



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



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***UNIVERSITY "ISA BOLETINI" MITROVICE***  
***FACULTY OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY***

**TECHNOLOGY, WITH SPECIALIZATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION ENGINEERING  
MSC (120 ECTS)  
(RE-ACCREDITATION)**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*30/January/2025, Mitrovica, Kosovo*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report*
- *Syllabi of courses*
- *Staff CVs'*
- *Contracts and property deeds*
- *Syllabi metadata file*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual*
- *Administrative Instruction for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosova*
- *Official website of UIBM*
- *Complimentary documentation requested and received after the visit*

### Documents additionally requested by the ET:

- *Description of Learning Outcomes: A comprehensive document outlining the learning outcomes for each study program.*
- *Historical Changes in Curriculum and Programs: A detailed record of any revisions, amendments, or improvements made to the curriculum and programs over time.*
- *List of Trainings: A comprehensive list of all training sessions conducted during the previous period, including the duration, topic, and attendance records. Descriptions of each training program in teaching skills are provided, along with links to their respective descriptions.*
- *Plagiarism Detection and Prevention*
- *Information on the software provider used for plagiarism detection and prevention.*
- *Sample Anti-Plagiarism Report: An example of an anti-plagiarism report generated for a BSc and MSc thesis.*
- *Sample BSc and MSc Thesis: An example of a BSc and MSc thesis.*
- *Sample Exams: Examples of exams conducted at the BSc and MSc levels.*
- *Self-Assessment and Feedback*

### Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *Accreditation manual*
- *Programme template for the external review team*
- *Programme compliance calculation form*

## Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at University Isa Boletini, Mitrovicë	
Program:	Technology, with specialisation 1. Environmental Engineering, 2. Chemical Engineering BSc, 180 ECTS ( <b>Re-accreditation</b> ) Technology, with specialization in Environmental Protection Engineering MSc, 120 ECTS ( <b>Re-accreditation</b> )
Site visit on:	<b>30<sup>th</sup> of January 2024</b>
Expert Team:	Prof. Sanja Kalambara; Prof. Francisco Javier Farfan; Mr. Issabek Muratov, student expert;
Coordinators of the KAA:	Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer Ilirijana Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer

Time	Meeting	Participants
<b>09:00 - 09:50</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Mensur Kelmendi Mehush Aliu
<b>09:50 - 10:40</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Mirsade Osmani Natyra Misini Shkumbin Imeri
<b>10:45 - 11:45</b>	Meeting with the head of the study programme: Technology, with specialisation 1. Environmental Engineering, 2. Chemical Engineering BSc, 180 ECTS	Mehush Aliu Flora Ferati Faruk Hajrizi Ismet Mulliqi Besire Cena
<b>11:45 - 12:45</b>	Lunch break	
<b>12:45 - 13:45</b>	Meeting with the head of the study programme: Technology, with specialization in Environmental Protection Engineering MSc, 120 ECTS	Sadija Kadriu Mensur Kelmendi
<b>13:50 - 14:30</b>	Meeting with teaching staff	Flora Ferati Faruk Hajrizi Alush Musaj Valdet Gjinojci Fatos Rexhepi Malësore Pllana
<b>14:30 - 15:10</b>	Meeting with students	Eranda Haxhnikaj Basrije Osmani Elona Shyti Bleona Feka Albert Baruti Mjellma Berani
<b>15:10 - 15:50</b>	Meeting with graduates/alumni	Albulena Ferati Butrint Hajra

<b>15:50 - 16:30</b>	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Bahri Hamza Fjolla Lasku Blerta Daija
<b>16:30 - 16:40</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
<b>16:40– 16:50</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Mensur Kelmendi Mehush Aliu

## **A brief overview of the programme under evaluation**

*The university of Mitrovica is a relatively “young” institution, with its beginnings dating back to the 1970s. However, the establishment as the institution that it is now dates back only to 2013. Born on programs about mining and geology, it has now expanded to a variety of programs and fields, including Law, Economics, Computer Engineering, to name a few. As part of the FFT, the program presented for this evaluation is a BSc that has an interesting set up, as it appears to be two different programs introduced as one, with a path to either Chemical Engineering or Environmental Engineering. Within the context of Kosovo, both fields of science are of high importance, especially in the European context and Kosovars’ efforts to become part of the European Union. On the path of development for Kosovo, elements such as the power grid, waste management infrastructure, industry and water infrastructure require significant upgrades, for which the training of the talented Kosovar youth is of utmost importance. With that in aim, the education system as well as study programs are being evaluated under the scrutiny of the European standards, and assuring the highest quality of education is the biggest contribution that external evaluators and HEIs can make on the effort towards this goal.*

## **Abbreviations:**

FFT – Faculty of Food and Technology  
UMIB – University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini"  
KAA – Kosovo Accreditation Agency  
SER – Self-Evaluation Report  
ET – expert team  
HEI – Higher Education Institution

## PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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

### **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)**

*Mission of the university of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, is defined in the Article 6 of the Statute of the university and published in the website of the university: <https://www.umib.net/en/the-mission-and-vision/>, which states: "The mission of the University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica is to provide quality teaching for the training of staff in unique areas for Kosovo and the region, dedicated to providing scientific research, professional counseling and other professional activities that ensure well-being and social advancement." The study program Technology study program with specializations in Chemical Engineering and Environmental Engineering outlines intended learning outcomes as mentioned in the page 20 of SER, that are in line with the strategic goal, which is part of the Strategic plan UIBM 2022-2025, and mission of the university.*

*With the accordance of the 106 of SER, the total area of space used by faculty and number of academic staff at Faculty (SER, p.44) enables enroll 120 students, which correlates with the actual number of students enrolled at the faculty (SER, p.12)*

**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)**

*University has adopted Code of Ethics, which serves as a basis for addressing plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and discrimination. Part II of the code outlines universal rights for all the members of the university, part III demonstrates ethical rules in teaching, research and scientific works. Council of Ethics, elected by Senate of the university, is competent for the implementation of Ethics Code, The Disciplinary Commission is professional body established by the Academic and Research Council of the university's Academic Units, which is competent for the implementation of procedures, in cases of violation of the Code of Ethics by university students. Article 35 of the code of ethics describes the role of ad-hoc disciplinary committee for implementation procedures in case of violations outside the teaching process. Upon the request of expert team, the sample anti-plagiarism report has been delivered by university. According to the report, the software used for anti-plagiarism is PlagiarismCheck.org.*

*In case of violations took place, regulation on disciplinary measures and procedures against UIBM personnel and regulation on Master studies will guide and serve as a procedural document. Any suspected act of violation of Code of ethics shall be submitted in the form of report to Council of Ethics. SER, pages 23-24 show general procedure of the mechanism for initiations of the violations.*

*The relevant Code of ethics, regulations, procedures are available publicly on the website of the university.*

**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 study program at UIBM integrates the SMU electronic platform for managing and delivering teaching materials. Academic staff can upload and share resources such as lectures, exercises, syllabi, and announcements, while students have full access to these materials. The Regulation on the work and use of University Management System- UMS provides full rules regarding the usage of the SMU. According to article 27 of mentioned regulation, the Information technology officer in Central administration makes backup storage of database every day following legislation. All data collection and procedures governed by the Regulation on the procedures and measures for processing and security of personal data at the University of Mitrovica, which is uniformly applied to all members of the university. Article 7 of this regulation requires to use the and keep all data accurately, safely and correctly.*

*Page 24 of SER indicates involvement of the students and academic staff in the providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities through Studies Committee and the University Senate, however no governing procedures describing the mechanism are found.*

**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 selection of administrative staff at UIBM is made based on public competition based on the Law on public officials, the Labor Law, and the University statute. As it was mentioned in the SER page 25, the Faculty of Food Technology at UIBM has five administrative staff members, ensuring sufficient support for the long-term implementation of the Technology study program. As per the UIBM Statute, the university provides administrative support to facilitate academic, research, and artistic activities through centralized and unit-level offices.*

*Administrative staff at FFT, undergo several trainings on teaching in higher education, in ethics in HEIs, etc at university level, state level and on international levels. As an example of such training is "Training on Teaching in Higher Education", which was held at Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Prishtina. Although still, teaching and learning methods are described in the syllabi in the most formal way, using almost identical wordings (for example, "Teaching through demonstration and experiment."). However, the interviewed academic staff explained that they use a practical approach and peer training for sharing experience. Also, the administrative staff is involved in local and international professional training and mobility, such as Erasmus+ DualAFS project, mobility activities in Finnish institution, etc, as it was witnessed in the SER, page 26.*

**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)**

*As per request of expert panel, university delivered instances and cases, where the implementation of the recommendations from previous evaluation procedures.*

*The recommendations for quality improvement from previous internal and external quality*

*assurance procedures have been effectively implemented in the Technology study program at both the bachelor's and master's levels, aligning with ESG 1.10. Continuous improvements have been made across reaccreditation cycles (2014-2019, 2019-2022, 2022-2025, and 2025), incorporating industry recommendations and benchmarking against international universities.*

*One key improvement was the integration of mandatory internships in the 2025 reaccreditation period, ensuring students gain practical experience, as recommended by industry partners. Additionally, the Environmental Chemistry course, previously elective, was made mandatory in 2025 to strengthen the curriculum's relevance to current environmental challenges. These changes demonstrate a commitment to continuous enhancement, addressing labor market needs and improving the overall quality of education.*

#### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Formulate an explicit overarching didactic and research concept of the study program. To be produced and implemented by the end of the first accredited academic year.*

## **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 FFT at UIBM is responsible for organizing and managing internal quality assurance in accordance with UIBM statutes, national laws, and European quality standards (SER, p.29). Quality assurance is applied across all aspects of program planning and delivery, supported by experienced academic and industry professionals (SER, p. 30). UIBM documents are in line with the Law on Higher Education, the National Qualifications Framework, and the European Qualifications Framework, the Education Strategy 2022-2026, and KAA manuals and guides provided on web site:*

*<https://www.umib.net/en/quality-assurance-office/regulation-and-guidelines/>*

*UIBM undergoes both internal and external evaluations to maintain high academic and scientific standards, with external reviews conducted by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) and the State Council of Quality (SCQ).*

*According to SER, p.30-31 a collaborative quality culture ensures that all stakeholders (faculty, administration, students) actively participate in quality assurance efforts (SER, p.30). The Rector oversees financial support, receives recommendations, and supervises the Vice-Rector for Quality, who manages academic quality assurance and accreditation. The Senate approves all policies, regulations, and tools related to quality assurance. The Office for Quality Assurance, an independent entity reporting directly to the Rector, gathers and analyzes feedback via stakeholder questionnaires, providing reports to the Dean and Rector for*

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*continuous improvement. The Dean leads accreditation and re-accreditation processes, facilitates discussions on quality, and fosters partnerships to enhance academic standards. The Faculty Council reviews and approves new and existing programs, ensuring alignment with quality standards.*

*The Vice Dean for Quality and International Cooperation supports program development, stakeholder involvement, and academic mobility through student exchange agreements and credit recognition procedures.*

*According to SER, p. 31-33 and sit visit the Quality Assurance and Evaluation Committee at the academic unit includes faculty leadership, staff, and student representatives, ensuring oversight of accreditation, teaching evaluation, and quality improvement. The Vice Dean for Quality Assurance plays a key role in guiding academic staff and students, monitoring stakeholder involvement, and overseeing initiatives to enhance quality and student mobility. The documents available to the ET and the website <https://www.umib.net/en/quality-assurance-office/show> that FFT has several documents that form the basis for the development of the quality system. In this sense, Work plans are available on the website for the years 2020-2021 and 2024, and the documents: Improvement Plan for 2021, 2022 and 2024. Although the above-mentioned documents analyze the current situation, problems and quality indicators, there is a lack of continuity in reporting and suggestions for improvement. Based on the available documents, the ET cannot conclude that the PDCA cycle, which is the basis for quality in higher education, is continuously applied in the system. This approach shows an ad hoc practice at FFT, which is not a good basis for system development. In this sense, it is necessary to structurally improve the quality system by applying the principles of reporting, improvement and subsequent revision of elements that are quality indicators. The documentation presented contains KPI indicators that also need a thorough revision, as there is no demonstrable measurability in physical or other form.*

*According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the SWOT analysis (pp. 28, 39, 85, 95, etc.), which should serve as the foundation for a comprehensive assessment of all quality indicators at FFT, is inconsistent and lacks clear understanding. The imbalance between identified strengths and weaknesses suggests an inadequate and insufficiently thorough evaluation of the overall situation and completely misunderstandings of threats.*

*The evaluations are carried out continuously. There are a total of 8 evaluation instruments (SER, p.32), which are incorporated into the improvement plan depending on the results (SER, p.33). However, although there are documents that comply with the regulations, their full implementation in the development of a quality culture at FFT is lacking.*

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

*According to SAR, p. 34 the Master study program in Technology, with specializations in Environmental and Chemical Engineering, aligns fully with the mission of FFT and meets both*

*national and European qualification standards. The development and approval of new programs at UIBM follow the internal quality assurance process to ensure alignment with institutional goals. According to SER, p. 34 FFT set procedures for design and approval process, involving multiple academic bodies before final approval by the University Senate. According to SER, p. 34 prior to curriculum development, market research is conducted to assess the demand for the program and employment prospects for graduates. However, the ET has analysed the documents submitted in SER, p. 34, and all publicly available documents and finds that there is an inconsistency with the stated allegations. In this sense, it is also noted that during the on-site visit and discussions with various stakeholders, it was found that changes are made to the programme based on the results of the periodic external accreditation, e.g. the introduction of new subjects, which has nothing to do with the internal development and organisation of the programme development process. The ET also notes that the documentation of the market research is not attached, and it is not known exactly how it is carried out. Key performance indicators (KPIs) should be clearly defined within the documentation; however, the ET emphasizes the need for a comprehensive revision to ensure they are aligned with qualitative, measurable standards.*

**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 program quality is continuously monitored through key indicators, including student progress, evaluation methods, pass rates, graduation rates, and overall program effectiveness. According to SER, p. 35 the study program undergoes regular evaluations to ensure that the allocated ECTS workload and defined learning outcomes are realistic, achievable, and appropriate. Annual data on student pass rates are collected as a key indicator to assess the alignment between expected learning outcomes and the feasibility of the assigned ECTS credits. Particularly in the context of measurability and student success rates, it should be emphasised that the average grade of students in 2023\_2024 was 8.59, which is lower than in previous years (SER, P.35). ET points to the fact that the number of students who failed the exam in the previous academic year is 73, compared to the pass rate of 101. These figures alone in the presentation indicate that there is a place for improvements in the implementation of the teaching process that completes the exam. For a detailed analysis and better indicators that should correspond to the KPI, it is necessary to express this ratio according to the subjects that students take in the academic year. Regarding the revision of ECTS credits, the present analysis cannot be an indicator of the ECTS credits achieved and the workload, so in this sense another evaluation model must be created. The learning outcomes in the syllabuses are defined according to the level of the degree programme, although there is place for improvement. A suitable basis for evaluation could also be the last question in the student questionnaire regarding the number of hours spent on learning at home. Various questionnaires are used to collect information about the programme: Alumni, students, teachers, employers, and etc. The questionnaires are available, as well as the results on web site. After analysing the available*

*questionnaires, especially from students, it is highlighted that satisfaction with the programme can be better and it is surprising that some students would not recommend the programme to others. ET believes that the results of the collected surveys are a good basis for an in-depth analysis and further development of the study programme. The quality system should be developed into a functioning system with clear improvement measures to reduce the relatively negative trend in the programme evaluation. However, it should be emphasised that during the on-site visit, in discussions with Alumni, students and employers, some of whom have completed this degree programme, it was noted that improvements are particularly visible in the laboratory equipment, infrastructure and courses. In connection with the content of the questionnaire completed by the students, question number 17. The tests were held as planned in the course syllabus is questionable. If the surveys are conducted as stated during the on-site visit, how can the students answer this question? ET suggests deleting this question from the questionnaire or rephrasing it so that it does not violate the quality principles of conducting the pre-exam questionnaire.*

*According to SAR, p. 36 professional practice is mandatory and an integral part of the study program and includes the duration of the student's practical work in the food industry, the number of credits, the dynamic work plan, as well as monitoring and evaluation by the supervisors/mentors of the practical work.*

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

*According to SER, p. 37-38, all policies, regulations, and guidelines related to the study program are publicly available and regularly updated to ensure accuracy and reliability. Detailed information on admission criteria, qualification recognition, enrolment quotas, syllabuses, learning outcomes, credits, assessment methods, and final qualifications is transparently published. As noted in the previous analysis, there are no public documents containing indicators of success, analyses of changes and improvements to the programme, alumni success stories and other information that could increase the visibility and quality of the programme. The ET was unable to locate publicly available data for pass rates, dropout rates, and graduate employment outcomes.*

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Ensure the proper functioning of the university's website by making all relevant regulations and required information (as outlined in substandard 2.4) publicly accessible. This will improve transparency, facilitate information retrieval for stakeholders, and support compliance with quality assurance standards. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 2. For the next application round need to implement a structured system that fosters active engagement of university staff in self-assessment and continuous improvement processes. Clearly define individual responsibilities, organize regular training sessions and meetings, and establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate staff involvement in quality enhancement initiatives.*

3. *For the next application round strengthen the accessibility of quality assessment results by ensuring that evaluation data is systematically collected, analyzed, and presented in a transparent manner. This will enhance accountability and provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of institutional performance.*
4. *ET recommended to implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track the effectiveness of quality assurance measures over time. This includes establishing measurable goals, collecting relevant data, and conducting periodic reviews to identify areas for improvement. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
5. *Conduct a complete revision of the SWOT analysis to ensure a balanced, evidence-based assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The updated analysis should provide a more accurate foundation for strategic planning and decision-making. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
6. *For the next application round move beyond a theoretical application of the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle by incorporating it into a real, measurable tool for discussion and management within the quality assurance system. This will facilitate continuous improvement through data-driven decision-making.*
7. *Establish a system for tracking ECTS allocation and regularly evaluating its effectiveness. This will ensure that the workload distribution is realistic and aligned with student learning outcomes, improving overall program efficiency and student success rates. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
8. *Revise student survey questionnaires to enhance their clarity, relevance, and ability to generate actionable insights. Well-structured surveys will provide more accurate feedback on teaching quality, learning experiences, and institutional services. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
9. *Conduct a thorough review of KPIs, placing greater emphasis on measurable, quantitative factors. This will improve the precision and objectivity of performance evaluations, leading to more effective quality enhancement strategies. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
10. *Prepare a strategy for reducing the drop-out rate and low grades and follow it up for the years until the next accreditation round. Said strategy must focus on the institution's shortcomings. That means, "students are at fault" will not be considered as a valid reason for the deteriorated performance of the program in this aspect. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*

### 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)**

*For indicator 3.1.1, it is required that all staff positions are advertised online in the webpage of the institution, and the SER claims that is the case, however, no evidence of the sort is presented. These calls for new positions should be easily accessible at a careers' tab on the front page on the site, as no amount of navigation lead to the ad. Therefore, without the possibility to verify, this indicator will be considered not met. About indicator 3.1.2 refers to specific examples of documents representing the recruitment process. Most of the documents are made available as annexes or by given links, with the exception of minutes for the faculty meeting, that is only mentioned but not presented. The documents unfortunately only in Albanian, turning the verification of such more complicated. Since one of the documents is missing, this indicator will not be considered as complied. Regarding indicator 3.1.3 refers to the existence of clear selection criteria and procedures for the hiring of academic staff. In this regard, the document "REGULATION-ON-PROCEDURES-AND-CRITERIA-FOR-SELECTION-RE-ELECTION-AND-PROMOTION-OF-ACADAMIC-PERSONNEL-IN-UNIVERSITY.pdf" covers for this requirement. Finally, for indicator 3.1.4 refers to the presence of descriptions and work environment regulations such as code of ethics to be available for those hired. The human resources manual has been made available for this review, and the code of ethics is openly available and hosted in the university's website, thus meeting the requirements for this indicator. With only half of the indicators of this standard being compliant, the standard will be considered as failed.*

**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 second standard in the group is the most important, as it's failure would result in rejection of the program accreditation. For indicator 3.2.1, the wording is somehow vague, as it is not defined what "adequate for implementation of the program" is. However, to the specifics of what the accreditation manual does mention, namely CVs, data on percentage of courses delivered by full-time staff and number of teachers with doctoral degree, none of which are mentioned in the SER, but present within other documents provided for the evaluation. Taking all this into account the indicator is considered as complied. For indicator 3.2.2, it demands that all academic staff holds no more than one full-time and one part-time jobs at any given time, regardless of the employers. This is of course impossible to verify as an external evaluator, and the institution claims close monitoring of the situation. Probably a government agency (the tax office for example) could produce a document specifying the employment status of the academic staff of the program, but without knowing if this is an option in Kosovo, the statement of close monitoring presented in the SER will be taken at word's value. For indicator*

3.2.3 talks about the workload of the academic staff. Although most academic staff holds 2 courses or less at any given time, it was noted that Professors Flora Ferati, Faruk Hajrizi and Florent Dobroschi teach for the program 4, 3 and 3 courses, covering 24, 18 and 18 ECTS respectively. Adding to the courses also present for the BSc program, this appears excessive and would indicate overload of some of the present staff, thus this indicator would be considered as not met. In addition, it makes the program overly vulnerable and dependent to few individuals. With Indicator 3.2.4, refers to the share of full-time to part-time ratio of over 50%. A table of the academic staff with their contracted start and end of term as well as type of employment would make this step significantly easier. That being said, the ratio of full-time to part-time is beyond the requirement, so this indicator can be met. About indicator 3.2.5, it demands one full-time staff per 60 credits of the program, thus, for a 180 ECTS at least 3 staff should be employed full-time. Assuming renewal of contracts for next academic year in the case of all the staff with a contract expiring between now and the start of the academic year, this indicator could be considered as met.

About indicator 3.2.6, it refers to the teacher to student ratio of a maximum of 1:30. In this case, the ratio is well below the maximum limit, thus this indicator is clearly met. Regarding standard 3.2.7, it refers to the competences of the staff regarding their specific teaching courses. In this regard, courses and the field of expertise of the respective teaching staff are matching and thus this indicator is approved. Regarding indicator 3.2.8, is somewhat similar or overlapping with 3.2.3, and addresses the workload of the academic staff. On this specific case, during the visit and in the SER there was no indication of overwork. Based on this, the indicator will be considered as complied. Following indicator 3.2.9 refers to the distribution of academic staff obligations among teaching, mentoring and research. Two ways to measure the adequacy of the balance between roles could be measured by student performance and scientific publications. On the publications front, for the past four years there has been a ratio of only 0.7 publications per staff per year, with a few of the staff exceeding expectations. The low average grades of students could also be a result of limited mentoring, but this one can be influenced by other factors. On the low-rate of publications alone, it can be determined that time for research is not sufficient, thus not meeting this indicator. Finally, indicator 3.2.10 refers to the sufficient number of qualified mentors to provide guidance and assist on thesis work. In this regard, the student to staff ratio is among the best compared to other institutions, and yet the students' performance is surprisingly low, this mixed with a drop-out rate that far exceeds the situation in other institutions can be considered as an indicator of insufficient support for students.

Overall, with three out of ten indicators not met, this standard will be considered complied.

**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)**

*Regarding indicator 3.3.1, the first part of the text makes clear reference to the opportunities and procedures for promotions, while the second part of the text focuses on the recruitment aspect. In response, the SER presents information about the recruitment process and adds as appendix the regulation for promotion, although the latter is only in Albanian. In this case, the indicator is compliant. The second indicator refers to the requirements for promotion within the academic track. The SER then elaborates in the requirements for all positions based in clear regulations, so this indicator is clearly complied. Finally, indicator 3.3.3 refers to the degree in which feedback and quality management are taken into account for the promotion or appointment of teaching staff. In this regard, the SER elaborates on the protocols for the delivery of feedback as well as correction protocols in case of below-average feedback, and makes reference to the "regulation on procedures and criteria for selection and re-election and promotion of academic staff" in which the evaluation of feedback is not named as criteria for either the selection or promotion of academic staff. Given feedback is not mentioned in the regulation for the UIBM, this indicator will be considered as not complied, but with the other two being met, this standard will be considered as approved.*

**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)**

*On indicator 3.4.1, it references the protocol for yearly professional development of the academic staff. In this regard, the SER indicates the existence of an annual operational plan that considers the training of staff, and elaborates in some of the aspects considered in this annual plan. Corresponding mentions were made during the visit by the university staff, so it will be considered as complied with. On indicator 3.4.2, is very specific in the wording, saying that the HEI should "prove" that the academic staff is engaged in professional development programs. In this regard, although the SER mentions that the staff is engaged in such programs, it does not show evidence or otherwise proves the staff is taking part in such programs. Certifications obtained on the previous academic period or otherwise information on the enrollment of individual staff linked to specific development programs was however presented in the supplementary information package after the visit, thus this indicator can be considered as met. Indicator 3.4.3 refers to the existence of support structures for the development of skills by the staff. In this case, wording is somewhat vague as support can mean one of many things. With the access to exchange and mobility described in the SER, I believe this indicator is therefore covered. Indicator 3.4.4 refers to the participation of the academic staff in international activities. To this, the SER elaborates on the different mobility instances that academic staff has participated in over the last 6 years. Although limited for such a long*

*period of time, there have been international exchanges and this indicator can be considered as covered.*

*Indicator 3.4.5 requires the presence of evidence for training on preparation and delivery of teaching. The SER in response, rather than presenting evidence, it refers of the types of training staff has been involved in. From the evaluation manual, it is no description of what constitutes evidence on this regard, but when it comes to the first two items mentioned in the SER, Harmonization of syllabi and adjustment of ECTS, this is the first evaluation in which the ECTS to workload did not require any adjustment, which is evidence to some sort of training in the topic. Therefore the indicator is complied with. As for indicator 3.4.6, both during the visit and also indicated in the SER, there are introductory trainings and additional advanced teaching methods trainings which are compulsory for all academic staff, thus meeting the indicator. Similarly, indicator 3.4.7 refers to introductory training to new employees other than for teaching methods, such as ethics and QA. In response to this, the SER elaborates on the protocol for familiarization of standard practices of the university, and the code of ethics is hosted and open for anyone to access it, thus the indicator is met. Finally indicator 3.4.8 refers to the support for the development of research by academic staff. As mentioned in the SER and also during the visit, faculty members have access to small project funding that can be applied to directly with the university, and they also get bonuses for publications, both of which would count as support for research and comply with the indicator. Overall, the standard and all eight indicators and is considered as complied.*

**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)**

*This standard focuses on the qualifications of external associates. However, a clear definition of what an external associate is. By experts' interpretation, an external associate would be a visiting researcher or otherwise an academic from another institution, whose main responsibilities and benefits come from the other institution, but are temporarily operating as part of the UIBM. In this case, no external associates are mentioned in the program, and thus this standard will be ignored.*

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. All recruitment steps, from the posting of the open position to the notice of decision should be recorded both in Albanian and English, in order to make external verifications of the process easier. To be presented as documents for the next application round.*
- 2. Evidence of the advertising of open positions in the university's website should be collected and presented for next application round. The advertising of positions should be easily accessible to anyone from the front page of the institution, for example through a careers' tab.*



3. *Better distribution of the workload among academic staff is needed, as 3 professors are in charge of around half of the ECTS required to complete the MSc. That makes the program too dependent on individuals, who may stop working for the UIBM for any reason and leave the program compromised. This should be corrected by next accreditation round.*
4. *Do not list expired contracts or at least do not have them in the same folder as valid contracts. This should be implemented by next application round.*
5. *Betterment of the balance for teaching-research-mentorship is needed, as currently the research output is low, and students' performance is also way below average. An explicit plan targeting this goal should be produced within a year of accreditation.*
6. *A specific separate document gathering the annual plan for academic staff development and training should be created and presented for the next accreditation round.*

#### **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 intended learning outcomes of the study program are in line with the FFT mission and strategic objectives and are generally at the Master of Science (MSc) level, reflecting the knowledge, skills and competences expected of students at level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which represents compliance for indicators 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. According to SER, p. 55, the outcomes are worded correctly. In the portion of the text that refers to explaining the connection to the standards for all outcomes, MF is cited: none, which is a good starting point for discussing and defining the mission at the faculty or programme level. Moreover, the learning outcomes appear to be written from the student perspective, thus meeting indicator 4.1.3. This may ultimately help to get a clearer picture of where we want to be in the future. As for indicator 4.1.4, it requires examples of good practices in defining learning outcomes. In response, the SER lists several practices and considerations for the definition of learning outcomes, thus this indicator is met. As for indicator 4.1.5, refers to the distribution of the learning outcomes into the development of knowledge, skills and competences. In this regard, the SER elaborates in detail how the learning outcomes influence the development in each of the beforementioned areas, thus meeting with the indicator requirement. Finally, for indicator 4.1.6 refers to the compatibility of the defined learning outcomes with similar programs in other universities. In this regard, the SER provides examples from Serbian and Albanian programs and their equivalencies. Therefore, the program meets with all the indicators of the standard and can be considered as compliant.*

**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 intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications. According to SAR, p. 60-62, the curriculum is designed based on contemporary scientific achievements and research while aligning with labour market needs in Kosovo, thus meeting the requirement of indicator 4.2.1. It fosters essential competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and independent research skills. Academic support policies ensure that students have opportunities to improve their learning outcomes through additional lessons, consultations, and tailored teaching methods. Course selection is based on market trends and methodological preparation, ensuring relevance and applicability. Measures such as adapting teaching strategies and providing supplementary materials help address learning challenges and enhance student success. Also, the curriculum is designed with a logical progression, ensuring that foundational courses provide the necessary knowledge and skills before students advance to more specialized and complex subjects in higher semesters (SER, p. 60-62). On Indicator 4.2.2 it refers to the differences between the bachelor's and master's programs' learning outcomes, to which the SER elaborates clearly on the distinctions between the programs and specifies on the specialization for the MSC learning outcomes. Therefore, the second indicator is met. Finally, indicator 4.2.3 refers to the distinction between the proposed programs and other programs taught in the institution. In this regard, the SER only alludes to the considerations taken for the development of the program, but does not directly address the indicator in question. A clear comparison and distinction should be made with other programs in the faculty to clarify this request, and thus is considered as not met. However, with two out of three indicators met, the standard is considered as complied with.*

**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)**

*Each course generally aligns with the intended learning outcomes, however, there are major differences between the defined learning outcomes of the individual subjects. The learning outcomes at the level of the individual syllabuses do not correspond to the level of the Master's programme. Industrial Microbiology is given as an example. When reviewing the curricula, it was also found that not all syllabuses have the same form, so that in some subjects the sequence of learning outcomes has been lost. It is necessary to standardise the formulation of learning outcomes, set the number of learning outcomes for the subject - minimum 4 and maximum 6 - and revise the whole programme. As long as this situation is breaking the flow of the program, indicators 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 will be considered as failed. The distribution of ECTS credits reflects a workload, allowing students to engage with course content effectively but at the same time need to be revised since the bad passing rate. Assessment methods are described and measure student achievement at different stages. On indicator 4.3.3, the syllabi and the SER appear to cover for the disciplines related to the learning outcomes of the program, thus this indicator can be considered as met. Finally, indicator 4.3.4 refers to the compatibility of the program with institutions and study programs abroad, as well as foreign work markets. In this regard, the SER only elaborates on the characteristics of the program, but does not provide compatibility examples with equivalent programs abroad. However, this is addressed somehow already for the indicator 4.1.6, and therefore will be considered as met. Altogether, with two out of four indicators met the standard is considered as failed.*

**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)**

*Regarding indicator 4.4.1, according to SER, p. 67 study program prepares students for regulated professions and FTT ensures that its study program aligns with European Union directives by adapting its content and structure to meet EU higher education standards. These directives establish guidelines for higher education systems in EU member states, influencing Kosovo's legal framework. Key regulations include Law No. 04/L-037 on Higher Education, which governs the organization, administration, and quality of higher education institutions based on European standards. Additionally, the Higher Education Quality Code (Decision No. 824, 24.12.2021) defines quality assurance measures. These efforts ensure that the program meets both national and international academic requirements, thus the indicator is met. About indicator 4.4.2 refers to the degree of consideration given to recommendations from professional associations, and in this case, both during the visit as well as in the SER it was made clear that external associations do have the ability to influence the content of the program and have a positive impact. Therefore, the indicator and the overall standard are complied with.*

**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)**

*On indicator 4.5.1, it refers to the existence of a regulation for the professional practice- in this regard, neither the SER nor during the visit is there a reference to an actual regulation, and in its absence this indicator is considered as failed. About the indicator 4.5.2 it refers to the allocation of mentors for the practice. In this case during the site visit, ET received information that there are mentors and that a practice diary is kept, so in this case the indicator is met, although no mention is made about the learning outcomes. The student internship is scheduled for the sixth semester (SER, pp. 62), carries 10 ECTS credits, is mandatory and 250 hours, thus meeting the requirement for indicator 4.5.3. On the FFT website, the Internship course is not listed. When analysing this section, it is important to point out that the outcomes of the internship should be clearly defined, linked to the outcomes of the study and made public. It is also desirable to appoint a coordinator for the internship at FFT. Moreover, indicator 4.5.4 addresses the established agreements with external institutions/organizations as well as the presence of established channels for feedback channels for the betterment of the implementation of the practice. In this case, although the SER and during the visit it was mentioned that agreements are established for the implementation of the practice, no mention is made of proper feedback protocols from external organizations, thus this indicator is not met. In total, with two out of four indicators failed the standard is considered as not compliant.*

**Standard 4.6 The study program is delivered through student-centred teaching and learning. (ESG 1)**

*The educational process at FFT is conducted in a modern facility equipped with state-of-the-art instruments, utilizing innovative, interactive didactic-pedagogical methods (SER, p. 78-79). Teaching is delivered through a combination of lectures, seminars, theoretical and laboratory exercises, practical work, fieldwork, professional excursions, consultations, and student-led research activities. Instruction is offered in various formats, including in-person, online, and hybrid models, ensuring accessibility for students with special needs. To enhance quality assurance, UIBM has integrated strategic plans to provide ongoing training for academic staff on contemporary teaching methodologies. Additionally, through the Erasmus+ project Dual Curriculum – Study and Practical Work in Agriculture and Food Safety (DualAFS), FFT has further strengthened its infrastructure, incorporating a hybrid classroom and advanced laboratory facilities to support both student learning and faculty research.*

*However, student-centred teaching and learning is not applied to the students. In fact, it is a pedagogical approach in which the emphasis is no longer on the transmission of information by the teacher, but on the active involvement of the students in their own learning, focussing on the students' needs, interests and abilities, making them active participants rather than*

*passive recipients of knowledge. In the materials presented by SER and during the site visits, active learning is not applied as students are not encouraged to research, ask questions and solve problems instead of just listening to lectures. There is also a lack of personalised learning and the teaching process is not adapted to the different learning styles, paces and interests of students. In syllabuses there are no examples of collaboration and interaction so that students work together, discuss and engage in peer learning. Critical thinking and problem solving are also not prevalent methods. During the site visit, it became clear that teachers are not facilitators. They are the source of knowledge. When teachers guide and support students in their learning process, there are no dropouts and no poor grades. It is necessary to use project-based learning, flipped classroom, enquiry-based learning and group discussions as well as peer teaching. This approach helps develop skills such as independent thinking, creativity and adaptability, which are essential for success in modern education and the workplace. The grades in this case would certainly be better.*

**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)**

*About indicator 4.7.1, according to SER, pp. 74, the assessment methods used in the programme ensure a systematic assessment of individual learning outcomes covering all relevant areas of knowledge, skills and competences as defined in the learning objectives of the programme. Therefore, the indicator can be considered as complied with. On indicator 4.7.2, it addresses the assessment methodologies for the program and their implementation to evaluate the development of learning outcomes and competences. In this regard, although there is a variety of methodologies implemented, their adequacy is questionable given the low average marks and high failing and dropout rates. Therefore, this indicator will be considered as failed. On indicator 4.7.3, it refers to the notice to students about the grading methodologies. In this regard, during the first week of classes, students are familiarised with the syllabus of each course by the respective professor. To ensure objective and reliable grading, FFT adheres to the master's degree programme regulations, Articles 27 and Articles 102 and 103 of the UIBM Statutes, which govern the conduct of examinations and the grading process. Therefore, the indicator is considered as met. On indicator 4.7.4, it refers again to the objectivity and reliability of students' grading. In this case, the SER indicates that they consider closely the regulations for assessment stipulated by law. Although the results of the assessments clearly demonstrate issues, it is not evident that the issues are either with the reliability or objectivity of the evaluation process, and thus the indicator will be considered as complied with. Next, indicator 4.7.5 refers to the timely delivery of assessment results to students so they can work in improving their shortcomings. In this regard, as part of the programme, students are subject to both formative and final assessment. Formative assessments are conducted during the learning process, e.g. through colloquia, and provide timely feedback and comments to help students address weaknesses and continuously improve. In addition to these statements and the analysis of the syllabuses, it is evident that the most used methods are partial exams, final*

*exams, seminars and laboratory assignments. Therefore, the indicator can be considered as complied with. Finally, indicator 4.7.6 refers to the existence of an appeal process for students to challenge the assessment results. In this regard, there is a clear rule in the regulation for master's studies of the university, therefore, the indicator is considered as met. Overall, with five out of six indicators complied with, the standard is considered as passed.*

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

*Indicator 4.8.1 refers to the relationship between assessment criteria and learning outcomes. Based on the results of the internal quality assurance system, new assessment methods have been introduced, which include student activities during the learning process, written assessments in the middle of the semester, seminar papers/projects, portion of the assessment is done by the course assistant and the final examination (SER, p. 75). Therefore, the indicator can be considered as met. Finally, indicator 4.8.2 refers to the balance of workload hours to ECTS. According to SER, p.75, the workload of the students was adjusted by harmonising the working hours with the ECTS credits. The ECTS credits are calculated according to the ECTS methodology and it is also provided on web site ECTS guide. The assessment points are determined based on the course components, taking into account the amount of time students need to complete the objectives of a particular subject. Therefore the indicator and the standard can be considered as met.*

#### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Develop a standardized syllabus template to ensure consistency in course: descriptions, assessment methods, learning outcomes, and prescribed literature. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 2. Update and enrich the literature across the majority of syllabi to align with current academic and industry advancements. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 3. Establish a clear framework for student-centered teaching methodologies, incorporating diverse approaches such as the flipped classroom. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 4. Reevaluate ECTS credit allocations based on student survey results to enhance alignment with actual workload and student feedback. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 5. Introduce new elective courses, including ESG Reporting, Climate Change, and Hazards, to expand the curriculum and address emerging global challenges. This can and should be implemented before the start of the next academic year.*
- 6. A clear comparison of the program with other programs of the faculty should be made*

*to clarify the distinction and justify the program. This should be presented for the next accreditation round.*

- 7. Create a clear and concise regulation for the practice period of the program. This regulation should be public and be presented before the start of next academic year.*
- 8. The university is still missing, or not presenting, an established protocol for external organizations to provide feedback about the student field practice. This protocol should be established and made public before the start of the next academic year.*

## **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)**

*The admission criteria for students are given in the articles 10-12 of Regulation for Master's Studies, in line with the legal regulations established by MEST and KAA. Admission criteria for master studies at FFT is based on a 100-point system.*

*Master's admission is based on a priority ranking of candidates with an average grade of at least 7.50. If spots remain, those with lower grades may be admitted after taking an entrance exam, with ranking based on study grades and exam results (max 100 points). In case of ties, ranking considers undergraduate performance, then female candidates, and finally, a faculty committee decision. Appeals can be made within three working days, with the final decision by a review committee.*

*Pages 79-80 of SER includes all necessary documents for enrollment and admission requirements are published. Webpage: <https://www.umib.net/en/new-students/> contains all necessary information regarding admission and they are publicly available.*

### **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)**

*According to the article 35 defines the way to determine the academic success of a student and the following methods can be applied: a colloquium, a seminar work, a test and a practical test during the lab hours. The method of evaluating knowledge and passing of the exam is determined by the course program. Examination enrollment period shall commence not earlier than 6 weeks before and not later than 8 days before the beginning of the examination term. Article 106, point 4, of the Statute of UIBM states that, upon special request, a student may be granted permission by the dean of the academic unit to take an exam earlier if they are participating in an international study exchange program or undertaking practical training. Each result from previous studies, through the transcript of records, is registered in the system as part of the application for continuing studies. Additionally, all achieved results are recorded in the Student Management System (SMU).*

*Master's studies last 1–2 years, requiring 60 ECTS credits. The academic year runs from October 1 to September 30, divided into two semesters: Winter (Oct 1–Jan 15) and Summer*

(Feb 16–May 31). Each semester lasts 15 weeks. ns of students in learning, attendance of lectures, evaluation, etc.

All rights and obligations are determined in the Statute of the University articles 140-142. These documents are freely available on the Internet: <https://www.umib.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Statute-UIBM.pdf>. During the discussion sessions it was witnessed that the meetings regarding the rights and obligations are periodically provided to students.

Students are expected to participate in the evaluation questionnaires of the courses academic staff, faculty as feedback of the learning process. During the session with students 's opinion was contradictory with the outcomes of such questionnaires that held previous years. The motivation for active participation in such questionnaires and feedback schemes should be encouraged.

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

*The procedures on international/ national incoming and outgoing students are governed by the regulation on internationalization and mobility and law no.04/l-037 on higher education in the republic Kosovo.*

*According to the SER, pp ,82-83. The International Cooperation Office (ICO) at UIBM informs and supports students in international exchange mobility programs. It ensures ECTS credit recognition and publishes application procedures and study program details in foreign languages. ICO facilitates student mobility by coordinating with partner universities, assisting with accommodation and visa processes, and ensuring available courses in English and German. After the exchange, transcripts are issued, and feedback is collected to improve procedures. UIBM tracks student mobility data for up to three months and beyond over the last five years.*

### **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 academic staff of the master's program in Technology at FFT includes 10 individuals with doctoral degrees: one full professor, six associate professors, one assistant professor, and two assistants. More than 90% of the staff are full-time employees, delivering over 80% of the program's teaching hours, in accordance with Article 26, point 5.3.3 of Administrative Instruction No. 15/2018 on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosovo. Part-time staff, comprising full professors, associate professors, and assistants, represent less than 10% of the total faculty and contribute to less than 10% of the teaching hours. Furthermore, the administrative team consists of four employees. Administrative support is provided by four staff members (SER, page 85).*

*The main document that outlines the legal relationship between the institution and the students is the FFT's Regulation for Master's Studies, Articles 17-19. Students in special circumstances (illness, disability, family situation) are treated with appropriate flexibility by the academic staff at FFT. All regulations are published on the UIBM website and are accessible to all students.*



*Students receive guidance on study and career opportunities, with thesis mentors and professional practice supervision. Regulations on studies, appeals, and complaints are publicly available, ensuring transparency. Special circumstances are accommodated per university policies. As witnessed during the sessions with students and employer, students have reliable academical and career support from both university and industry.*

*Academic staff are required to be available to students for a few hours on a regular schedule. Additional consultation hours with academic staff may be arranged. Consultations can be organized in individual or group form.*

*Students are informed about extracurricular activities, including sports and recreation, with funding support available from the university and external sources.*

*University is providing opportunities for those students who also work in industries by providing flexible schedule of the courses and hybrid study mode (online lectures and mandatory practical/laboratory classes). SER generally mentions enhancement of hybrid education format, however, do not specify the ratio between number of hybrid and traditional classes. The mechanism for hybrid education process has not clearly established.*

#### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Encourage students to actively participate in the evaluation questionnaires of the courses and academic staff. A strategy to guarantee feedback participation should be made and implemented by the start of the first accredited academic year.*
- 2. The fully regulation on hybrid education method should be established before the start of the first academic year.*

## **6. RESEARCH**

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

*The first standard focuses on the alignment of the program to the mission and strategic goals of the institution. Regarding indicator 6.1.1, it is clear that the defined objectives reflect on the research plan, thus meeting this requirement. The next indicator, 6.1.2 addresses the funding for research, and during the visit there was mention of publication bonuses and small project funding. Simultaneously, the SER mentions specifically the financial support as well. Whether if logistic and human resources are provided is not clear, but due to the open wording of the indicator will be considered as met. Finally, indicator 6.1.3 refers to the existence, or lack thereof, for clear policies that define what recognized research is. In this regard, the SER diverges into the establishment of collaborations, which is not relevant to this indicator. A regulation on scientific research is linked in the appendix, but it is only in Albanian language. Thus, this indicator won't be considered as met. Overall, two out of three indicators are complied and so will be considered for the standard.*

**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.**

*Indicator 6.2.1 addresses the channels of validation for the research. Besides scientific publications, the SER cites organization of scientific conferences, industrial projects and university collaborations. Although no mention is made of specific instances of conference organization, the scientific publications and industrial collaborations suffice to cover for the indicator. Regarding indicator 6.2.2, research findings are clearly presented in scientific journals as shown in the list of publications, and consultancy with industry was also showcased in specific cases during the visit, thus meeting this indicator. Finally, indicator 6.2.3 refers to the qualifications of the staff. The list of CVs for the staff is in this case complete and all staff have the required experience and education degrees, thus this indicator is met as well as the standard.*

**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.**

*Indicator 6.3.1 refers to the engagement of the staff in community development. During the visit, examples were given of joint projects with the industry, particularly on the front of wastewater treatment. In addition, the SER cites specific examples of collaborations between staff and other HEIs on projects relevant to the society. This type of interaction alone covers for meeting the indicator. Regarding indicator 6.3.2, the SER elaborates on collaborations with foreign HEIs, namely King's College London, University of Milan and University of Parma, thus covering for this indicator. Next, Indicator 6.3.3 refers to the engagement of the staff with local businesses. This indicator is maybe redundant, as local businesses can be considered part of the local community. That being said, and referring to the wording on indicator 6.3.1, this indicator would thus be met. Finally, Indicator 6.3.4 focuses on technology transfer. Out of the degree in which this happens within joint research projects, there are no specific instances of such interactions mentioned in the SER or during the visit. Instead, the SER only refers to the protocols for technology transfer and sharing, therefore this indicator could not be considered as met, but with three out of four indicators, the overall standard is met.*

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

*The wording of this standard is quite vague, as a "proven record" could be interpreted as one article without limit in the age of the article itself. By examining the publication list and the courses list, it is clear that research published for the most matches the topics of some courses,*

*and the SER refers to the encouragement to incorporate new results into courses, thus meeting indicator 6.4.1. Regarding indicator 6.4.2 the SER elaborates on how students of the faculty, but importantly not the program, have taken part in research and student exchange with HEIs from abroad. Specific mention is made of master's students taking part in exchange, but not in research activities. Although it is a high bar for a masters program, this indicator is not met, and with only one out of two indicators met, this standard will be considered as failed.*

#### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Specific support structures should be created or defined for the development of research, which should include more than just financial support, but also logistical support and human resources support. This should be completed by the end of the first academic year.*
- 2. A specific regulatory definition of what accounts as research should be created or made available also in English. This should be made available for next accreditation round.*
- 3. Clear evidence of instances of technology transfers should be mentioned and listed by next application round, in order to meet the requirements of indicator 6.3.4*
- 4. Strategies to involve students from the master's program with research should be developed within the first accredited year and implemented thereafter. In case such instances are already taking place, they should be mentioned in the SER with clarity. This is in reference to indicator 6.4.2, that specifically refers to students from the program, while the SER only provides examples at a faculty level.*

## **7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES**

*During the visit to the campus of the University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini", it was evident that the campus itself was recently commissioned. Therefore, all premises appear in top condition at the moment of the visit.*

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

*Considering indicators 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, the premises of the faculty as well as the laboratories are in good conditions to host educational activities. Laboratories are well equipped and have designated places for laboratory assistants for flexible access by the students. The faculty also has access to a variety of software, some licensed and other open access, therefore meeting indicator 7.1.3. For the evaluation of the indicator 7.1.4, there is reference to the conditions of the premises, which in the intro of the section has been already mentioned the conditions of the new premises are quite good. There is definitely space in good conditions in laboratories, library and classrooms. However, deeds for the building and purchase or rent documentation for facilities and equipment are not included in the materials. Finally, on indicator 7.1.5, ramp access to the building and elevators inside the building allow for people with reduced mobility to access all facilities. Overall, this standard is thus complied with.*

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

*This standard focuses specifically on library and library services. Indicator 7.2.1 refers to reading spaces, workspaces and books stock. There were reading and working spaces, as for the book stock there is no mention in the SER. 7.2.2 addresses library access, and although the book services were closed after office hours, the reading and working places remained accessible. About 7.2.3, there are clearly enough reading places in the library for the total number of students in the program as it is now, which is also confirmed in the SER. The indicator 7.2.4 is about group working spaces, which are also inside the library and appeared sufficient, further indicated in the SER. In contrast, 7.2.5 refers to the stock of the specific books required for the courses in the program. Although the SER indicates that those books are available in sufficient numbers, there no specific accounting of number of books of each of the needed titles, therefore the expert team could not verify this indicator. Finally, indicator 7.2.6 talks about the “sufficient” subscriptions to journals and other publications, and since the word “sufficient” is not concise enough, having the several book and database accesses specified on the SER and during the visit will make this indicator as met, and the overall standard as complied.*

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

*Standard 7.3 addresses the funding specifically. Indicator 7.3.1 specifically mentions the financial plan for the study program for the next five years. Considering that the accreditation period is intended to start in 2025, the financial plan should cover 2025 to 2030. Unfortunately, the financial plan and budget is presented only for the period 2024-2026, thus not meeting the requirement for this indicator. Finally, indicator 7.3.3 refers to additional financial resources for the study program. In the SER as well as during the visit there is reference made to small research project grants. Whether this is something that could be considered as funding for development and improvement of the program is difficult to tell, but given the open phrasing of the indicator it will be considered as complying. Given that two out of three indicators are met, the standard will be considered as complying.*

### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Remember to include the deeds and documents of ownership for subsequent application rounds.*
- 2. The elevators, although new as the building, require recalibration, as there were noticeable gaps at the stopping positions, big enough gaps to obstacle the movement of people with limited mobility. This can and should be implemented before next academic year starts.*
- 3. By next application round, make sure to include a table in the SER that mentions*

specifically the books stock for the literature used in the proposed courses and the number of specimens of said books.

#### OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Standard area	Compliance
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially Compliant
2. Quality management	Partially compliant
3. Academic staff *mandatory	Substantially Compliant
4. Educational process content	Partially compliant
5. Students	Substantially Compliant
6. Research	Substantially Compliant
7. Infrastructure and resources *mandatory	Fully compliant
Overall compliance	Substantially Compliant

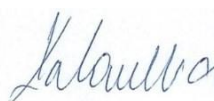
In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program in *Technology Program With Specializations in Environmental Engineering MSc* offered by the University of Mitrovica is **Substantially compliant** with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number of 20 students to be enrolled in the program.

#### Expert Team

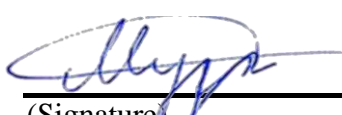
##### Chair

	Francisco Javier Farfan Orozco	21/02/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

##### Member

	Sanja Kalambura	21/02/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

##### Member

	Issabek Muratov	21/02/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)