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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



***UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA “HASAN PRISHTINA”
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY
M.Sc. POMOLOGY AND VITICULTURE
REACCREDITATION***

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

December 2024, Prishtina

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

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

Abbreviations

EHEA: European Higher Education Area

ET: Expert team

FAV: Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary

HEI: Higher Education Institution

KAA: Kosovo Accreditation Agency

MEST: Ministry of Education Science and Technology

OFQA: Office for Quality Assurance

SER: Self-evaluation report

SWOT: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

UP :University of Prishtina

Programme Accreditation Procedure at UP Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine	
Programmes:	UP Pomology and Viticulture, MSc UP Plant Protection-Fitomedicine, MSc
Site visit on:	18 December 2024
Expert Team:	Prof. Reiner Doluschitz Prof. Kiriaki Zinoviadou Ms. Nadia Manzoni
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ms. Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer Ms. Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer

Site Visit Programme

Time	Meeting	Participants
08:30 – 09:00	Meeting with the management of the faculty	Arben Musliu Sali Aliu Alltane Kryeziu Fatgzim Latifi
09:00– 10:00	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme UP Pomology and Viticulture, MSc	Prof. Vahid Avdiu Prof. Bedri Dragusha

10:05 – 11:05	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme UP Plant Protection-Fitomedicine, MSc	Prof. Arben Mehmeti Prof. Fadil Musa
11:05 – 11:45	Meeting with teaching staff	Sali Aliu, Muhamet Zogaj, Mentor Thaqi, Saranda Musa, Betim Bresilla, Mimoza Jakupaj, Xhavit Ramadani, Muhamet Zogaj, Lavdim Lepaja, Sami Kryeziu, Mergim Zogaj
11:45 – 12:45	Lunch break	
12:45 – 13:25	Meeting with students	Xheneta Isufi, Kaltrina Selimi, Djellorita Lushaku, Yll Shtavica, Florent Hoxha, Rexhep Dervishaj, Adhuron Hoti, Blendi Gashi, Diellza Uka, Fjolla Plakolli, Elira Sheholli, Xhemile Xhemajli,
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with graduates	Naim Delijaj, Fatlinda Muqiqi, Ymer Ymeri, Burim Ahmeti, Liridon Mustafa, Drilon Blakaj, Adni Islami, Egzona Hajra Egzon Maqani
14:10 – 14:50	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Lirim Sadiku-AgroEko, Samet Fetahu-Agro Sodovina, Karsten Klapp-GoBeyond, Qendrim Selimi- Agroelita, Muhamet Demolli- Greenhouse production, Zenel Bunjaku-IADK, Naim Rrahmani- Asociation of walnuts & hazelnuts, Xhavit Alija-Prilli 98
14:50 – 15:00	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:00 – 15:10	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Arben Musliu Sali Aliu Alltane Kryeziu Fatgzim Latifi Gezim Hodolli
15:10 – 16:10	Visiting Facilities at FAV	Arben Musliu Vahid Avdiu Arben Mehmeti

Overall instructions for HEIs:

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

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

The Faculty of Agriculture was founded on August 26, 1973. The aim of this foundation has been the faster development of the agricultural sector in Kosovo by graduating well educated people with superior qualifications in agriculture. By decision of the Senate of University in Prishtina in 1996, the veterinary section was established with the aim of educating professionals in veterinary medicine that would serve animal health, food industry, food security and food safety in general. In 2001, the Senate of the University of Prishtina approved curricula based on the Bologna Declaration for Bachelor Degree. In 2006 the Faculty Council and its academic staff proposed expanding the Faculty of Agriculture to the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary (FAV). The proposal became approved by the Senate of the University of Prishtina (UP) and subsequently the Minister of Education, Science and Technology issued an amending Decision no. 883/01-B, on December 2006. In 2023 a total of 2239 students (BSc and MSc) graduated according to the report of the Student Services of FAV

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

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

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Agriculture and Food Economics	24	19	19	19	19	17	20	19	19
Plant Protection - phytomedicine	12	14	10	10	10	10	9	8	5
Pomology and Viticulture	11	12	10	10	14	7	9	10	7
Urban Agriculture	/	/	/	/	/	15	16	/	/
Crop Science	/	/	/	/	/	/	12	10	12
Horticulture-Fruits and Vineyards	12	11	11	10	17	/	/	/	/
Food Sciences	/	/	/	40	40	30	/	/	/
Public Health	11	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

The program under evaluation for reaccreditation is a 2-year M.Sc. study program in UP Pomology and Viticulture, MSc with 120 ECTS. The number of students on FAV degree

programs is generally declining. One important reason for this is the demographic development in Kosovo and the decreasing interest of the young generation in agriculture, however there are other reasons specific to this faculty and to this programme that will be identified in this report and which requires attention.

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

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

The mission of the study program is in line with the missions of FAV and UP as it is stated in the SER and confirmed in the on-site-visit discussion. The agricultural sector in Kosovo is still under development and an important element of the national economy. Therefore, ag-related study programs are of special high importance for Kosovo.

A particular positive aspect of the study program under evaluation is the close collaboration with local and national agribusiness-enterprises. This is generally of high relevance in order to provide internships, topics for BSc.-theses and foster subsequent job opportunities of students. This is of extraordinary importance in Kosovo due to the difficult situation of its labor markets. The SER confirms that the study program has a long-term vision of fulfilling its function and mission, in creating a perspective for the new generation, modernizing and reforming the education system in accordance with the requirements of the labor market in Kosovo, as well as with Regional and European Integration in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary, Food, and Agribusiness.

The program under evaluation is based on a rudimentary analysis of the labor market, which does not include statistics or data on the employment outcomes for graduates as no regular graduate tracking or surveys are conducted for this programme. The basics analysis however was developed in cooperation with actors from the labor market and agricultural organizations.

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

The infrastructure, in particular the provision of premises has improved somewhat compared to the former situation from springtime 2024 when the last evaluation took place. It is stated in the SER that there are 3.2 m² available space for each student. However, since FAV has still no permanent solution for the infrastructure, it is hard to estimate the relation between students and space.

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

It is indicated in the SER that the study program follows specific procedures for handling cases of plagiarism, informing staff and students about the course of the process. Students and staff are informed about the appropriate steps to follow after a positive result from the software appeared.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendations for improving the study program, given by previous quality assurance procedures, are analyzed but the implementation is not effective (see Standard 1.5).

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

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

All study program activities and operations are subject to a policy and review process that ensures adequate and efficient administrative staff and budgetary support. This is confirmed in the SER.

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

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

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

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

It is claimed in the SER that reviews of policies and regulations are conducted “as appropriate in the circumstances of the change”, however, there is no fixed schedule for a regular review.

ET recommendations:

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

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

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

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

by the Office of Quality Assurance (OFQA). This is confirmed in the SER and in the on-site-visit discussion..

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From the SER it can be quoted that Principal Performance Indicators for this level of study program have been set up. These performance indicators are measured through the forms set out in the respective regulation. However, key performance parameters should become highlighted more prominently.

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

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

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

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

It is confirmed in the SER that FAV established the AGRO Career Center for Jobs, since its establishment 40 young graduates in agriculture have been placed in private agribusiness companies. The department maintains constant contact with graduates and often mediates their employment through cooperation with private companies, banks, agencies.

There is a stakeholder survey established. Each academic year, the University of Prishtina through SEMS assesses the academic staff. The assessment results are made public. Student visits, organized by the Department of Agricultural Economics, to agricultural businesses, allow constant contact with employers from whom feedback is received as well as from employed students and also a list of cooperation with private companies and agencies is provided by the Department. The ET trusts this statement and recommends to keep up with this integrated system of information flow.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ET recommendations:

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

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

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

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

As stated in the SER, the announcement of job vacancies and the procedures for announcements, recruitment, and the hiring of new staff, are fully defined through the relevant regulations. Every step is transparent and open for discussion among the public and interested parties. However, in the submitted SER there is limited information regarding the announcement of the vacancies internationally and examples of completed carried out teacher recruitment procedures are lacking. During the visit it was confirmed that UP has adequate

procedures for the selection of the best candidates for each position that is aligned with national legislation.

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

Unfortunately limited information has been provided via the SER and a number of these indicators had to be evaluated during the visit. It can be declared that at least 50% of the academic staff who are involved in delivering the study program are full-time HEI employees (employment contracts). However, despite the fact that table 4 provides the names of permanent and temporary academic staff at Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary as well as their expertise it is not possible to identify the names of the staff that is directly involved in this MSc program. This can be achieved only by studying the tables provided for Standard 4. In the introductory paragraph of Standard 3 in the SER it is stated that 14 professors and teaching assistants are engaged in implementing this program however later it is stated that the number of academic staff meets the standards set by the applicable regulations, including two lead professors for the program with the appropriate qualifications, six other professors within the FBV, as well as one professor and two teaching assistants engaged in the program (total 11). It is very important to avoid such contradicting data as it may lead to confusion.

The provided CVs prove that the number and qualifications of academic staff are adequate for the implementation of the study program and for performing scientific/professional activity at the required level however, some of them have not been updated since 2023. As stated in the SER all academic staff involved in teaching in Msc Pomology and Viticulture possesses proper documentation as required by applicable regulations approved by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). Moreover, all the academic staff of the involved in Msc Pomology and Viticulture programme studies has completed the online forms of the Accreditation Agency (e-accreditation).

As the number of active students is limited the required ration of students to full-time academics for the study program (1:30) is easily achieved. In addition, as indicated in the SER “besides teaching, each of the academic staff at least twice a week has consultations with students”. During the visit it was observed that a number of staff members are involved in more than one program delivered in FAV. Despite the fact that this is a common practice in a large number of International Institutions it creates confusion when it is required to calculate the total workload of the members. Moreover, the fact that only the name of the permanent staff appears on the curriculum provided in Standard 4 can lead to the conclusion that only two full time faculty are providing most of the compulsory courses. Despite the fact that it is not stated in the SER the visiting team trusts that the distribution of faculty responsibilities - including student mentoring, teaching, research professional development, administrative duties, and community service - is well balanced and responsibly managed.

Standard 3.3 The study program is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which

include the evaluation of excellence. The advancement of staff arises from the higher education institution's strategic goals and is in line with the legislation and internal regulations in effect. (ESG 1.5)

As stated in the SER the procedures for the advancement of academic staff engaged in the study program are transparent and objective (including examples of completed recruitment procedures for engaged staff, copies of job vacancy announcements, the composition of selection committees, reports from selection committees, and decisions made by expert bodies). It is also declared that the promotion of academic staff to higher levels is based on excellence and significant achievements and that evaluation results are taken into account in the promotion and reappointment of teaching staff and in the continuation of contracts. However this material is lacking and the relevant link to a database with relevant decisions that would allow the team to view such documents is not provided. The team only trusts that all processes are followed accordingly.

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

It is stated in the SER that there is an annual operational plan for the professional development of engaged academic staff, which facilitates the enhancement of skills related to lesson preparation and delivery, testing and evaluation methods, as well as familiarity with regulations and practices in higher education. Such a document was not provided however, during the visit the team had the opportunity to discuss with faculty and it was evident that they receive support in various aspects when required.

UP has established the Center for Excellence in Teaching which offers comprehensive training for newly hired teachers. Existing staff members are required to attend two training sessions before the expiration of their first contract.

In addition to participating in teaching trainings, organized by the University of Pristina itself, academic staff participates abroad in various trainings organized by higher education institutions. Staff talked very highly about a funded project that is running in collaboration with the University of Iowa, US, that assists in curriculum development and large number of faculty participate in mobility activities.

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

The engagement of external collaborators is preceded by specific requests based on the needs of the program, which, upon approval by the relevant mechanisms, is published through a competition with clear criteria based on the regulations for engaging external collaborators. The entire recruitment process for external collaborators is transparent and fully compliant with legal procedures. Once engaged, external collaborators have full access to infrastructure

and equipment necessary for the normal development of teaching and research activities. As identified during the visit external collaborators from industry and agencies also contribute to practical internships and final theses. However, the training they receive in order to be able to effectively supervise students following the required academic standards is not clarified in the SER.

ET recommendations:

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

- 1. The total workload of all faculty should be clearly demonstrated and the involvement of temporary staff in each course should be declared.*
- 2. Faculty should be constantly trained on the use of AI and other technologies so that they will be able to evaluate student work more effectively.*
- 3. In the future the SER should include more information and links to inventories that include all the required documents should be provided.*
- 4. The number of permanent staff should be increased as FAV relies greatly to a number of faculty that are occupied temporarily and this fluidity can negatively affect the overall quality.*
- 5. Develop a concrete guide including assessment criteria that will be used by any stakeholders that are involved in thesis or internship supervision.*

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

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

The mission of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary is stated as “transfer of knowledge and competences to future experts in all branches of the agro-food chain” including “Production and processing of raw materials of plant and animal origin and food security”. The mission of FAV does not provide further details on the vision regarding specific fields such as pomology and viticulture and skills associated with them, however since expertise in plant production is a general aim of the Faculty, the aims of the MSc study programme in pomology and viticulture are aligned with the mission of the Faculty. It can therefore be said that as a whole, the learning outcomes and the goals of the study programme are aligned with the overall institution's mission.

On the other hand, the alignment between the study programme objectives and the intended learning outcomes is more problematic. The self-evaluation report exhibits terminological

confusion between programme mission, vision and objectives. What can be considered closest to study programme objectives is the following:

“After the completion of the studies, the students with this level of education will have the following skills and competencies:

- c) **Advanced Scientific Knowledge:** Students will gain advanced knowledge in pomology and viticulture and will be well-prepared for advanced research or leadership roles in the horticulture, fruit, and grape production industries.
- c) **Practical and Technological Skills:** They will develop the ability to use new technologies and advanced techniques for land and crop management, adapted to various agroclimatic conditions.
- c) **Innovation and Impact on the Horticulture, Fruit, and Grape Industry:** Students will be prepared to contribute to innovations in the production and processing of fruits and grapes, with a sustainable approach and a strong impact on both local and international industries.” (pg.10 of SER)

The intended learning outcomes of the programme were supplied retroactively by the Faculty to the experts and they consist of the following:

- Utilization of advanced professional and scientific knowledge in the horticulture sector.
- Understanding and integrating knowledge acquired from various interdisciplinary modules into practical applications.
- Implementation of advanced technologies in horticulture aligned with labor market demands, such as soil management, irrigation, fertilization, plant maintenance, protection and adaptation to biotic and abiotic factors, harvesting, post-harvest handling, storage, and processing of fruits and grapes.
- Conducting independent research on theoretical and practical problems to identify and develop innovative or improved solutions.
- Analyzing modern practices in the economic evaluation of fruit trees, grapevines, and ornamental plants.
- Combining diverse interdisciplinary knowledge to design and implement effective practices in horticulture.
- Collaborating in teams, ensuring professional communication, conducting critical analyses, and transferring knowledge effectively to others.

While the two lists are fairly aligned in terms of their substance and also, in terms of content, provide a comprehensive list of outcomes for the programme, it is evident that the learning outcomes have not been compiled using an appropriate taxonomy of knowledge, skills and competences. The outcomes are however written from the perspective of what students are expected to know and be able to do at the completion of the course but in certain cases the appropriate levelness is lacking.

The curriculum as a whole of the study program Pomology and Viticulture is based on the curriculum of the University of BOKU in Vienna, Austria.

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

The learning outcomes of the MSc study programme in Pomology and Viticulture are correctly attributed to EQF level 7. However, the detailed syllabus was not provided to the expert team so it is impossible to assess to what extent the subject descriptions/learning outcomes/assessments are appropriate to level 7. As it stands, the intended learning outcomes of the overall course reflect the Master-level requirements such as research skills and critical thinking and no overlap with other qualifications/study programmes is detected.

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

There does not appear to be a progressive increase in complexity of subjects and demands from students between the first semester and the final fourth semester. For instance, the courses do not progress from more general to more specialised courses over the course of the Master programme, which would be expected as students build their more specialised skills on the previously gained general knowledge. The flow of courses is therefore not clear and the distinction between general and specific competences is not made. As a result, it is also not evident that the learning outcomes of previously passed courses are sufficient prerequisites for next courses in the curriculum, at least not on paper.

The structure of the curriculum includes half of the courses each semester being mandatory and the other half elective. Students choose from a possible list of 18 elective subjects, however, considering the class is so small, the students probably have to agree on the same elective course to make it sustainable which means that the electives are not exactly a free choice of students and students do not have full autonomy in choosing their specialisations, as should be the case in a Masters programme.

It is highly unusual that all courses weigh 5 ECTS across the first three semesters and it is also unclear why each of the courses has the exact same distribution of theoretical lectures and practical exercises (with lectures assigned 2 hours and practical exercises assigned 1 hour per week).

The literature assigned for courses is often very outdated, up to 30 years old or older in some cases. Many of the assigned literature pieces are in English, which is not necessarily a drawback

but no English language course is provided to students as part of the study programme and it is questionable how good the student's English skills are.

When it comes to comparability with learning outcomes of programmes abroad, in terms of content, there is a distinct lack of courses on environmental and ecological aspects of fruit, crop and grape growing, which demonstrates a need to update and modernise the curricula according to latest trends and scientific and technological discoveries. There is no emphasis on processing, but rather on growing fruits and grapes and on horticulture. In that respect the Masters is rather specialised.

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

The study programme does not lead to a regulated profession.

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

The curriculum includes practical work in each mandatory and elective course (which forms 50% of the final course grade). The expert team has not seen a detailed elaboration of the learning outcomes and assessment methods for these practical exercises. There is no internship component in the study programme. Lab assistants assist professors in running the practical exercises. The FAV has signed cooperation agreements with main stakeholders and the department has a strong collaboration with the private sector and is frequently contacted for professional consultation, pointing to the fact that it has a good reputation in the real sector, which is growing.

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

Small groups (this year only 7 newly enrolled students, down from 10, 9 and 7 in the last three years) normally imply a more student-centred pedagogical approach as professors can dedicate individual attention to students.

There is no evidence of teaching methods being adapted though there is a central office at the University of Prishtina which offers pedagogical skills upgrade training to professors at the Faculty.

Modern technology such as smart boards and computers is not available in most classrooms, however programme holders report large investments into infrastructure through externally funded projects. One example is the donation to the Faculty of a drone for crop monitoring, however there are no expertise in the Faculty for operating this drone so it is not used at all.

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

The evaluation methods are too heavily reliant on written and oral exams, according to the detailed syllabus. Where courses have a heavy component of skills development and practical knowledge, the assessment methods should be adapted accordingly, and students' applied knowledge and skills should be assessed through applied and practical tests, both in group teamwork assignments and individual assignments. The detailed syllabus lists only generic evaluation methods for each subject and their respective weight for the final overall grade, in this form: "Midterm Evaluation 35%, Homework or presentations, seminars 15%, Regular attendance 10%, Final exam 40%, Total 100%". This is insufficient for students to know in what form the evaluation, homework and final exam will be administered – whether it is a written question and answer exam, a multiple choice exam, a presentation or group project or other type of evaluation. Therefore, the conclusion is that the evaluation does not adequately align with the learning outcomes when expressed in knowledge, skills and competences. Students are informed about assessment methods at the beginning of each term.

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

The workload is calculated and ECTS assigned to all learning activities that lead to the program learning outcomes including the learning outcomes of the program components., however see standard 4.7. for the drawbacks of the assessment criteria.

ET recommendations:

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

- 1. Define the role of programme coordinators in assessing the adequacy of overall learning outcomes of students, and the responsibility in monitoring student progress, completion rates and graduation rates of enrolled students.*
- 2. Officially designate the programme holders to be responsible for and empowered to follow-up on recommendations in this expert report pertaining to the study programme, learning outcomes and curriculum and define their reporting lines and frequency of reporting to the hierarchy.*
- 3. Revise the evaluation methods in the syllabus to reflect the proportion of knowledge, skills and competences that students are required to obtain at the end of each course.*

4. *Provide training to all staff in assignment design, innovative assessments methods, marking criteria and levelness.*

5. STUDENTS

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

In the academic year 2024/2025, there was no open call for admission in the summer phase, only in the autumn phase, because the study programme did not have accreditation during the summer of 2024. This meant that there was a very low enrolment (7 students). Programme holders, however, report that students from other study fields such as architects interested in landscape architecture (which is not offered as a course at the Faculty of Architecture) are interested in this study programme. This academic year may have been an exceptional year due to unfavourable circumstances, but the enrolments should be monitored continuously in the years to come as they are decreasing steadily and such low numbers may make the programme unsustainable in the future.

Conditions for admission of students are set by the University of Prishtina, which announces the competition for enrolment of students publicly. The procedure is open to all interested students. The SER states that the admission of students for studying at a MSc level at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary is based on the success in the admission test and the score earned in graduation test, as prescribed in the UP regulations. The students admitted to the programme possess a high school graduation diploma, as per UP regulation.

The BSc Plant Production at FAV is the main source of students for this programme. Students who have completed BSc studies in related fields, such as Plant production and Agro-economy, are favoured when applying for the MSc in Plant protection-Phytomedicine and the rectorate sets additional conditions for students who have completed other study programmes. This practice means that admission criteria are not equally and fairly applied to all students.

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

There is no evidence of neither student progression monitoring practice nor student completion incentives in this MSc programme. The lack of an established quality culture means that there is no high level of awareness of the importance of learning from data such as student progression rates for internal quality improvement.

It is tolerated and socially acceptable (and propagated by the student union as one of their key demands towards the Faculty) for students to make extensive use of the option to retake exams up to 5 times during the year, for students to be inactive but not officially removed from the student register or to take many years to complete the degree.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ET recommendations:

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

1. *Ensure that admission policies are equally treating Bachelor students from all study programmes when entering the programme and that students can take make-up or preparatory classes before or in parallel to enrolling in the programmes.*
2. *Mainstream support and counselling for international exchange and make it less dependent on the engagement of academic staff.*
3. *Regularly collect, analyse and act upon student progression and student completion data, for the purpose of internal quality improvement.*
4. *Introduce student support services dedicated to improving the quality of university life and learning of students and empower the student union to monitor and enhance this process.*

6. RESEARCH

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

The Pomology and Viticulture study program has defined its scientific/applicative research objectives according to the research development plan in higher education institutions (research strategy). Financial and logistical support for research in this program is linked to the policies promoting scientific research within the university, which are also included in the Strategic Education Plan for Kosovo, the National Science Program of the Republic of Kosovo, and the Strategy for Scientific and Development Research Activities, among others. Scientific research is subject to international policies related to the field of study. However, such information is not provided in the SER and they ET can only trust what is declared.

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

Detailed information on human and financial resources is lacking in the SER and only based on the discussions during the meeting it can be confirmed that there is sufficient funding for research purposes.

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

The research and/or professional activities of the academic staff are validated through scientific and applied research publications. Academic staff publish their work in high-quality scientific or professional journals, and their research or professional achievements are presented at

national and international conferences. During the meeting with the faculty, it was confirmed that if they wish they can apply for funding in order to attend international conferences abroad.

The academic staff of the study program is actively engaged in scientific research, and each regular staff member has published on average more than two scientific-research publications in the last three years. Data on these publications can be found in the academic staff CVs. However, the quality of the journals is not equal and the faculty has to put more effort in publishing in peer reviewed journals with high impact factor.

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

The Department has a cooperation agreement within the ERASMUS + program with University of Giessen (Germany), University of Bologna (Italy), and University of Milano (Italy), University Szent Istvan in Godollo, Hungary, University of Minnesota (USA) etc. Unfortunately, despite the fact that it is stated in the SER that two separate annexes are prepared for research projects/journal articles and conference proceedings for full time and part time professors involved in this programme no material was included in the SE. However, very kindly the faculty took the time and provided a list of publications during the team visit upon our request.

It is mentioned in the SER that faculty participate in developing collaborative research agreements with colleagues from other higher education institutions, both domestically and internationally. The teaching staff involved in the study program is supported in collaborating with local partners in the public sector and business industries through joint research projects, collaborative development strategies, and the shared use of equipment and technologies for knowledge transfer. Although specific MOUs or other agreements were not provided this was confirmed through discussions with stakeholders during the on-site visit.

The University of Prishtina has in recent years provided its staff with access to a scientific platform that can serve academic staff to be better informed about the latest scientific knowledge and research in relevant fields. To encourage staff participation in research and participation in conferences, UP has also made established a special office called, the Office for Research and Sponsored Projects of UP.

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

The academic staff engaged in the Fruit Growing and Viticulture study program are encouraged to incorporate their research findings and information about their scientific activities into the subjects they teach. This is an excellent practice that gives added value to the student experience.

Students enrolled in the study program are involved in research activities with the academic staff as at this level, the practical aspect of the study involves mainly student work in the field of study, which is also realized through various research projects either within the university or other relevant organizations.

ET recommendations:

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

- 1. Additional funding should be secured so as to further boost research within the programme and to upgrade scientific equipment*
- 2. Faculty should attend training in preparing applications for national and international funding*
- 3. A position of Vice Dean of Research and Extension should be created in order to enhance research efforts as well as the collaboration with the industry.*
- 4. All academic staff should be given sufficient time and resources in order to be able to publish their research findings.*

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

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

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

As the FAV laboratories are still located on the previous premises and the research farm is located on the premises of the new FAV building, the students have activities at three distant locations, which requires time consuming traveling through city traffic. The FAV management is making an effort to cluster the teaching activities in a way to reduce traveling during the day. The current situation is not optimal but temporarily acceptable until the new FAV building is ready for occupancy. FAV management was able to credibly demonstrate through correspondence that the endangering power lines would be relocated in the foreseeable future, however it is highly unlikely that the works on the displacement of the electricity line and the internal refurbishment will be finished by the start of the academic year 2025-2026.

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

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

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

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

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

ET recommendations:

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

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

1. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET


In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program M.Sc. Pomology and Viticulture offered by the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary is substantially compliant with all Standards as included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends accrediting the study program for 3 years with an input of 10 students per year.

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	Substantially Compliant
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	Fully Compliant
3. ACADEMIC STAFF *Mandatory	Substantially Compliant
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	Substantially Compliant
5. STUDENTS	Partially Compliant
6. RESEARCH	Substantially Compliant
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES	Substantially Compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially Compliant


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

Expert Team


Chair

	Prof. Dr. Kyriaki Zinoviadou	7/02/2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Prof. Dr. Reiner Doluschitz	7/02/2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Nadia Manzoni	7/02/2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)