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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”

GENERAL LAW PROGRAM (LLB)

PROGRAMME RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

August 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 26 July 2023

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Dr. Peter Parycek, Expert*
- *Lali Giorgidze, Expert Student-online*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, KAA Director*
- *Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer*

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and the following annexes:
 - Annex 1: Law No. 04-1-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo
 - Annex 2: Statute Prot. No. 04-V-622 of the HZU
 - Annex 3: Rules of Procedure of Study Committees at Senate Level and at Academic Unit Level
 - Annex 4: Guide on the Determination of Performance Evaluation Indicators for the Study Program
 - Annex 5: National Qualifications Framework
 - Annex 6: Regulation on Bachelor Studies
 - Annex 7: Guide for New Students
 - Annex 8: Code of Ethics for HZU Academic Staff.
 - Annex 9: Regulation on disciplinary measures and procedure for academic staff of the HZU in Peja.
 - Annex 10: Regulation on disciplinary measures and procedure for students of the HZU in Peja
 - Annex 11: Administrative Instruction No. 09.2021 on the Application of Student Fees in Public Universities + Decision on the repeal of paragraph 1.3 of Article 3 of Administrative Instruction No. 09.2021 on the Application of Student Fees in Public Universities
 - Annex 12: Regulation on the Quality Assurance and Assessment System in the HZU
 - Annex 13: 2020 -2024 Quality Assurance Strategy
 - Annex 14: Quality Assurance Guide
 - Annex 15: Manual for planning and evaluation of academic staff at the HZU
 - Annex 16: Regulation on study programs

Annex 17: Regulation on selection procedures related to the appointment, reappointment and advancement of regular academic staff at the HZU.
Annex 18: Regulation on evaluation procedures for the engagement of external associates in the HZU
Annex 19: Law on Labor + Academic Staff Handbook
Annex 20: MEST Administrative Instruction 15/18 on the accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo
Annex 21: HZU academic staff development plan
Annex 22: Regulation on personal income + Amendment of Article 5 of this Regulation
Annex 23: Regulation on Publication at the Haxhi Zeka University in Peja
Annex 24: Law No. 04/L-131 on State-Funded Pension Schemes
Annex 25: Syllabi of all courses in Albanian and English;
Annex 26: Other Cooperation Agreements
Annex 27: Regulations on anti-plagiarism procedures with the Anti-Plagiarism System (SAP)
Annex 28: Regulations for the electoral procedure, establishment and work of the parliament
Annex 29: Code of Ethics and Integrity in Scientific Research Rules of Procedure of the student parliament
Annex 30: Regulation on academic mobility
Annex 31: Regulation on scientific research and artistic activity;
Annex 32: HZU Research Strategy 2020-2024
Annex 33: MEST Administrative Instruction 01/2018 on the Principles of Recognition of Platforms and International Journals with Reviews, and MEST Administrative Instruction 17/2018 on Amending Administrative Instruction 01/2018 on the Principles of Recognition of Platforms and International Journals with Reviews.
Annex 34: Academic Staff CVs
Annex 35: Implementation Project for renovations/adaptations for the Faculty of Law - demolitions
Annex 37: Register of Books
Annex 38: Memorandum of Understanding between the HZU and the "Xheladin Deda" Resource Center for Learning and Counseling in Peja
Annex 39: Regulations for the UNISUM international summer university
Annex 40: the Regulations for the load of Students at UHZ, which takes into consideration
Annex 41: Regulations on the workload for teachers, Associates and Assistants in Academic units and the Institute of Science and Arts of UHZ

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

Standards for institutional evaluation as outlined in the Accreditation Manual 2022 of the KAA

1.2. Site visit schedule

| Time | Meeting | Participants |
|---------------|--|--|
| 09:30 – 10:20 | Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated | Prof. Asoc. Dr. Avdullah Robaj – Dean Prof. Ass. Dr. Orhan Çeku – Vice Dean for academic affairs Prof. Ass. Dr. Petrit Nimani – Vice Dean for finance Era Mujaj – Secretary |
| 10:25 – 11:10 | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff | Prof. Dr. Gani Asllani – Coordinator for Quality Assurance Prof. Ass. Dr. Gjylbehare Murati – Member of KMCV MSc. Albana Belegu –Quality Assurance officer MSc. Donika Kastrati – Students service officer |
| 11:15 – 12:15 | Meeting with the heads of the study programme | Prof. Asoc. Dr. Avdullah Robaj Prof. Asoc. Sabiha Shala Prof. Asoc. Kole Krasniqi Prof. Ass. Dr. Mensur Morina |
| 12:15 – 13:15 | Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site) | |
| 13:15 – 14:05 | Meeting with teaching staff | Prof. Ass. Dr. Gjylbehare Murati – full time Prof. Ass. Dr. Orhan Çeku – full time Prof. Asoc. Dr. Berat Aqifi – part time Prof. Asoc. Dr. Mimoza Hyseni – Spahiu – full time Prof. Dr. Afrim Hoti – part time Prof. Dr. Gani Asllani – full time Dr. Sc. Gentiana Gega – full time LLM. Fatime Bamja – full time LLM Granit Elezaj, PhD candidate – part time |
| 14:15 – 15:00 | Meeting with students | Leart Husaj – Second year Nurije Krasniqi - Second year Fjolla Gashi - Second year Medin Mavraj – third year Kreshnik Kabashi – third year Liresa Hyselkaj – third year Eriona Nikqi - third year Arber Iberdemaj – fourth year Altin Lajqi – fourth year |
| 15:10 - 15:55 | Meeting with graduates | Etnik Hajdaraj Liridona Rraci Kreshnik Hoxha Donjeta Rexhbogaj Milot Neziraj |
| 15:55 – 16:40 | Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders | Sulltan Dobraj – judge Basic court of Gjakova Ilda Cucovic - judge Basic court of Peja Burhan Shabanaj – Lawyer Blerim Baloku - private enforcement agent Dorjan Juniku – Prosecutor Basic Prosecutor Peja Zenel Hasanaj – Basic Prosecutor Peja Gjevahire Çeku – Municipality of Peja |
| 16:40 – 16:50 | Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts | |
| 16:50 – 17:00 | Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program | Prof. Asoc. Dr. Avdullah Robaj - Dean Prof. Ass. Dr. Orhan Ceku – Vice Dean for academic affairs Prof. Ass. Dr. Petrit Nimani – Vice Dean for finance Prof. Asoc. Sabiha Shala Prof. Asoc. Kole Krasniqi Prof. Ass. Dr. Mensur Morina Era Mujaj – Secretary |
| 17:00 – 17:30 | Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure | |

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The Faculty of Law at "Haxhi Zeka" Public University in Peja offers a Bachelor's program in "General Law" aligned with the principles of the Bologna system. Despite broader challenges in Kosovo's higher education landscape, the program has demonstrated progress in adapting to market needs and enhancing study conditions. This report evaluates the "General Law" program for reaccreditation, assessing its adherence to defined standards, progress since the last evaluation, and ongoing commitment to quality assurance. Recommendations for continuous improvement will be provided based on the findings of this evaluation.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.

The mission of the General Law Bachelor's (LLB) program is aimed at educating and professionalizing new generations of lawyers in Kosovo that aligns perfectly with the broader mission of the University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka". The mission of the institution to continue its positive academic tradition, foster a transformative academic environment, and realize students' full potential resonates with the program's objective of offering to students comprehensive knowledge, experience, and analytical skills required for practicing law effectively. By preparing students to meet the challenges they may encounter in their professional roles within the field of justice, the program can contribute to the economic development of the Peja region and of the country as a whole. This synergy ensures a cohesive approach towards achieving academic excellence and societal impact of the programme.

Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The program has taken significant steps to ensure alignment with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and has engaged with national external stakeholders and academic staff in this process. However, there are certain areas that require further consideration. The benchmarking has been conducted with six universities in total (from Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, and Montenegro). On the positive side, these countries share regional similarities, enabling easier comparison of educational practices and standards. While this approach may lead to the adoption of best practices from neighbouring countries, potentially enhancing the program's relevance within the regional context, a more comprehensive and diverse benchmarking process could enhance the program's robustness and its relevance on an international scale. The downside of limiting the scope of benchmarking to only neighbouring countries might overlook innovative practices and advancements in the field of law in other countries or regions.

Another notable aspect that warrants attention in seeking relevant advice is the absence of systematic approach of involvement of students and graduates in defining the intended learning outcomes. Students and graduates are key stakeholders and their perspectives are invaluable in shaping a program that meets their needs. And omitting their input, can lead to overlooking critical insights into the desired educational outcomes and the real-world challenges students may face after graduation.

Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.

The overarching didactic and research concept of the program revolves around providing educational experience that should prepare students for successful careers in the justice system while fostering research engagement. However, objectives of the programme are too general (e.g. objectives of the programme are to enable students to actively participate in research activities during their studies, provide opportunities for the development of vital skills such as communication and research, and equipping graduates with the necessary competencies to succeed within the institutions of the justice system, to facilitate students' experiences in studying abroad) that may not serve as a sufficient guidance for the staff for developing courses. Along with general objectives which set the framework for the program, it is also essential to have specific objectives that describe the intended outcomes of the education and the qualities that graduates should possess upon completion of the program.

To further strengthen the program's focus and impact, it is essential to clarify and refine the research goals. Currently, the research goals may lack specificity, requiring more precise definition to guide faculty and students towards conducting meaningful and impactful research. This clarity will help ensure that research activities align with real-world challenges in the justice system, ultimately enhancing the program's overall research concept.

The program offers legal clinics, although it should be noted that not all clinics currently offer real-world cases, which presents an area for improvement. To maximize the benefits of these clinics, efforts should be made to standardize and expand real-world case opportunities for all students. This systematization will ensure that each graduate can demonstrate tangible practical experience, enhancing their employability and professional readiness.

Moreover, collaboration with external partners should be systematized to ensure that every student gains exposure to real-world practice. Strengthening partnerships with legal institutions and practitioners will enable students to work on actual cases, applying their knowledge in practical settings. This practical experience should be well-documented to provide evidence of graduates' abilities and accomplishments.

In addition to offering opportunities for students to study abroad, the program should seek opportunities for international research collaboration and exchange programs. This will broaden students' horizons and expose them to diverse legal systems, enriching their research and professional perspectives.

By addressing these areas, the program can create a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept that can support students better in excelling in the justice system nationally and internationally.

Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.

It is commendable that institution has well-developed formal policies and regulations that are publicly available on the web-site of the institution.

Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.

The ET has not found any evidence of staff and students not complying with international regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.

Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.

The stakeholders have been actively consulted in relation to changes within the program itself. However, concerning the broader policies and regulations governing the program, there is a notable absence of documented records of policy review meetings.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty has made amendments in number of regulations. However, there was no clear rationale explaining policy changes in response to evolving circumstances, as such there is uncertainty regarding whether these reviews were carried out systematically in line with the standard requirement or if they were done sporadically. Further clarification and a more structured approach may be needed to ensure compliance with the standard on two-year review cycle.

To uphold a transparent and accountable governance framework, it is imperative to establish a systematic approach to policy review and documentation, providing a solid foundation for informed decision-making and fostering a culture of continuous improvement within the program.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution. | X | |
| <i>Standard 1.2.</i> Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. | | X |
| <i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept. | | X |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Standard 1.4.</i> There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students. | X | |
| <i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities. | X | |
| <i>Standard 1.6.</i> All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances. | | X |

Compliance level: 50% partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Apply a more diverse benchmarking approach and explore a broader range of institutions worldwide that can help identify cutting-edge approaches, enrich curriculum design, and better prepare students for interconnected world; this can also enable the programme to better meet international standards and compete on a global level.*
2. *To ensure a more student-centric approach and foster a program that aligns closely with students' needs and aspirations, it is crucial to introduce systemic approach of involving students and graduates of the programme in the process of defining the intended learning outcomes.*
3. *To improve didactic and research concept of the programme (a) develop specific objectives of the programme that describe the intended outcomes and the qualities that graduates should possess upon completion of the program; (b) strengthen the program's focus and impact, by clarifying and refining the research goals, to guide faculty and students towards aligning with real-world challenges in the justice system, ultimately enhancing the program's overall research concept; (c) maximize the benefits of legal clinics, by expanding real-world case opportunities for all students, so that each graduate can demonstrate tangible practical experience, enhancing their employability and professional readiness; (d) systematize and strengthen partnerships with legal institutions to ensure that every student gains exposure to real-world practice. This practical experience should be well-documented to provide evidence of graduates' abilities and accomplishments. (e) to enrich professional perspectives of students seek opportunities for international research collaboration and exchange that can broaden students' horizons and expose them to diverse legal systems.*
4. *To uphold a transparent and accountable governance framework, it is imperative to establish a systematic approach to policy review and documentation, providing a solid foundation for informed decision-making and fostering a culture of continuous improvement within the program.*

2.2. Quality Management

Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.

Quality assurance regulations mandate that staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes, the recent SER however lacks substantial evidence to validate these claims. While the regulations may ensure staff involvement in these activities, the absence of concrete evidence raises concerns about accuracy actual involvement and collaboration of staff in self-evaluation. To address this, it is crucial for the program to implement more robust mechanisms for gathering and documenting evidence of staff participation in self-evaluations and cooperation with reporting and improvement processes. Transparent evidence and documentation of staff engagement and collaboration can also foster a culture of accountability and excellence within the program.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty noted that academic staff provides feedback on programmes annually. However, it is equally important for administrative and professional staff to participate in self-evaluation of the programme to ensure a comprehensive assessment of all aspects of the institution's activities. Their involvement provides valuable insights into administrative efficiency, support services, and institutional effectiveness, contributing to well-rounded reporting and improvement processes.

Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.

The program integrates evaluation processes and planning for improvement into its planning activities. Through evaluation reports accessible online the program demonstrates a proactive approach to assessing its performance and identifying areas for enhancement.

Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of Programme planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.

Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall Programme as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes, and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.

The Quality Assurance processes encompass substantial part of aspects for program planning and delivery. However, it's important to note that the Quality Assurance staff does not actively participate in the development of learning outcomes for the program. Instead, the Quality Assurance and Assessment Office, by support of the Quality Assurance and Assessment Officer and Coordinator at the Faculty of Law, primarily focuses on monitoring the learning process. This includes monitoring teaching courses, checking teaching materials used by

academic staff, and conducting checks on passing rates and final exam reports. It should be noted that quality assurance processes encompass more than just monitoring and checking. An essential aspect of quality assurance is conducting comprehensive evaluations aimed at continuous improvement and enhancement of the program. Therefore, in addition to monitoring and checks, the Quality Assurance processes should involve conducting systematic assessments of the program's performance, curriculum effectiveness, teaching methodologies, and learning outcomes, considering risks of overreliance on feedback from students in these regard. To ensure comprehensive and effective quality assurance, the institution should adopt a holistic approach that covers all aspects of program planning and delivery, including and not limited to implementation of robust assessment strategies to measure students' attainment of learning outcomes and use the results to inform program improvements, measures for maintaining consistency and fairness in assessment of students learning outcomes, collaboration with industries for students to gain practical experience, graduate outcomes tracking etc. Additionally, since credit transfer being a long process was identified as one of the areas of weaknesses, the quality assurance could also review and assess the efficiency of this process based on the feedback from students and academic staff, to identify any bottlenecks and find solution for the development of transfer process.

Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance

Regulation for Quality Assurance outlines assessment areas and relevant responsible bodies. Putting in practice robust approaches for assessing these areas can ensure that there is continuing improvement in performance.

Standard 2.6 Survey data is being collected from students, graduates, and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available

The faculty collects these data and the results of evaluations are accessible on the website of the institution.

Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system have been taken into consideration for further development of the Study Programme. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.

The ET commends the work of the institution that it has undertaken in relation to fulfilment of recommendations developed during the previous review of the programme. However, the programme could greatly benefit if the faculty introduces systemic and more robust approach for engaging with graduates for programme development. This could include but not limited to establishing an alumni network that will connect graduates with the institution and the program.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty noted that alumni graduate organization was established in 2017 and since then the faculty has held regular meetings with graduates but the evidence of evaluation of employment of graduates for quality assurance system is missing. It is necessary that the faculty implement a career outcome tracking and conducts regular surveys to gather feedback from graduates regarding their experiences in the program, the relevance of the curriculum, and the skills they found most valuable in their careers.

It could also be useful to form an alumni advisory board comprising influential and successful graduates who can provide strategic guidance and recommendations for program enhancement.

Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the Programme are prepared periodically (e.g., every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses

According to the SER evaluation of overall quality of the programme coincides with the external evaluation of the programme by KAA, as the programme last time was accredited for 3 years. But it is also necessary for the programme not to follow solely external accreditation timeline for internal evaluation of overall quality of the programme, as accreditation can also be granted for 5 years. Further periodic internal evaluations of the overall quality of the programme can foster a culture of continuous improvement and cultivate a sense of ownership among stakeholders over the quality of the programme.

Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the Programme are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.

Improvements in quality assurance arrangements of the programme mainly stem from the changes at the university level and from the recommendations of Kosovo Accreditation Agency. However, it is important that the faculty goes beyond the decisions of university central administration and national QA agency, and contribute to a more holistic and effective quality assurance framework that aligns with the program's goals and educational objectives. Involvement of the Faculty in reviewing quality assurance arrangements can bring a perspective from those directly engaged in program delivery and ensure that quality assurance arrangements will better consider the unique needs and challenges faced by faculty and students.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity. | | X |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes. | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of Programme planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution. | | X |
| <i>Standard 2.4.</i> Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall Programme as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes, and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students. | | X |
| <i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance. | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates, and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available. | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system have been taken into consideration for further development of the Study Programme. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates. | | X |
| <i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the Programme are prepared periodically (e.g., every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the Programme are themselves regularly evaluated and improved. | X | |

Compliance level: 56 % partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Strengthen transparency of documentation/evidence on participation and collaboration of staff in self-evaluations with reporting and improvement processes.*
2. *To ensure comprehensive and effective quality assurance, the institution should adopt a holistic approach that covers all aspects of program planning and delivery, including and not limited to implementation of robust assessment strategies to measure students' attainment of learning outcomes and use the results to inform program improvements, measures for maintaining consistency and fairness in assessment of students learning outcomes, collaboration with industries for students to gain practical experience, graduate outcomes tracking etc.*
3. *Introduce systemic and more robust approach for engaging with graduates for programme development. This could include but not limited to (a) establishing an alumni network that can serve as a platform for communication, information sharing,*

and networking opportunities. (b) implementing career outcome tracking and regular surveys to gather feedback from graduates regarding their experiences in the program, the relevance of the curriculum, and the skills they found most valuable in their careers. (c) it could also be useful to form an alumni advisory board comprising influential and successful graduates who can provide strategic guidance and recommendations for program enhancement.

4. *Ensure that periodic internal evaluations of the overall quality of the programme are conducted notwithstanding external evaluation timeline, as this can foster a culture of continuous improvement and cultivate a sense of ownership among stakeholders over the quality of the programme.*
5. *Ensure involvement of the faculty staff and students in reviewing quality assurance arrangements for the programme, that can bring a perspective from those directly engaged in program delivery.*

2.3. Academic Staff

Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.

The SER provides comprehensive descriptions of academic positions, including terms of employment, duties, rights, and the appointment process, by referring to the relevant regulations. It contains detailed data about both full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) academic/artistic staff, presented in a tabular format. This includes their names, qualifications, academic titles, durations of valid contracts, and their workloads for teaching, examinations, consultations, administrative activities, and research, all specific to the study program under evaluation. The faculty is portrayed in a focused and precise manner, ensuring that all requisite information as per the standard is sufficiently addressed.

Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation

Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.

Academic staff meet the criteria set by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) through the Administrative Instruction on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions - Instruction no. 15/2018. In line with legal provisions (Law on Labor, Articles 20 and 21) and internal HZU rules regular academic staff cannot hold employment contracts with other universities or public or private institutions. The staff's commitment to their duties and

responsibilities arising from employment contracts and HZU's internal normative acts further attests to this. Based on the information provided by SER, the institution shows a clear commitment to continuous professional development for its teaching staff, as evidenced by its first strategic objective and the Plan for Academic Development of HZU staff. Staff receive training in areas of need, including using new and developing technologies. The training for Advanced Teaching Methods, supported by the Czech Republic's embassy, and online training organized within the Erasmus+ project "ENEMLOS" exemplifies this commitment, as does the introductory training for newly hired academic staff.

Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program

According to the SER, the Faculty of Law employs 25 academic staff in total for the "General Law" Bachelor program, out of which 14 are full-time employees and 11 are part-time. The full-time staff comprises more than 50% of the academic staff. The 14 full-time staff members cover over 50% of the study program's courses.

Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.

The Bachelor's program in General Law at the Faculty of Law consists of 240 ECTS credits. Based on the standard, the program would require at least four full-time staff members with a PhD (as $240/60 = 4$). The SER indicates that the program employs 12 to 13 full-time faculty members holding a PhD, which is more than three times the required minimum. The maximum would be three student groups. The student group's size depends on the nature of the course; for a mandatory lecturing course, the maximum size is 60, and for an exercise elective course, it is typically 30.

Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.

Based on the information provided in the SER, Faculty of Law has implemented several measures to ensure compliance with this standard. Key measures include the establishment of a Teaching and Learning Committee, mandatory training for staff receiving negative evaluations, the implementation of an annual staff training project, and ongoing training through the ENEMLOS Project. During the SV these measures have been confirmed in different meetings.

Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.

The faculty's engagement in community service is demonstrated through their organized institutional service via Real Legal Clinics, which aim to provide free legal services to marginalized groups. This project is part of their ENEMLOS initiative and reflects a direct contribution to the community. In addition, regular consultation hours for student interactions are offered.

Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.

In the SER, various evaluation mechanisms are described, such as student evaluations via the UMS system, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, evaluation by the dean at the end of each academic year, self-assessment form for academic and scientific work and peer evaluation system was introduced recently.

Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.

The Faculty of Law has implemented operational measures, such as the Academic Development Plan, to enhance the teaching quality. They work continually to foster and control the professional results of their academic staff, demonstrated by their commitment to teaching and their willingness to improve pedagogical skills. However, while operational enhancements are evident, the faculty needs a comprehensive, long-term strategic approach to continuously improve teaching strategies and learning materials, which is crucial for full compliance with this Standard. Initial efforts to foster a feedback culture, mentioned during the SV, are promising for an open feedback culture.

Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.

According to the SER, teachers who retire at the age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 3.1.</i> Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.3.</i> Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.4.</i> At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.5.</i> For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions. | X | |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.7.</i> The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.8.</i> Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available. | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials. | | X |
| <i>Standard 3.10.</i> Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers. | X | |

Compliance level: 90% Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Long-term teaching strategies: The faculty needs to develop a comprehensive, long-term strategic approach to continuously improve teaching strategies and learning materials. This will ensure the quality and consistency of the educational delivery, which is paramount for academic excellence. Feedback culture should be fostered and effectively utilized to guide this improvement process.*
2. *Staff development: Develop a formalized policy or structure for faculty development, including a system for tracking and ensuring faculty participation in development opportunities. This will foster continuous professional growth and enhance teaching quality across the board.*
3. *Staff development plan: Establish a comprehensive plan for the staff development pipeline to ensure the institution is prepared for the eventual loss of experienced faculty members. This is crucial for maintaining high academic quality and mitigating any disruptions in teaching and learning processes.*

2.4. Educational Process Content

Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.

The LLB in General Law Program is modelled on well-articulated qualification objectives (p. 38). The program objectives aim to provide knowledge of basic legal concepts and principles, develop critical thinking in a legal context, and enhance personal skills and competencies, such as communication and research, vital for employment in the legal field. The study program offers a broad range of potential employment opportunities for graduates, from roles in the justice system and state administration to positions in business organizations and NGOs. The program's curriculum is structured to build students' legal knowledge and skills. The employability was highlighted during the meeting with the employers, which high-profile officials conducted: Sulltan Dobraj – judge Basic Court of Gjakova, Ilda Cucovic - judge Basic Court of Peja, Burhan Shabanaj – Lawyer Blerim Baloku - private enforcement agent, Dorjan Juniku – Prosecutor Basic Prosecutor Peja, Zenel, Hasanaj – Basic Prosecutor Peja, Gjevahire Çeku – Municipality of Peja. All of them highlighted positive experiences with internships, and more the half of them also employed students after finishing their bachelor studies. They all highlighted employability and practical skills, which are based on their judgement well balanced. Some participants were also part of the advisory board, which supported further curriculum development. Further was mentioned that some of the organizations actively participate in legal clinics courses, giving a speech or providing cases and receiving free legal advice; the representative of the City of Peja especially positively highlighted this.

Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning

The expected learning outcomes are clearly defined across multiple dimensions, including knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge, learning skills, communication skills, and competencies (p. 43):

- Knowledge and Understanding: Acquisition of foundational legal knowledge, understanding of different branches of law, the legal system of the Republic of Kosovo, and the socio-economic and historical context of legal norms.
- Application of Knowledge and Understanding: Understanding rule of law principles, identifying and applying legal principles, problem-solving, and research skills.
- Learning Skills: Initiative and responsibility in identifying learning needs, synthesizing resources, and utilizing library and computer skills for legal knowledge.
- Communication Skills: Effective oral and written communication, legal document drafting, and taking initiative in professional activities.
- Critical thinking and solving competencies: Ability to solve legal problems, interpret legal norms, critically evaluate legal and ethical norms, teamwork, and articulation of legal concepts.

These outcomes align well with the National and European Qualifications Framework (Level 6 of the NQF). The program blends general and advanced competencies and courses typically impart knowledge, skills, and competencies that qualify a student for the level 6. This program's practical application emphasis is a vital feature of this program, which is explicitly visible through the legal clinics' courses in the different main subject areas, as already highlighted in Standard 4.1.

Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation

While the LLB in General Law Program presents a logically structured curriculum, some aspects can be improved. It begins with interdisciplinary foundational knowledge and skills in the first year, moving to advanced concepts and the application of law in the second year. The third year offers a specialized approach to legal studies, while the fourth year allows students to focus on specific legal fields through different modules. The blend of core and elective courses throughout the curriculum offers a well-rounded legal education and the flexibility for students to customize their learning pathways. In addition, a positive development is the specific emphasis on strengthening the internationalization component with mandatory English Language courses.

The sequencing of related topics over multiple semesters, for example, content and process, does not always follow a clear logical path. The inclusion of topics in the curriculum is also relatively conservative, focusing on traditional legal areas and lacking in emerging areas like digital law, data protection, or e-commerce law. These missing subjects are a noticeable gap considering the increasing relevance of these legal issues in today's digital age, even in the local economy. Management of the law faculty pointed out the need for more specialists in these areas within Kosovo and the challenge in attracting experts. While this argument is understandable, it could be addressed by strategic measures such as creating PhD or Assistant Professor positions to cultivate expertise in these emerging fields.

Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation

Syllabi of the study program are uniform and are comprised of the general information on the course, contents, objectives, learning outcomes, weekly agenda, basic and additional literature, teaching methodologies, distribution of student workload in connection to ECTS, assessment system and, if applicable, academic policies. In order to standardise the syllabi, a manual for the design of syllabi was created, which was also referred by the management during the site visit. The faculty members are also aware of the handbook and the importance of learning outcomes. The quality of the syllabi, especially the formulation of learning outcomes, varies, so further training specifically on the formulation of learning outcomes would be valuable. The importance of learning outcomes is constantly increasing, especially for recognising national and international student achievements. Therefore also an essential basis for all further Erasmus activities.

Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for

instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.

Not applicable

Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.

The management of the law faculty emphasises the transition from professor centric to student-centric, especially the faculty members with international experience foster this change, which became very evident during the site visit. Therefore is this transition the foundation for a refined relationship and partnership between students and teachers, wherein both parties share the responsibility of achieving learning outcomes? Staff members must clarify the syllabus details during the first lecture and make the syllabus accessible via the UMS system. The assessment process is structured to ensure that learning outcomes are met. Teachers also must organise consultations on evaluation results, providing further clarity. Faculty members, students, and graduates confirmed this positive dynamic during a site visit. Nevertheless, the quality of the syllabus varies, as described before, in this standard, the alignment of learning outcomes and assessment. Further training would be a valuable measure. (Standard 4.6)

Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.

The SER reveals that professors determine teaching strategies based on university guidelines at the Faculty of Law. The faculty provides resources to meet the requirements of the academic staff to achieve the desired learning outcomes. This includes equipment for specific course needs or field trips. The necessary teaching-learning resources are outlined in the syllabi by the academic staff. During the site visit, further discussion led to the following issues, which must be further discussed with the faculty. One of the main issues is the varying quality of the syllabi regarding the teaching strategy. The second issue is that the emphasis on academic freedom is significant in the SER. Academic freedom is one of the most important or the most important ethical values at universities; nevertheless, professors must align their course to the overarching learning outcomes, and therefore, they need to develop a teaching strategy that supports the program's overall objectives and learning outcomes. The ET highlights that these values need to be balanced and limits in a kind of way the academic freedom. (Standard 4.7)

Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses

The SER indicates that student evaluation is determined by the teacher and is included in the course syllabus. The framework for evaluation is guided by the Statute and Regulation on bachelor studies of the HZU, which allow for written, verbal, or combined evaluation methods. Teachers are obliged to respect this framework while maintaining their autonomy in evaluation. The assessment methods are communicated to the students at the beginning of the

semester, ensuring transparency and clarity. The site-visit meetings with students and graduates confirmed that assessments are transparent and assessed fair.

Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.

According to the SER, transparent assessment procedures are outlined in the syllabus and published on the website, ensuring clarity for students. The grading system is defined, with specific scores correlating to particular performance descriptions, fostering consistency over time and across different courses. The continuous evaluation further aids in monitoring student's progress. However, the comparison with other study programs isn't mentioned and needs to be assessed to be done for the next SER.

The site-visit meetings with students and graduates confirmed that assessments are transparent and assessed fair. (Standard 4.8, 4.9)

Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed.

According to the SER, HZU complies with this standard. It has a transparent procedure defined in its Statute and Regulation on Bachelor Studies to deal with such situations. During the site-visit, students and graduates were not aware of any cases.

Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.

Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.

According to the SER, the LLB program includes practical stages through mandatory legal clinics and internships, each worth 4 ECTS credits. Institutions, where internships are held, prepare student achievement reports, which form the basis for final grades along with the student's performance in simulations. Real Legal Clinics have also been established, offering practical experiences in areas like Criminal Law and Labor Law, where students offer free legal assistance under supervision. The provided information indicates a clear structure for practical learning and evaluation, confirmed during the site visit, especially in the meeting with employers, who participate in legal clinics, offer internships and employ graduates. HZU has established a strong network of regional partners and stakeholders who are actively collaborating and participating with HZU.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 4.1.</i> The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.2.</i> The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.3.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.4.</i> The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.5.</i> If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program. | n.a. | |
| <i>Standard 4.6.</i> The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.7.</i> Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.8.</i> Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses. | X | |
| <i>4.9.</i> Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for | X | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions. | | |
| <i>Standard 4.10.</i> Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.11.</i> If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program. | X | |
| <i>Standard 4.12.</i> In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units. <i>*To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)</i> | X | |

Compliance level: 100% Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Curriculum Enhancement: While the program presents a logically structured curriculum, it lacks courses on emerging legal areas such as digital law, data protection, and e-commerce law. The inclusion of these areas in the curriculum will provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to address modern legal issues and increase their employability in the digital age. It is recommended to strategically address this issue, possibly by creating PhD or Assistant Professor positions in these emerging fields.*
2. *Business Law BSc program: explore the possibility of collaborating with the business faculty to develop the Business Law BSc program to foster regional commercial development further. This partnership has the potential to enhance the faculty's offerings and contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of the region. Further evaluation and discussions with relevant stakeholders can help determine such collaboration's feasibility and potential benefits for the region.*
3. *Improve Quality of Syllabi: The quality and formulation of learning outcomes in the syllabi varies. The university should invest in further training, specifically on*

formulating learning outcomes. As the importance of learning outcomes is increasing for recognizing national and international student achievements, improving their quality should be prioritized.

4. *Balance Academic Freedom and Learning Outcomes: While academic freedom is crucial, it should not compromise the achievement of the program's overall objectives and learning outcomes. Professors should be guided to develop a teaching strategy that aligns with these, balancing their academic freedom with the program's needs.*
5. *Continue Strengthening Practical Learning: The strong focus on practical learning through mandatory legal clinics and internships is commendable and should be continued. It is recommended that the university continue its efforts in strengthening this aspect of the program, which greatly contributes to the employability of its graduates.*

2.5. Students

Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.

The SER describes admission procedure and requirements for applicants who have received Matura certificate and for those who have not. This information also includes the number of applicants to be admitted to programmes of the faculty.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

According to the the Faculty procedure and general criteria for the admission of students are determined by the legislation in force in the Republic of Kosovo and the Faculty does not have the authority to change these criteria. While the ET considers this limitation, it is necessary to ensure that there is clarity in relation to the entrance exam.

Information on admissions on the web-site mentions that entrance exams are organized by the faculties. But this information lacks clarity and transparency, as there is no information provided about the content and structure of the entrance exams. To ensure clarity of admission procedure, it is essential for the faculty to publish detailed information about the entrance exam to the programme, including the syllabus and format.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty noted that they will follow the usual practice similar to International and European Law MA programmes of the faculty and will be publishing the names of the courses based on which students will be assessed through entrance exam. The ET notes that while this approach enables to assesses applicants on the essential knowledge for the program, ensuring those admitted are well-prepared academically, this approach

may place excessive emphasis on academic performance, potentially overlooking other essential qualities like leadership, teamwork etc. So, to strike a balance, it is essential to consider a holistic admission process that includes other elements, such as interviews, personal statements, and references in addition to admission requirements that are mandated by the state. This will enable the faculty to evaluate applicants more comprehensively, ensuring they not only meet the academic requirements but also possess the qualities and potential to excel in the program and contribute positively to the academic community.

Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.

The institution ensures that all students enrolled in the study program have a high school diploma and comply with MEST requirements.

Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.

According to the SER 75 is the maximum number of students in groups for mandatory courses and 50 students is the maximum number in courses which are more practical ones. The programme employs 23 academic staff (including full-time and part-time) and plans to enrol 300 students annually, in 4 years the total number of students will be 1200. The staff-to-student ratio in this case is approximately 1 staff member for every 62 students, which seems relatively high and may present some challenges. Specifically, in each semester, (e.g. in the first semester) with only 6 academic staff members responsible for teaching 6 courses to 300 students can be even more concerning in terms of effective dimensioning of study groups because it creates a significant imbalance in the student-to-staff ratio, that can potentially lead to reduced opportunities for active engagement of students, and challenges in providing timely and constructive feedback impacting the overall learning experience and academic support for students.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty noted that it is planned to announce a competition for the admission of regular academic staff within a period of one year, but this could not be considered by the ET as the review of the programme is expected to be carried out based on current circumstances.

Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.

The regulation on Bachelors Studies outlines requirements on assessments of students. If the student assumes that the grading was unfair, they can request to have feedback and make an appeal. The faculty has started implementation of Tutoring and Peer-to-Peer system for supporting and advising students regarding study programs.

Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.

The faculty records all the grades obtained by students throughout study. However, the ET noted that students may also pass internship during their studies. It would be useful if the faculty finds the way for including this experience in students' records. Including internship information in the transcript is crucial for recognizing students' practical experience, enhancing employability, and presenting a comprehensive student profile.

Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.

The faculty has in place flexible approaches for students in special situations and students during interviews have confirmed these approaches being put in real practice.

Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.

The records of students' completion rates are kept for all courses and for the overall programme. But it is concerning that the quality assurance processes have not addressed low completion rates in the programme. According to the SER, in 2018-2019 academic year 301 students were admitted to the programme but only 94 of them completed their studies in 2021-2022. This low completion rate raises concerns about the effectiveness of quality enhancement processes in addressing this issue. Therefore, it is necessary that the institution identifies factors contributing to attrition and address these issues within its quality assurance activities by implementing targeted interventions for improving overall graduation outcomes.

Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.

Code for Ethics and Integrity in Scientific Research emphasizes the importance of research ethics and integrity in research for both staff and students. However, this document describes punitive measures (written notice, no funding of research and projects for a period of 2 years, 30% of salary for three consecutive months, non-participation in international projects for a period of 2 years), which are mostly relevant for the academic staff and not for students. Giving a written notice for academic misconduct can be a reasonable and standard measure, but the rest of the punitive measures can certainly be considered as a strict to discourage academic misconduct. However, there is a concern that too harsh penalties may discourage reporting of academic misconduct of cases and may not promote a culture of academic integrity. So, it is essential to strike a balance between imposing consequences for academic misconduct and promoting a culture of academic integrity.

The faculty uses software to scan final theses of students for potential instances of plagiarism but this may not be sufficient for the procedure to be effective for ensuring that work submitted by students is original. This needs to be done in relation to all written assignments and additionally, it would be essential to provide students education and specialized training (through workshops, seminars or online resources) to students on legal research and citation methods not only for the final thesis but for all assignments that students submit during studies. Further, to safeguard originality of students' work, the faculty also needs to consider potential challenges posed by AI-generated content and stay informed on the developments in the field for adapting ethics and integrity policies effectively.

Further clarification based on the comments of University of Peja

The faculty noted that the staff of the faculty raised the same concerns during the consultation process around the Code of Ethics in scientific research, but the Code was approved by the University Council and is not within the competence of the Faculty of Law. This however do not change the outcomes of the measures for ensuring originality of students work and it may be necessary to revisit the code and practice to make necessary adjustments or develop additional guidelines to ensure the program's compliance with this standard.

Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.

The faculty makes rights and obligations of students publicly available through various means (throughout welcome week, through student representatives and publishing on the website). However, the current situation at the institution, where the students have no voting rights in the Steering Council raises concerns about the effectiveness of safeguarding students' interests. The Steering Council, as the main governing authority of the University, holds significant responsibilities, including strategic decision-making, financial matters, and infrastructure management. And the absence of right of vote by student members in the council results in an unbalanced and non-inclusive decision-making process at strategic level. It also contradicts the principles of the European Higher Education Area, which emphasize student-centeredness and the involvement of students in all levels of decision-making.

Furthermore, the criterion for selecting student representatives based solely on academic performance, such as high grades, can be flawed. While academic excellence is commendable, it may not necessarily reflect a student's ability to understand and advocate for their rights and diverse needs of other students. Students with high grades might lack a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by the broader student body, potentially resulting in decisions that do not cater to the holistic student experience.

The faculty noted that in all public universities in Kosovo, students do not have the right to vote in the University Council but to fully enforce students' rights (also based on the Bologna action lines and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), it is necessary to address the issue of students' rights to vote in the Steering Council; for this it will be necessary to amend governance structure of the institution to grant voting rights to elected student representatives. Further, to ensure students' rights to become student representatives, it is necessary to revise the criteria for selecting student representatives so that election of student representatives is done through a transparent and fair process, considering factors beyond just academic grades; consideration needs to be given to leadership abilities, communication skills and genuine commitment to advocating for the student community. This can ensure that student representatives possess a broader understanding of student needs and can effectively safeguard the rights and obligations of all students, regardless of their academic performance.

Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.

The institution has published the regulations on transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programmes that is accessible for the students of the programme. The SER mentioned procedures for the recognition and transfer of ECTS credits from other universities being very long as one of the areas of weakness. To address this weakness, the faculty could work on the development of comprehensive guidelines on the recognition and transfer of ECTS that is accessible and understandable for both incoming and current students. Further, implementing a standardized credit evaluation process that minimizes the need for case-by-case assessments and assigning dedicated staff for handling credit transfer matters could also decrease the amount of for assessing the equivalence of courses and ECTS credits between the home and host institutions.

Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.

Students during interview session confirmed availability of staff for consultation and advice for students, and regular schedule of consultations is also published on the website of the university. It is important to recognize that while academic staff can offer valuable academic support and guidance to students, they may not have the necessary professional training and qualifications to provide effective psychological counselling. Psychological counselling requires specialized knowledge and expertise in understanding and addressing mental and emotional challenges that students may face. Thus, it is important that dedicated mental health service staffed by qualified professionals are available for students of the programme; this service should provide students with a safe and confidential environment to address psychological concerns, stress management, emotional well-being, and other personal challenges that may impact their academic performance and overall student experience.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 5.1.</i> There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students. | | X |
| <i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements. | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process. | | X |
| <i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed. | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record. | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations. | X | |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators. | | X |
| <i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original. | | X |
| <i>Standard 5.9.</i> Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals. | | X |
| <i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents. | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.11.</i> Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning. | X | |

Compliance level: 55% Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *To ensure clarity of admission procedure, it is essential that along with programme description the faculty publishes detailed information about the entrance exam to the programme, including the syllabus its format and scoring methodology; this can help candidates to adequately prepare and showcase their abilities*
2. *To have fit-for-purpose admission, it is essential to consider a holistic admission process that along with assessing knowledge of applicants and requirements mandated by the state includes other elements, such as interviews, personal statements, and references. This will enable the faculty to evaluate applicants more comprehensively, ensuring they not only meet the academic requirements but also possess the qualities and potential to excel in the program and contribute positively to the academic community.*
3. *In information on admissions procedure include guidelines for transfer students, including credit transfer policies and eligibility criteria, as well as information on available financial aid options and scholarship opportunities*
4. *Consider recruiting more staff or teaching assistants to assist academic staff in managing coursework, conducting discussions, and providing extra academic support to students*
5. *It is recommended to identify factors contributing to attrition (de-enrolment of students form the programme) and address these issues within the quality assurance activities by implementing targeted interventions for improving overall graduation outcomes*
6. *Provide students specialized training (through workshops, seminars or online resources) on legal research and citation methods not only for the final thesis but for all assignments that students submit during studies*
7. *Consider potential challenges posed by AI-generated content and stay informed on the developments in the field for adapting ethics and integrity policies, to further safeguard originality of students' work*
8. *To fully enforce students' rights, it is necessary to grant voting rights to elected student representatives in Steering Council (the highest governing structure of the institution); in this way the institution will have in place formal structure for involvement of students*

in all levels of decision-making that is one of the principles of student-centeredness and of the European Higher Education Area

9. *Revise the criteria for electing student representatives so that election is done through a transparent and fair process, considering factors beyond just academic grades; consideration needs to be given to leadership abilities, communication skills and genuine commitment to advocating for the student community. This can ensure that student representatives possess a broader understanding of student needs and can effectively safeguard the rights and obligations of all students, regardless of their academic performance.*
10. *Provide dedicated mental health services staffed by qualified professionals for students, which can provide students with a safe and confidential environment to address psychological concerns, stress management, emotional well-being, and other challenges that may impact students' academic performance and overall student experience.*

2.6. Research

Based on the information given in the SER, the Faculty of Law is dedicated to scientific research as a crucial component of academic advancement. Their research mission is well-aligned with HZU's Scientific Research and Artistic Activity Strategy for 2023-2026, showcasing a defined and ambitious research objective. This mission sets explicitly a goal to augment scientific research by 50% over the forthcoming four years, which signifies a clear and ambitious research objective. Moreover, integrating students into the research process is a commendable practice. Their efforts are evident in ongoing joint research projects with institutions like the University of Rome and the University of Graz. Establishing a Scientific Research Group tasked with fostering collaborative research partnerships also attests to their commitment to advancing research. The faculty's endeavours in securing external funding and their success in gaining internal financial support for scientific research further demonstrate their proactive approach to expanding their research capacity. However, the SER should present specific details regarding the allocation of financial, logistic, and human resources meant to support research activities. While the faculty has stated ambitious objectives and anticipated outcomes in its strategic plan, a lack of concrete information on resource allocation may create potential challenges in achieving these goals. During the site visit, a discussion with academic staff revealed a disconnect between ambition and reality. Factors like limited time resources and constrained funding opportunities for law research present challenging circumstances that make these goals appear unrealistic. If these high-reaching goals are intended to serve as a motivational stretched goal, this should be communicated to avoid misunderstandings. (Standard 6.1.)

The Faculty of Law effectively integrates research into the academic expectations of its staff and uses performance in research as a significant factor in staff evaluation and promotion, as detailed in various internal rules and strategic documents. A 30% allocation of staff time to research is implemented, with further expectations including the publication of at least one article per year and participation in international conferences. The faculty encourages research through various activities like conferences, roundtables, and guest lectures, fostering a vibrant

research culture. Student involvement in research activities is notable, as is the faculty's contribution to the creation of a university-level scientific journal. (Standard 6.2.)

The Faculty of Law at HZU has well-established policies to define research, aligning with international standards and field-specific norms. The policies are integrated within their staff appointment and advancement procedures. A demonstrated commitment to high-quality research is demonstrated through regular publications in ranked journals. The faculty's active participation in research projects, including international collaborations and ERASMUS+ project, shows a high level of research engagement. (Standard 6.3.)

The Faculty of Law demonstrates a clear alignment between the research interests of academic staff and their teaching activities, as evidenced by published articles and their respective CVs. The challenges faced due to insufficient funding and infrastructure for research activities are recognised. The introduction of incentive measures for staff and students to engage in community-related research, including financial support, is commendable. (Standard 6.4.)

Based on the information provided in the SER:

- Table No. 17 List of full-time academic staff publications, p. 64
- List of full-time academic staff at the Faculty of Law, p 25
- List of part-time academic staff at the Faculty of Law, p.27

the academic staff of the Faculty of Law are actively publishing their research in respective national journals and ranked international journals and participating in various local and international scientific conferences. The number of publications in prestigious platforms and conference participations is for the field of law impressive, which signifies a robust scientific activity within the faculty. Based on a quick search, around 30 to 40 articles are published in Scopus indexed journals and impressive 10 to 15 in web of science. Furthermore, the successful acquisition of two scientific research projects, like Erasmus+ ENENLOS and ResearchCult p.61f, indicates the faculty's capabilities and intention to generate income through research in the future. (Standard 6.5., 6.6., 6.7, 6.8.)

Based on the SER, teaching staff are required to include their research findings and publications in the course syllabus as supplementary reading material. Individual samples from the existing syllabi have confirmed this. (Standard 6.9.)

The university has revised its Code of Ethics for research, emphasizing ethical and legal norms in research, including intellectual property rights and contractual obligations with publishers. The Ethics Council monitors implementation and proposes disciplinary measures if needed. The Regulation on Publications outlines conditions for publishing and provides compensation to authors. Overall, the university prioritizes protecting intellectual property and encouraging commercialization. (Standard 6.10)

According the SER, students are involved in research projects, which was also mentioned in several meetings during the site visit; an highlight was a Scopus publication based on the data collection by the students. (Standard 6.11)

| Standard | Compliance | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| | Yes | No |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Standard 6.1.</i> The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.2.</i> Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.3.</i> Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.5.</i> The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.7.</i> Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.9/6.8.</i> Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities. | X | |

Compliance level: 100 % Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Research funding: Provide specific details regarding the allocation of financial, logistic, and human resources to support research activities. While the Faculty of Law has set ambitious objectives for augmenting scientific research, it is essential to have a clear plan for allocating resources to achieve these goals.*

2. *International cooperation: Strengthen collaborations with international institutions and organisations to enhance research opportunities and promote global research engagement. Building on existing partnerships and establishing new ones with other recognised institutions will provide additional research opportunities and foster vibrant research culture.*
3. *Internal research culture: Encouraging faculty members to participate in international conferences and research networks will also contribute to the global visibility and impact of the faculty's research. Encouraging faculty members to engage in research that addresses real-world challenges and contributes to societal development will align research activities with community needs.*
4. *Community-related research: Encourage and incentivise staff and students to engage in community-related research, including financial support for such initiatives. Expanding these measures to provide financial support and resources for community-based research projects will benefit the local community and enhance the faculty's reputation as a socially responsible institution.*
5. *Code of Ethics for publishing: Ensure strict adherence to the Code of Ethics for research to protect intellectual property rights and promote responsible research conduct for ensuring research integrity and intellectual honesty.*

2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

The HZU facilities on the Peja campus are sufficiently available for the teaching of law. In addition to the traditional seminar rooms of various sizes, there is also a room available for simulating court proceedings. For faculty and administrative staff sufficient space is available. In 2023, further facilities will be allocated to the law faculty and renovated to accommodate modern study programs and teaching methods. The project includes classrooms for different group sizes, round table classrooms for student meetings and online learning, labs, institute, and project and quality offices. (Standard 7.1.)

Based on the information provided in the SER, the Faculty of Law at "HAXHI ZEKA" University in Kosovo follows the relevant laws and regulations for budget planning and financial management. The budget plan for the LLB in General Law Program is ambitious and includes all necessary funds for planned activities. The responsible officers closely monitor the financial management process and prepare reports on budget execution. The budgetary funding for direct support of the program is presented in Table No. 22. Overall, the financial

support for the program appears to be well-organized and aligned with the university's strategic and action plans. (Standard 7.2.)

Based on the information provided in the SER and verified during a site visit on 26th July, the Faculty of Law at "HZU" in Kosovo has a well-equipped and functional campus that includes classrooms, a library with reading room and IT lab, offices for administrative staff, and a Real Legal Clinic/Institute for Rule of Law and Human Rights. The library has reserves of books covering various disciplines in the curriculum. A project has been initiated so that the literature of the syllabi is fully covered. Furthermore, like in all institutions, libraries always have room for improvement. Student and faculty evaluations of the infrastructure are regularly conducted. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms, and laboratories is well-matched to the size of study groups. There are large amphitheatres with a capacity of 150-200 seats for large groups, comfortable halls with a capacity of 150 seats for medium groups, and rooms with 50-100 seats for smaller groups. The courtroom is adequately equipped for practical learning and simulation of cases, while the Legal Clinic provides an opportunity for students to engage in clinical work and gain real-world experience. The IT lab with 15 computers allows students to actively use technology and prepare for their studies and future roles as lawyers. The presence of an E-Kiosk at the entrance of the faculty building also facilitates access to important information and student complaints. (Standard 7.3. and 7.4.)

The library has a reading room with a seating capacity of 60, which corresponds to at least 10% of the total number of students in the Faculty of Law program. The library provides access to electronic resources, including online literature platforms and the UMS, which offer a wide range of materials for research and study purposes. The library has its own book stock with a sufficient number of books to cover the disciplines within the curricula. (Standard 7.5.)

The current premises and equipment at the Peja site are not suitable for students with special needs. (Standard 7.6)

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 7.1.</i> The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account. | X | |
| <i>Standard 7.2.</i> There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years. | X | |
| <i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; | X | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</p> <p>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</p> <p>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</p> | | |
| <p><i>Standard 7.4.</i> The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.</p> | X | |
| <p><i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <p>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years;</p> <p>d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for;</p> <p>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p> | X | |
| <p><i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</p> | | X |

Compliance level: 86% substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure that the new facilities are equipped with the necessary resources and technology to support innovative and interactive learning.*
2. *Regularly assess and update the budget plan for the LLB in General Law Program to ensure sufficient funds are allocated for planned activities and to meet the ambitious goals set in the strategic plan.*

3. *Consider expanding the library's book stock to include more recent and diverse titles from recognised publishers to meet the requirements of Standard 7.5. This will enhance the resources available to students and support research activities.*
4. *Ensure that the facilities and resources are accessible and inclusive for all students, including those with special needs. Address the current limitations at the Peja site and make necessary adjustments to create an inclusive learning environment.*

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

As shown above the compliance levels per general areas are:

| Standard | Compliance level |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Mission, objectives and administration | 50% Partially compliant |
| 2. Quality management | 56% Partially compliant |
| 3. Academic staff | 90% Substantially compliant |
| 4. Educational process content | 100% Fully compliant |
| 5. Students | 55% Partially compliant |
| 6. Research | 100% Fully compliant |
| 7. Infrastructure and resources | 86% Substantially compliant |
| Overall compliance | 76% Substantially compliant |

According to the expert team's evaluation, the "Law (LLB)" is "Substantially compliant" with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, the expert team recommends re-accrediting the programme for the duration of three years and admitting maximum 100 students to the programme per year.

Expert Team

Member



(Signature)

Peter Parycek

(Print Name)

06.08.2023

(Date)

Member



(Signature)

Lali Giorgidze

(Print Name)

05.08.2023

(Date)