THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY "KADRI ZEKA" in GJILAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

PROGRAMME

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING LEVEL
MASTER (60 ECTS)

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Prishtina, May 16, 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Sources of information for the Report:

- SER
- Anexes
- KAA Accreditation Manual
- The interviews in site with the management of the faculty, the quality assurance representatives and administrative staff, the heads of the study programme, the teaching staff, and employers of graduates and external stakeholders;
- University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan webpage.

1.2. Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA

Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at University "Kadi Zeka" Gjilan	
Programmes:	**English Language Teaching, MA** (Accreditation)
Site visit:	24 April 2025
Expert Team:	Mrs. Tanja Gradecak Mr. Thomas, Wulstan Christiansen Mrs. Elisa Knief
Coordinators of the KAA:	Milot Hasangjekaj, Head of Post-Accreditation Procedure, KAA Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer at KAA

Site Visit Program

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Merxhan Avdyli-Dean Mensur Neziri – Vice Dean Kushtrim Demi - Secretary

09:50 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Voglushe Kurteshi- Vice Rector for Academic Development and Quality Divison, Vjosa Baftiu - Academic Development and Quality Divison, Xhevat Bekteshi -Quality Coordinator, Arlinda Selmani - Career and Alumni Divison, Arjetë Rexhepi - Scientific and Research and Innovation Division, Betim Berisha - International Cooperation and Memberships Division
10:35 – 11:25	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme	Teuta Agaj Avdiu
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	
12:40 – 13:20	Visiting facilities	Merxhan Avdyli, Shpresë Qamili, Dukagjin Leka, Teuta Agaj Avdiu
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with teaching staff	Shpresë Qamili, Dukagjin Leka, Flora Maliqi, Shpresa Veseli Dragobuzhda, Ardita Haziri, Leotrime Maxharraj, Shqipe Avdiu Kryeziu
14:10 – 14:50	Meeting with students	Elsa Matoshi, Jetë Surdulli, Shëndrit Hasani, Viola Maliqi, Altesë Mahmuti, Vitesë Sopi
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	Merxhan Avdyli-Dean Mensur Neziri – Vice Dean Kushtrim Demi - Secretary

1.3. A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

The Public University "Kadri Zeka" (UKZ) in Gjilan was established on March 6, 2013, by decision of the Government of Kosovo, and approved by the Assembly of Kosovo. It serves a diverse population across the Gjilan region—including municipalities such as Kamenica, Vitia, and Ferizaj—as well as communities in the Presevo Valley and parts of North Macedonia. UKZ builds upon a long tradition of teacher education in Gjilan, dating back to the founding of the Teacher Training Centre in 1958. This legacy evolved through institutions such as the Pedagogical Academy and the "Skënderbeu" Higher Pedagogical School, eventually integrating into the University of Prishtina before becoming part of UKZ.

UKZ currently comprises six faculties offering ten accredited study programs—five at the bachelor level and five at the master level—organized according to the three-cycle system of higher education and aligned with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Bologna Process. The Faculty of Education, originally established in 2002/2003, became part of UKZ in the academic year 2013/2014. It offers programs such as Elementary Education (BA), Preschool Education (BA), Teaching in Albanian Language and Literature (MA), and Teaching and Curriculum in Elementary Education (MA).

The proposed Master of Arts (MA) in English Language Teaching is a one-year (60 ECTS) full-time program designed to address the growing demand for professionally trained English educators in Kosovo and the surrounding regions. It targets graduates of accredited English Language and Literature programs (240 ECTS), particularly from other universities, as UKZ currently does not offer such a bachelor's program. The program will admit up to 40 students, with tuition set at €125 per semester.

The curriculum includes core and elective courses such as English Didactics I & II, Pedagogical Grammar, Curriculum Development, Assessment in Education, Research Methodology, Teaching Practice, and a Master's Thesis. It aims to equip educators with advanced theoretical, practical, and critical skills in modern English teaching methodologies, supporting both classroom effectiveness and academic advancement.

This program is essential due to several factors: a shortage of qualified English teachers at all pre-university levels; the absence of similar postgraduate programs in Kosovo; the requirements of Administrative Instruction 5/2021 mandating a master's degree in education for teaching positions; and the broader need for English proficiency in an increasingly globalized and digital world. It also supports the university's strategic goals, including the development of a new campus and the promotion of innovative pedagogy, educational research, and European integration.

2. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

The programme evaluation consists of 7 standard areas through which the programme is evaluated.

2. 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)

Both the University and the Faculty have defined their mission and strategic goals, and the proposed new educational programme is in line with these. According to the SER, UKZ's mission is "to provide qualified and advanced education in the field of teaching, as well as to prepare professionals who can contribute to the improvement of the education system." The mission of the English Language Teaching programme is "to provide English language graduates and teachers with advanced practical, theoretical, and critical knowledge of contemporary English language teaching methodologies, strategies, and approaches, and to prepare them to apply these in diverse teaching contexts."

The university has undertaken a number of activities, based on its regulations and decisions, to implement its mission and vision. At the system level, management and monitoring of the teaching process and activities have been established. This has also been brought down to the faculty level. According to the institutional strategic planning, this programme has been offered at the master level in order to organise a core staff for Teaching of English as a Foreign Language which would then attract further staff members for the future planned BA programme in EFL, providing thus a full educational cycle.

During the development of the program, consultations were held with English language teachers, directors of municipal directorates, public school principals, directors of private English language schools, as well as with graduates in this field.

The planned programme is supposed to be enrolled by all students with a BA in English Language from all public and private universities in Kosovo. and according to the enrollment requirements

At the Faculty of Education of UKZ specific information about admission criteria and program content is published to inform and guide potential students. This information is available on the official website**.**

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)

The Faculty, as a university unit, follows and implements in its daily routine various mechanisms and tools developed to prevent plagiarism and academic/research misconduct. The institution has adopted a Code of Ethics that outlines the standards of academic and ethical conduct, while the Ethics Council oversees and addresses potential violations. The institution also uses specialized software to detect and prevent plagiarism, contributing to maintaining academic integrity and a fair environment for all students. The university utilizes the following anti-plagiarism platforms: Plagiarismcheck.org and UMS, the anti-plagiarism subdomain.

During the ET's discussion with students and graduates it transpired that students are also well informed on academic integrity and anti-plagiarism procedures as well as on the use of AI. Furthermore, Student Council is represented in the Faculty of Education Council by two representatives, who assist and represent students in all their requests and needs. They also intervene in cases of discrimination or unfair treatment that may occur toward students. Academic integrity is emphasised through various faculty and programme activities and is addressed to both academic staff and students.

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 organization of the teaching process, as well as the assessment of student achievements at the Faculty of Education, is carried out in accordance with the applicable regulations published on the university website. A digital registration system for academic and administrative staff at the entrances of UKZ supervises staff entry and exit, which is reviewed weekly by the deans of the faculties and the Secretary General for Administration, and the findings are discussed in the weekly meetings between the rector and the deans. The information management system in the Faculty of Education ensures that information is up- to-date, reliable, and appropriate for the needs of managing and developing the Master's program in English Language Teaching. It outlines the organization of studies, the duration of studies, enrollment requirements, criteria for advancing to the next year, change of study program, transfers from/to other faculties, exam organization, student rights and duties, student activities, completion of studies, and graduation procedures, among other aspects.

The Faculty of Education regularly monitors and periodically reviews all its programmes. This process involves various members of staff, both administrative and teaching as well as the Quality Assurance Office. The information management system provides a continuous cycle for improving the study program by collecting and analyzing data that can be used to modify and enhance teaching methods, course content, and assessment structures, as well as to propose new courses in line with emerging trends. All these activities are used to improve the existing programmes, but also to plan changes, according to SER.

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)

The management of the Faculty of Education is committed to ensuring sufficient and qualified administrative staff to meet the needs of students and academic staff. The management has also established clear standards for the performance and responsibilities of administrative staff to improve efficiency and quality in the execution of their duties. The administration has been under a constant reorganisation process and was expanded in the previous year into five new divisions. The Faculty of Education has sufficient administrative staff to support the teaching and learning needs of both students and academic staff. The professional development plan includes career advancement opportunities for administrative staff, offering chances for increased responsibilities and the development of leadership skills.

The administrative staff (organised in six sub-sections spanning the QA divisions such as academic and career development or international cooperation) is part of the faculty's support

team. It is under the supervision of the University Secretary General and reports to him. The University Secretary General evaluates the work and performance of the administrative staff across academic units. It is committed to analyzing and improving administrative processes to meet the needs of the programme as well as the demands of students and academic staff. SER mentions that the administrative staff participate in regular training sessions that cover aspects of higher education management, the use of new technologies in academic administration, and the development of skills to handle various administrative tasks, including the management of student information and academic data. In its comments of the draft version of this report, the UKZ clarifies that administrative staff have participated in numerous national and international projects (e.g., Erasmus+ CBHE "QATEK", GIZ, CARITAS, QUADIC, STAND, ResearchCult), which have included international staff meetings and capacity-building activities. While specific language training had not been conducted due to the absence of an English program, staff have gained relevant experience through these projects and through training sessions on writing project proposals.

They provide necessary administrative services to students, such as course registration, administration of grades and certificates, organization of exams, and provision of information on academic and career opportunities. The administration also supports students with daily academic matters and assists in resolving any administrative issues that may arise. Additionally, the administration provides logistical and technical support to academic staff, including the management of teaching materials, assistance in course planning, and the organization of academic activities.

Based on the performance of the administrative staff, the University Secretary General makes proposals for their training and professional development, providing for skilled personnel, which contributes to student success and the overall quality of the program.

Internationalisation opportunities are found by the ET to be underutilized and this will take a toll on the promotion of the program. On the other hand, the ET recognizes the difficulty of organizing student exchanges within a one-year program. In its reply to the draft version of this report, the UZK explains that it actively promotes Erasmus+ opportunities through digital platforms, newsletters, and events. A dedicated webpage for the English Language Teaching program is planned, and the university is committed to expanding international collaboration.

It does not help that the web page of the study programme is not available, so that prospective incoming international students also would be prevented in gaining necessary information.

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)

This is not applicable since the programme is for the first time in accreditation process.

ET recommendations:

1. *To ensure that the management of the programme is effective and efficient, the information collected, the analysis carried out and the changes implemented should all be publicly available.*

2. *The administrative staff engaged in the delivery of the study program should each have a professional development plan with some kind of training, e.g. language training, international staff meetings etc.*
3. *The efforts to strengthen international cooperation should be intensified. The number of ERASMUS+-opportunities has to be increased.*

2.2. 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)

The university's quality assurance system relies on three main components: documents, assessment bodies, and evaluation instruments, all of which support the objectives aligned with the UKZ mission.

The Faculty has established all relevant procedures, documents and regulations for the implementation of internal quality assurance. Each academic unit has its own Quality Assurance Committee, there is a coordinator, while at the institutional level there is a Central Quality Assurance Committee. As it was identified during the interviews a regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation has been developed, and the Office for Academic Development and Quality was established. UKZ has strengthened its capabilities by appointing a Vice-Rector for Academic Development and Quality. Additionally, in the last three years the Office for Academic Development and Quality recruited officials for Accreditation and Career Development and Alumni, Scientific and Research and Innovation Division and International Cooperation and Memberships Division, a Project Office is in the process of acquiring new employees.

The performance evaluation of academic staff at UKZ is guided by the Manual for Planning and Evaluation of Performance (MPEP). A crucial element of quality assurance at UKZ involves various instruments used for data collection. This includes employing different types of questionnaires, conducting interviews, and monitoring academic staff during their lessons.

The Industry Board was consulted regarding the planned syllabus: which content should be included, the credits that should go in the programme, which competences the students should have and specific criteria were thus established.

Documents are publicly available, albeit in Albanian only.

The monitoring of programmes is carried out on an ongoing basis and is analysed and updated annually through the Faculty of Education Action Plan, i.e., through evaluation instruments, measures quality across several dimensions using a considerable number of questionnaires and various document analysis.

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

Study programmes are developed according to the institutional mission and strategic objectives. UKZ has well-defined procedures for approving new programmes, and various

internal and external stakeholders are involved in this process. Before the program is reviewed by senior management (Faculty of Education Council, the evaluation process of the UKZ Senate) it goes through several stages of planning and evaluation by working groups established by the Faculty of Education Council.

A body of external stakeholders, plays a specific and important role before a new programme is proposed. External experts are often engaged in its development and implementation, in addition to the intellectual resources within the Faculty of Education. These experts may include renowned academics, professionals from language schools, educational consultants, and representatives from accreditation organization

Once the programme is approved and accredited, it is monitored within the institutional system of internal quality. The Individual Development Plan has been introduced
to improve the quality of scientific studies, as a performance indicator and is carried out and monitored regularly.

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)

The Faculty of Education at UKZ performs regular checks, which help assess the assignment of the estimated workload (ECTS) and analyze the defined learning outcomes. All stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the implementation of the programme also contribute to the process of monitoring and reviewing the programme. This process is ongoing and the data collected is analysed on an annual basis.

The English Language Teaching study program should be regularly monitored to ensure that it remains aligned with the dynamic needs of society and the demands of the labor market.

Quality Coordinators play a key role in monitoring and evaluation processes of the study program. This involvement is achieved through various methods, such as regular questionnaires, focus group discussions, and the analysis of evaluation results.

Academic staff conduct self-assessments, managers evaluate academic staff, and senior management evaluates the deans of academic units. These assessments are carried out annually, at the end of each academic year.

The assessment of alumni at UKZ is conducted biennially at the university level, while at the level of academic units, it is done during the process of reviewing study program

Regular assessments of academic staff and courses by students are conducted in two phases. The first phase takes place after the end of the winter semester, and the second phase occurs after the end of the summer semester. The Office for Academic Development and Quality processes the data obtained from the evaluations and creates reports. The evaluation results are sent electronically to each professor. Deans, Vice-Deans, and Quality Coordinators receive all the results for their respective faculties. The summary reports of all units are reviewed by the Supervisory Council for Quality and Evaluation, which issues final recommendations for potential improvements. The reports are then sent to the Rector and Vice-Rectors, and the summaries are published on the University website, making them publicly accessible to all parties.

It is not clear from this piece of information whether teachers' names and student assessment are also publicly displayed, so this should be discussed and the GDPR regulations should be taken into consideration, if applicable in Kosovo. In its reply to the draft version of this report, the UKZ explains that only summary reports are published online, without names or detailed student data. Full results are shared privately with relevant individuals, ensuring compliance with privacy standards.

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

At the Faculty of Education of the Public University "Kadri Zeka," specific information about admission criteria and program content is published to inform and guide potential students, but the information in English is missing.

The majority of documents, policies and regulations are publicly available on the institutional website, but there is still some information that is not accessible. According to the SER, the Faculty carries out a number of surveys and conducts questionnaires among students, employers and mentors, but the results and outcomes of these activities are not publicly available. It should be discussed in which form the data should be made available, especially considering the repercussions of a public display of the data.

During the ET's discussion with the teaching staff it turned out that all the data for potential candidates for e.g. Teaching Assistant were publicly available, but the consequences of the public display of private data should be analysed.

ET recommendations:

1. *Additional efforts should be made in order to update all the information relevant for the study programmes and to make them publicly available;*
2. I*nfrastructural development should remain a priority in the future;*
3. *HEI should be prudent with publicizing openly staff data in e.g. student assessment reports and create a closed system of information distribution which would be available to the interested parties only.*

2.3. 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)

The study program is supported by the academic staff employed by the Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo No. 04/L-037, Law No. 03/L-212 of Work, and the internal regulations in force at UKZ. UKZ has clear, objective and transparent processes for staff recruitment and employment conditions, which is supported by the above listed documents and examples of competitions publicly announced at the University web pages, employment contracts for some of the teaching staff etc. The Senate, by majority vote, can either approve or reject the evaluation report for individual candidates. All candidates are

notified of the Senate's decision through publication on the website. Candidates dissatisfied with the Senate's decision have the right to appeal, and the appeal is reviewed by the Appeals Committee in the second instance. The final decision is made by the UKZ Senate.

UKZ has adequate procedures for the selection of the best candidates for each position (teacher recruitment procedures arise from the strategic goals of the HEI and the specific needs of study programs, and they are aligned with the legislation and internal regulations in effect). In the discussion with the teaching staff it turned out to be a rather complex and lengthy procedure, which HEI itself cannot alter.

Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and employment conditions on the university's website, where they can find all the internal regulations, including the code of ethics for academic staff and students, regulations for disciplinary procedures for academic staff and students, and more. Additionally, based on Article 8 of the Statute of the Public University "Kadri Zeka," the university ensures and supports equal gender opportunities, or the so called "positive discrimination", which is to be understood in the context of the Kosovo society and especially the academic environment that, obviously, honoured male staff members. In cases where male and female candidates have equal qualifications and professional achievements, priority will be given to the female candidate.

HEI has public and transparent competitions for the appointment, reappointment, and promotion of academic staff, announced on the university website and in other media. The competition for reappointment or promotion is announced on the University website and in a daily newspaper within 15 days, but it is not publicised internationally, e.g. o Euraxess.

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)

The majority of staff members planned for teaching are full time employed in the Faculty of Education, four out of six, and have qualifications in the field of education. Whereas this allows for the educational/pedagogical elements to be well covered, it does not sufficiently address the EFL specificities, as only a limited number of full-time staff members (2 members out of 4) have qualifications also in English. This might be ameliorated by the fact that the general pedagogical courses at universities in the region are usually delivered by speakers of mother tongue only and that the part-time staff members have qualifications in EFL As English as the Medium of Instruction or immersion is widely promoted, the value of staff being able to deliver the full program in English so as to demonstrate EFL understanding and capacity is believed by the ET to be of paramount importance. In its reply to the draft version of the report, the UKZ remarks that, in order to strengthen the linguistic and cultural component of the planned programme, they have partnered with the Peace Corps in Kosovo and applied for a native English-speaking volunteer with specialised expertise in English language instruction. This could contribute to both students' and teachers' direct exposure to communication in English and to the natural process of English language acquisition.

It is highly recommended that the staff are engaged more in publishing their research in relevant international publications because their publication lists are satisfactory in terms of the minimal requirements for admission and promotion, but are lacking in terms of the specific area they are to teach. The new regulations introducing financial incentives for high quality research

publication may contribute to achieving this goal insofar as it would increase their visibility and their potential for international networking and project development.

As the program is not yet accredited, the ET can only go on anticipated workloads and cannot test the reality of cumulated teaching load for individual teachers, which, of course, needs to be correlated with hours for assessment, graduation thesis coordination and general consultations availability.

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)

The reappointment/promotion of academic staff at the Faculty of Education is regulated by the University Statute and the Regulation on Selection Procedures for the Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Academic Staff (based on Article 2, point 2.1) and was described b the management and teaching staff to be fully transparent.

The report of the Evaluation Committee is published on the university website and remains available for 15 days as the period of potential appeal to the Complaints Committee after which the Faculty Council of Education votes on the report of the Evaluation Committee.

The evaluation of full-time and part-time academic staff is carried out twice a year, at the end of each semester. All academic staff are subject to quality assurance and evaluation. The Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation at KZU guidelines the performance evaluation of academic staff through structured questionnaires and reports, which are integrated into the SMU, kept confidential, and allow academic staff to view the evaluation results in real time. The Office for Academic Development and Quality collects the results of the semester/annual evaluation and sends them to the Supervisory Council for Quality and Assessment. Performance Evaluation Reports for each academic staff member of the Faculty of Education are sent privately to their respective e-mails.

The promotion of academic staff is, among other criteria, based on international achievements in their scientific discipline and publications in international journals with an impact factor. The main criterion for the promotion of academic staff is scientific papers published in international journals indexed in the SCOPUS and Web of Science platforms. Financial support has been increased significantly for this element of academic excellence, which is aligned with the UKZ Strategic Plan 2023-2028 contains a separate chapter on Strategic Objectives. Within these objectives is Strategic Objective 2, which presents the Development of scientific activity.

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)

The HEI has been implementing training courses on innovative teaching practices targeted at academic staff members in cooperation with the Center for Excellence in Teaching of the University of Prishtina and the Didactic Center for Teaching Excellence at the "Fehmi Agani" University in Gjakova. The training objectives are well developed, but a vision of training in more contemporary teaching methods and especially IT skills, such as the use of AI in the teaching process would be advisable. Also, to our best knowledge, we could not deduce whether the listed training objective of "Advanced teaching methods" involves the methods in

EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) which would be a desired asset for teachers at an MA study program in TOEFL, and the application of AI in teaching practices. In its reply to the draft version of the report, the UKZ remarks that, while the most recent institutional training did not focus on EMI, English language professors had previously received relevant training. Additionally, since the submission of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), staff have attended numerous AI-enhanced and corpus-based language instruction trainings.

International mobility of the teaching staff is sufficiently developed, evidence of which is provided for six out of nine members. This type of mobility should, however, be more strongly practiced, as well as the incoming mobility of teachers, preferably in the field of TOEFL and native speakers of English would be recommended.

UKZ seems to have improved conditions for research and scientific activities, and in particular, is committed to financially supporting academic staff to achieve competitive results at both the national and international levels, so that substantial financial rewards are given to the most productive researchers and authors of research papers and (text)books.

The staff of the HEI is involved in international projects, mobility programs, study visits to foreign higher education institutions (HEIs). The conditions, criteria, forms, and methods of support and approval for mobility and other activities, as well as active participation in international symposiums, conferences, and scientific congresses, are regulated by the Regulation for the Support of Mobility and Other Activities of Academic Staff at 'Kadri Zeka' University, Gjilan.

The infrastructure of the Faculty of Education provides each academic staff member with an office equipped with computers and other necessary equipment for preparing lectures, writing scientific papers, and participating in various scientific projects. These offices also serve as spaces for the staff to carry out daily academic tasks and hold consultations with students. It is recommended that access to contemporary databases and journals would be provided in order to enable access to contemporary research trends and secure more successful research results.

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 external collaborators selected for the master program English Language Teaching are professionals with extensive experience in teaching EFL, one with a PhD and one in a PhD programme. Their selection and procedure for engaging external collaborators are regulated by the Regulation on the Procedures for the Engagement of External Collaborators (Regulation Ref. No. 01/1473) and is similar to the Regulation on Selection Procedures for the Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Academic Staff. To ensure quality in teaching, UKZ, in accordance with the Regulation on the Procedures for Engaging External Collaborators at UKZ, does not allow the engagement of candidates as external collaborators who have more than one active employment contract, either as a full-time or part-time employee, in other public or private institutions.

External collaborators are encouraged to participate in trainings offered to fully employed staff but there is no evidence in SER that there is a mechanism of their mentoring by senior colleagues, project teams, assistance in developing research proposals, and funding.

ET recommendations:

1. *Competitions for work positions should be publicized internationally in order to attract international experts, possibly native speakers of English.*
2. *All staff intended to engage with the program must have some exposure to master's level teaching and understand Level 7 requirements or must receive induction/training to this effect.*
3. *The Program should ensure improved teaching strategies with the support of new technologies anticipated to influence heavily the future of education: AI and distance learning.*
4. *The Program should increase the variety of provided opportunities for professional development for the teaching staff especially for the external teaching staff and in areas related to research and involvement in international projects.*

2.4. 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 study program's intended learning outcomes are aligned with the institution's/academic unit's mission and its strategic goals (proof of alignment of each intended learning outcome with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution).

- SER (p.7): "The study program is in line with the mission of the higher education institution and its strategic goals. The master's program has been developed to fulfill the university's mission, which is to provide qualified and advanced education in the field of teaching, as well as to prepare professionals who can contribute to the improvement of the education system. The program also supports the institution's strategic goals by providing opportunities for the development of students' professional and academic competencies, with a focus on preparing qualified teachers to teach English at various educational levels."

The intended learning outcomes are aligned with the general goals and objectives of the study program (proof of alignment of each intended learning outcome with the stated goals and objectives of the study program).

- The study program aims to prepare students to become English language experts able to teach English, at all levels. On the ET visit, it was emphasised in more than one of the meetings that the focus would be on state-school teachers, especially those wishing to teach in higher grades of secondary school (9-12) where the possession of a master's degree is a minimal professional requirement. The learning outcomes are listed in the syllabi for the individual courses but explicit proof of alignment is not provided.

The program's intended learning outcomes are written from a student perspective; they describe what a graduate of the study program will know and will be able to do (published and explained on the HEI website).

- As the course is not accredited yet, it is not referenced on website: [https://uni-gjilan.net/en/faculties/faculty-of-education/about-the-faculty/]. SER (p. 36): ". This process is linked to transparency, which is an essential factor in helping students clearly understand objectives and expectations. The academic staff is committed to providing ample opportunities for consultation and offering detailed information on the topics and learning outcomes to be achieved during the course. At the beginning of each course, the academic staff is required to present the teaching plan and explain the course content, ensuring that students have a full understanding of what will be taught. In addition, the course syllabus is provided to students through the SMU system, enabling them to access the necessary information regarding topics, assessment dates, and general course expectations."

The HEI proves that it used examples of good practices in defining intended learning outcomes (ECTS Guide, 2015)

- This is not specified in any of the documents submitted by UKZ. On its visit, the ET was told by the university management that this MA program in English Language Teaching would be the only one of its kind in Kosovo. In the SER (p.34) it states: "From the many universities that offer English language teaching programs, we have selected three universities to compare their programs, where we found a close resemblance." From the ET visit, it transpired that these universities (in France, Hungary and Greece) were selected because staff are familiar with them. No specific details are given about these courses, only links to their websites, and no evidence of a systematic mapping of learning outcomes against these programs is given. In the comments on the draft version of this report, the UKZ submit a proposal for a detailed mapping of how each course contributes to program objectives and how the program aligns with international standards (France, Hungary, Greece). A visual mapping grid and structured benchmarking are planned for future documentation.

Intended learning outcomes are of the indicated level of studies and include the development of generic and specific competencies, and are divided in knowledge, skills, and competences.

- This is not done systematically. The terms *Skills*, *Knowledge* and *Competence* appear only in some of the syllabi but then only occasionally and in a more general sense: not related specifically to specific and general consequences. On the ET visit, it was explained that the CVs submitted by UKZ would be refined, if the course is accredited, if the course is accredited, which leaves unanswered the question as to why they did not do so in the first place.

Intended learning outcomes are comparable with similar study programs in EHEA, and the mapping of learning outcomes against other programs in EHEA has been performed.

- In the SER (p.34) it states: "From the many universities that offer English language teaching programs, we have selected three universities to compare their programs, where we found a close resemblance." From the ET visit, it transpired that these universities (in France, Hungary and Greece) were selected because staff are familiar with them. No specific details are given about these courses only links to their websites, and no evidence of a systematic mapping of learning outcomes against these programs is given.

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 study program's intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors (study program syllabus and curriculum).

- SER (p. 31) "The English Language Teaching Master's program is aligned with the National Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework, specifically at level seven (7) of the NQF." SER (p.34) "The English Language Teaching Master's program is fully aligned with: 1. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of Kosovo. 2. The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)."

If the study program is delivered at the graduate level, its intended learning outcomes differ from the learning outcomes achieved at the undergraduate level of the study program.

- SER (p. 43) "B. Weakness: The absence of a Bachelor's degree program in English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Education at UKZ;" On its visit, the ET was informed that the strategy of UKZ is to attract graduates of English Language BA programs at other HEIs, public and private in Kosovo. The assumption is that, while it may be a challenge to attract students from distant areas due to transportation links and the cost and inconvenience of studying away from home (UKZ does however a dormitory and on other courses UKZ does attract students from as far away as Peja), there will be a sufficient number of BA holders in the areas in and around the city of Gjilan (many of whom in-service state school teachers, who would not be able to move away from their places of work in any case).

The intended learning outcomes of the study program are aligned with the level and profile of qualification gained, and they avoid overlapping across different study programs.

- The course syllabus and syllabuses for individual courses confirm this, but there is no statement in any of the documents submitted about the absence of overlapping. However, given the fact that UKZ does not offer a BA program in English means that this point is perhaps mute.

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

> **The courses 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.**

- SER (p.32): "The English Language Teaching Master's program is designed to provide students with the essential knowledge and skills needed to teach English effectively. The program covers fundamental teaching methods, with a focus on practical approaches. In addition, students learn how to plan and organize lessons to achieve educational goals, ensuring that the content is relevant and structured in a way that helps students succeed. The program also emphasizes the use of technology, teaching students how to incorporate digital tools into their teaching to enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and interactive. Students are also introduced to more advanced teaching techniques, enabling them to address the diverse needs of their students. The program develops research skills, enabling students to critically evaluate teaching practices and stay informed about the latest developments in the field of English language teaching. Finally, through practical classroom experience, students apply their knowledge in real-world settings, preparing them for successful careers." Examination of the individual syllabi confirms that there is a systematic progression in the first semester from more fundamental subjects to more advanced ones in the second, and that the proposed course is compatible with others of the same kind in the EHEA (e.g. the three foreign universities cited in the SER: 34).

> **The rules defining the order of students' progression through the program courses ensure that the learning outcomes of previously successfully passed courses are sufficient to meet the prerequisites of the next courses in the curriculum.**

- SER (p.38) "Continuous assessment includes student attendance at lectures, participation in class discussions, completion of various assignments, case studies, seminar papers, research papers, presentations, and other related activities ... A student who fails to pass the exam within three terms is required to retake the relevant course, in accordance with Article 110 of the UKZ Statute." Other than this, no specific information is given about the rules defining the order of students' progression through the program courses nor in the Regulations for Master's Students document submitted by UKZ.

> **The core disciplines necessary for achieving the leaning outcomes and acquiring competencies in the respective fields are adequately covered by the program courses. (mapping of competences on course level against the program learning outcomes has been performed).**

- Examination of the individual syllabi confirms that the core disciplines necessary for achieving the leaning outcomes and acquiring competencies in the respective fields are adequately covered by the program however, no evidence is submitted by UKZ that the mapping of competences on course level against the program learning outcomes has been performed.

The study program is comparable with similar study programs abroad and enables graduate students horizontal and vertical mobility and employability in the European and global market (comparative analysis of the proposed study program in relation to similar accredited study programs in the EHEA).

- In the SER (p.34) it states: "From the many universities that offer English language teaching programs, we have selected three universities to compare their programs, where we found a close resemblance." I.e. in France, Hungary and Greece. No specific details are given about these courses only links to their websites, and no evidence of a systematic mapping of learning outcomes against these programs is given. From examination of the program structure and the individual syllabi, it appears that this program is structured in such a way as to allow students or graduates to transfer to other courses in the EHEA either horizontally or vertically.

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 program is compatible with prescribed conditions defined in EU Directives. (Mapping of the program content and parameters against the requirements of all relevant directives has been performed).

- SER (p.35) "Specifically, the English Language Teaching program is classified at level seven (7) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), ensuring full compliance with the standards and requirements of European qualifications. This compliance allows students to benefit from a standardized education, recognized both nationally and internationally, and provides the foundation for pursuing regulated professions in the labor market in Kosovo and beyond." There is no specific mention of "mapping of the program content and parameters against the requirements of all relevant directives" but two of the courses use official Kosovo MESTI manuals: "Curriculum Development and Course Design" and "Inclusive Education".

The contents of the study program and other aspects of its delivery have taken into account and applied the recommendations issued by professional associations (opinion of the professional chamber, possibility of license examination, etc.).

- "SER (p. 35) "The study program includes a mix of theoretical and practical elements, preparing students not only for academic tasks but also for the possibility of engaging in professional practice at public educational institutions. This commitment is supported by agreements between the Faculty of Education and the Municipal Directorates of Education. This integration of professional practice with compliance to European qualification standards and requirements is an important step toward ensuring quality and increasing employment opportunities for students, preparing them for successful careers in the education sector in Kosovo and internationally."

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 HEI has developed a regulation for practice that includes the expected learning outcomes, rights and responsibilities of all involved parties and templates for all documents necessary for completing practice.**

  Professional practices / Internships at the university itself are outlined in the "Regulation on student engagement in internships at administration of the public university 'Kadri Zeka' Gjilan" document submitted by UKZ. No regulation for practice has been submitted however. On its visit, the ET was told that no such regulation has been drawn up for the proposed program yet. Provisionally, they plan to use the manual from the University of Pristina but are in the process of developing their own (submitted on request of the ET as "Doracaku-per-mesim-praktik_Master.pdf"). This is designed for a two-year Master's program and will be adapted for the one-year program proposed here. They foresee sending students to state schools and it is envisaged that drawing up the necessary agreements with schools can be handled relatively easily through the Municipal Directorates of Education. The Dean told the UKZ that the Faculty of Education cooperates with schools in Gjilan and surrounding municipalities already on other programs. The coordinator of internship makes arrangements for a 3-week internship, with unpaid mentors in the schools. Meeting with students (albeit from other courses), the ET was informed that internships at UKZ were organised well. Professors came to visit students weekly and a new system does not require long periods of time away from the classroom so better (e.g. students can do their practice for a couple of days each week).

  During the practice period, students have mentors assigned among the academic staff in the study program. The practise is organized in appropriate learning environments outside the higher education institution, in cooperation with the labour market (contracts/agreements with employers, regulations on student practice).

- (SER: 35) "The primary purpose of the practicum is to provide master's students with opportunities to develop skills in planning and implementing effective classroom teaching, including student assessment, and to help them better understand the roles and responsibilities of teachers within the school and classroom culture. The practicum component will include both time spent in lectures and time spent in school classrooms." The teaching practice component is also framed as a separate course with a lecturer in charge. While on teaching practice, the students will also have state-school teachers as mentors.

  ETCS credits are allocated to practical work that is monitored through activity reports (records of student practice).

- This component is framed also as a separate course within the program "teaching practice" (5 ECTS) as set out in the syllabus submitted. As regards assessment, the syllabus in question states: "During the practical training at school, each student must conduct a successful lesson in front of the mentor teacher and the professor from the faculty. Students who work in education must teach the lesson at a school in Gjilan, although they can complete the practical training at their place of employment. Students employed in non-educational professions must complete the practical training as if they were students who are not employed. The form provided in the appendix of

the manual is used for this assessment. The form is completed in collaboration with the mentor teacher." Concerning the latter case, no regulation for practice has been submitted. On its visit, the ET was told that no such regulation has been drawn up for the proposed program yet. Provisionally, they plan to use the manual from the University of Pristina but are in the process of developing their own.

The delivery of the study program is supported by cooperation agreements, contracts, or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units and feedback on cooperation from employers which participate in the organization of the student practice (feedback from supervisors from or outside the higher education institution, record of student practice).

- SER (p. 35) "The study program includes a mix of theoretical and practical elements, preparing students not only for academic tasks but also for the possibility of engaging in professional practice at public educational institutions. This commitment is supported by agreements between the Faculty of Education and the Municipal Directorates of Education. This integration of professional practice with compliance to European qualification standards and requirements is an important step toward ensuring quality and increasing employment opportunities for students, preparing them for successful careers in the education sector in Kosovo and internationally."

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

The study program has a didactic concept which supports students in achieving the program learning outcomes.

- SER (p.32): "The program covers fundamental teaching methods, with a focus on practical approaches. In addition, students learn how to plan and organize lessons to achieve educational goals, ensuring that the content is relevant and structured in a way that helps students succeed. The program also emphasizes the use of technology, teaching students how to incorporate digital tools into their teaching to enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and interactive. Students are also introduced to more advanced teaching techniques, enabling them to address the diverse needs of their students. The program develops research skills, enabling students to critically evaluate teaching practices and stay informed about the latest developments in the field of English language teaching. Finally, through practical classroom experience, students apply their knowledge in real-world settings, preparing them for successful careers." On its visit, the ET was told by the program holder that, if the course is accredited, two teaching assistants will be allocated to the program.

The study program is delivered through various pedagogical methods that align with the intended learning outcomes and are adequate for the level of studies.

- SER (p.36): "Learning outcomes are clearly defined in the course syllabi, and the academic staff is committed to helping students achieve these outcomes. The assessment process is designed to ensure that students have acquired the required knowledge and skills, using a variety of assessment methods, including projects, tests, assignments, and seminars. This process is intended to reflect the development of

students as individuals and future professionals." This is confirmed by examination of the syllabi submitted by UKZ.

Various teaching methods are used that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving and creative and critical thinking, with clearly defined instructions aligned with the learning outcomes.

- SER (p.36): "Teaching and learning in this program will be conducted in a way that places the student at the center of the process. This means that students are not only present in lectures, but also actively participate in discussions, analyses, and activities that enhance their critical and practical skills. Lectures and practical activities occur in an environment where students are encouraged to express their opinions and contribute to the teaching process, thus fostering an open and inclusive atmosphere."

To deliver the study program, teaching methods and different modes of program delivery are continually evaluated and adapted.

- SER (p. 36): "The English Language Teaching study program will be implemented through a student-centered methodology, reflecting the commitment to providing quality and effective teaching. This methodology aims to actively involve students in the learning process, engaging them in developing the skills necessary to become successful professionals in the field of English language teaching. The program is oriented not only toward the development of theoretical knowledge but also toward the application of this knowledge through practical activities and critical reflection, which are essential for the development of students as capable and responsible individuals." UKZ also lays great stress on technology, (SER: 32) "The program also emphasizes the use of technology, teaching students how to incorporate digital tools into their teaching to enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and interactive."

Teaching methods are adapted to support a diverse student population on demand (part time students, mature students, international students, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.).

- SER (p. 41) "The Master of English Language Teaching Program will offer a wide range of support services to meet the diverse needs of its students. The program recognizes and values the diversity of student backgrounds. To help them achieve academic and personal success, the program offers personalized resources and support." The program also includes a course specifically on "Inclusive Education".

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 program clearly describes the relation between the overall intended learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) and the contribution made by each individual module to achieve those learning outcomes.

- SER (p.37): "Student assessment is determined by the professor and is included in the course syllabus. The methodological framework for student assessment is based on the Statute and Regulation for Master's studies at the Faculty of Education. The Statute

and Regulation for Master's studies stipulate written, oral, or combined assessments. The professor is required to adhere to the framework of the relevant Statute and Regulation while maintaining assessment autonomy."

Assessment methodologies which are implemented in the program ensure systematic assessment of individual learning outcomes related to all relevant areas of knowledge, skills and competences as defined in the program learning outcomes (a mapping of assessment methods against the learning outcomes of the study program has been performed).

- The terms *Skills*, *Knowledge* and *Competence* appear only in some of the syllabi but then only occasionally and in a more general sense: not related specifically to specific and general consequences. On the ET visit, it was explained that the CVs submitted by UKZ would be refined, if the course is accredited. As things stand however, there is no evidence of systematic assessment all relevant areas of knowledge, skills and competences as defined in the program learning outcomes and there is no specific mention of "mapping of assessment methods against the learning outcomes of the study program."

The assessment criteria and methods, as well as grading criteria for the study program, are published in advance and all students are informed about it.

- These are available in the individual course syllabi. SER (p. 37) "The professor of the course is required to communicate the assessment methodology to students at the beginning of the semester."

The study program ensures objective and reliable grading of students.

- Seeing that the course is only a proposition and accreditation is being sought, this is difficult to verify. SER (p. 38) "If students do not achieve satisfactory results in the assessment, they are required to retake the exam. If students believe that they have not been adequately assessed, they have the right to submit a request to the Dean's Office for a review by a committee. Upon receiving the request, the Dean's Office must form the assessment committee within 24 hours. The members of the committee must be experts in the specific subject area for which the assessment is being requested. The committee is required to conduct the exam and assess the student within 48 hours. After the assessment, the committee must submit a written report on the student's evaluation. " SER (p. 42): "Student data management during registration, grading, examination submission, payment of administrative fees until their graduation, are carried out electronically through the university management system (SMU) always maintaining the privacy of information." In its reply to the draft version of the report, the UKZ also remarks that, since the proposed programme has only two semesters, there is no general requirement to pass specific course, aside from e.g. English Didactics I and II, in order for students to progress in their studies.

Students receive timely feedback on the evaluation results that identify their strengths and weaknesses, and if necessary, guidelines for the learning process based on these evaluations.

- SER (p.36): "To ensure that students have the opportunity to develop and fully understand the results of their assessments, academic staff provide regular consultation opportunities. This process allows students to receive additional information and guidance to improve their performance and understand in detail what they can adjust or develop further."

A functional student appeals procedure for the study program is in place (examples of appeals procedures).

- SER (p. 38) "If students do not achieve satisfactory results in the assessment, they are required to retake the exam. If students believe that they have not been adequately assessed, they have the right to submit a request to the Dean's Office for a review by a committee. Upon receiving the request, the Dean's Office must form the assessment committee within 24 hours. The members of the committee must be experts in the specific subject area for which the assessment is being requested. The committee is required to conduct the exam and assess the student within 48 hours. After the assessment, the committee must submit a written report on the student's evaluation." On the ET visit, students confirmed that were satisfied with this system as applied on other courses.

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

Assessment criteria must express what students know and can do as a result of demonstrating the learning outcomes.

- The terms *Skills*, *Knowledge* and *Competence* appear only in some of the syllabi but then only occasionally and in a more general sense: not related specifically to specific and general consequences. On the ET visit, it was explained that the CVs submitted by UKZ would be refined, if the course is accredited. In the individual syllabi, expected learning outcomes, are articulated in terms of variants of the phrase "at the end of the course, the students wil be able to:"

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.

- This is set out in each syllabus. The program is 60 ECTS, with courses between 4 and 5 ECTs. It emerges from examination of table 5 (SER: 33-34) that 4 ECTs for 100 hours of student workload, 5 for 125 hrs (25 hrs = 1 ECT). In the material submitted by UKZ, the division of ECTs between lectures and exercises is not detailed. In its comments on the draft version of this report the UKZ sustains that each syllabus includes a detailed breakdown of student workload, which reflects the ECTS distribution across learning activities.

ET recommendations:

1. *Course syllabus should clearly indicate how generic and specific competencies are divided into knowledge, skills, and competences.*

2. *UKZ should draw up a regulation for practice that includes the expected learning outcomes, rights and responsibilities of all involved parties and templates for all documents necessary for completing practice applicable to a Master's program of this kind.*

2.5. 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)

UKZ has clear admission policies for its new Master's program, as outlined in the UKZ Statute and the Regulation for Master's Studies. These documents are publicly accessible. To be eligible for enrollment, applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree totaling 240 ECTS credits in English Language and Literature. In addition, an entrance exam is administered by the academic unit as part of the admission process. Candidates who do not pass the exam have the right to appeal the decision. The institution also has a formal plan for the recognition and validation of study periods completed in other countries. The program is designed to admit 40 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)

The evaluation of administrative services is conducted through the SMU platform by the Student Services Office and the Office for Academic Development and Quality. Students participate in this process by completing questionnaires specifically designed to measure their satisfaction with administrative services. Each semester, the Dean of the academic unit evaluates student progress and discusses the findings with the university management and the Faculty Council to identify and address issues that may impact student achievement. These results are also communicated to student representatives and the wider student body. According to the meetings conducted with the students, they are satisfied and their wishes are considered by the faculty. The faculty regularly holds meetings with student representatives and students to discuss opportunities and forms of student engagement, as well as to address any challenges or obstacles that may hinder the continuation of their studies. Furthermore, students are kept informed—through meetings and other channels—about the potential outcomes and opportunities associated with their academic qualifications. The university also facilitates student transfers through a public call, which outlines the criteria that students transferring from other institutions must meet. These criteria are based on current legislation that recognizes qualifications earned at other universities.

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

Students of the Faculty of Education are regularly informed about opportunities for international exchange and mobility programs. UKZ maintains partnerships with a number of international organizations and programs, including USAID, OSCE, the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo, the Fulbright Program, Erasmus+, and HERAS, among others. Through the efforts of the UKZ International Cooperation Office, students are encouraged to participate in exchange programs with partner institutions in countries such as Turkey, Bulgaria, Switzerland, North

Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, and others. However, the English Language Teaching Program does not currently include a structured mobility window for long-term study abroad. As a result, undertaking a mobility period would significantly extend the duration of studies, rendering it an unattractive option for many students. Given the critical role of English language proficiency and intercultural experience in this field, it is essential that the program actively promotes and integrates international mobility opportunities. In addition, while the Master's program aims to attract international students, it currently lacks a comprehensive strategic plan for international student recruitment. In its comments on the draft version of this report, the UKZ acknowledges the lack of a formal mobility window but emphasizes that UKZ actively promotes international mobility through Erasmus+, Fulbright, and other programs. Alternative models like short-term exchanges and online collaborations are being explored.

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 Faculty of Education provides adequate resources to support its students effectively. The program offers personalized academic and career support, and the number of professional, administrative, and technical staff involved in student support services is both sufficient and appropriately qualified. Students appear well-informed about relevant regulations, academic programs, and available support services, including those offered by the Career Center. They receive guidance on both academic pathways and career development. All essential information related to their studies is accessible through the UKZ Student Handbook. Furthermore, students are familiar with the institutional procedures for lodging complaints and participate in regular evaluations conducted twice per academic year. They report feeling that their concerns are taken seriously. In accordance with Article 142 of the UKZ Statute, students have the right to file complaints regarding the quality of teaching or university infrastructure. Such complaints are reviewed by a dedicated committee within 60 days. Additionally, under Article 109 of the Statute, students may submit a written appeal to the Dean of the academic unit concerning the grade they have received.

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends looking at ways of expanding international mobility opportunities within the program.*

2. *The ET recommends developing and implementing a strategic plan for attracting international students.*

3. *Collect and analyze feedback from both national and international students, and implement measures to enhance the processes and effectiveness of international exchange programs.*

2.6. RESEARCH

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

> **The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives that are reflected in the research development plan of the HEI (research strategy).**

- In UKZ's Strategic Plan 2023-2028 document: Strategic objective 2 is the development of scientific activity to improve the quality of studies and innovation (p. 28). Under Strategic Objective 3: Internationalisation as an element of internal development, two objectives regard English and EMI "3.2 Development of the offer for learning in the English language, 3.7.1. Offering at least 10 bachelor and master courses in English; 3.7.2. Offering a master's program in English." During its visit, it was impressed upon the ET that the university sees the MA English as way to increase internationalisation and incoming mobility. Teachers will be paid more to teach courses using English as a medium of instruction. Furthermore, the ET was told that UKZ plans to start an MA English Teaching program not only as an end in itself but also as a prelude to setting up BA programs in English and German and establishing a faculty of languages. With a new MA program, the University Senate will sanction the hiring of two more professors, facilitating this process.

> **The implementation of the study program is ensured through sufficient financial, logistic, and human resources provided by the institution for achieving the proposed research objectives.**

- SER (p. 45): "The implementation of the study program is ensured through sufficient financial, logistical and human resources provided by the institution to achieve the proposed research objectives. UKZ has a financial stability that guarantees the functioning and expansion of academic and scientific activity for the next five-year period." The finances and infrastructure of UKZ outlined in the Strategic Plan 2023-2028 document. On its visit, the ET was told that the University Senate has earmarked funds for two new professor contracts if the MA program is accredited.

> **The study program is subject to clear policies that define recognized research and relate to international standards and established norms in the field of study program.**

- SER (p. 45): "UKZ has defined policies that guide scientific research, basing it on international standards. For academic recruitment, the university accepts only scientific articles published in journals indexed in recognized international platforms such as SCOPUS and Web of Science. This is determined by the Regulation on Scientific Research Activities of UKZ, through which academic staff is supported in scientific research and publications." Scientific Research is specifically covered in Articles 159-163 of University Statute.

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 academic staff research and/or professional activity is validated through scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfers, consultancy centres, scientific parks and/or professional activity.

- SER (p. 45) "UKZ supports the publication of scientific works and university textbooks, publication in scientific journals and encourages the scientific research work of academic staff, providing support, both in technical and financial terms." On its visit, the ET was told that the UKZ was one of first universities in Kosovo to support staff for research and provides funding for up to 3 publications a year (€1000 each), €1,500 for books and monographies. Examination of the CVs of course lecturers it emerges that together they have authored or co-authored numerous academic works of various kinds, many of which relevant to this study program but not all while working at this particular HEI. Of these, three out of six (50%), have published in SCOPUS indexed journals (17 titles) and two (33.33%) in WoS linked journals (6 titles).

The academic staff publish their work in high-quality scientific or professional publications, research or professional achievements are presented at national and international conferences, they participated in projects as consultants (for example, for academic and scientific study programs, national requirements about publication and promotion purposes must be respected).

- SER (p.47) "Members of the academic staff of the Faculty of Education have contributed in various fields with their expertise in developing activities for the benefit of the community. To illustrate the concrete commitment of the staff in these activities, one can mention the mobility of Prof. Assoc. Dr. Teuta Agaj Avdiu who, within the framework of the cooperation between the "Kadri Zeka" University and the University of Zug in Switzerland, has been officially invited to the University of Zug in Switzerland as an expert lecturer to lecture together with Professor Sylvia Nadig on the methodology of teaching English, from June 5 to 9, 2023, thus sharing with students their personal experiences and practices in this field. The professors of English at UKZ: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teuta Agaj Avdiu and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Shpresë Qamili have published a book chapter in a monograph (Learning through International Exchanges in Teacher Education: Experiences with the Learning Culture in Universities – LECU – Project in Albania, Kosova and Switzerland) with co-authors (Teuta Agaj, Marcus Büzberger, Nada Kallçiu, Shpresë Qamili, Christa Scherrer, Naxhi Selimi)." Examination of the CVs shows that each member of the academic staff has participated in and spoken at numerous national and international conferences. During its visit, the ET was assured by program holders and academic staff that the recruitment process is regulated, transparent, but lengthy, taking about 6 months. At all stages, the University statute and national law are respected.

The academic staff who are involved in delivering professional bachelor study programs have a minimum master's degree and at least five years of relevant professional activities.

- Examination of individual CVs confirms this. Some of the academic staff also have a background in school-teaching which is particularly relevant to this program.

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 academic staff engaged in the study program is involved in identifying and capitalizing on its expertise and providing research and development services to the community.

- SER (p.47) "Academic staff involved in the master program English Language Teaching are encouraged to participate in collaborative activities with local and international partners. These activities include, but are not limited to, participation in scientific research, conferences, seminars and academic exchanges, which help in the exchange of knowledge, innovation and best practices in the field of English language teaching. Academic staff have the opportunity to establish and maintain partnerships with other academic institutions, language teaching professionals and international organizations. These collaborations help in improving the quality of the teaching program by bringing different perspectives and approaches to language teaching, and also create a global network of academic expertise."

The academic staff engaged in the study program is involved in developing collaborative research arrangements with colleagues from other HEIs from the country and abroad.

- SER (p.47) "In addition, staff are supported in their efforts to engage in joint research projects, co-author publications, and contribute to international academic discussions on language teaching methodologies, educational technology, and applied linguistics. These collaborative efforts ensure that the English Language Teaching master program remains in line with the latest trends and advancements in the field, while also contributing to the ongoing development of international academic discourse." Examination of the individual CVs reveals that each member of the academic staff has experience working outside Kosovo and with international organisations / projects.

The teaching staff engaged in the study program is supported to cooperate with local business partners through joint research projects, cooperative strategies for development, and shared use of equipment when it is possible.

- SER (p. 47) "The academic staff at the Faculty of Education is involved in identifying and utilizing expertise and providing research and development services to the community. Members of the academic staff of the Faculty of Education have contributed in various fields with their expertise in developing activities for the benefit of the community."

The teaching staff engaged in the study program is supported and involved in technology transfer and cooperation to transfer knowledge with the industry and public sector.

- This is not specified in any of the documentation submitted by UKZ. The SER (p. 47) is general: "The academic staff at the Faculty of Education is involved in identifying and utilizing expertise and providing research and development services to the community". It must be remembered that the program has not been activated yet. One

of the several cited justifications for the program is "Improving pedagogical approaches by providing knowledge of contemporary teaching practices and contributing to the enhancement of pedagogical methods and the effective use of technology in the classroom;" (SER:9).

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.

> **Academic staff engaged in the study program are encouraged to include in their teaching the results of their research and information about their scholarly activities relevant to the courses they teach.**

- SER (pp.48-56) lists 43 articles and works published by the Academic staff. SER (p. 56): "From the table it can be assessed that the academic staff, in the past three years, has intensified its scientific research activity, publishing articles in scientific journals, as well as participating in numerous conferences. Most of the scientific articles, scientific presentations by the academic staff are in the field in which they lecture." Nowhere in the documents submitted by UKZ is it specified whether they "are encouraged to include in their teaching the results of their research and information about their scholarly activities relevant to the courses they teach."

> **Students enrolled in the study program are engaged in research activities with the academic staff.**

- This is not specified, but it must be borne in mind that the course has not been activated yet. It would however be reasonable to assume that in an MA program which has many in-service teachers as students (those wishing to add an MA to their BA in order to be able to teach higher grades in secondary school) then there will be ample opportunity to engage in such things as classroom research, which could easily be a launch pad for different projects.

ET recommendations:

1. *UKZ might consider encouraging academic staff to explicitly integrate their research findings into their teaching materials and course content. This could be formalized through internal guidelines or incentives. In its comments on the draft version of this report, UKZ comments that this was previously limited due to the nature of English courses at UKZ. However, with the new MA program, integration of research into teaching is a priority.*

2. *Although the program is not yet active, it is recommended UKZ designs structured opportunities for student participation in research, such as: research assistantships, collaborative classroom-based research projects; thesis supervision with a strong empirical component; consider establishing a student research forum or journal to showcase student work.*

3. *UKZ encourage staff to engage in applied research projects that involve technology use in language teaching. It may look into creating a knowledge transfer office or*

designate a liaison to facilitate collaboration with the public and private education sectors

4. *While international engagement is evident, it would be beneficial for UKZ to: establish formal agreements (MoUs) with international institutions for joint research and staff exchanges; create a mobility and collaboration strategy that includes targets for joint publications, co-supervision of theses, and participation in international consortia.*

5. *Although the program is not yet active, it is recommended that UKZ use this time to: develop a research roadmap for the first three years of the program; identify potential research themes aligned with the MA in English Language Teaching, such as digital pedagogy, bilingual education, or curriculum innovation.*

2.7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

The Faculty of Education provides appropriate premises and equipment to support both educational activities and research. Laboratories required for mandatory curriculum activities are suitably equipped, and the Higher Education Institution (HEI) maintains an adequate level of technological infrastructure. Public University "Kadri Zeka" has secured Microsoft 365 licenses—covering programs from the Microsoft Office suite—for a period of three years. These licenses are funded by the Government of Kosovo / Ministry of Economy through the KODE project and are available to all academic and administrative staff as well as students. In addition, university staff have access to a variety of software tools, including open-source options. Classrooms are equipped with projectors to support multimedia presentations. The university management has also committed to constructing a new building to address ongoing infrastructure needs. During the site visit, the evaluation panel was provided with a comprehensive tour of the facilities. The number of students enrolled in the program aligns with the institution's capacity in terms of space, equipment, and academic staff. However, it was noted during the visit that students expressed a desire for a canteen and recreational areas where they could socialize before, between, and after classes. Furthermore, the facilities and equipment allocated to the study program are suitably adapted to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Recently installed elevators contribute to increased accessibility and inclusivity. For students from outside the region, dormitory accommodations are secured through existing agreements.

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

The Faculty's library is equipped with a dedicated reading room and maintains its own collection of books. The available space for individual study is sufficient; however, group study rooms are not available. Given that the new Master's program will be held in the afternoons and on Saturdays, the current library operating hours—from 08:00 to 16:00—are not adequate to meet the needs of prospective students who are likely to be employed during those times. The only infrastructure accessible beyond these hours is the reading room, which remains open from Monday to Saturday between 08:00 and 20:00. In preparation for the launch of the new Master's program, 21 relevant books have already been ordered by the program management. In addition to the Faculty library, the university has access to a central library with a broad range of literature in Albanian, English, and Serbo-Croatian, as well as more limited resources

in Greek, Spanish, and Turkish. Furthermore, the institution has signed agreements with the Kosovo Electronic Library Network and the National Library "Pjetër Bogdani", granting students unlimited access to these digital and physical resources.

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

The University "Kadri Zeka" is a public institution funded through the Kosovo state budget. Tuition fees are determined by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. UKZ prepares its institutional budget in consultation with MEST and the Ministry of Finance, and the final budget is approved in accordance with the Kosovo Budget Law. The study program is integrated into the university's overall financial and procurement planning.

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends creating recreational spaces and spaces for extracurricular activities for students.*
2. *Consider creating group rooms in the library.*
3. *Look into extending the library hours so that students of the Master's program can visit the library.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

It is the Expert Team's opinion that both the Faculty of Education and the University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan have proposed a new program that fits in adequately with their existing expertise and experience and which also answers a pressing need both in the immediate geographical area and nationally. The absence of a BA program in English language is a weakness but the UKZ does have the facilities and staff, administrative and academic, necessary to get the programme off the ground It is hoped that with the promised investment and expansion, in staff and facilities, by the UKZ, that the program can quickly establish itself and may eventually serve as a catalyst for further language-related courses.

The QA Office should maintain the necessary focus on maintaining the structured support programs for academic staff to engage in high-quality research and internationalisation of their research results, on expanding the range of international mobility opportunities for students and, above all, to ensure that the programme will maintain flexibility in curricular redesign and engagement with municipal directorates of education and other stakeholders, national and international, to monitor developments in the field of language teaching.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program MA Program in English Language Teaching proposed by University "Kadri Zeka" of Gjilan is **Fully 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 maximum number of 40 students to be enrolled in the program on an yearly basis. The number has been determined also by

consideration of the existing number of academic staff and overall workload arrangements, distribution of staff across all campuses and infrastructural descriptors.

In reply to the UKZ's comments on the draft version of this report, the ET thanks the UKZ for its constructive engagement with the evaluation process. The clarifications and commitments found in the comments reflect a high degree of dedication to quality and continuous improvement at an institutional level.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT TEAM	
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	*Fully Compliant*
6. RESEARCH	*Fully Compliant*
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES *Mandatory	*Fully Compliant*
Overall Compliance	***Fully Compliant***

Expert Team

Chair
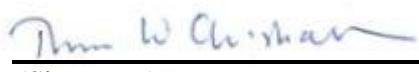
(signature)	**Thomas Wulstan Christiansen**	16/05/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

(signature)	**Tanja Gradečak**	16/05/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

(signature)	**Elisa Knief**	16/05/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)