is still the lack of sufficient funding for research, including both research itself and more investment in human resources and infrastructure and facilities. In particular, some areas of research are financially demanding, such as natural sciences, medicine, etc., and require specific costs for accessories and maintenance of equipment. These aspects of budgeting need to be recognised by the main funders.

It is also not clear whether the existing budget and the planning for the next period take into account the very specific, unfavourable location of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. At present it is scattered and hosted by other faculties. It is likely that this type of management of educational programmes is also more expensive and not necessarily of the same quality as it would be if there were dedicated facilities and adequate learning and teaching and research conditions for the respective fields.

The University of Prishtina has a fairly ambitious research funding plan, and this is definitely something to be recognised as a very positive institutional attitude towards research. Research funding is in line with the Budget Circular and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, but it should also be emphasised that research in general should be more focused and financially supported.

Standard 3.4 A senior governing body (or Specialized Office) is responsible for overseeing and managing the institution's budgeting and accounting functions. They ensure that financial auditing reports are regularly prepared and published.

The University has an appropriate management system and a dedicated office to deal with the overall financial system, including financial audit reports and monitoring. Financial audit reports are regularly prepared and submitted to the University Council. According to the status of the University, the Central Administration is responsible for professional, administrative and technical matters related to accounting and finance.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

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- 1. Try to ensure sufficient budget for infrastructure development and spatial planning;
- 2. Develop mechanisms for adequate allocation of budget for supporting research;
- 3. Invest more and allocate additional funds for research infrastructure which is prerequisite for performing updated and relevant research;
- 4. Ensure active participation in budget allocation at faculty level to optimise spending processes;
- 5. There is a need to modernise and make more transparent the way the budget is presented, using appropriate categories that clearly show what is being funded by each.

4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, RESPONSIBILITY, AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY (ESG 1.1 ESG1.8)

Standard 4.1 The HEI has policies and effective mechanisms for monitoring unethical behaviour and all the employees and students are informed thereof.

The PU system to ensure academic freedom, responsibilities, and public accountability through its existing bodies and mechanisms is supported by a number of relevant documents:

- University Statute, 2024
- Regulation no. 1/751, dated 19.7.2013 of the code of ethics
- Regulation no. 1/629, dated 14.7.2016, of the work of the Ethics Council
- Regulation no. 857, dated 11.4.2017, for disciplinary measures and procedures against the academic staff of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"
- Regulation no. 2/747, dated 1.10.2019, for selection procedures related to the appointment, reappointment, and advancement of academic staff at UPHP
- Regulation for prevention and protection from sexual harassment and harassment in UP

The UP actively promotes academic integrity through a consistent approach comprising a solid ethical framework, educational and informative initiatives, and transparent processes for handling violations. Central to this commitment is the Code of Ethics, which serves as the foundational document outlining the values and standards expected of both academic staff and students, supported by various regulations, including those governing disciplinary measures and the work of the Ethics Council. In addition, in 2024, Professor Dr. Richard Hall, a Fulbright visiting scholar was involved in revising the University's Code of Ethics, helping to address key issues and proposing improvements to ensure the code aligns with international standards and best practices. On the top of that, three women professors are now part of the Code of Ethics Review Committee, ensuring dignified representation of women's perspectives.

Reported case or harassment have also imposed a strong University action to ensure that all members of the university community are aware of and adhere to these ethical standards. The university has integrated the Code of Ethics into its SEMS platform, requiring mandatory acknowledgment from staff and students, thus showing a proactive approach not only raises awareness but also fosters a culture of accountability and responsibility among all the

beneficiaries of the University as place of knowledge development and formation either technical, social and personal of staff and students.

In addition to these structural measures, the university emphasizes education as a key component of promoting academic integrity. Investment in antiplagiarism software have been made. Regarding the challenges related to AI tools and services the UP aware of the actual and future challenges has launched several seminars and lectures with international experts to educate staff on the use and impact of AI in the field of education and research.

Faculty members engage in projects aimed at enhancing students' understanding of ethical practices in research and academic work and thus initiatives addressing emerging challenges, such as the impact of Artificial Intelligence on academic integrity, are implemented by seminars and workshops. Furthermore, the university has established clear procedures for addressing violations of academic integrity, such as plagiarism and harassment. These procedures are designed to be transparent and fair, ensuring that any allegations are investigated thoroughly and that appropriate actions are taken to uphold the institution's ethical standards.

Standard 4.2. The HEI ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social activities).

The UP has demonstrated a commitment to ensuring clarity and accessibility of information for internal and external stakeholders. UP communicates information on its academic staff, research initiatives, and social activities through its website and official publications. Details of academic staff qualifications, research projects, and teaching activities are available online, moreover social activities, such as community outreach programs and academic events, are actively publicized through social media platforms and newsletters. Also, the scientific and research achievements, such as publications and collaborations, are periodically reported.

UP share evaluation outcomes with stakeholders and governance bodies, providing transparency in institutional performance and implicitly incorporating the feedback mechanisms to act for the recommendations.

The UP publishes students' final theses in a publicly accessible repository, which significantly contributes to transparency and academic integrity. This practice not only allows for the dissemination of knowledge but also enables the academic community and the public to access and review the research conducted by students.

The SER reports that "The University informs stakeholders about the results of previous evaluations" and this is somehow contradictory as from the onsite discussion this did not emerge in addition it has stated that not all the Deans have read the actual SER document.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Revise the Code of Ethics at least at every 4 years (for example, at the beginning of a new mandate of the Ethics Council);
- 2. Ensure that the information about academic staff and research activities, in multilingual, is consistently updated;
- 3. Dissemination of evaluation outcomes to the wider public is limited, reducing external stakeholders' awareness of institutional progress.

5. QUALITY MANAGEMENT (ESG 1.1, ESG 1.2, ESG 1.7, ESG 1.9)

Standard 5.1 The HEI has established and implemented a highly structured and efficient quality assurance and improvement system, which is continuously being improved.

The University of Prishtina (UP) has implemented a quality assurance policy - REGULATION ON QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EVALUATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA adopted in 2016 to establish mechanisms and procedures for quality assurance and evaluation; this regulation is publicly available at the set of documents on the webpage (where it is the document called Regulations for the Assurance and Evaluation of Technology at the University of Pristina, with no. 4-132, dated 30.12.2016). The institutional interest towards quality improvement in all areas is reflected in the university strategic plan adopted for the period of 2023-2025 and publicly available.

The university has several procedures in place to consistently monitor, evaluate, and enhance the performance of its quality assurance system, for study programs and research, for example: Regulation for Basic – Bachelor Studies, Regulations for Master's Studies, Regulations for Doctoral Studies; Regulations on the Structure and Working Principles of the Center of Excellence in Teaching, - Regulation of Financing Scientific, Artistic, and Sports Activity Research. These all have been recently adopted.

At the University of Prishtina the entities responsible for the process of quality assurance are: UP Management, Central Commission for Quality Assurance, Office for Academic Development, and Deans (**SER**, **page 74**). Internal institutional assessment is the responsibility of the Office for Academic Development and the Vice-Rector for Development and Quality.

During the **site visit**, the discussion with the management of the institution and the quality assurance representatives revealed to the ET is better defined in the Statute of the institution and that the university has sufficient resources to ensure the functioning of the quality assurance system, although the need for more financial support would be important, especially from the new location/building perspective.

Standard 5.2 The HEI has quality policies and procedures that include the collection and analysis of relevant data, with the purpose of ensuring and improving the quality of all institutional activities (academic activity, student services, administration, etc.). These procedures include all stakeholders of the higher education institution (students and external stakeholders - employers, alumni, representatives of professional organizations, civil society organizations and internal stakeholders).

The University of Prishtina has set up mechanisms to collect and analyse data on its processes, resources, and outcomes; more precisely, to monitor the quality of academic and administrative activities, the UP Senate, upon the proposal of the Quality Assurance Commission, has approved three types of evaluation instruments - questionnaires, which are: questionnaire for academic staff; questionnaires for administrative staff; questionnaires for students. The data collected are analyzed and a specific report reveals the main conclusions and proposes concrete recommendations. The Quality Assessment Report and Recommendations for Quality Improvement was provided to the ET as additional document and shows several sets of recommendations from all categories of internal stakeholders, some being common aspects, for example: computer centres at the faculty should be equipped more with modern equipment; sufficient funds should be allocated for equipping faculty research laboratories with more contemporary equipment and tools; a strategy for modernizing administrative services at faculties should be created.

The improvement process was confirmed during the site visit by the students regarding the library renovation and the digitalisation, but they would also express a need for more staff in laboratories to guide them (architecture area), more new equipment (medicine area), more practice as having hands on (electrical engineering area). Moreover, the evaluation results are used by departments and teachers to improve courses highlighted by students; for example, the discussion with teachers showed that they improved their teaching methods by providing more case studies or practice-related experiences to students.

The evaluation questionnaires in SEMS is mandatory for students. Students participating in the meeting at the **site visit** explained that the allocated period to fill in the questionnaire would be much better to be more flexible, as it is a must when they need more information to access and cannot get the information until they fill in the questionnaire; therefore, there is the risk that students do not to pay enough attention when answering. They also mentioned that they were not aware of the final report based on their questionnaires.

Statistical data is used for quality assurance purposes, as well as in supporting decision-making at all units: at the Institutional Level (The Senate, UP Management, Studies Committee, Central Commission for Quality Assurance, Office for Academic Development, Office of Academic Affairs) and at the Academic Unit (AU) Level (Academic Unit Council; The Studies Committee at the level of the University; The Management of the AU; The Relevant Department; Coordinator for Academic Development at the University) (SER, pages 86-87). Collection of data is also done from external stakeholders, such as graduates and employers, all the participants in the meeting confirming their several occasions to provide their feedback to institution.

Standard 5.3 The HEI established a formal process for the design and approval of its study programs.

The study programs at the University of Prishtina follow an effective internal quality assurance process and have been formally approved by the higher education institution; plans for their continuous improvement are in place. According to the Regulation on Quality Assurance at the University of Prishtina, the evaluation that is carried out for accreditation of the programs include the following components: quality of teaching and learning; quality of scientific activity; international cooperation; graduates' perceptions of study quality; employers' perceptions of the quality of graduates; quality of student affairs services; quality of organizational culture and management (Additional document 1).

The ET recognizes the institutional effort to consider in the procedures and policies for the development and approval of the study programs the internal and external stakeholders approaches. Several recommendations are considered in the report elaborated on the questionnaires on quality assurance, while other recommendations are generated from other types of interaction, for example with the graduates and employers. The Report on Graduates elaborated in 2023 have produced data and analyses that measure the results of teaching and learning (student success and progress), and understanding the information on the effectiveness of study programs and formulating educational and decision-making policies. Clear recommendations in this report focus on advancing teaching methodology and instructional materials, subjects, literature, integrating technology in teaching etc.

The university has defined key indicators for monitoring the quality of the delivery of the study programs and the methods of collecting the necessary information. Many indicators are defined with specific target values in the <u>Strategic Plan</u>, but not all of them. Other indicators are generated from SEMS.

Standard 5.4 The HEI periodically monitors and reviews the study programs to ensure that the programs are in line with mission and the institutional strategy. The monitoring of the study programs involves active stakeholder participation.

The procedures to monitor, review and improve the quality of study programs at the University of Prishtina are defined and in place. For example, the <u>Syllabus Review Guide</u>, supports academic/teaching staff to adequately write/review/revise the syllabi of their courses so that these better reflect the content of the course and methodologies applied. Other relevant documents refer to Regulation for Basic – Bachelor Studies, Regulations for Master's Studies, Regulations for Doctoral Studies.

ECTS allocation, learning outcomes and workload estimates are feasible, practical, and suitable. Deans and teachers participating in the meeting during the **site visit** confirmed their interest in cooperation when define or review the course content and the ECTS allocation and that the ECTS allocation is verified at the faculty level. Even the new appointed deans were aware of the process of correct identification of the learning outcomes and the learning objectives.

The results of the monitoring processes and the resulting action plans are published on the HEI website; for example the <u>Report on Graduates</u> include their recommendations. The revised and up-to-date <u>study programs</u> are published on the HEI website, with ECTS, opportunities for students in the structure of the faculty and objectives.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Revise the REGULATION ON QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EVALUATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA and make it publicly available (make sure all links are the right ones) in the next year; other documents must be revised, such as the Code of Ethics (in maximum 2 years);
- 2. Communicate the report based on the internal stakeholders questionnaires (academic staff, administrative staff and students) to make them understand that their responses are relevant and considered in a future development plan;
- 3. Revise the period of time allocated to students to fill in the questionnaire when evaluation the quality, as they need to have a more flexible time to be able to provide proper answers;
- 4. Define target values for all indicators to be able to monitor the progress in the delivery of the study programs.

6. LEARNING AND TEACHING (ESG 1.2, ESG 1.3)

Standard 6.1 The HEI has established policies and procedures that apply to all study programs. The institution actively monitors the implementation of these policies and procedures to ensure their effective realization.

Every year, faculties at the University of Prishtina elaborate and publish an online report on WORK AND TASK FULFILLMENT; an example include the annual reports of the Faculty of Civil Engineering. With this occasion, several key performance indicators (KPIs) are calculated – scientific papers, number of students, teachers' hours, number of graduates, statistics of results achievement in exams for BSc and MSc students, academic staff advancement, budget spendings. Annual reports also provide an extensive overview of the achievement of strategic and specific objectives, and the strategy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure alignment with higher education sector needs and challenges (SER, page 24-25); these metrics are calculated once a year by senior administrators in charge of academic affairs, the institution's quality body, and the senior academic body. The university overall performance is then formally reported to the governing structure.

At the University of Prishtina, all study programs are carefully monitored and supported by specialized internal structures. The curriculum development process includes 5 stages: 1. Review and Analysis, where current programs are reviewed and compared with accredited

international university programs; 2. Stakeholder Consultation, when different inputs from students, academic and administrative staff, graduates, labor markets, international institutions, and other stakeholders are gathered; 2 SWOT Analysis to reveal the characteristics of the study program and the need for improvement; 4. Proposal and Documentation, when the relevant department proposes the study program based on infrastructural and personnel capacities and sends it to the Studies Committee; 5. Evaluation and Approval, stage where the Studies Committee examines the proposal, and after necessary improvements, forwards it to the Faculty Council, Office for Academic Development, Studies Committee in the Rectory, and the University Senate before submitting it to the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (SER, page 103, meetings with the deans and teachers, during the site visit).

Teachers gain new experiences and trainings, participate in conferences, or visits abroad and transfer this knowledge to students (SER, page 29). To assist academic staff in creating appropriate syllabi, the University of Prishtina has published a comprehensive guide; it provides detailed instructions on including learning outcomes and ensuring the proper allocation of ECTS.

Standard 6.2 The study programs' intended learning outcomes are formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices; they are aligned with the published mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution, and they are publicly available. *Mandatory

The University of Prishtina engages in a continuous review and improvement process for its learning outcomes. Feedback from students, faculty, industry partners, and other stakeholders is regularly collected and analyzed to ensure that the learning outcomes remain relevant and up-to-date with current educational and industry standards. Examples of learning outcomes: 1.Undergraduate Programs: Clearly defined learning outcomes for undergraduate programs focus on foundational knowledge, critical thinking skills, and practical application in relevant fields. 2.Graduate Programs: Learning outcomes for graduate programs emphasize advanced knowledge, research skills, and professional competencies, preparing students for leadership roles and specialized career (SER, page 102).

The study programs intended learning outcomes are written from a student perspective and they distinguish knowledge, skills, and competences (published and explained on the HEI website). A good example is for the <u>Primary Education Program</u>, where 13 learning outcomes are considered; however, intended learning outcomes do include the development of generic and specific competencies but not clearly distinguished into skills, knowledge and values. Program holders participating in the meeting during the **site visit** confirmed that they benchmark the program with other similar ones in Kosovo and abroad.

Standard 6.3 The HEI demonstrates that each study program is designed considering the correlations between learning outcomes, teaching methodology and assessment.

*Mandatory

Programs at the University of Prishtina are designed to ensure a strong correlation between learning outcomes, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods; this facilitated through the Electronic Study Management System (SEMS), where students can access detailed information about their courses and evaluations. Also, continuous monitoring by quality assurance mechanisms ensures that teaching and assessment practices effectively support the achievement of learning outcomes (SER, page 112).

The study programs are presented in the form of a series of documents which include: the general and specific objectives of the programs; the curriculum, with the subjects' weight expressed in ECTS credits and courses distributed over the study period; example – Faculty of Philology, <u>BA</u>. The university has high potential to establish a collaborative approach between departments to ensure the successful implementation of interdisciplinary study programs.

The design of the programs encourages student mobility within the institution through credit transfers and the accumulation of ETCS credits. The institutional is applying the <u>Regulation on the Students' Academic Mobility</u>. The acquired courses from a university from abroad, which are similar or identical to the courses that are provided by the study program of the respective faculty, must be accepted without any assumption or obstacle; the decision and the record of the Study Committee must be attached to the student's file.

Teachers at the University of Prishtina participate in workshops and conferences abroad. The participants in the meeting during the **site visit** confirmed that they update the study program's content regularly with the latest scientific research findings.

Standard 6.4 The HEI ensures that ECTS allocation is appropriate.

The ECTS credits for each course are allocated according to the guidelines provided in the specific guide (A Short Guide for Reviewing and Revising Syllabi), publicly available. Calculation of ECTS at the University of Prishtina refer to: 1 ECTS = 25 hours of (estimated) work done by the students; it is obligatory to include the student's own working/learning time (self-study) when calculating the number of ECTS (not only the teaching hours/presence of the teaching staff).

Some teachers participating in the meeting at the **site visit** considered the ECTS allocation based on the importance of the subject, which is not the right approach, since the ECTS allocation should be done in accordance with the actual student workload, based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process, or other procedures.

Standard 6.5 The study program's intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors.

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At the University of Prishtina, Enhancement of Educational Quality and Learning Outcomes is a clear strategic direction; this objective focuses on improving the quality of education and ensuring that learning outcomes and include curriculum development, teaching methodology improvements, and continuous assessment practice; learning outcomes are part of the survey addressed to academic staff (if learning outcomes are defined and achievable). The learning outcomes of the study programs align with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for European Qualifications of Higher Education (SER, pages 12, 75, 85, Additional document 2).

The University of Prishtina has paid a lot of attention to make a difference between the subjects taught at a bachelor level compared to the more advanced teaching and learning in a master program. Therefore, the intended learning outcomes of the study programs differ at master program from the learning outcomes achieved at the undergraduate level of the study programs. The website of the university include descriptors of these, for example – Faculty of education, program of Primary education.

Standard 6.6 If the HEI study programs lead to degrees in regulated professions, they are aligned with the national and EU Directives and recommendations issued by the national and international professional associations.

At the University of Prishtina, the consultancy and professional services component for industry and other institutions is facilitated through faculty institutes, board participation, advisory body cooperation, and evidence-based practice publications. Moreover, the Center for Career Development develops cooperation agreements with about 150 companies and institutions. Since 2024, the SEMS platform has evolved and enables the creation of accounts for all external partners, allowing direct connections between students and the representatives of the labor market (it provides numerous opportunities, such as internships, training, and other professional development activities, enhancing students' access to practical experiences and their growth in collaboration with the industrial sector and employers) (SER, pages 129, 182, 183).

The University of Prishtina has considered recommendations issued by professional associations. The meetings with graduates and employers during the **site visit** confirmed the good cooperation with the university, from guest lecturing to workshops, open sessions, to internships, having a cooperation of long term with staff and students and the management of the institution.

Standard 6.7 The higher education institution ensures student-centred teaching and learning.

Teachers at the University of Prishtina use different pedagogical methods in study programs delivery in accordance with the intended learning outcomes, from theoretical approach to practical cases, from traditional to digital tools, such as Kahoot. They encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving and creative and critical thinking. Both teachers and students participating in the meeting during the site visit confirmed this.

Teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population. A Centre for Students with special needs has been established allowing disabled and visual impairment students to access literature in a nice and friendly environment. A lot of interest has been shown to digitalisation, although there is still a lot of room for improvement. Therefore, ET considers that the University of Prishtina provides the study programs to be executed using modern technology.

Standard 6.8 The HEI ensures that evaluation and assessment are objective and consistent and ensures that intended learning outcomes are achieved. (ESG 1.3.)

The university ensures that the criteria and method of assessment, as well as criteria for grades are published in advance and all students are informed about it. Professors use different methods for assessment; for example, according to the <u>Regulation on Mater Studies</u>: "The ways how the exam organization can be: theoretical/ practical/ laboratory/ performative which can be a test or oral questions and answers, or a presentation of an artistic activity in the case of the Faculty of Arts".

Teachers use a variety of assessment methods of students knowledge during and at the end of the semester. Teachers and students participating in the meetings during the **site visit**, confirmed that students receive feedback on the evaluation results that identify their strengths and weaknesses, and if necessary, guidelines for the learning process based on these evaluations, in general, as common mistakes made and what the right answers were.

Standard 6.9 The HEI ensures that a functional procedure and mechanism for student appeals is in place. (ESG 1.3.)

Students are informed about a clearly defined appeals procedure at the University of Prishtina. They have the right to review their written exam assessments with their teacher and can submit a written complaint to the Dean if they disagree with the evaluation (SER, page 109).

The <u>Regulation on Bachelor Studies</u>, for example, in the article 20 states that: "1. The student has the right to file a written complaint to the dean of the academic unit against the grade received. 2. The deadline, the reasons for filing the complaint and the procedure for forming the commission for student assessment are defined in Article 114 of the UP Statute". ET considers that this is not the right practice and should be revised. Of course, students could contest the grade, but once final, it should not be refused; also, students could have the right to

upgrade the grade, before the end of the year, but not to refuse the given grade. Students participating in the meeting during the site visit were open to such an alternative, although considered the current practice as favourable.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Make sure that the intended learning outcomes include the development of generic and specific competencies distinguished into skills, knowledge and values for all programs;
- 2. Create a regular training for teachers and program holders to better understand the process of ECTS allocation; consider this allocation based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process;
- 3. Reconsider the appealing system of the current practice when students can refuse a grade to a system which encourage more responsibility by giving the students the right to context the grade and then to ask for an upgrade by taking part in another exam. This should be regulated to a specific number of extra-examination, all grades being reflected in the SEMS;
- 4. Make sure that all courses include two types of students'evaluation continuous (during the semester) and final (in the examination session).

7. RESEARCH

Standard 7.1 The HEI has developed a research strategy which is integrated within the institutional strategy and aligns with its institutional mission. This strategy is reflected in a detailed action plan, which includes clearly specified performance indicators and is made publicly available.

The University of Prishtina is the core research-oriented higher education institution in Kosovo, and many steps taken at the institutional level attest to this status. Research is carried out in a number of different research areas and it is implemented across faculties as either basic or applied research. There are also intentions and new regulations that require the involvement of students. In particular, the new statute emphasises the role and relevance of research and enables the development of different mechanisms to increase research productivity. Research activities are an integral part of the University of Prishtina Research Strategy, which is also accompanied by an Action Plan. The document is publicly available.

The existing strategy with a newly adopted statute is an impetus for more intensive research activities at the institutional level, it will also trigger additional individual motivation and will most likely contribute to an overall higher research productivity, which is still insufficient.

The University has set up a unit to support researchers, both junior and senior, and to help them apply for projects. As Kosovo academics have recently been able to apply for HORIZON project programmes, it is expected that more UP researchers will apply and that the institutional support will mean a lot.

The SER has expressed a number of positive plans and intentions to improve research across all faculties and disciplines. The near future will require very focused monitoring and support and will show whether the improvements will materialise. A new university leadership has an important task and challenge in its mandate to further develop university performance.

University has records of their research productivity and they keep track of research performance and publish reports.

Standard 7.2 The HEI ensures that academic staff are committed to the achievement of high-quality research work and/or professional activity.

As mentioned above, a new statute supports research and indeed sets higher minimum criteria for research productivity for all academic staff. This was seen as a positive and motivating change by the majority of participants during the site visit. Of course, these criteria are still relatively low compared to other European universities and additional efforts will be needed to keep up with the pace of researchers in the European Research Area.

It is important to note that the University has performed much better in research in recent years than in the relatively recent past. However, there are still large disparities between fields, research areas and individual researchers. We can assume that the new criteria for academic promotion will also motivate researchers to be more productive, but this is still *pro futuro* and needs to be followed and closely monitored.

Encouraging and requiring academic staff, from the most junior to the most senior, to publish in internationally recognised journals is a significant improvement in institutional attitudes to research. It is important to note that an increase in the number of citations has already been observed, according to various sources. The same is true for the number of papers published, which has almost doubled in four years.

However, despite the many positive changes and improvements that are taking place and are likely to change the status and output of research at the university, research performance is still a weak point. The overall average output of publications per person at institutional level is still low. There are still not enough research projects being carried out, especially those evaluated and approved by recognised funders, and income from research projects is still relatively

modest, in particular considering the size of the institution. This needs to change. Insufficient promotion of the research culture has also led to a lack of skills in presenting and reporting on the activities of research projects. The list of projects is not properly reported, without a clear distinction between research and professional projects, with many lacking adequate information. It can be assumed that more research activity will also improve this aspect of research performance.

Standard 7.3 The HEI ensures that the academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

University has started to record all outcomes related to research activities and their productivity. The recording of individual and domain outcomes, as well as the collection of information on where and what has been published, also with what impact, provided more detailed information also on the quality and content of the research carried out.

Students are now more often involved in research activities that are approved and funded internally by the university, and this is an additional format for establishing a better link between research and teaching. Research-based teaching is an important institutional component that supports high quality learning and teaching. This is even more articulated at Masters and PhD level.

Overall, ET found that the University is implementing the whole range of different mechanisms and using different tools to stimulate research activities and to better align research and teaching on the one hand, but also to become a more productive research institution in general. However, there are still challenges that need to be carefully considered.

Level of compliance: Partially compliant

Please note: Compliance for research, considering that there are three standards within the standard area, does not allow for substantial compliance, which would actually be appropriate in the case of the evaluated institution; the options are either full compliance or partial compliance as soon as one standard is not fully positively evaluated; ET believes that this needs to be reconsidered.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Invest more in research infrastructure and modernise facilities;
- 2. Research culture needs to be nurtured across all research fields;
- 3. Distribution of budget need to be stimulating and transparent in order to support excellence in research but also to support overall research development;
- 4. Additional skills need to be developed to report on research activities; academic writing needs to become an obligatory training;

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5. Innovation and transfer technology, as one of the research impacts, still need to be more emphsised.

8. STAF, EMPLOYMENT PROCESSES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ESG 15.)

Standard 8.1 Teacher recruitment is in line with national legislation, internal regulations in effect and it is based on objective and transparent procedure.

The University of Prishtina has in place the - REGULATION FOR THE SELECTION PROCEDURES REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT, REAPPOINTMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA "HASAN PRISTINA" (Translation 20, as document). The institution has separated the career evolution into two direction – call for new position versus promotion which is managed internally. According to this regulation, criteria for appointment include: (1) Educational activity - Appendix I (2) Research and professional activity - Appendix II (3) Artistic activity - Appendix III (5) Quantitative assessment of candidate activities - Appendix V. (4) Service activity - Appendix. IV. All appointments for titles as well as the duration of employment are made in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Statute of the University of Prishtina. The other direction of promotion is based on competitive and meritorious for all positions. Management of the institution, deans and teachers explained this process and confirmed the abovementioned aspect during the **site visit** to the ET.

According to the same regulation, the selection procedure at the university for appointment, reappointment or advancement is done in a transparent manner and with the announcement of the public competition for the relevant position; the competition for appointment, reappointment and promotion is announced by the decision of the senate, after the approval of the proposals of the faculties (Translation 20, as document). The selection of the best candidates for each position is clearly stated for different academic titles: full professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer and tutors.

Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment (<u>university regulations</u>, including the Code of Ethics for teachers and students). The process is also regulated for the external staff; in this case, of an external staff, a reference for pedagogical ability is also accepted from the head of the department/program or the dean of the relevant academic unit, in which the candidate has completed the necessary work experience, which serves as a temporary replacement of certificates from the QPM but which it is not evaluated with points (Translation 20, as document).

Standard 8.2 The higher education institution has enough permanent academic staff adequately qualified for the delivery of the study programs.

The University of Prishtina ensures that there are enough qualified academic staff to carry out the study programs and conduct scientific and professional activities at the required level. The

<u>Strategic Plan</u> includes specific indicators and targets related to this issue. The academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), and during the **site visit**, the discussion with the teaching staff revealed that they are happy that according to the new Statute they will have the opportunity to focus either on more teaching, or on more research direction of professional development.

The teaching load is reasonable and the teachers participating in the meeting during the **site visit** are satisfied with it. The academics' workload aligns with relevant legislation and by laws, regulations issued by competent bodies, etc. The university ensures an adequate number of qualified academic staff to deliver study programs effectively which includes maintaining a high percentage of staff with doctoral degrees and ensuring compliance with workload regulations (SER, page 150).

The workload of academic staff is closely monitored by the Office of Coordinator Academic Development and Quality (SER, page 103). The university provides information that the academics' workload ensures the appropriate distribution of teaching obligations, professional and/or scientific work, professional and personal development and administrative duties (including mentoring of students) and community service; this compatibility is guaranteed thanks to the specific teaching hours set for the staff, which allow them to engage in scientific research and other activities for the community (SER, page 103).

Members of academic staff who are involved in delivering professional bachelor study programs have appropriate and relevant qualifications in accordance with the legislation and qualifications framework. The discussions during the site visit with the teaching staff proved the expertise of the staff in the field of their teaching subjects.

Standard 8.3 The promotion and re-appointment of teaching staff is based on objective and transparent procedures and policies which are publicly available, which include the evaluation of excellence, and they arise from the higher education institution's mission and strategic plan.

At the date of the ET visit, University of Prishtina is currently in the process of drafting the performance card, which will further strengthen the performance evaluation system of the academic staff; this scorecard is a tool that will measure staff performance in several areas, including publications, community activity, and professional and academic engagement (SER, page 146).

To encourage excellence in teaching through new methods, the <u>Strategic Plan</u> of the University of Prishtina includes specific indicators and target associated to these, such as: Academic staff qualifications (80% of the academic staff have the appropriate qualifications); Continuous training of academic staff (50% of the academic staff participated in training related to teaching at least once with a minimum of 6 hours); Provide internal training on new teaching methodologies (10 training groups); Access to the exchange of experiences (5 new international cooperation agreements).

The **University of Prishtina** proves that the promotion of academic staff into higher grades is based on excellence and important achievements considering also the **s**cientific discipline, high-impact publications, projects, supervision of final thesis, textbooks, feedback from the students etc. In the Regulation of financing scientific, artistic, and sports activity research at the University of Prishtina it is stated that the university has in place a Scientific Research Publications Incentive Program and that scientific activities acceptable this are mainly international congresses, conferences, symposiums, artistic and sporting events organized abroad (Translation 28, as document).

The university has implemented a staff performance evaluation system that includes feedback from students, supervisors, peers, and self-assessment. The results of this evaluation are considered when promoting and reappointing teaching staff, as well as renewing their contracts, as the meetings with the deans and teachers confirmed during the **site visit**. The staff evaluation issues are regulated by the Statute, the Regulation for Quality Assurance, and the Regulation for the Use of Evaluation Results (SER, page 142).

Standard 8.4 The higher education institution ensures and supports academic staff in their professional development.

The University of Prishtina has set up a structured mechanism for the professional development of academic staff, providing the opportunity to follow various modules offered at the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). The attendance of these modules is mandatory for advancement and meeting the requirements of promotion standards, ensuring that academic staff are up-to-date with the latest skills and knowledge in their field (SER, page 147).

The <u>USER MANUAL FOR STUDENT ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SEMS)</u> includes not only a section for students 'training, but also for the academic staff training with aspects describing in details subject configuration, grade transfer requirements etc; this serve as an important guide which can be used whenever is needed. Another important guide is the Syllabus Review Guide.

For staff mobility, University of Prishtina follows the Regulation no. 2/111, dated 14.7.2017, for academic and student mobility in UP (SER, page 73). A <u>call for academic staff</u> mobility is available at the date of the ET visit, with clear application procedure, deadline and remuneration and logistics. Deans and teachers participating in the meetings during the **site visit** confirmed that they have many opportunities to travel and participate in Erasmus exchanges, in conferences, and get financial support from the university for that.

The University of Prishtina provides concrete training sessions for external collaborators, (mainly for those coming from the business sector or from other institutions from abroad). These sessions relate to aspect, for example: how to prepare and deliver lessons, and comply with regulations and practices in higher education, including ECTS credits, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment methods (SER, page 149).

Standard 8.5 The HEI ensures that its external associates have adequate qualifications and work experience to deliver study programs in line with the program's objectives and intended learning outcomes.

External associates include the latest research, trends and know-how from the labour market in the teaching process. The discussion with the graduates and employers during the site visit showed their support and engagement in programs at the University of Pristina. Some of the participants would like more internship period (agriculture area) and agreed that the Industrial Board has got a more important role in the latest year in many aspects related to teaching and research for the students' benefit.

The appointment of external members is decided by the Council of the academic unit based on the reasoned proposal of the department (Article 26, Regulation for Bachelor Studies). They also provide regular mentorship to students; participants in the meeting with the employers, during the site visit stated the need for more cooperation between the mentor of the university and the mentor in the company during the practical stage of the students.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Create more visible long-term operational plan for developing academic staff that is in line with the institution's mission and strategic plan, not only as part of the strategy, but generated from the strategic approach and being an independent document;
- 2. Enhance the cooperation between academic staff and representative from the companies / institutions during the practical stage of the students and their mentoring process.

9. STUDENT ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES (ESG 1.4, ESG 1.6)

Standard 9.1 An admission policy is clearly defined and is made publicly available.

University of Pristina has a clearly defined conditions for the admission requirements to the study programs. The Statute serves as the foundation for regulating student admissions, further detailed by the Regulations for Bachelor and Master Studies, which outline clear admission processes and procedures.

According to the University's Regulations for Bachelor Studies (annexed in the SER), articles 6-8, candidates eligible for enrolment include those with secondary education and the state matura exam or four-year secondary education without the matura, with additional criteria for those educated outside Kosovo per the UP Statute. The number of students, admission criteria, entrance exams, results announcements, appeals, and final results are outlined by the UP Senate through a public competition. To manage admissions, the academic unit appoints committees from regular academic staff, with specific responsibilities defined by the unit council, ensuring members do not serve on both admissions and complaints committees. Candidate selection follows competition criteria, with preliminary results

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published online, allowing candidates to file complaints within a set deadline, after which final decisions and results are promptly posted.

According to the University's Regulations for Master Studies (annexed in the SER), articles 3-4, the Faculty Council proposes the number and conditions for new student admissions, with the University of Prishtina Senate approving the public competition announcement. Candidates for master's studies must meet specific ECTS credit requirements, with additional criteria or differential exams for applicants from unrelated study fields, as determined by the Faculty. Candidates with recognized foreign diplomas may also apply. Selection is based on UP Statute criteria and accredited program conditions, overseen by a commission of faculty members appointed by the Faculty Council, which also assigns a Complaints Committee to address appeals. Deadlines for applications, complaints, and result announcements are set by the competition. Student registration is completed at the University's Central Administration, with ID cards issued by the faculty's IT service after verification.

At the start of the academic year, the University organizes orientation days for newly enrolled students. Representatives from the Student Parliament are also actively involved, offering support to new students during this period.

The Statute and the Regulation for Bachelor studies also regulates the recognition of periods of study and has prescribed procedures for recognition periods of the study.

SER highlights that all information and data about the admission process is shared on the University's website. The University's website features a dedicated tab for the admission process for international students, providing guides for both students and academics.

The Evaluation Team concluded from reviewing the website that all necessary information about the institution is transparently available for prospective students, including details on programs and courses, program requirements, and student rights and responsibilities.

The University of Pristina is striving to place students at the center of their academic experience. Students and graduates expressed that the academic staff provides support whenever needed.

Standard 9.2 The HEI collects and analyses information on student progression and takes appropriate actions to ensure students completion of the study program.

Based on the SER, regulations, and meetings with administrative and academic staff, students, and graduates, the Evaluation Team concluded that the University has a robust system for monitoring students' progress. This system includes tracking progress through exams, study offices assigned to each program, and the Career Development Center.

Consultation hours for students are mandatory for all academic staff. These consultations are particularly important after exams, providing students with an opportunity to address their concerns and seek guidance. Academic staff are required to include their consultation hours in front of their offices. The evaluation team learned from the meetings and the SER that the University has introduced a pilot online consultation system this year. Through the SEMS system, students can now schedule virtual

consultations with their professors. This initiative aims to enhance accessibility and flexibility in student-professor interactions.

Finally, the University is following the student progression and competition rates through its Quality Assurance Office and the SEMS system. The SER shared that measures are undertaken in cases when the study progression and competition rates not good. The available data in the SER indicates a significant discrepancy between the number of students enrolled in the academic years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 and the number of graduates in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024, suggesting a gap in the expected graduation rates. The need for appropriate actions to address student progression and completion rates should be formalized based on systematic monitoring and analysis. The University should formalize a structured process for monitoring student progression and completion rates and implement targeted actions to address identified gaps, ensuring improved graduation outcomes.

Standard 9.3 The HEI ensures appropriate conditions and support to outgoing and incoming students (national and international students).

The University of Pristina is dedicated to promoting international cooperation and encouraging students to apply for available international exchange programs. The Office for International Relations facilitates support for students participating in these mobility programs, as outlined in the SER. The University's website features a dedicated section for international cooperation, providing information on open calls, international educational fairs, and International Week. To motivate students, the University employs various methods, including info sessions that explain the conditions and requirements for the different exchange opportunities.

As per the additional documents received from the University of Pristina from December 2023 to November 2024, the University actively engaged in international mobility programs through CEEPUS and Erasmus+. Under the CEEPUS program, 68 students and staff participated in mobility opportunities at European universities. Through Erasmus+, 227 students from the University of Prishtina took part in mobility programs outside Kosovo, highlighting the University's commitment to fostering international academic experiences.

As per the SER and its additional documents it can be concluded that there is a regulation for on the student academic mobility and recognition of the ECTS credits for students who have been part of the international exchange program. Among the documents regulating is the Learning Agreement (LA) document and their Transcript of Records (TOR) that is suppose to be submitted to the coordinator.

Based on the SER and the Guide for International Students and Staff it can be concluded that University provides dedicated support for international students through its Office of International Relations and a specialized guide that outlines application procedures and integration steps. To enhance accessibility, several courses are offered in English, including three Master's programs entirely in English, attracting a global audience and fostering academic diversity. By combining strong support systems with multilingual opportunities, the University creates an inclusive environment that promotes mobility and enriches its educational community.

One of the weaknesses highlighted in the SER is the limited outreach to international students. To address this, the University should leverage its global partnerships to actively promote its programs and attract more incoming students.

Standard 9.4 The higher education institution ensures 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.

The University of Prishtina is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students, offering tailored resources to meet diverse needs. The evaluation team met a representatives from the administrative teams from different sections who are highly motivated and engaged. They were eager to share their positive stories and to improve their work with an aim to support the students in their studies. Each study program has an administrative referent to assist students with challenges, and specific quotas and scholarships ensure representation and support for minority groups and students with special needs. However, the students expressed a desire to reduce the amount of administrative work they are currently handling.

The Center for Students with Special Needs provides essential resources, while trained staff offer ongoing assistance across academic units. The SER presents that this Center aims to improve the support available for students with disabilities, providing essential resources and tools to help them overcome academic challenges and achieve success in their studies. The SER also shares the link to the Facebook profile of this Center where all its activities are visible. In addition, the University has created a special scholarship to support students with special needs, as per the information shared in the SER.

Additionally, the Career Development Center prepares students for the workforce through training, career guidance, and internship opportunities. From the administrative staff met during the evaluation visit the Evaluation Tema learned about the "eCareer" Platform - official platform of the Career Development Centre for professional orientation, career education and counselling for students and graduates. The Evaluation Team would like to acknowledge the work and enthusiasm of the Career Development Center.

In addition to all this, the Evaluation Team during the evaluation visit learned that the University organizes soft skills courses for the students, among which training for time management and effective communication.

Despite the range of available services, the students expressed a desire for more leisure activities.

Set of scholarship opportunities are ensured for the students among which scholarship for vulnerable groups of students, students with special needs and for the ones maintaining an average grade above 9.0. These scholarships are awarded through competitive processes and open calls, with detailed information accessible on the university's website and via faculty references, as the Evaluation Team learned by the available documents in the SER and from the discussions during the evaluation visit.

This comprehensive support system reflects the University's commitment to inclusivity and empowers students to achieve their academic and professional goals.

The University has a well-designed and user friendly website where information for the students services, activities, regulations and all possibilities are stored. The website provides information in Albanian and English language.

The University of Pristina has drafted a Student Handbook, but as the Evaluation Team learned all needed information are provided for the students also through the SEMS System. The students and graduates also shared that they are informed about all procedures and regulations.

The SER specifies that information regarding complaint and appeal procedures is publicly accessible on the University's website and outlined in student handbooks. It details the procedures, including the steps involved and the responsible offices and bodies overseeing the process.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The University should formalize a structured process for monitoring student progression and completion rates and implement targeted actions to address identified gaps, ensuring improved graduation outcomes;
- 2. The University should complete and distribute the Student Handbook, ensuring it is widely accessible across the institution. The handbook should provide comprehensive information on admission, progression, recognition, certification, regulations, student rights and responsibilities, disciplinary procedures, relevant officer and commission roles, and potential penalties;
- 3. Enhance the range of leisure activities available to students by introducing more diverse and inclusive options. This could include organizing social events, hobby clubs, or recreational outings to foster relaxation and community engagement.

10. LEARNING RESOURCES AND FACILITIES (ESG 1.6) *Mandatory

Standard 10.1 The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research.

*Mandatory

The University of Prishtina is predominantly located in Prishtina, with a total of 14 faculties, strategically positioned near the Central Management/Rectorate, Central Administration, and the National and University Library. This close proximity promotes a cohesive academic atmosphere, enhances accessibility, and enriches the city's dynamic academic and cultural environment.

The University utilizes 21 facilities, comprising 86,111.00 m² of internal space allocated for the faculties and 4,401.00 m² dedicated to the Rectorate and the University Library. These interior spaces are designed to meet modern teaching standards, ensuring they are well-lit, warm, clean, and equipped with amenities that provide a comfortable learning environment for students and optimal working conditions for teaching staff. The premises are owned by the University.

As prescribed in the SER the University is focused on enhancing its human resources and infrastructure, coupled with the digitization of services. Significant changes has happened in the last couple years in terms of infrastructure within the University among which is the opening of the Center for Students with Disabilities.

During the site visit the evaluation team had the chance to visit the following Faculties and their premises: Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Medicine, New building of Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The Evaluation Team was informed that he Faculty of Physical Education and Sports will soon move to a new building who is already constructed and is near to the ones which they are already using it. The Evaluation Team noted an urgent need for new premises for the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. Additionally, most of the classrooms in the faculties visited are well-equipped for delivering study programs, with the majority being digitalized.

The laboratories at the University are equipped and actively utilized by both academic staff and students. However, the University faces an ongoing challenge in recruiting and retaining qualified technicians to support laboratory operations.

The University has implemented valid software across various faculties, as confirmed by the SER and verified during the evaluation visit conducted by the evaluation committee.

Most of the academic staff have adequate office space, and nearly all the faculties visited by the Evaluation Team have facilities that are being adapted to accommodate students with special needs, including the installation of elevators. However, accessibility remains limited, a challenge acknowledged by the University in its SWOT analysis as a weakness. The recently opened Center for Students with Special Needs is a new initiative, and its impact will require time to be fully evaluated.

The Evaluation Team learned that the Rector plans to support all faculties, especially the ones who do not have such, to establish and open food service facilities for students.

The SER reports that a senior staff member at the University of Prishtina is assigned with the responsibility of overseeing and developing infrastructure and resources.

Standard 10.2 The HEI ensures adequate library resources for their study programs.

The University of Prishtina libraries are equipped with reading and group study rooms, organized by academic disciplines. They have a dedicated library with up-to-date academic literature in Albanian and foreign languages, covering all areas of study offered. The collection, regularly updated with titles from the last 10 years, includes resources from well-known publishers to meet students' and researchers' needs.

As shared in the SER, libraries provide sufficient seating for students in each program, ensuring comfortable study conditions. An online catalogue (www.biblioteka.uni-pr.edu) and subscriptions to local and international electronic resources offer easy access to academic materials. The libraries operate beyond regular hours and use reliable systems to manage loans, ensuring efficient access for students and staff. In addition, the students from University of Pristina can use the national library. The Evaluation Team received a list of library book inventory from the Faculty of Philology, List of books donation from Japan Project in 2024 and Elsevier subscription agreement.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The University should prioritize the establishment of food service facilities in faculties currently lacking such amenities. This initiative, as proposed by the Rector, should be supported with a comprehensive plan that includes allocating necessary resources, identifying suitable spaces, and ensuring affordability and accessibility for students. Engaging student representatives in the planning process can help tailor services to meet their needs effectively;
- 2. The University should prioritize the development of additional recreational spaces for students. This could include creating multipurpose areas for relaxation, sports, and social activities, ensuring they are accessible and cater to diverse interests. Engaging students in the planning process will help tailor these spaces to their needs and preferences;
- 3. The University should continue efforts to make its premises more accessible for students and staff with special needs. Additionally, the effectiveness of the newly opened Center for Students with Special Needs should be systematically evaluated to ensure its efficiency and identify areas for improvement.

11. INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Standard 11.1 The HEI has formulated and implemented a proactive institutional collaboration plan that aligns with its mission institutional strategy. This plan is clearly reflected in the institution's decision-making and resource allocation in this field.

The University of Prishtina pays clear attention to institutional cooperation, both local and international, in all its relevant documents. It has a well-defined partnership strategy, which helps to decide on cooperation with different partners and to start a process of signing cooperation agreements. So far, the university has signed about 150 MoUs with different organisations, companies and institutions from different sectors. This is certainly a good basis for establishing partnerships and working together on further institutional development, which could also be very beneficial for students and for the development and implementation of curricula.

Transparent and detailed information on existing partnerships is publicly available and could be found on the University's inter-institutional cooperation website. Internationalisation is an important aspect of the University's activities, which is reflected in the number of MoUs and the actual activities taking place both at institutional level and at the level of the faculties and their staff.

Standard 11.2 The HEI has implemented mechanisms to facilitate collaboration with national and/or international higher education institutions, networks and organizations. The HEI provides support to teaching staff to establish partnerships with the academic community, locally and/or globally.

The University does not favour particular type of cooperation but given its wide range of fields and educational needs, it supports both international cooperation and cooperation with various local and national institutions, public or private. During the site visit, ET had the opportunity to interview a number of external stakeholders and received quite good feedback.

A special window of opportunity for increased international cooperation has been opened with a new visa regime that allows travel and mobility for students and staff.

Supporting the organisation of conferences or participation in international conferences is also an important way of building professional networks and is most likely to facilitate further cooperation..

Standard 11.3 The HEI established and maintain relationships with local industry, public sector, employers and local community.

Industry boards have been set up at the university, which are linked to the individual faculties, and they play an advisory role. Although their experiences differ to some extent, they are generally in favour of this kind of cooperation and see it as an opportunity for mutual benefit. What seems to be lacking, at least in some cases, is a clear, defined way of receiving feedback, implementing and/or processing the suggestions made by the Industry Boards and applying some form of follow-up monitoring.

The ET also observed, although this was not confirmed by the Industrial Board representatives, that the size of each Board, which in most cases has between 15 and 20 members, is too large for it to function effectively and efficiently.

Many external stakeholders are also alumni of UP and carry with them their positive impressions and a certain professional loyalty to the University. They believe that UP graduates are potentially good employees, and they would like to be in contact with them during their training. All external stakeholders felt that work placements were a good learning opportunity for students, but at the same time they felt that mentoring needed to be better established. The optimal way would be for each student to have two mentors, one from the university and one from the company. This still needs to be done, well prepared and supported by the university.

Standard 11.4 The HEI has established and maintains relationships with its alumni.

The relationship with the university's alumni is partially established and implemented through various forms of cooperation, in particular through industrial placements. However, there is still a need to formalise the alumni association and to develop more structured and direct communication with alumni and to involve them in various university activities.

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Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Support alumni and involving them more directly in various university/college activities:
- 2. Facilitate implementation of internship, monitored by double mentoring;
- 3. Review the functioning of industrial committees and define an effective mechanism for cooperation, implementation of changes and follow-up.

Overall evaluation and judgments of the ET

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

University of Prishtina demonstrated an **overall full compliance**, with only one partial compliant area of evaluation. According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team **recommends to reaccredit the University of Prishtina for the period of 5 years**.

Expert Team

Chair ### ### ############################	Melita Kovacevic.	November 30, 2024
(Signature)	(Print Name)	
Member ,		(Date)
Myllatio	Magdalena Platis	November 30, 2024
(Signature) Member	(Print Name)	(Date)
Mora Forull	Mauro Zarrelli	November 30, 2024
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)
Member		
paul.	Marija Vasilevska	November 30, 2024

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AKA | Qendra e Studentëve, kati 2-të, 10000 Prishtinë, Kosovë Tel. +381 38 213722 | Fax +381 38 213087 | www.akreditimi-ks.org