



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency



Universum International College

PROGRAM RE-ACCREDITATION EVALUATION
“Professional Bachelor in Dental Hygiene”

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

18th of June 2024, Prishtina

1
Affiliate
of **ENQA**.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 18th of June 2024 Expert

Team (ET) members:

- *Antonio Sánchez Pozo,*
- *Jadranka Pelikan, Student expert*
- *Adrian Tudor Stan,*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Milot Hasangjekaj, KAA Officer*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER)*
- *Interviews with faculty, students, and staff*
- *Relevant institutional documentation and annexes*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *Kosovo Accreditation Agency standards*
- *National Qualifications Framework (NQF)*
- *European Higher Education Area (EHEA) guidelines*

1.2. Site visit schedule

| Programme Accreditation Procedure at Universum International College | |
|--|---|
| Programmes: | Bachelor's Degree in Dental Hygiene, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation) Laboratory Biomedicine, BSc, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Professional Bachelor in Cosmetology, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) |
| JOINT MEETING Main Link: <i>This zoom link will be</i> | Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81970506582?pwd=2AWScBvlgJLarjuenD4xueDIMxp6KC.1 Meeting ID: 819 7050 6582 |

| | |
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| <i>used for the Management and Quality assurance meetings.</i> | Passcode: 954380 |
| Zoom Link: Cosmetology and Laboratory Biomedicine | Topic: Accreditation: Cosmetology and Laboratory Medicine Time: Jun 18, 2024 09:00 AM Rome Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81970506582?pwd=2AWScBvlgJLarjuenD4xueDIMxp6KC.1 Meeting ID: 819 7050 6582 Passcode: 954380 |
| Zoom Link: Dental Hygiene | Topic: Accreditation - Dental Hygiene Time: Jun 18, 2024 09:00 AM Rome Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89269584540?pwd=Op4z6cLa6fVdFj13gUqrcCPnLSMkdT.1 Meeting ID: 892 6958 4540 Passcode: 738442 |
| Site visit on (hybrid): | 18 June 2024 |
| Expert Team: | Antonio Sánchez Pozo, Jadranka Pelikan, Student expert Adrian Stan, |
| Coordinators of the KAA: | Milot Hasangjekaj, KAA Officer |

Site Visit Programme

| Time | Meeting | Participants |
|----------------------|---|---|
| 09:00 – 10:00 | Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated | Prof. Alejtin Berisha Prof. Isabel Salvat |
| 10.05 – 10.55 | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff | Prof. Uran Rraci Prof. Donjeta Zejnullahu Pllana Ms. Gabriela Ukaj |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Meeting with the heads of the study programme Bachelor's Degree in Dental Hygiene, 180 ECTS (Reaccreditation) Room 1 | Prof. Rozafa Troni Prof. Arianit Emra Prof. Maigona Dermaku |

| | | |
|--|-------------|--|
| | Adrian Stan | |
|--|-------------|--|

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|----------------------|---|---|
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Meeting with the heads of the study programme Laboratory Biomedicine, BSc, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Professional Bachelor in Cosmetology, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Room 2 Antonio Sánchez Pozo, Jadranka Pelikan, Student expert. | Prof. Dua Danjolli Hashani Prof. Arianit Gashi Prof. Shkelzen Elezaj Prof. Arjeta Gashi fazliu Prof. Redon Jashari Prof. Flamur Hasimi |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch break | |
| 13:00 – 13:45 | Visiting Facilities | Tevide Shabani |
| 13:45 – 14:45 | Meeting with teaching staff Bachelor's Degree in Dental Hygiene, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation) Laboratory Biomedicine, BSc, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Professional Bachelor in Cosmetology, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Room number 1 Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81970506582?pwd=2AWScBvlgJLarjuenD4xueDIMxp6KC.1 Meeting ID: 819 7050 6582 Passcode: 954380 | Prof. Riaz Agahi Prof. Tevide Shabani Prof. Vigan Kiseri Prof. Fuat Bislimi Prof. Albin Gashi Prof. Xhevdet Quni Prof. Donjet Bislimi Prof. Hana Domi Prof. Nora Shabani Prof. Jeton Havolli Prof. Bekim Ramabaja |
| 14:45 – 15:30 | Meeting with students and graduates (Dental Hygiene) | Erona Aliu, Flora Hajrizi |
| | | Kristina Dedaj Loresa Syla Mal Ahmeti Flaka Çela Artistika Kastrati Diana Aliti Dorela Mehmetaj Fjolla Miftari Melisa Rrahimaj Ereza Çitaku Artiola Latifaj Baftishahe Aziri Leona Gjoni Florentina Ibrahim Nita Qarkaxhija Violeta Svarça |

| | | |
|----------------------|--|---|
| 15:30 – 16:15 | Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders | Gazmend Bërlajolli Fjolla Gashi Shefki Abdullahu Hajriz Sejdiu Admir Salihu Samir Reka Ramush Mahmutaj Fadil Redenica Ana Tolaj Driton Avdiu Violeta Pirana Hatixhe Ramabaja Rezana Saraqi Bardha Leka Shaip Muja |
| 16:15 – 16:20 | Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts | |
| 16:20 – 16:25 | Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program | |

Overall instructions for HEIs:

1. No presentations of any kind are allowed, as the meetings are intended to be free discussions.

2. The students selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of fields of study, programme, study cycle, year of study, students with special needs if any, etc.
3. The teaching staff selected for the meeting should reflect a diversity in terms of faculties and programmes, full-time and part time, local and international, etc.
4. The students, graduates and employers of graduates should not be employed at the institution.
5. Anyone whose attendance won't be agreed in advance with KAA, and the Expert Team will be asked to leave the interview session.
6. Nametags are to be provided for all people attending the meetings.

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

Universum International College was established in March 2005 in Prishtina, Kosovo. The institution aims to provide high-quality, accessible, and affordable education to both local and international students. It offers 13 Bachelor level and 3 Master level programs and has entered a strategic partnership with Arizona State University (ASU) since March 2023 to enhance its academic offerings and quality assurance measures. In this collaboration, Universum International College aims to implement advanced management practices and quality assurance protocols that meet international standards, reaffirming their dedication to providing top-tier education. This partnership enables students to graduate with a diploma "Powered by ASU," and furthermore, students in certain academic programs can transfer to ASU for part of their studies, allowing them to earn a dual degree.

The mission of Universum International College is to provide high-quality education that promotes intellectual growth, critical thinking, and practical skills. The college strives to create a supportive and dynamic learning environment that fosters academic excellence and personal development, preparing students for successful careers and active citizenship in a globalized world.

Universum International College currently operates across two campuses: Prishtina Campus and Ferizaj Campus.

Starting January 2024, academic programs are organized into three faculties, each managed by a dean responsible for achieving academic objectives and implementing the curriculum.

The Dental Hygiene study programme has been first accredited in 2021 with a 65 student quota and stands a further accreditation procedure as of 2024.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

The updated mission of Universum International College is outlined as follows: Universum International College aims to nurture students into responsible citizens, successful and open-minded leaders, capable of thriving in the digital and globalized era of Industry 4.0. They achieve this by offering personalized academic and life coaching, placing students and their learning at the forefront within an innovative, digitally enriched environment. This environment promotes creativity, inquiry, teamwork, innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking. Its dedication to quality, teaching excellence, and applied research lays the foundation for a robust and dynamic nation and region.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the mission, aims, and expected learning outcomes of the program were crafted through an extensive consultation process involving the institution's academic staff and representatives from Arizona State University. This collaborative effort guarantees that the program is aligned with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, thereby meeting Standard 1.2. Furthermore, the SER indicates that the program incorporates diverse teaching methods, including lectures, discussions, practical work, group activities, and digital learning tools, to effectively align with the program's objectives, fulfilling Standard 1.3.

Transparency is fundamental to the grading and assessment processes at Universum International College. The institution requires all academic staff to establish clear grading rubrics and define course learning outcomes, along with the corresponding teaching methodologies and student assessment types. This information must be readily accessible to all students. However, the expert team observed that the website lacks sufficient details about the institution's operations. Although management asserts that all policies and rules are available internally, it is recommended that this information be made publicly accessible. Furthermore, the website does not provide information about the academic staff, which is essential for recognizing the institution's academic contributions. Consequently, Standard 1.4 has been only partially met.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), Universum International College has implemented a Code of Ethics and Staff Manual that delineates procedures and expectations for academic staff. Core principles such as academic integrity, responsibility, and public accountability emphasize the importance of honesty in all college operations. The Code of Ethics also includes provisions for an Ethical Committee, which convenes in cases of breaches or non-compliance with established rules and guidelines, ensuring adherence to Standard 1.5.

Furthermore, the SER states that all policies, regulations, terms of reference, and statements of responsibility related to program management and delivery are reviewed and potentially amended at least once every two years to accommodate changes. The university's management reported that Universum International College is undergoing significant policy and regulatory changes due to its agreement with Arizona State University, thereby meeting Standard 1.6.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.</i> | x | |
| <i>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.</i> | x | |
| <i>Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.</i> | x | |
| <i>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.</i> | | x |
| <i>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.</i> | x | |
| <i>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.</i> | x | |

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. ET recommends to increase transparency of the HEI by publishing on the official web site all regulation, policies and CVs of academic staff as well as all the information about study programs*

2.2. Quality Management

The Higher Education sector in Kosovo is governed by the 2011 Law on Higher Education No. 04/L-037. Since 2001, Kosovo has embraced the Bologna Process model for its Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), incorporating the Bologna Reforms even though it has not formally signed the Bologna Declaration. Currently, the objectives of the Bologna Process are implemented through national legislation and regulations at Universum International College. This includes the adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), a three-cycle degree structure, student and staff mobility initiatives, and a quality assurance system.

The evaluation by the Expert Team (ET) is based on documentation provided and information from the Head of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and supporting staff, both prior to and during the site visit. The University follows a two-tier system for reviewing academic programs. The first tier involves an internal review, where progress reports are prepared based on data collected by the QAU and through weekly meetings between the Program's Academic Director, Program Coordinator, and administrative staff. The second tier focuses on external review, where internal reports are shared with an external panel for feedback and recommendations. Arizona State University (ASU), the University's strategic partner, participates as an external reviewer.

The QAU oversees quality control at two levels. Firstly, it handles internal quality assurance in accordance with University rules. This includes developing and monitoring quality assurance policies, enhancing the student learning experience, tracking key performance indicators across departments, analyzing data, preparing reports, providing continuous improvement recommendations, facilitating staff and student evaluations, supporting curriculum development and student services, and improving institutional effectiveness. Secondly, the QAU manages external quality assurance processes linked to the partnership with ASU. This involves ensuring faculty participation in ASU training programs and evaluating their effectiveness in enhancing teaching skills, facilitating student involvement in ASU training and certification programs, and aligning course content with ASU requirements.

Universum International College has developed its own quality assurance strategy, utilizing a range of custom instruments to enhance and maintain program quality. This strategy will also apply to the new program under consideration for accreditation. The college follows established guidelines for the periodic internal review of academic programs, collecting data based on 25 key performance indicators (KPIs) that cover administrative and professional aspects such as teaching, research, timely communication with students, and student satisfaction. The findings from this quality assurance system inform the further development of study programs.

Training at both institutional and program levels is provided to improve service quality and ensure compliance with standards set by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). Additional support for quality management is available through the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching and the Quality Assurance and Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) comprises five full-time professionals with expertise in data collection, aggregation, analysis, curriculum development, policy and regulation development, and general administration. However, the Expert Team (ET) noted that the QAU's workload exceeds its current capacity. To address this, the QAU collaborates with academic directors from each department, who allocate two staff members to assist the QAU, bringing the total number of staff involved in quality management to 29. Despite this collaboration, the ET recommended increasing the number of full-time QAU professionals, especially given the dual focus on internal and external quality assurance processes.

Universum International College ensures quality across three domains: academic and teaching within study programs, local and international cooperation, and administrative and operational functions, including student services. The college has a Quality Assurance Manual outlining procedures for data collection, reporting mechanisms, and timelines, which is regularly updated. Although the manual is supposed to be available on the university's official website, the ET could not find it on the English version of the site.

For specific program evaluations, the QAU follows KAA guidelines and conducts surveys among academic and administrative staff to monitor progress and satisfaction levels. Data collected are shared with stakeholders through an internal information-sharing platform accessible to students and staff, with some information also available on the university's website. For accredited programs, the QAU prepares self-improvement reports and submits them to the KAA, monitoring the implementation of recommended standards and improvements.

Every program undergoes regular performance enhancements to meet the requirements of the university's strategic partner, Arizona State University (ASU). The QAU conducts regular evaluations of both administrative services and academic staff, occurring twice a year for the winter and spring semesters. These evaluations gather student assessments of courses, professors, and services. The QAU handles data dissemination, collection, analysis, and report aggregation, providing targeted recommendations for improvement. Reports are shared internally with the rector, academic directors, professors, department coordinators, and students. While staff self-evaluation reports are not publicly accessible due to data protection regulations, students have access to evaluation reports for their professors. According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), this system of result dissemination fosters constructive dialogue among management, professors, and students, leading to improved learning experiences. The

university is transitioning from Moodle to a more user-friendly platform for information sharing.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.</i> | X | |

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|---|---|---|
| <i>Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.</i> | | X |
| <i>Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study programme. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the programme are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.</i> | X | |

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends that the University considers increasing the number of QAU staff according to the wide range of tasks linked to internal and external procedures in quality assurance.*
2. *The ET recommends a stricter focus of quality assessment of the study programs and their outcomes.*
3. *The ET recommends regular monitoring and capturing the data on the employability of the graduates across all study programs.*

2.3. Academic Staff

There are 27 staff engaged in the Dental Hygiene programme, employed full-time, who comply with all the legal requirements specified in the Administrative Regulations for Accreditation regarding professional positions. They are expected to participate in research, assume administrative responsibilities, and contribute to community and industry engagement. The strong relationship with the industry allows many professors to involve industry professionals in co-lecturing, typically in a guest-lecture capacity. Additionally, there will be collaborative teaching between Universum's academic staff and Arizona State University's (ASU).

Universum College is facilitating student and staff exchanges with international partner universities under the Erasmus+ mobility framework. These collaborative exchanges are instrumental in helping Universum achieve its objectives. To date, 539 professors have participated in the Erasmus+ Program, engaging in lectures and training at various European universities.

Training opportunities for the academic staff are created in collaboration with industry partners, allowing Universum to better understand industry needs. This ensures that the training programs equip academic staff with the necessary skills and perspectives, which they can then incorporate into their syllabi and teaching practices. Additionally, some training programs are developed in partnership with international collaborators. This collaboration helps the staff adopt contemporary teaching, assessment, and validation methodologies.

Before the start of each academic year, Universum conducts an intensive, full-day induction training for both new and existing academic staff. This training focuses on teaching methodologies, curriculum and syllabus development, and achieving academic outcomes.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| | | |

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|--|-----------------|--|
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |

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|--|----------|--|
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| | | |

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

2.4. Educational Process Content

The Dental Hygiene programme in Universum offers quality teaching and learning experience characterized by qualified lecturers, an interactive and updated curriculum since first accreditation, apparently motivated and inspired students, and a comprehensive support system that addresses the academic needs of students. The curriculum emphasizes service and participation in community outreach projects, as well as the practical application of knowledge, but not research knowledge

Beyond delivering a learning experience, the college encourages students to gain a deeper understanding of their subject, pushing them to go beyond basic explanations and descriptions. Students are expected to analyze data and information, make sense of it, and reach evaluative judgments. At higher levels of study, students are required to apply critical thinking to their synthesis of knowledge, supported by exposure to relevant theories, concepts, and models integrated into the curriculum.

This professional program is designed to provide comprehensive upper-level studies, preparing dental hygienists for emerging roles in oral healthcare. The curriculum incorporates all aspects of dental hygiene into both theoretical frameworks and practical experiences. It includes general education as well as specialized coursework in biomedical and oral sciences.

The curriculum covers four main areas: general education, biomedical sciences, dental sciences, and dental hygiene science. This content is integrated and delivered with sufficient depth, scope, sequence of instruction, quality, and emphasis to ensure the achievement of the program's defined competencies.

Comprehensive care delivery is achieved by following a structured care process: assessing patient needs, formulating a dental hygiene diagnosis, planning for the prevention and treatment of oral diseases, implementing various dental hygiene interventions, and evaluating the efforts and oral health outcomes of both the patient and practitioner.

Clinical dental hygiene emphasizes the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills required to provide preventive, educational, and therapeutic services to the public. Clinical practice involves close collaboration with clinical dental hygiene faculty, including assessing patient needs and planning for treatment and disease control.

The programme diploma is awarded to students who have successfully completed all required courses and accumulated 180 ECTS credits over three years, meeting the degree requirements. Of the 180 ECTS credits required for this professional degree, students must earn 146 ECTS credits from core courses available to all streams of the programme, 8 ECTS credits from optional or elective courses, 10 ECTS credits from the Bachelor Thesis, and 16 ECTS credits from the Internship (Practical Clinical work).

The Dental Hygiene Program is taught in Albanian and it incorporates various resources in English. Students have access to electronic libraries, and professors are encouraged to provide literature that is most relevant to their subjects. Each syllabus importantly includes non-academic partners, who contribute as guest speakers, in case studies, joint research projects, study visits, etc. The college also offers a variety of classes in English to facilitate students' understanding of the material. Instructors are expected to conduct lectures in Albanian while being proficient in English. Both teachers and students are supported in using materials from other languages and integrating them into their learning and teaching.

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| | Compliance |
|--|-------------------|

| Standard | Yes | No |
|---|------------|-----------|
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | | X |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| <p><i>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 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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.</i></p> <p><i>*To be inserted the overview of the program (with all areas to be filled out)</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Have established mechanisms to ensure a sufficient number of patient experiences, that all students have the opportunity to achieve stated competencies*

2.5. Students

The University's web site contains information about the admission procedure and compulsory documentation for the application for enrolment in the study programme. Information is available in Albanian and English language. The University's policy follows the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo (2011). The SER (p.131-132) clearly presents procedures and criteria for admission and selection of the candidates applied to the public call.

The University's web site contains information about the admission procedure and compulsory documentation for the application for enrolment in the study programme.

Information is available in Albanian and English language. The public call for new academic year enrolment contains this obligatory condition.

The number of students' enrolment at BSc level is well dimensioned for an effective and interactive teaching (two practice rooms with chairs 5 + 8), models for practice, tools and equipment for dental prosthodontics and similar.

The study programme syllabi have defined fashion of examination. The SER claims that the feedback is provided soon after the exams. The assistance is in a form of consultation meetings with the teachers available weekly. In case of dissatisfaction students can appeal according to the procedure.

The student grades are kept in the electronic data base. There are effective processes in place to collect and analyse reliable data referring to the profile of the student population, student progression, success and students' satisfaction with their programs, learning resources and student support available, career paths of graduates. The Student Affair Office and administration collect data and keep all records.

*Student who fail to complete their studies in the study program may apply for an additional exam. The SER (p.136) states that students can reject, accept, or request clarification about their scores. DMIS platform enables academic and teaching staff to post, calculate, and sum up the students' grades. Staff is able to get data about the passing rate of the class, thus addressing any important issues for future references. Examinations can be held individually upon the request of students (respecting their work schedule), as well as any other request inquired by a formal request by students is well considered. According to the SER (p. 151) students have an opportunity for flexible studying experience, quote: *The flexible schedule, combining asynchronous and synchronous elements, creates a modern and inclusive learning environment where students engage with diverse perspectives, shaping a future where education knows no borders.**

According to the information provided, there are processes in place to collect and analyse data referring to the student progression, yet, there is no information about drop-out rates. The institution collects also data on students' satisfaction with their programmes, the learning resources, and administration and support services. The SER (p.135) states that all the results and performance indicators of students are stored and processed electronically. Hence, both our academic staff and students have easy access to the relevant information concerning their progress and academic record through DMIS or MOODLE platforms.

The University has established different regulations to deal with academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating. The SER (p.140 - 141) clearly defines what is considered as misconduct and dishonesty: plagiarism, multiple submission, collusion and

cheating in examination. There is a three-stage procedure for misconduct. The SER (p.171) states that the University applies anti-plagiarism software namely Academia Platform, the first software dedicated to the identification of plagiarism in the Albanian language.

The Statute of the University defines clearly student rights and obligations. The document is publicly available. The students have an access to the Handbook for students along with other regulatory documents related to student rights and obligations.

Regarding the student mobility, the University clearly describes available possibilities and procedures. The SER (p.133) clearly describes that transfer of students is regulated by provisions of the policy on transfer of students, which is in full compliance with the higher education law of the Republic of Kosovo. A transfer of students is enabled only if a previous academic program is relevant, includes courses of similar nature and the relevant courses are acknowledged by the respective academic staff, mostly in the final year of the study programme.

The SER explicits that the academic staff publishes materials and information related to the teaching process. During the interviews it has been confirmed that the academic staff is obligated to publish the consultation schedule weekly. The mentoring system peer-to-peer does not exist, but there is an effective procedure of peer-to-peer evaluation as a learning tool.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.</i> | X | |
| <i>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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.</i> | X | |

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| <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 are 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: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The drop-out rate should be included into the SER. The activities for drop-out decrease should be developed and implemented.*

2.6. Research

The college identifies itself primarily as a teaching institution with well-developed degree programs, rather than a research-intensive one. However, this does not imply that research is considered less important.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the primary challenges at the institutional level include a lack of government funding for scientific research and limited financial resources for research projects. Although the development plan includes budget projections for publications, training, workshops, seminars, development projects, cooperation, and

conferences, as well as coverage for research expenditures, these opportunities have not yet been accessed by the academic staff.

Research remains a significant challenge for higher education institutions in Kosovo. The country ranks last in the Balkans in terms of research output, a problem that extends beyond the institutional level. This issue partly stems from the quality of PhDs being produced in Kosovo, where the profession is increasingly seen not as an opportunity for academic contribution, but rather for financial gain due to the numerous available opportunities. At the moment there is not any accredited PhD in Dental Medicine study programme and thus academics have to enroll in a PhD abroad.

There is no evidence that all publications were peer reviewed and the h-index is quite low, indicating that the research has a low impact. No data is available about transfer of research results to society, but the research is well disseminated. The connection between the research and the students' teaching regarding their involvement is missing. There appears to be no opportunities for students to do research, although they feel they can ask for help. The bachelor's thesis should be a good starting point for a more research oriented perspective. At the moment the thesis is only theoretical, a literature review.

Most of the submitted CVs were prepared hastily, lacked consistency, did not include a list of research publications, and were generally outdated.

Only few academic have a proven track record of scientific publishing in the last three years.

| Standard | Compliance | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| | Yes | No |
| <i>Standard 6.1. 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.</i> | | X |
| <i>Standard 6.2. 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.</i> | X | |

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| <i>Standard 6.3. 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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.5. 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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.</i> | | X |
| <i>Standard 6.7. 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.</i> | | X |
| <i>Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.</i> | | X |
| <i>Standard 6.9/6.8. 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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.</i> | X | |

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| <i>Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.</i> | | X |
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Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Scientific student activity should be encouraged, especially within the bachelor's thesis*
2. *Ensure a balance between strategic research priority areas and research arising from individual interests*
3. *Updated staff CV's*
4. *A common template to be used by all staff in making their CV's to ensure consistency*
5. *Specific funds allocated and internal grants offered for dental hygienist programme*
6. *Academics should be encouraged and supported in research and publishing under the Universum College's name*

2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

As confirmed in the meetings, the UNIVERSUM building will provide good conditions for the study program implementation and the student's learning experience. Permanent teaching staff is available and accomplished by temporary staff. However, the classrooms are not equipped with airconditions which can impede the learning experience and the quality of studying.

The SER does not contain a financial plan at the level of the study program. Investment and financial budgets and policies are regulated at higher levels of the University. However, it is indicated in the SER that budget allocated is sufficient for keeping the study program sustainable.

UNIVERSUM provides an adequate, clean, attractive and well-maintained physical environment for the study programme implementation. There are classrooms for lectures, practical work laboratories, with the basic equipment which should be improved continuously. Yet, there is no evidence of access to laboratories for the compulsory subjects Introduction to chemistry and Principles of Microbiology. During the site visit the heads of the programme stated that the practical work will be conducted at the partners' premises. The partners did not confirm that they can accept 105 students, the partner organisations clearly stated that all together they can accept not more than 20 students weekly.

The library mentioned in the SER is rather limited in space (exact size has not provided by the SER). The number of books in a variety of genres is available, yet there is a limitation of the professional literature. The SER states that there is an access to electronic scientific literature available to the students and academic staff.

Note: This criterion contains four sub-criteria. The Expert team considers this criterion satisfied if all sub-criteria are met to at least some extent which is not the case in this evaluation. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories is sufficient.

The library situation is only briefly addressed in the SER. Observations during the sitevisit has shown, that there is fairly free access to the central unit of the library as well as in the academic units. Free access is provided to electronic books, bibliographic references, bibliometric information scientific databases. The libraries offer quiet learning environments, extensive print and electronic collections and helpful staff to support students and teachers. UNIVERSUM has 16 study programmes and two level-5 programmes. It is questionable if the seats and space in the library can meet the standard.

The building and the classes are not entirely suitably adapted for students with physical disabilities. There is an elevator in the building, yet there are barriers such as uneven floors level, door knobs difficult to access.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>Standard 7.1. 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.</i> | X | |
| <i>Standard 7.2. 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.</i> | | X |

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| <p><i>Standard 7.3. 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:</i></p> <p><i>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</i></p> <p><i>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</i></p> <p><i>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</i></p> <p><i>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>Standard 7.4. 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.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |

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| <p><i>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</i></p> <p><i>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>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;</i></p> <p><i>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |
| <p><i>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</i></p> | <p>X</p> | |

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The Financial plan should be included in the SER despite the fact it is a private organisation, but it provides a public service.*
2. *The classrooms should be equipped with air-condition systems to ensure safe and healthy environment for the students' learning experience and quality of studying.*
3. *UNIVERSUM must provide access to laboratories for practical work within courses of Introduction to chemistry and Principles of Microbiology.*
4. *The library should contain more professional books available to the students.*
5. *The number of seats in the library is very limited. The University should provide additional space for students to read and study.*
6. *The special needs students should have an improved access to the classes and practice rooms in terms of existing barriers removal.*

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

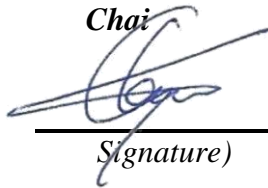
The Dental Hygiene study program at Universum International College, while comprehensive in its intent, exhibits several significant shortcomings. Despite being designed to provide a high-quality educational experience, the program faces considerable challenges in delivering on its promises. Additionally, the program’s curriculum, though integrating core courses, electives, a bachelor thesis, and practical clinical work, may lack depth and rigor needed for a truly well-rounded education. The strong emphasis on industry connections and collaboration with non-academic partners, while beneficial in theory, appears underutilized in practice. The guest lectures, case studies, joint research projects, and study visits seem more aspirational than consistently implemented.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance Level</i> |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>Mission, objectives and administration</i> | <i>Substantially compliant</i> |
| <i>Quality management</i> | <i>Substantially compliant</i> |
| <i>Academic Staff</i> | <i>Fully compliant</i> |
| <i>Educational Process Content</i> | <i>Fully compliant</i> |
| <i>Students</i> | <i>Fully compliant</i> |
| <i>Research</i> | <i>Partially compliant</i> |


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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Infrastructure and resources</i> | <i>Substantially compliant</i> |
| <i>Overall Compliance</i> | <i>Substantially compliant</i> |

Overall, the Dental Hygiene study program at Universum College, despite its comprehensive design, falls short in execution, facing significant challenges that impede its ability to fully prepare larger number of students for successful careers as dental hygienists. In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Dental Hygiene, offered by Universum College is “substantially compliant” with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number of 40 students to be enrolled in the program.


Expert Team

Chai


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