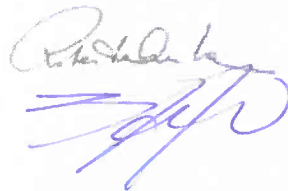


**EXTERNAL EVALUATION  
REPORT FOR  
PhD. IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE  
OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITY ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY**

**External Evaluation Group:**

1. Prof. Roberto ACCOLLA
2. Prof.Asc Entela HALOCI



Tiranë, 2016



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**EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**  
**FOR STUDY PROGRAM: PhD IN "PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE", AT THE PRIVATE**  
**UNIVERSITY, ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY**

| Table licensing data for the study program: |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1   | HEI applying:  | Private University Albanian University   |
| 2   | Faculty who offers:  | Faculty of Medical Sciences  |
| 3   | Order/Decision of Councils of licensing/<br>re-organization      | Order of Minister No. 68, date<br>12.02.2013   |
| 4   | Title of the study program:                                      | Phd in Pharmaceutical Science  |
| 5   | Study cycle:   | Third cycle  |
| 6   | Duration of the study program:                                   | At least 3 year  |
| 7   | ECTS in total:   | 60 ECTS organized theoretical studies and<br>15 ECTS theoretical which will be done by<br>foreign academic staff with the third<br>cycle studies qualification |
| 8   | Form of study (fulltime/part time/in<br>distance/):              | Full time  |
| 9   | Language (albanian/other):                                       | Albanian   |
| 10  | The program is offered by the<br>institution                     | Private University Albanian University   |
| 11  | The program is offered in cooperation<br>with other institutions | In collaboration with University of Pisa<br>and Universita degli Studi di Palermo  |
| 12  | Joint degree:  | Phd in Pharmaceutical Science  |
| 13  | Double degree:   | -  |
| 14  | Level on the National Framework of<br>Qualifications             | 8  |
| 15  | Activation of the study programm                                 | 2013 – 2014  |
| 16  | The first generation of graduation                               | -  |
|   | Etc  |  |




## **INTRODUCTION**

As an introductory remark, this EEG has analyzed the documents provided by the candidate institution, The Albanian University, for the organization of the PhD Program in "Pharmaceutical Science". The analysis and the evaluation of the PhD program by this EEG will be specifically developed in the various sections of the Report. The EEG evaluation has been based also on the site-visit and on the discussion with the various actors participating to the PhD program organization and development, including the Rector of the University, the Council of Professors, the Internal Evaluation Committee and, most importantly, the PhD students.

On 9.12.2016 the draft report of the external evaluation was sent to Private University Albanian University. The Private University Albanian University sent to APAAL the official letter no. 53/90 dated 09.12.2016, about some comments relating to this draft report. Experts read the comments and decided as below:

1. For comments 1 Experts decide to not take into account as the comments cited in the report will be fulfilled in the future but actually are not present. Regarding the diploma format should be seen not only the format but its content also such as the title of the cycle, the cycle and other datas.
2. For comment 2 is not evident in the institution report.
3. For comments 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Experts decide to not take into account as they do not change the results the group had during the evaluation time.

## **MEMBERS OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION GROUP (EEG)**

1. Prof. Roberto ACCOLLA, Department of Surgical and Morphological Sciences, School of Medicine, University of Insubria, Varese, Italy
  2. Prof. Asc Entela HALOCI Department of Pharmacy, University of Medicine, Tirane, Albania.
- The EEG was assisted by program officer Msc Iva Lika, from PAAHE/APAAL.

## **MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATION OF DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAMS**

### **1. Mission and objectives of doctoral study program**

#### **Description part**

The PhD study programme in "Pharmaceutical Science" (hereafter indicated as PhD-PS) is proposed as a third cycle programme within the Albanian University (AU), as regulated by Albanian law n.9741, of 21/05(2007 and amended by Law n.10307 of 22/07/2010) in Tirana. The course was activated based on the Decision of the Albanian University Senate, and on Decree No. 68, 12/02/2013 by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania.

The PhD-PS programme is integrated with the general aims of the AU, which entail the training and formation of specialized personnel qualified in pharmaceutical disciplines, according to Albanian standards. On its aim, the PhD-PS course is offered to a suitable number of students with a background in medicine, pharmacy and potentially in clinical chemistry to provide increased professional level and research skill for employment in private and public institutions, and will ultimately assign the title of Doctor (PhD).

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External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

The programme wants to merge the implementation of student's knowledge in Pharmaceutical Science with the development of research attitude towards principle of drug therapy, drug resistance and pharmacovigilance.

In analyzing the "Mission and objectives of the doctoral study program", the External Evaluation Group (EEG) concurs that the current plan complies with the needs of the University, and may represent a possible basis for AU future involvement in the process of formation of PhD graduates with, at present, a national target. As a matter of fact, as described, the PhD program activities are mainly theoretical and very little experimental. For the latter activities, in large part, the commitment and quality level of the programme appear to rely mostly on interactive collaboration with other Albanian and foreign institutions. Within this frame, agreements have been signed with Italian Universities such as University of Pisa, University of L'Aquila, and University of Palermo. Students are allowed to spend from a minimum of three months to one half of the PhD program in collaborating institutions, provided specific funds will become available.

The PhD-PS program has enrolled 6 students for the first cycle initiated in 2013, which the EEG considers to be a suitable number for the tutorage and research facilities of AU and partner institutions.

- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards <sup>1</sup>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Standard I.1 - General framework</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> The study program of third cycle (doctorate) is a new program or a reorganized program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> If it is reorganized, the extent to which it affected the previous program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> The total number of students studying how doctor eight and number of those who attend this study program each year is in line with the policies of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) where the program is conducted as well as state policy for higher education and scientific research regarding recognition and validation of diploma and number of students studying for doctorate to one scientific mentor;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> Doctorate study program is supported by national or international research groups accredited for research in relevant field or fields of studies;</p> | <p>The PhD-PS is a new study programme, initiated in 2013. Six (6) students have been enrolled for the first cycle, whereas no additional cycles were initiated in 2014 and 2015. The first enrolled PhD students have therefore almost completed the cycle in terms of the time requirements. The yearly number of students is in line with the HEI policies, against a total of about 120 students presently registered in the Faculty of Medical Sciences, which includes the Department of Pharmacy. The main target of medical aspects included in the PhD-PS is reflected by the observation that all current PhD students are formerly graduated inin "Pharmaceutical Science".</p> <p>Most of the criterias of the Decision 68 No 68. 12.02.2013 are respected. This EEG underlines, however, that although the Albanian law indicates that lessons and exams should be carried out in Albanian language, some lessons and exams were in English.</p> <p>The number of PhD students assigned to each scientific mentor is also complying with the State principles for HEI,</p> |

<sup>1</sup> EEG must write for the fulfillment of each standard (based on the criterions which are in the left). At the end of their, need to write his opinions (summary), if is fulfill the standards or not.






External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

**Criterion 7** Internal evaluation report of study program of the third cycle is reviewed by the Council of Professors.

and the recommendations for proper ratios Tutor/Students in order to respect full guidance during the classes, training and working activities. Nevertheless (see below) only 50% of the teaching staff is engaged full time, while the Law rules require at least 60% of staff full time. Moreover, the EEG noticed that some tutors changed with respect to the list of tutors present in the report of the institution.

Also, the format of the Diploma, as it stands now, need to be reformulated according to the actual law of the Education and Sports and should be registered to the competent office at the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The policy of the AU includes collaboration letters with national and international partner institutions and research groups, which are accredited for PhD study courses, either within the PhD course or in the general activity of Faculties. This ensures, in principle, standard support to the PhD-PS programme.

On the other hand, during these three years there is not evidence of supporting the research activity of the study program by this collaboration.

The Internal Evaluation Group established by Albanian University Rector Decree includes the PhD-PS Scientific Coordinator, as well as representatives of Professors and students, which may help better harmonization within the programme. The “Internal Self-Evaluation Report (SER)” is sent to the Deputy Rector and reviewed by the Council of Professors (CoP) before approval. During the discussion with the CoP, however, it was not clear to this EEG whether all members of the CoP had indeed read the SER.

**Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partially met.**

The EEG considers that the mission and objectives of PhD-PS study programme are sufficiently defined and that the criteria on which the programme is based are mostly respected. The first cycle of PhD-PS course is close to the end of the minimum time necessary as cited in the Law of Education and Sports. Some critical issues still exist and will be evidenced in the specific sections of this EEG review.

**Recommendations:**

1. Teaching staff enrolled on a full time basis should be increased
2. The Institution should justify the change in tutorship of some members
3. The format of the Diploma should be in line with the Law rules
4. The institutions should better clarify the role of the external collaborating persons and institutions

**Student list**

| Name | Surname | Study programme | Average | The research | Experience (publications) | Tests interview | Total | Passes |
|------|---------|-----------------|---------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------|--------|
|      |         |                 |         |              |                           |                 |       |        |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|          |          |                        |    | project |    |    |    |   |
|----------|----------|------------------------|----|---------|----|----|----|---|
| Suela    | Zeneli   | Pharmaceutical Science | 20 | 14      | 20 | 30 | 84 | x |
| Aurora   | Napuce   | Pharmaceutical Science | 18 | 20      | 10 | 35 | 83 | x |
| Edlira   | Kaloshi  | Pharmaceutical Science | 2  | 20      | 10 | 35 | 69 | x |
| Emi      | Panariti | Pharmaceutical Science | 0  | 10      | 0  | 20 | 30 | x |
| Gentiana | Goxhaj   | Pharmaceutical Science | 1  | 10      | 10 | 20 | 41 | x |
| Majlind  | Agalliu  | Pharmaceutical Science | 1  | 10      | 0  | 25 | 44 | x |

## 2. Academic Organisation chart of the Doctoral School

### Description part

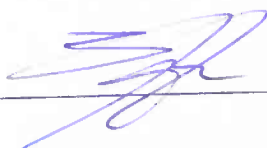
The Doctoral School of Albanian University was established to implement the academic program with a third teaching and training cycle, and is committed to coordinate and support the activities of the different PhD courses from all Faculties within the University, thus providing a centralized service. The activity of the School is regulated by the Regulation Act approved by the Academic Senate, and involves interaction with national and international partners, providing academic staff for teaching and training in the framework of the PhD programmes, based on bilateral agreements undersigned by the Chief Offices of the different institutes. Some of these are already in place for a number of years since the opening of the University, including, for the PhD-PS program the University of Pisa, L’Aquila and Palermo. The chart of the AU is well organised but the institution still is on the process of the accreditation.

The Doctoral School is located within the AU campus in Tirana. The logistic infrastructure made available to the School includes: teaching rooms, library, offices, spaces for students’ gathering and study work, basic laboratories with basic analytical instrumentation.

The Executive Board of the PhD program encompasses: i. the School Director (SD); ii. the Council of Professors (CoP); iii. the Scientific Coordinators (SC) of the PhD programmes. There is not Administrative staff precisely dedicated to the PhD program, since these duties are covered by the Administrative bureau in charge to the the Department of Pharmacy.

Staff members at points i., ii., and iii. shall have the title of Professor, Associate Professor and/or Doctor (PhD), and are nominated by the Academic Senate and act according to the Decisions and Deliberations of the same and the Rector (Regulation Act of the School; Regulation Act of the Programme). Further bodies include the Internal Evaluation Group and the Internal Quality Assurance Group.

The PhD-PS staff involved in teaching and research includes both full-time, and part-time personnel from the AU and/or external/foreign bodies. Both the scientific and administrative organization is established following quality assurance guidelines, allowing fast tracing of records by both paper document filing and *ad hoc* computer-based systems. Competent personnel are dedicated to the analytical control of personal and teaching files, and student registration documents




External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private University  
Albanian University

**Measurable indicators:**

- Organizational structure (chart)
- Bodies selected/nominatet at all levels
- Hierarchical units, decision- making
- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution
- Academic Structures of doctoral school
- Database of HEI, updating and the responsibility for retaining and sharing information;
- Number of accademic staff (verify the data, according to Table 1 and 2)

**Table 1**

| Doctoral Program<br>University/<br>Faculty/<br>Department | Number of FAS |  | Number of PAS |                                  | Number of AE |                    | Total number |   |
|---|---------------|--|---------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
|   | Total number  | Number of Degree's                               | Total number  | Number of Degree's               | Total number | Number of Degree's | Total number | Number of Degree's                                |
|   | 5             | 1 Prof. Dr<br>2 Prof<br>Assoc<br>2 PhD<br>(west) | 6             | 2<br>Prof.Dr<br>4 Prof.<br>Assoc | 2            | 2 MSc              | 11           | 3 Prof. Dr<br>6 Prof.<br>Assoc<br>2 PhD<br>(west) |

**Council of Professors and the coordinator of the study program (see Table 2)**

**Table 2**

| Name /Surname   | Degree      | Position (Member / Chairman) |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Ereleta Celmeta | Prof. Dr.   | Chairman                     |
| Vera Ostreni    | Prof. Assoc | Member                       |
| Anesti Kondili  | Prof. Dr.   | Member                       |
| Hivzi Muharremi | Prof. Dr.   | Member                       |
| Ana Lalaj       | Prof. Dr.   | Member                       |
| Rajmonda Duka   | Prof. Dr.   | Member                       |
| Lida Miraj      | Prof. Dr.   | Member                       |
| Fatmir Tartale  | Prof. Assoc | Member                       |

In their final form they will be 7 members. 2 of the present Council are on resignation

- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion   | Evaluation according to standards  |
|---|--|
| <b>Standard III.1 - Management and financing tools for doctorate study program</b>  |  |
| <b>Criterion 1</b> Unit that organizes doctorate study program has accredited two first cycles of studies in the field, in which it offers the doctorate study program; | The local units involved in PhD-PS programme have been accredited by Minister of Education and Science Law n.462 dated 14/10/2010, but there are on the process of the institutional accreditation.                              |
| <b>Criterion 2</b> Unit that organizes the doctorate study program has adequate administrative premises to realize its good functioning;                                | The centralized structure of the Doctorate School at AU ensures good functioning of the new PhD-PS course. Administrative units of personnel, not specified in number, are dedicated to the Program, recording all files in loco |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

**Criterion 3** In order to carry out the doctorate study program, the unit that proposes its opening engages the necessary personnel, ranging from teaching secretary that follows the third cycle progress;

**Criterion 4** Responsible bodies for its supervision are established in doctorate study program regulation;

**Criterion 5** Board of Professors, which is responsible for organizing and supervising doctorate study program has a sufficient number of members that cover all its issues. Minimum number of professors in PC should be 7 (seven). Board of Professors may be also raised to the level of higher education institution, when its main units do not meet the required number of full-time professors;

**Criterion 6** Board of Professors of the main unit that organizes and manages the doctorate study program meets periodically throughout the year;

(both paper files and computer database) and taking care of timely exchange of information, documents and teaching records. Administrative infrastructure is satisfactory and sufficiently equipped.

The link between administrative and teaching personnel is close, ensuring proper supervision of students' course of study.

The organizational chart includes responsible bodies for supervision (Department, Scientific and Administrative Coordinators, Council of Professors).

The internal personnel which the PhD-PS course programme relies on stems from the Faculty of Medicine, Department of Pharmacy, and includes a number of qualified professors and researchers from the AU which satisfy the minimum standard of 7 that is required.

Currently, the PhD-PS Council of Professors includes 8 members. It is planned to reduce the number to 7 members. The Council meets at least twice a year; additional meetings are organized if needed.

The objectable financing tools of the PhD program consist in the tuition fees payed by the students. There is not evidence of other funds or grants dedicated to this study program.

**Conclusions of EEG: The basic standards are substantially met**

The management infrastructure and administrative personnel offered by the Doctorate School to this specific PhD program is sufficient and satisfy the need for the correct functioning of the program. The Board of professors ensures sufficient number of full and associate professors, as well as assistant professors to perform the teaching activities of the program and the activities of support to research. The institution is on the process of the accreditation.

**Recommendations:** The Institution should make additional effort to dedicate additional funds to the PhD program.

**3. Quality of Academic and administrative (support) staff**

**Description part**

The Scientific Coordinator of the PhD-PS programme, Prof. Aida DAMA has a good experience in teaching at a top university level, and will ensure proper coordination of the team.

The qualification of the academic staff involved in the PhD-PS programme is satisfactory as a whole, their selection is regulated by rules internal to tha AU. Procedures for assigning contracts to the academic personnel are in place. Some members of the academic staff have distinctive academic reputation in their corresponding Institutions as Prof.Dr Mimoza Basho, Prof.Dr Vincenzo Calderone, Prof.Dr. Anesti Kondili, Prof.Dr Anila Godo. This EEG notices, however, that not all members of the



External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

academic staff have sufficient scientific production as judged on the basis of international standards. In some cases, members and tutors do not oversee activities related to their scientific background. The PhD School teaching staff in general, and within the PhD-PS programme in particular, includes both full-time and part-time personnel from either the AU or national and international collaborators. The ratio between Academic personnel and PhD students is adequate, allowing proper student’s assistance and teaching. Similarly, the workload for the administrative personnel with regards to the current PhD-PS programme students appears reasonable, being favored by the logistics, organization and expertise of the members of administrative office. All contracts for Academic staff are clearly defined, under the regulations of each partner’s institution and joint agreements. This is documented by the records present at AU.

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate some datas such as:
  - Number of professors;
  - Number of associated professors
  - Number of doctoral degree holders (or PhD)
  - Number of assistants
  - Number of administrative and support staff (lab assistants, technicians, administrative staff etc)
- Verify the data, according to Table

| Full-time Academic Staff (Name/Surname) |                | Position in the Department                           | Degree      | Part-time Academic Staff (Name/Surname) |                    | Degree      | Institution where he/her works full time   |
|---|----------------|--|-------------|---|--------------------|-------------|--|
| 1                                       | Anesti Kondili | Full-time Lecturer at Faculty of Medical Science, AU | Prof.Dr     | 1                                       | Anila Godo         | Prof. Dr    | University Hospital Center of Tirana   |
| 2                                       | Vera Ostreni   | Full-time Lecturer at Faculty of Medical Science, AU | Prof. Assoc | 2                                       | Jul Bushati        | Prof. Dr    | University Hospital “Shefqet Ndroqi” Tirana  |
| 3                                       | Aida Dama      | Head of Pharmacy Department, AU                      | PhD (west)  | 3                                       | Edi Hashorva       | Prof. Assoc | University Hospital “Mbretresha Geraldine” Tiarana. Head of the Meical Statistics Sector |
| 4                                       | Alba Laho      | Full-time Lecturer                                   | PhD (west)  | 4                                       | Gentian Vyshka     | Prof. Assoc | University Hospital Center of Tirana   |
| 5                                       | Mimoza Basho   | Full-time lecturer                                   | Porf. Assoc | 5                                       | Vincenzo Calderone | Prof. Assoc | Universita degli studi di Pisa, Italy  |
|   |                |  |             | 6                                       | Stefano Fogli      | Prof. Assoc | Universita degli studi di Pisa, Italy  |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

Qualification data and reports between them (verify the data, according to Table 4)

Table 4

| Academic and administrative staff                            | FAS | PAS      |                   | FAS/PAS rate |
|--|-----|----------|-------------------|--------------|
|  |     | Albanian | Foreign (invited) |              |
| Professors   | 1   | 2        | -                 | 1 / 2        |
| Associate Professors   | 2   | 2        | 2                 | 1 / 2        |
| Doctor Degree or PHD degree (taken at European Universities) | 2   | -        | -                 | 2            |
| Administrative employes                                      | 2   |          |                   |              |

Data by age (verify the data, according to Table 5)

Table 5

| Academic and administrative staff                            | Data by age (years old) |     |         |     |         |     |         |     |
|--|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
|  | (36-45)                 |     | (46-55) |     | (56-65) |     | (66-68) |     |
|  | FAS                     | PAS | FAS     | PAS | FAS     | PAS | FAS     | PAS |
| Professors   |                         |     |         |     |         | 1   | 1       | 1   |
| Associate Professors   |                         | 1   | 5       |     |         |     |         |     |
| Doctor Degree or PHD degree (taken at European Universities) | 2                       |     |         |     |         |     |         |     |
| Administrative employees                                     |                         |     |         |     |         |     |         |     |

Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

Evaluation according to the Standards

| Standards/criterion   | Evaluation according to standards  |
|---|--|
| <b>Standard I.1 - General framework</b>   |  |
| <b>Criterion 6</b> The number and level of researchers engaged in this program constitutes a guarantee for program implementation (60% of them should be internal academic staff, engaged in research and holders of academic titles "Professor", "Associate Professor" or scientific degree "Doctor" or "PhD" awarded in universities well known in the world for quality and rich research and publishing activities in the relevant field; | At the time of the EEG review, the teaching staff dedicated to the PhD-PS programme is composed by 8 members; only 4 of them are full employees of the Albanian University. With such premise, the required ratio of 60% between internal and total staff with academic titles of Professor, Associate Professor or Doctor is not reached. The total research and teaching staff, including tutors not directly involved in frontal teaching, sums up to 11 units. All research personnel possess the title requested, which was achieved in recognized national or international universities, and have demonstrable experience in Pharmacology research although, in terms of number of publications and scientific journals where the publications were |

External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>made, from the available curricula it is not always apparent a scientific production fulfilling the international standards for teachers and/or tutors of PhD programs. As mentioned above, in some cases, tutors do not oversee scientific activities related to their scientific background.</p>  |
| <p><b>Standard II.1 - Capacities for scientific research</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> The institution that offers programs of study of third cycle (doctorate), has sufficient academic staff with scientific titles and degrees;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> The institution has sufficient administrative and research structures for activities provided in the study program to conduct research. The institution may organize joint programs of doctorate study with one or more other institutions, based on agreements between them;</p>   | <p>The overall number of academic staff with proper scientific titles and degrees in the Institution offering the PhD-PS program, the department of Pharmacy, is suitable, although this EEG notices that the academic staff, at the present, has only one figure of professor, and specifically in the role of Associate Professor. All members are committed to their role. In addition to the AU internal academic staff, further force to the PhD-PS programme is provided by collaborative actions with external universities and research or clinical institutions the staff of which has the required qualification, in addition to factual commitment and personal interest in participation to the PhD-PS students' formative process.</p> <p>As far as administration, at the beginning of the PhD program there was only one unit of personnel covering the need of all PhD programs? Subsequently, the services were reorganized and at present the administrative structure in charge at the Department of Pharmacy, composed of 5 units of personnel, oversees the duties and cover the needs of the PhD-PS, the bachelor and the master students of Pharmacy. Offices are well organized and suitable Informatic facilities and technical support are provided to the personnel in charge.</p> <p>As it stands, the PhD-PS program is not organized as a joint program with other Albanian or international Institutions.</p> |
| <p><b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partly met.</b></p>   |  |
| <p>Upon evaluation of documents, visits in the AU and and interviews, the EEG concludes that the necessary quality of both Academic and administrative staff, although the existence of some critical points, is granted for the ongoing PhD course, also based on suitable infrastructures, organization and joint efforts of the AU Faculty of Medicine, the Department of Pharmacy and other institutions participating in the PhD-PS programme.</p> <p>Some critical point remains on the appropriateness of the scientific curriculum and production of some members of the Academic staff, as judged by international standards.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> |  |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

1. The required ratio of 60% between internal and total staff with academic titles of Professor, Associate Professor or Doctor is not met
2. Some members of the academic staff do not have sufficient scientific production as judged on the basis of international standards.
3. In some cases members and tutors do not oversee activities related to their scientific background.

**4. Facilities, infrastructure, logistics and other services of doctoral program**

**Description part**

At the AU site, there are several buildings dedicated to the teaching courses for the first cycles of Faculties and the PhD-PS programme, within a downtown campus-like setting. Sites are fully serviced for hosting the students and the calculated surface per student and quality criteria are in compliance with the standards requested for proper hosting of the 6 PhD course students. Basic chemical and pharmacological laboratory spaces are available inside the main building serving for teaching activities, where the PhD students can run minimal part of their research benchwork; these laboratories normally host practical basic activities of Faculty classes, and may not be of sufficiently relevant support to the PhD students, who therefore will conduct most of their benchwork elsewhere in Tirana (PHI). This despite the fact the equipment of the pharmaceutical laboratories such as HPLC, GAS/FID (Varian type) is available and sufficient to develop research activity for the students. The library is located in the main building and offers sufficient space for the students to sit and read, consult the internet with PCs provided by the University, and have access to specific electronic library searches but only for consultation and not for retrieval of articles, for example, via their own computers.


The administration offices, including the Academic staff offices (rectorate, government body and commission rooms, secretariat, offices, etc), are located in an other building. Spaces cafeteria are also available.

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate: The Facilities, infrastructure and logistics for doctoral school (verify the data, according to Table 6)

**Table 6**

| Facilities for doctoral program of the Faculty of Medical Science | Number | Square m2 |
|---|--------|-----------|
| Auditoriums   | 6      | 607.2     |
| Classrooms  | 4      | 206.32    |
| Promoting Activities Rooms  | 1      | 180       |
| Module / Professional Practice Rooms                              | 16     | 1295.6    |
| Teaching Laboratories   | 5      | 182.4     |
| I.T. laboratories   | 0      | 0         |
| I.T. Rooms  | 1      | 49        |
| Library Rooms   | 1      | 17        |
| Logistics Room (for photocopying machines, etc.)                  | 1      | 14.4      |
| Student Information Office  | 1      | 12        |
| Corridors / halls   | 5      | 626.57    |






External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

|  |   |      |
|--|---|------|
| University sports facilities                               | 0 | 0    |
| Rooms for student government activities                    | 0 | 0    |
| Recreational facilities such as cafeterias / fast-food/etc | 1 | 70   |
| Toilet units for students                                  | 3 | 61.6 |
| Library  | 1 | 10   |
| Third parties facilities                                   | 3 | 441  |

Table 6.1

| University Facilities                                | Number | Square m <sup>2</sup> |
|--|--------|-----------------------|
| University Library Rooms                             | 3      | 297                   |
| Rectorate Offices                                    | 5      | 147.5                 |
| Research Center Offices                              | 7      | 125                   |
| Finance Office                                       | 2      | 47                    |
| SBC Unit Office                                      | 1      | 23.2                  |
| Photocopy, Library Rooms                             | 3      | 30                    |
| Student Information office                           | 4      | 24                    |
| Corridors / Halls                                    | 33+    | around 1857           |
| University Sport Facility (Contract in Annex nr. 10) | 1      | 4000m <sup>2</sup>    |
| Third Party Services                                 | 3      | 1130                  |
| Toilets for students and third parties (café)        | 22     | 223.4                 |
| Toilets for the staff                                | 5      | 56.8                  |
| Human Resources office                               | 1      | 19                    |

Table 6.2

| Staff Facilities                               | Number | Square m <sup>2</sup> |
|--|--------|-----------------------|
| Office for the Dean / Deputy Dean / Chancellor | 5      | 147.5                 |
| Offices for teaching secretariats              | 8      | 184.54                |
| Department and Research offices                | 7      | 125                   |
| Academic Staff Offices                         | 13     | 325.21                |
| Finance Office                                 | 2      | 47                    |
| SBC Unit offices                               | 1      | 23.2                  |
| Meeting Rooms                                  | 2      | 50.9                  |
| Service Staff Facilities                       | 7      | 48.1                  |
| Toilet Units for the Academic Staff            | 5      | 56.8                  |
| Service Facilities for the Staff / Archives    | 8      | 145.14                |
| Technical Service Facilities                   | 5      | 89.16                 |

EEG should analyze and evaluate other logistics database, as:

- number of PC per doctoral students;
- number of PC furnished labs per students;
- number of PC for academic staff
- number of PC for administration
- number of printers for each one
- number of photocopying machines for each one
- number of head projectors



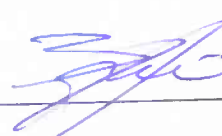

External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

- number of video-projectors
- number of scanners

Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards  |
|--|--|
| <b>Standard II.2 - Didactic basis and technical support</b>  |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Students admitted in the third cycle study program have necessary conditions to realize the study program with academic and research character;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Doctorate studies program provides harmonization of student's goals in scientific-research field, approved research projects and, at its conclusion, even the possibility of academic career and employment;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> A scientific library with publications in hardcopy and electronic form and complete IT infrastructure available to of third cycle study program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> Students have sufficient technical support for scientific research development;</p> <p><b>Criterion 5</b> Researches that include laboratory researches are supported by sufficient scientific laboratory basis.</p> | <p>The students admitted to the PhD-PS programs have sufficient conditions to accomplish a program which, by its nature, is mostly focused toward a theoretical goal. This EEG emphasizes the aspect of insufficient focus on experimental activities, which is the essence of a PhD course of studies.</p> <p>Given this, the Academic and research personnel, including tutors, is well qualified and able to provide both teaching and scientific support to the students, also due to the inter-partner harmonized choice of the research plans of all PhD students admitted, based on the specific logistic and mutul personal interests of students and involved staff.</p> <p>With the important limitation expressed above and considering the prominent theoretical focus of the assigned research projects (most of the students are carrying out projects of statistical impact, requiring little, if any, benchwork), this EEG has verified that tutors follow up closely the work of the students and are satisfied of it. Most of the PhD themes proposed are also supported by the concurring existence of closely related national collaborations.</p> <p>This EEG reiterates the fact that students involved in this first cycle of the PhD programme - as it is conceived currently - will have very limited time for performing the real thesis work. In fact, no practical activity was planned for the entire first year of the 3 years normally planned for the programme, since this was fully dedicated to teaching. It appears thus very hard to achieve the necessary skill and the finalization of the research program.</p> <p>The EEG advices that measures should be undertaken to ensure that the AU PhD programme can reach, or at least can be close to, similar standard and rules to those applied in European Universities, particularly with respect to the research part of the course.</p> <p>The study and documentation activity is facilitated by the presence of sufficient library/IT/web facilities and personal study spaces, although a further effort in expanding electronic accessibility to scientific journals, books and other related publications should be considered.</p> <p>Sufficient laboratory space and basic instrumentation is</p> |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | provided within the AU campus to perform what can be an initial experimental activity in the field of the PhD-PS. Thus this EEG sees no obstacle to the fact that students perform real experimental research. |
| <p><b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partly met.</b><br/>The facilities, infrastrutures and logistics of AU and other institutes participating to the PhD-PS programme are overall well satisfactory for both the teaching and administrative conduction of the programme. The current narrowness of highly specialized laboratory infrastructure on campus force the students either to spend an increasing part of their time in more equipped institutions or, as it happens in the present PhD-PS, to chose thesis arguments whose development does not require standard research laboratories. However, personnel (technicians) and basic instrumentation are available at the AU campus, and the University should make a stronger effort to make available these facilities and skills for the at-the-bench work of the students.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Substantial more focus on experimental research activities</li> <li>2. Additional accessibility of in-house laboratories for support to the PhD students</li> <li>3. Additional accessibility and retrieval to online scientific publications</li> </ol> |  |

**5. Financing and management of financial resources**

Descriptions part

The financial resources made available to the PhD-PS programme are completely derived from the tuition fees of the students. Apparently no other economical resources, including grants or donations, either from the AU, collaborating institutions or by the central Government are provided specifically for the day-by-day experimental work of the students. Given the lack of a salary/bursary to be paid to the students, the self-generated funding is sufficient to cover the net expenses of the programme.

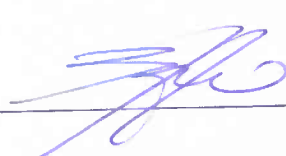
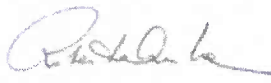
The AU has the expertise and organization for proper management of the School and Program financial balance. The financing balance of the PhD-PS programme is discussed yearly and evaluated within the specific internal committees and the Administration Office of the Department of Pharmacy, for formal approval after conducting the internal auditing.

Measurable indicators:

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the Financial resources, data over the three years (verify the data, according to Table 7)

Table 7

| RESOURCES FROM:  | For three or four years (as the PhD study program continues) |            |            |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| <b>NON-PUBLIC FUNDS: 2012-2013 2013-2014 2014-2015</b> |  |            |            |
| Central government                                     |  |            |            |
| Local government                                       |  |            |            |
| <b>NON-PUBLIC FUNDS:</b>                               |  |            |            |
| Grants on research and contracts                       |  |            |            |
| Consultations, services                                |  |            |            |
| All kinds of tuition fees                              | 11.690.000   | 11.690.000 | 11.690.000 |
| Sponsorships   | 1.031.000  | 1.031.000  | 1.031.000  |

External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|   |            |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Donations, assurance activities, foundations etc. | 12.721.000 | 12.721.000 | 12.721.000 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                      |            |            |            |

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the Costs for students and their mobility costs;
- Transparency and internal financial control, audit and outcomes;
- Financial management capacity;
- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution;

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards   |
|--|---|
| <b>Standard I.1 - General framework</b>  |   |
| <b>Criterion 5</b> Doctorate study program is supported by a sufficient budget for research;   | The AU provides the financial support for general expenses. These expenses are mostly covered by the tuition paid by the students. As stated before, no other apparent budget is allocated by either the AU or other public or private Agencies for the research work. This is a important limitation to the development of a serious research activity leading to a product, in the form of a publication in good impact factor international journals or in the form of a patent, to be offered to the Albanian and, importantly, to the international scientific community   |
| <b>Standard II.1 - Capacities for scientific research</b>  |   |
| <b>Criterion 8</b> External funding received for scientific research is indicative of high level research activity and they are administered for the progress of relevant study program. | As it has been referred and reported by the competent AU authorities, no external grants are specifically available for the current PhD programme.  |
| <b>Standard III.1 - Management and financing tools for doctorate study program</b>   |   |
| <b>Criterion 7</b> Financial budget of doctorate study program is sufficient to achieve research objectives for each doctorate student;  | As stated above, this EEG does not believe that the financial budget of the PhD-PS program is sufficient to achieve classical experimental research objectives, particularly in the field of Pharmacological Sciences, a discipline with marked experimental orientation.<br>This is certainly one of the reasons why students are committed to choose scientific subjects related to statistical and/or epidemiological studies whose financial impact is limited.<br>The EEG strongly recommends initiatives of grant applications to all possible Albanian agencies, public and private ones, as well as to international agencies such as, for example, EC within the contest of Horizon 2020.<br>Students and their mentors/supervisors should work in concert toward this goal. |
| <b>Criterion 8</b> Financial budget distribution structure of doctorate study program matches with scientific research policy and needs.   |   |
| <b>Standard III.3 - Financing of doctorate study program</b>   |   |



External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Number of research works funded by the ministry;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Distribution of funds to host and supervision teams of scientific research works is done in a balanced way;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> Number of research works funded under national research projects, benefited by scientific supervisors of doctorate students for this study program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> Number of research works funded under international research projects benefited by scientific supervisors of doctorate students for this study program;</p>  | <p>The Ministry of Education and Science has not allotted funds to implement the PhD-PS programme. To the knowledge of this EEG, supervisors of PhD-PS do not dispose of relevant, if any, national or international financial support obtained through specific grant applications for the program.</p> |
| <p><b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are not met</b></p> <p>Although the EEG acknowledges the great efforts made by AU in supporting the PhD program, the present lack of external funds does not enable the EEG to formulate a positive judgement, based on facts, on this crucial aspect of the PhD program organization. It is possible that the AU will eventually support the activity of all 6 PhD students by redirecting further funds from internal budgets, but a full support of the research programs should become an established pre-requisite for a long-term durability of the PhD cycles. Given the importance of sustaining an efficient PhD school in biomedical fields for both the education of highly qualified PhDs in Albania as well as the offer to neighboring countries, it appears particularly important that a direct participation of the dedicated Ministry is searched for this and similar programmes. In addition, the AU should encourage and support financially PhD students to publish articles, to participate in conference and other activities which are necessary elements for the whole accomplishment of a PhD program.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The hosting Institution should make efforts to provide additiona budget for the research activities.</li><li>2. Scientific supervisors should be more sensitized to apply for research funds to national and/or international agencies.</li></ol> |  |

## 6. Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)

### Description part

An internal IQAS, is in place since 2009. Its functioning is based on national standards. The IQAS Unit is composed of four members. IQAS operates in strict collaboration with the Departments. The head of Department provides a report on a periodical basis (every six months) and sends it to the IQAS. The office has a feedback with the students via a questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire and the reports from the Heads of Department are published in the Annual Report prepared by IQAS unit.

IQAS operates globally and the 4 members are in charge of monitoring both the bachelor/master program and the PhD programs including therefore the PhD-PS doctorate. Surveys are made once a year and controls of the students' activities is monitored periodically. At the present time, 6 students are enrolled in the PhD program and thus 6 students are monitored. As mentioned above, monitoring includes the completion of a form in which the students express their

judgement on the organization, development and methodology of the PhD program as well as on the infrastructures and the teachers’ way of conducting the courses and their availability within the institution (in loco). The completion of the form is an anonymous procedure. The collection of the forms and the elaboration of their contents is carried out by a fully informatics procedure. The results of the survey are transmitted first to the head of Department and then to the Rector of the University and after his evaluation they are discussed in the Senate. On the basis of the results of the yearly surveys, the University leading staff elaborates the subsequent steps to render the PhD program more functional and adapted to the students needs.

The EEG examined in detail the various aspects of IQAS and found them in line with standards at national and international levels

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the quantitative data for IQAU, as:
  - How many surveys are made with students?
  - How many students were surveyed?
  - How many surveys are processed, and what problems are issued?
  - Which have been the next steps?
  - etc.
  
- EEG should analyze and evaluate the analyses for *Internal quality control*, as:
  - Responsibilities in monitoring and quality management, until the department level
  - Self assessments conducted, and their results
  - Quality improvement policies, on the basis of periodic self-assessment
  - The results of the audit and preview external assessment
  - Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Conclusions of EEG: Standards are substantially met.**

The EEG considers that the question of Internal Quality Assurance is addressed properly by the governing board of the PhD-PS programme, in line with the strong commitment to pursue a productive course of study and training for the PhD students. It is important that the PhD-PS program will be also carefully monitored in its final steps at the level of final thesis and diploma conferment, actions that should be in line with international standards.

**Recommendations:**


1. Final thesis should be evaluated by a mixed national/international committee

**STUDY PROGRAM**

**7. Study program, its organization**

**Description part**

The study program of the PhD in “Pharmaceutical Science” was approved by Decision of the Academic Senate. The title of diploma is in accordance to the actual law framework. This EEG suggests to modify the format of the Diploma by inserting the title and the study cycle.



External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

Mission and objectives of the PhD program are well defined. In particular, the mission of increasing knowledge, facilitation and guiding the scientific quality products in the field of Pharmaceutical Sciences. This may have an important impact in spreading the process of development of the Albanian Universtity.

As it will be explained below, this ambition and the necessity to follow the Albanian laws let the PhD organizers to dedicate the first year of the PhD program exclusively to courses and therotical formation on many disciplines whose stile and composition are better suited for a bachelor and/or a master degree than for a PhD program. The EEG acknowledges the big effort to pursue a high level theoretical of the PhD students, but also believes that dedicating one entire year to ex cathedra courses, most of which should have been already done in previous educational formation, prevents the PhD students to initiate and productive research activity since the beginning, as it is in all PhD programs at international level.

**Measurable indicators:**

- Analyses and evaluation for: general elements of the study program:
  - Duration: not less than 3 years
  - Year for advancing theoretical studies (1 year or 60 ECTS)
  - Search / Creation: at least 2 years
  - Thesis (within 4 years of enrollment)
- Analyses and evaluation for: academic curriculum plan of the first year, the division of subjects in credits, and according to the forms of teaching (verify the data, according to Table 8)

Table 8

| Academic Curriculum -Plan |                        |         |          |          |        |           |                  |                     |          |                |                |                            |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|-----------|------------------|---------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| NAME OF ACTIVITY          | Subject classification | CREDITS |          |          |        |           | CREDIT STRUCTURE |                     |          |                |                |                            |
|                           |                        | Total   | Lectures | Seminars | Essays | Exercises | Lab              | Hours in auditorium |          |                |                | Hours of Independent study |
|                           |                        |         |          |          |        |           |                  | Lectures            | Seminars | Research paper | Exercises/ lab | Total in auditorium        |
| <b>FIRST SEMESTER</b>     |                        |         |          |          |        |           |                  |                     |          |                |                |                            |
| Module 1<br>Research      | Char<br>acter          |         |          |          |        |           | 70               | 30                  | 10       | -              |                |                            |



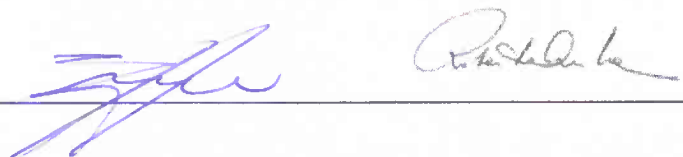

External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private University  
Albanian University

|  |                              |                           |    |   |   |   |   |                           |    |    |     |     |     |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| Methods in Pharmacy Studies            |                              | 11                        | 7  | 2 | 2 | - | - | Total hours in auditorium |    |    | 110 | 165 |     |
| Module 2 Pharmacology                  | Basic knowledge subjects A)  |                           |    |   |   |   |   | 106                       | 34 |    |     |     |     |
|  |                              | 14                        | 10 | 4 |   |   |   | Total hours in auditorium |    |    | 140 | 210 |     |
| Module 3<br>Advanced Medical Chemistry | Basic knowledge subjects (A) | 12                        | 9  | 2 | 1 | - | - | 105                       | 15 | 10 |     | 130 | 170 |
|  |                              | Total hours in auditorium |    |   |   |   |   |                           |    |    |     |     |     |

| SECOND SEMESTER                                |                              |    |   |   |  |  |  |                           |    |  |     |     |     |
|--|------------------------------|----|---|---|--|--|--|---------------------------|----|--|-----|-----|-----|
| Module 4<br>Clinical and Pharmathrapy Pharmacy | Basic knowledge subjects (A) |    |   |   |  |  |  | 90                        | 30 |  |     |     |     |
|  |                              | 12 | 9 | 3 |  |  |  | Total hours in auditorium |    |  | 120 | 180 |     |
| Module 5<br>Pharmaceutical Care                | Basic knowledge subjects (A) |    |   |   |  |  |  | 70                        | 40 |  |     | 110 | 165 |
|  |                              | 11 | 7 | 4 |  |  |  | Total hours in auditorium |    |  |     |     |     |

| Total General Teaching Activities in Auditoriums | Total Credits | Total hours of lectures in Auditoriums | Total hours of seminars, exercises, and laboratory work | Total hours of independent studies |
|--|---------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
|  | 60            | 441                                    | 169   | 890                                |

This EEG remarks that the course credits are not equally subdivided. For example, the coefficient of 1 credit/seminar = 6-8 in-class hours is not the same as for "Research Methods in





External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

Pharmacy” course where 1 credit = 15 in-class hours, and this is also for other courses. Within the general framework of a strong reduction of the theoretical courses, this EEG estimates that more efforts should be made to armonize the courses and insert disciplines more suitable for the specific PhD program

- Analyses and evaluation for Academic Curriculum Plan, related to the relevant academic staff (verify the data, according to Table 9)

**Table 9**

| Subject/Module                        | Responsible professor/s (Name Surname)  | Title/degree                     | Department  | FAS or PAS      |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 Pharmacology                        | 1) Vincenzo Calderone,<br>2) Aida Dama  | 1) Prof. Assoc.<br>2) PhD (west) | 1) Department of Pharmacy,<br>University of Pisa,<br>Italy.<br>2) Department of Pharmacy, AU          | 1)PAS<br>2)FAS  |
| 2 Metodat e Kërkimit shkencor         | 1) Eduart Hashorva<br>2) Gentian Vyshka | 1) Prof. Assoc<br>2) Prof. Assoc | 1) Department of Statistics, M. Geraldinë Hospital<br>2) Department of Clinical Medicine, QSUT (UHCT) | 1)PAS<br>2) FAS |
| 3 Clinical and Pharmatherapy Pharmacy | 1) Stefano Fogli<br>2) Aida Dama        | 1) Prof. Assoc<br>2) PhD (west)  | 1) Department of Pharmacy,<br>University of Pisa,<br>Italy.<br>2) Department of Pharmacy, AU          | 1)PAS<br>2) FAS |
| 4 Pharmaceutical Care                 | 1) Mimoza Basho<br>2) Vera Ostreni      | 1) Prof. Assoc<br>2) Prof. Assoc | 1) Public Health Institute<br>2) Faculty of Medical Science   | 1)PAS<br>2) FAS |
| 5 Advanced Medical Chemistry          | 1) Aida Dama<br>2) Anesti Kondili       | 1) PhD (west)<br>2) Prof. Dr     | 1) Department of Pharmacy, AU<br>2) Faculty of Medical Science  | 1)FAS<br>2) FAS |

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the: the syllabuses for each subject, with all the elements
- EEG should analyze and evaluate: the procedures followed for the research project, proposed by candidates

The candidates have proposed the project according to the procedures detailed in the regulation of the study program.




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the second year of PhD: (Research/Creation), as database for institutions in/outside the country, where students have completed their scientific research, such as:
  - university / research center and development of a University
  - Institute / non-academic research unit
  - Foundation / public entity / private entity
  - Hospital structure
  - Other
- Analyses and evaluation of third year of PhD: Research/creation/data processing /publication of articles /presentations to international conferences
  - Data for publications / references of students;
  - Data for Magazines, publishing entities where these articles are published
- EEG should analyze and evaluate the: doctoral thesis and its presentation
- Relevant documentation, received in visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards   |
|--|---|
| <b>Standard I.4 - Design and realization of theoretical course of third cycle studies (Doctorate)</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Programs of third cycle studies include 60 credits for theoretical organized studies;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Theoretical organized studies anticipate balanced ratio of classes for academic and scientific general and specific training;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> Detailed teaching program is approved pursuant to bylaws in force;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> Theoretical doctorate course is evaluated with a general theoretical examination in relevant field of study, organized by Dean's office and Professors' Council, with a commission consisting of 5 (five) professors in the relevant research field or approximate to it. Candidates who achieve over 80% points are allowed to attend the doctorate research studies. Those who do not reach this result receive a certificate for conducted modules, together with accumulated credits and interrupt doctorate studies.</p> | <p>Although the PhD-PS study plan and programs attain strictly to the Albanian legislation, the EEG considers that one full year dedicated exclusively to teaching - as it appears from the description of the PhD program - is overwhelming. Courses common to all students should be significantly reduced. This EEG estimates that a maximum of 15-20 credits should be dedicated to general courses. Remaining courses should be mostly focussed and taylored on the PhD program chosen by each single students. The educational formation can be spread throughout the entire period of the PhD program. PhD students should be assigned a research project immediately on the first year. Thus theoretical learning and lab work should proceed in parallel. By consequence, evaluation of the students should proceed accordingly. General rules of evaluation can remain as such but also practical education and research production should be continuously assessed.</p> <p>This would permit the PhD-PS programme, and future similar cycles, to get closer to the standards of European and international PhD courses, therefore generating PhDs with a more international preparation and better perspectives of professional involvement abroad. Similarly,</p> |




|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>the School would be more appealing and attract students from other places of Albania as well as from the Balkan area. The present course of study may endanger the achievement of the target of 3 international publications within the 3 years of course, which are requested for obtainment of the Doctor title. For the current cycle, in order to publish a reasonable number of good papers it may be considered to extend the duration of the course dedicating at least 3 years to intense research/laboratory work.</p> <p>A Commission of professors in charge of evaluating PhD student activity is in place and organized following the standard rules recognized by the organizing University.</p> <p>With the limitations expressed above, this EEG agrees that a proper control/examination of the activity of students is preliminary to the extension of the study course granting access to second and third year to those students having produced above a minimum standard, should other cycles will follow the present one.</p>  |
| <p><b>Standard II.3 - Drafting and approval of proposed research project</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Applicant who requires to be admitted to doctorate studies program has submitted the request for a particular research area and this has been discussed with him in the interview;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Scope of research is selected in such a way that doctorate studies program can support it;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> Proposal is approved by Professors' Council if criteria prescribed and announced in regulation of doctorate studies are met. The following should be also confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Duration of study program;</li> <li>b) Modalities of verification of research or creative activity of doctorate students;</li> <li>c) Manner of final presentation of scientific research result that doctorate student will achieve;</li> </ul> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> A member of academic staff with the title "Professor", "Associate Professor" or with scientific degree "Doctor" or ("PhD") awarded in the scientific field in which doctorate student follows the studies in universities known in the world, for quality and rich researching and publishing activities in the relevant field, is appointed by Board of Professors to supervise and support student's</p> | <p>Admission procedures are regulated to take into account the requests of applicants for specific research area. This is assessed by an interview with the student made by the Evaluation Commission.</p> <p>The steps for approval of student's application proposal include discussion within the Council of Professors, and are selected for a proper choice of candidates to the PhD programme. Not all the candidates are eventually accepted, and the number of candidates enrolled, based on the number of tutors, is decided upon the Ministry of Education and Science Act No. 22, 14/09/2012.</p> <p>The CoP selects suitable tutors for the specific candidates, respecting the qualification and degree required to the task. The supervisor is responsible for all the instructions to be passed to students for accomplishing the program.</p> <p>The EG acknowledges that AU guarantees the minimal support of the PhD program following the rules of Albanian laws. Students should interact continuously with their supervisor who has the responsibility to transfer to the student theoretical and practical know-how instrumental for the advance of the PhD student activity. The supervisor has also the responsibility to fix the schedule for the achievement of the progressive objectives related to the</p> |






External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

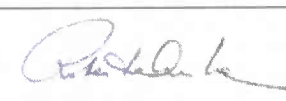
|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>research work;<br/><b>Criterion 5</b> Doctorate student presents to Board of Professors the research development plan, designed by him and discussed with his supervisor;<br/><b>Criterion 6</b> Supervisor has advised repeatedly the students that he supervises for didactic duties and research activities as well as research methodology to ensure the progress of his studies in this program.</p>   | <p>PhD program.<br/>After careful supervision, this EEG estimates that the various elements required for a correct evaluation of the methodology of research project assignment and student activity follow-up by the supervisor fulfill the standard criteria required by the Albanian rules related to the organization of the third level of Higher Education. This EEG estimates that additional attention should be made by the CoP to evaluate the parameters on which the decision should be made for a student to proceed to next year of the PhD program.</p>  |
| <b>Standard II.1 - Capacities for scientific research</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> A third cycle study program (doctorate) is integrated in research activity of Higher Education Institutions;</p>   | <p>The PhD-PS programme is organized to the purpose of providing mostly theoretical skills and mental approach, as a part of the training of students within Higher Education Institutions to become qualified professionals in the field.</p>  |
| <b>Standard II.4 - Doctorate student’s supervision and continuous evaluation of progress of doctorate studies</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Scientific supervisor of student is responsible for directing, advising, assessment of student’s needs and for developing and monitoring progress of student’s research work. He has the academic title "Professor", "Associate Professor" or the scientific degree "Doctor" or ("PhD") awarded in Western universities and has a rich research and publishing activity;<br/><b>Criterion 2</b> All scientific supervisors have had the expertise, instruction and proper guidance for their role in realization of scientific research project of doctorate students;<br/><b>Criterion 3</b> Scientific supervisors work to update their knowledge and skills, based on institutional arrangements in order to enable the exchange of best practices and providing advice to support students effectively;<br/><b>Criterion 4</b> Board of Professors selects scientific supervisors, capable to supervise doctorate students’ research work, based on assessment of their publishing and research activities inside and outside the country;<br/><b>Criterion 5</b> The main scientific supervisor and the other supervisor (when program of doctorate studies is offered by more than one university) guarantee that doctorate students receive sufficient support and guidance to facilitate their work to achieve success;<br/><b>Criterion 6</b> In all cases, the student must have only one identified contact point, who should</p> | <p>All criteria and recommendations set by the AU for the students’ supervision and evaluation throughout the doctorate course are endorsed by the EEG. The governing bodies of the PhD-PS programme have paid due attention to the training of PhD students both favoring the choice and selection of suitable, promising and committed young candidates and laying the conditions for a smooth and productive study and research course. 6 candidates were chosen among more than 20 applicants to the selection. Candidates were chosen on the basis of their previous CV in bachelor and master studies and on colloquium vis-à-vis with the selection commission.<br/>This EEG notes that at least 4 selected candidates accomplished their previous studies in the AU. The teaching body, tutors and other supervisors, are from either internal resources or external institutions, in order to offer better quality and professional skill in teaching and research. Several procedures are also established to control and act so that the efficiency of the training process takes maximum advantage from the maintenance of a constructive relationship between teaching and research staff members and the student. Besides the face-to-face close interaction between student and supervisors, the EEG also considers highly valuable the intermediate and final verification steps through reports and presentations before the Evaluation Commission chosen by the Scientific Coordinator<br/>Within this frame, however, it would be desirable that the</p> |






External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private University  
Albanian University

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| <p>be his main supervisor. If his main supervisor is not available, the student must know who will be the person to replace him;</p> <p><b>Criterion 7</b> University ensures that supervisor has enough time to supervise doctorate student;</p> <p>If the main leader is unable to continue supervision of student, or will be absent for a considerable period, he should be replaced by another his main supervisor before the period of awarding the diploma for scientific degree "Doctor";</p> <p><b>Criterion 8</b> If relationship student-supervisor does not function well, at the request of student or his supervisor, supervisor is changed, provided that this does not affect the project progress;</p> <p><b>Criterion 9</b> Clear and transparent procedures are set for verification of knowledge or periodic evaluation of student (for example, an annual review by a panel called for this purpose or by a special commission set up by Professors' Council);</p> <p><b>Criterion 10</b> Doctorate student and his supervisor should be present during this process. The manner and periods of verification of knowledge or periodic evaluation of doctorate student are stipulated and specified in the beginning of doctorate studies program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 11</b> Continuous evaluation conclusions for realization of scientific research project of program of doctorate studies are clear and transparent including suspension, extension or withdrawal from doctorate studies;</p> <p><b>Criterion 12</b> Meetings between supervisors and doctorate students are documented, especially during the review of progress reports.</p> | <p>final examination to confer the title of PhD is performed by a Commission including members external to the institution, to guarantee maximum objectivity and visibility of the formative process.</p>   |
| <p><b>Standard II.5 - Final evaluation of students in this cycle of studies</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Student provides evidence that he has acquired:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profound knowledge in relevant scientific field;</li> <li>Profound knowledge in some areas approximate to it;</li> <li>Professional skills in using modern technology to solve critical problems related to his field of scientific research;</li> <li>Innovation, to expand and update existing knowledge;</li> <li>Autonomy, scientific, professional integrity</li> </ol>   | <p>Since the first cycle of the PhD-PS programme started in 2013, the 6 students are close to the end of the program. This EEG met with the students to assess their level of scientific expertise and background formation. Only 4 students participated to the discussion. Two students did not show up and no objective justification was provided. Interviewed students demonstrated a good background knowledge in their scientific field and a great enthusiasm in their PhD activities but very little experience in laboratory research. The limited experience in bench work, however, does not allow them to fulfill the criteria of profound</p> |

External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private University  
Albanian University

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| <p>and dedication for development of new ideas that encourage scientific research;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Student provides evidence that he has brought original scientific products, scientific works of a high scientific level through conducted scientific research, some of which have deserved or deserve publication in scientific national and international magazines;</p> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> Final evaluation of doctorate students is based above all on an assessment of their scientific research product;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> On the basis of an agreement reached in the phase of the study program approval, scientific research result is presented as a dissertation thesis, or cumulative with 3 scientific articles published in international journals with impact factor coefficient above 1;</p> <p><b>Criterion 5</b> In case of doctorate examination with dissertation thesis, doctorate student meets the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) He has realized as first author at least three scientific papers or presentations (poster), of which two papers or presentations are held in a international scientific event, in a western country (symposium, conference, congress), accepted on the basis of a preliminary scientific assessment, published in "Proceedings", indexed with an ISBN code;</li> <li>b) He has published as first author, at least three scientific articles in scientific journals. At least two of the articles have been published or accepted for publication in well-known western journals with editorial board;</li> <li>c) He has prepared and presented to Faculty Board of Professors the dissertation, along with a summary, approved by scientific supervisor. Structure of dissertation and its summary are defined in doctorate study regulation;</li> </ul> <p><b>Criterion 6</b> Board of Professors defines two or three opponents, one of which is from outside the institution. Opponents are also members of the jury to assess dissertation. They have required academic titles and rich research and publishing activities inside and outside the country in the relevant field of study in which program doctorate studies is offered;</p> | <p>professional skill in using modern technology</p> <p>all criteria included in this section have been widely covered by the report of the Internal Evaluation Group in their SER.</p> <p>As far as the criteria of scientific productivity, as a remark to be considered for optimizing the evaluation process, the EEG wishes to clarify that the equation “scientific paper=poster presentation” is not allowed internationally, and advice to modify the relevant part in the programme. In fact, scientific papers are the ultimate, structured products of a series of investigations, which singularly can be presented as posters even in international meetings.</p> <p>The requirement of having published or having accepted at least three papers in well known western journals seems to the EEG quite difficult to reach, particularly because the time the PhD student has to accomplish the assigned research program is particularly short (less than two years, following the PhD plan exposed). A safe but stringent compromise would be to publish at least one paper as first author in an international scientific journal with good impact factor (e.g. more than 3 IF).</p> <p>For the ongoing cycle, the EEG suggests to extend the course of the PhD program which remains possible within the study plan, allowing students to conclude their experimental activity and finalize publications. For the future, this EEG recommends to consider the possibility to change the study programme including the start of experimental work since the first year of course</p> <p>The other criteria appear to be respected.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not graduate students as yet</p> |
|--|--|




**Criterion 7** Opponents who have had a substantial involvement in the work of doctorate student, or whose work is the very focus of research project;

**Criterion 8** A dissertations copy is given to every opponent, giving enough time to read it and to write a separate report. Opponents should not communicate among themselves, with doctorate student or its scientific supervisor during this period. Opponents must verify the authenticity of data used in dissertation, observance of scientific research practice as well citations of scientific research works and articles of other authors;

**Criterion 9** Opponents express clearly that scientific paper is free of plagiarism. If they notice and find that this has happened, they ask for termination of dissertation assessment;

**Criterion 10** Dissertation is accompanied by a summary, about 10 pages in English. This review is published in the official website of the institution, in the section designated for information for this study;


**Criterion 11** Scientific supervisor of the student should not be an opponent;

**Criterion 12** When opponents have completed their reports, they are called by the Dean and Head of Board of Professors to agree to conduct oral examination;

**Criterion 13** It is recommended, that a jury member of doctorate examination be from universities known in the world for quality and rich research and publishing activities in the relevant field, which has at least the scientific degree "Doctor" awarded in the scientific field in which doctorate student follows the studies and over 5 years academic and research experience. This criterion may not be applied to Albanological sciences. Assessment of doctorate student in examination is made open by consensus, provided that all members are pronounced for a passing grade. Even if one member has evaluated doctorate student by convincing arguments, with a failing grade, the final outcome will be failing;

**Criterion 14** Opponents submit to dean of unit that organizes the program of doctorate studies and chairperson of doctorate examination jury a copy of their individual reports;

**Criterion 15** Dissertation defense for obtaining



External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

the diploma for scientific degree "Doctor" is public. It is announced at least 4 weeks before and it is done in the presence of department interested members, students and teachers in the relevant Higher Education Institution;

**Criterion 16** Evaluations that opponents can make include: granting diploma of scientific degree "Doctor", or resubmission of written scientific research paper after completion of their recomme- ndations, or a further extension of study program, or denial of diploma for scientific degree "Doctor";

**Criterion 17** A copy of dissertation of student who received a diploma for scientific degree "Doctor" is deposited in library of faculty, research institute, university research centers, university where study program is carried out and scientific paper and a copy in National Library. Scientific degree "Doctor" is not issued without dissertation being deposited in aforementioned institutions, published in paper and on disk (CD) and without making it public in the official website of respective higher education institution;

**Criterion 18** Scientific degree "Doctor" is not issued without being registered in National Register of Doctorates of Securities Commission Academic Assessment (KVTA) in MES

**Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partly met**

The EEG endorses the recommendations provided by the IEG. However, this EEG expresses some perplexity on the possibility that the PhD student can produce at least three papers in international journals, unless these journals are of very low IF and then of relatively low scientific quality. It shall be considered that a student is supposed to start working at experimental part of the course only after the first year of course is completed, i.e. only 2 years to perform and publish research results. This could be a very dangerous message given to the PhD student who, instead, should be trained to produce competitive research to the best of his (her) capabilities.

This EEG noticed that some tutors have changed without apparent justification and, importantly, some tutors have a substantially different background with respect to the argument of thesis approved for their student.

**Recommendations:**

1. Research activities should start already at the first year
2. The organization of the PhD program should be more focused to experimental research
3. A more accurate policy in chosing the tutors should be put in place

Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution



## 8. Teaching – Learning outcome (in first year)

### Description part

The organization of the courses and the methods of teaching is in line with the standards provided by similar courses in Pharmacology, that is second level of higher education. However, this teaching methodology is not a standard for PhD programs. EEG reiterates that the teaching charge in the first year is overwhelming! This prevents the student to initiate immediately, the research activity in the suitable environments, such as biomedical laboratories, as it is the rule in PhD programs at the international level. Teaching activity should be addressed and harmonized with the specific research activities of the student. Moreover, continuous education (specific seminars, minicourses, congress and meetings, specialized english courses) should be spread all over the entire period of the PhD program. Given the above considerations, the remaining activities should be framed accordingly.

### Measurable indicators:

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the student’s workload, forms of teaching (verify the data, according to Table 10)

Table 10

| Forms of teaching     | Class hours for |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Lecture               | 250             |
| Seminars              | 200             |
| Exercises             |                 |
| Laboratories          | 0               |
| Practice for subjects |                 |
| Professional practice |                 |
| Etc. (Research)       | 100             |
| Total                 | 550             |

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the policies for Learning Outcomes control (verify the data, according to Table 11)

Table 11

| Learning Outcomes control                                       | in % |
|---|------|
| Active participation in lectures, seminars, etc.                | 10%  |
| Implementation of obligations (laboratory course tasks, essays) | 10%  |
| Intermediate tests  | 20%  |
| Final exam  | 60%  |
| In total  | 100% |

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the: students’s participation in the research activities of the University/Faculty/etc. (verify the data, according to Table 12)

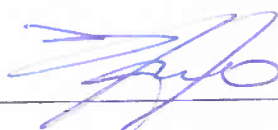



Table 12

| HEI scientific activity   | Number of students activated |
|---|------------------------------|
| For individual Papers of teachers                                     | -                            |
| For scientific projects of Faculty / Department /<br>Doctoral Program | 6                            |
| For research projects, in collaboration with other                    |                              |

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards   |
|--|---|
| <b>Standard I.2 - Continuous increase of theoretical level and promotion of students' team work are targets of a study program of third cycle, doctorate.</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> Level of scientific research development helps in student training to complete the study program successfully;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Students have the opportunity to participate in various research activities closely related to the specific area in which they attend doctorate studies, which help him/her to be trained for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Acquisition of research methodologies for independent creative activities, such as scientific articles, presentations, standard approach for references, bibliography, indexes and content writing as the basis for doctor a thesis processing;</li> <li>b) Independent work in laboratory;</li> <li>c) Use of information resources (e.g. libraries and Internet) and information management;</li> <li>d) Use of modern technologies for public presentations;</li> <li>e) Acquisition of advanced methods of analysis and data processing;</li> <li>f) Learning and mastery of specialized terminology associated with the research field of doctorate student;</li> </ul> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> Doctorate students participate in foreseen activities young and their research work.</p> <p>A doctorate student is free to participate as a listener or as a speaker in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Lectures;</li> <li>b) Seminars;</li> <li>c) Interdisciplinary debates, organized in the framework of doctorate study program;</li> <li>d) Other possibilities of learning such as following presentations of post doctorate students and research projects, even when</li> </ul> | <p>By meeting the students and discussing with them about the organization of the PhD program, the EEG was able to assess that they had the opportunity to participate to various initiatives such as seminars, lectures outside their obligatory course, some conferences. As mentioned in the previous section, EEG appreciates the good theoretical knowledge that students possess of the research objectives to be reached during their PhD program. PhD students demonstrated a good level of communication capacities, mastering the way of presenting their own ideas and results.</p> <p>This EEG was impressed by the strong motivation and enthousiasm that PhD students demonstrated toward their choice.</p> <p>They referred to be involved in supporting teaching for students of first and second cycle of education</p> <p>As mentioned earlier, perplexity remains about the excessive time dedicated to courses provided as classical ex cathedra lessons. This prevented a series of initiatives and primerey the acquisition of sufficient skill for independent work in the laboratory.</p> |




it is not related directly to the student's research interest.

e) Scientific mentors advise students to take part in scientific activities and conferences that help them in their scientific research;

**Criterion 4** Students have gained skills for appropriate communication with a scientific level (*Student's communication skills include: the competency to write clearly and with an appropriate style, use of persuasive arguments and clear articulation of ideas before the public concerned; the ability to debate and support others, involved in teaching, supervision or demonstrations*);

**Criterion 5** Students have acquired the ability to communicate correctly with others, and necessary skill for a scholar, but also in other situations (*being able to develop and maintain cooperation and working relationships with others, awareness that their behavior affects them and others and be willing to listen, to give and to take reactions and responses with sharpness*);

**Criterion 6** Development of communication skills of doctorate students encouraged them to be engaged in teaching in study programs of first and second cycle (e.g. by engaging in teaching as lecturers, in support of professors guiding their thesis).

**Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partly met.**

Students enrolled in the PhD program have a strong motivation and a good basic preparation on the various disciplines matter of the PhD program. They manifest good skill in communication tools. The only element of criticism referes to the organization of the first year of the PhD program which is definitely oversized in terms of learning load. Dedicating one full year to ex cathedra courses only may significantly delay the development of satisfactory attitude to research, laboratory work and publications in relevant journals, thus postponing the completion of the PhD program far beyond the 3-4-year plan.

**Recommendations:**

1. The oversized teaching organization of the first year of the PhD programs prevents the acquisition of technical and operative research skill and research experience that a PhD student in Pharmaceutical Science should have

**9. Doctoral students**

**Description part**

The number of students enrolled appears congruent with the purposes and capabilities of the AU. The qualification of applicants is described in detail and previous academic diplomas in pertinent study programs are needed as a condition for being enrolled. Knowledge of C1 level English is

External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

required. An academic Commission, established by the AU Rector, evaluar and under the control of the Council of Professor the candidate scores based on a published scoring list, for suitable selection of PhD students.

The selection procedure lasts two weeks and is perfomed in three phases: examination of the curricula, interviews with those candidates who meet the application criteria and the specificity of the Pharmaceutical field, and finally the selection of winning candidates. All procedures are made in clear, publicly. EEG acknowledges the good quality of the students enrolled, along with their very strong motivation and interest to pursue the PhD program. For the already reported remarks, this EEG believes that the duration of the doctoral studies should be extended.

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate the statistical data for doctoral students:
  - The total number of PhDs students and the number for each year; **6**
  - The number of PhDs students coming from outside of the university; **2**
  - Number of graduates each year; **not yet**
  - The average duration of doctoral studies and what has been the trend of this indicator; **3-4 years**
  - Number and percentage of students, who have interrupted his doctoral studies. **0**
  - Number and percentage of students, who come from Kosovo, Albanian territories, as well as from the Albanian diaspora; **0**
  - Number and percentage of foreign students, who come from the Balkan region; **0**
  - Number and percentage of students, who come from EU countries; **0**
  - Number and percentage of students, who come from other countries of the world; **0**
  
- EEG should analyze and evaluate the information for the mobility of doctoral students at universities abroad
  
- Analyses and evaluation of data for the final evaluation of doctoral students
  
- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards  |
|--|--|
| <b>Standard I.3 - Admission of students in a doctorate study program</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> The student admitted to doctorate study program has completed second study cycle with average grade (&gt; 80% of points) and was awarded the university degree "Master of Science"/ "Master of Fine Arts" or an equivalent degree, following completion of university studies that include a scientific thesis evaluated with 30-40 ECTS;</p> <p><b>Criterion 2</b> Candidate who applies to continue the third cycle program, the doctorate, has profound theoretical knowledge in the relevant</p> | <p>EEG has analyzed the data provided by he Internal Evaluation Committee in their SER. Beside the necessary documentation required by the University and the State laws, the selection of the students has been performed on the basis of the high degree of theoretical preparation, the score received in previous studies (Bachelor and Master) and the attitude toward the PhD program, verified also by an extended oral interview. 6 students have been enrolled, all coming from Albania and</p> |






External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private University  
Albanian University

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| <p>field of study. Some basic knowledge that doctorate student has is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Creative thinking;</li> <li>b) Development of critical sense about research;</li> <li>c) Connections between different fields of research;</li> <li>d) Skills developed for solving problems arising during research work;</li> <li>e) Competence to manage research complexity and to propose new ideas in research field;</li> </ul> <p><b>Criterion 3</b> The student admitted to doctorate study program is ready to apply in practice the knowledge gained from research in relevant field of studies;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> Student owns the English language certified in the international level, at least "C1", based on internationally recognized tests and a second foreign language as French, German, Italian, Spanish or Russian. In social sciences it may be Latin, Ancient Greek, Persian or other languages needed for research in the area;</p> <p><b>Criterion 5</b> Professors' Council set the criteria for admission to program of doctorate studies contained in regulation of doctorate program of studies;</p> <p><b>Criterion 6</b> The applicant has received detailed information about doctorate program of study, before being admitted into it. He is fully informed regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Duration of study program;</li> <li>b) Conditions that student should meet before appearing in doctorate exam;</li> <li>c) Support that institution provides to the student through administrative and research structures for activities envisaged in the study program (laboratories, libraries, etc.).</li> <li>d) Modalities of exercise of research or creative activity of doctorate students, especially with regard to preparation of doctorate thesis;</li> </ul> <p><b>Criterion 7</b> Admission criteria include also interviews and supports that can be provided by references and additional documents;</p> <p><b>Criterion 8</b> Admission policies include also doctorate admission exam.</p> | <p>only two of them from other Universities Most of the candidates obtained their previous degree at the AU. All enrolled students have been clearly informed about their rights and their duties the list of which includes important issues such as:</p> <p>Rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) require conditions to follow lectures and other activities provided in the study program;</li> <li>b) be provided with teaching materials (textbooks and lectures written)</li> <li>c) work in laboratories and other facilities made available to doctoral and use all appropriate devices and instruments;</li> <li>d) use the Faculty library or search in the respective unit;</li> <li>e) voluntarily withdraw from the program by submitting a written request;</li> </ul> <p>Obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) recognize the rules of doctoral study programs and the relevant legal basis (instructions ME etc.)</li> <li>b) meet all legal obligations arising from the laws, decisions, instructions and regulations.</li> <li>c) complete an approved program of doctoral research;</li> <li>d) achieve high results in the realization of doctoral studies program;</li> <li>e) pay on time, the university (faculty), all financial obligations arising from the registration and continuation of studies in the doctoral program;</li> <li>f) report at least once a year at the base of the program (council of professors) on the progress of work for the implementation of the program;</li> <li>g) carry out scientific and ethical standards provided for doctoral studies;</li> <li>h) conclude the thesis in the right time;</li> </ul> <p>All these parameters are endorsed by the EEG.</p> |
| <p><b>Standard III.2 - Quantitative aspects of doctorate study program</b></p>  |   |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

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| <p>Total number of registered doctorate students and doctorate number for each year;<br/>Number of registered doctorate students coming from outside the unit that has opened the doctorate study program;<br/>Number of diplomas issued to receive "Doctor" degree for each year;<br/>Average duration of doctorate studies and trend of this indicator;<br/>Number and percentage of those who gave up doctorate studies in the level of study program.</p>  | <p>Since the programme started in 2013, no student has yet completed the course, thus no diploma has been assigned and no data on duration are available.<br/>At the present time, none of the students gave up with the PhD program.</p>  |
| <p><b>Standard III.4 - Internationalization of doctorate study program</b></p>   |  |
| <p>Number, expressed in percentage, of registered doctorate students coming from Kosovo and other areas where Albanians live and Albanian Diaspora;<br/>Number, expressed in percentage, of registered doctorate students coming from Balkans region.<br/>Number, expressed in percentage, of registered doctorate students coming from the EU countries;<br/>Number, expressed in percentage, of registered doctorate students coming from other countries of the world;</p>  | <p>All PhD students enrolled to date are from Albania. This PhD program is one of the first PhD programs very recently launched by the Albanian University.<br/>With the recommendations provided in this review, a strong input to the development of a competitive and successful PhD-PS program will certainly be achieved.</p> |
| <p><b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are substantially met.</b><br/>The stringent and high quality selection procedure of admission to the PhD program has been instrumental to select the best and more motivated students among those who submitted their candidature. This is a crucial element for the success of the initiative that, in turn, will generate wide knowledge and appreciation of the PhD program in the country and abroad. Internationalization of the PhD program will be the logical consequence.<br/><b>Recommendations:</b><br/>1. More efforts should be dedicated to enlarge the audience of students enrolled the PhD program. At present only Albanian students coming from the hosting institution have been enrolled</p> |  |

**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH POLICIES**

**10. Research in doctoral school and involvement of doctoral students**

**Description part**

Table 13 summarizes the measurable indicators related the research activities and involvement of doctoral students. It can be appreciated that 3 abstracts have been already presented at an international meeting to be held in Albania in 2015. EEG does not have elements to evaluate the nature and the subject of these abstracts, neither the authors of these abstracts. EEG outlines also the importance of initiative such as the ARTI initiative to inform students and teachers about the nature and the possibilities offered by the launching of the EC program Horizon 2020




External Evaluation Report of Phd in "Pharmaceutical Science" of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate: data for research (verify the data, according to Table 13)

Table 13

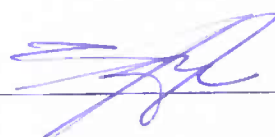
| Planned activities, individual and institution, who are involved in doctoral students | Number | The titles of scientific journals, projects, research activities  |
|---|--------|---|
| 1. Publications, where students have scientific articles                              | 1      | Academic Journal "OPTIME"   |
| 2. Research projects, acquired by leading professors or doctoral students             | -      | -   |
| 3. Projects Implemented   | -      | -   |
| 4. Scientific activities organized by the HEI   | 3      | 1. Pharmaceutical International Conference on the theme "Innovative Studies in Medical Science", AU (2014-2015 academic year)<br>2. International Conference on the theme: "Nowadays of the Social Sciences - Social Sciences for Innovation Research, Technology and Development". AU (2014-2015 academic year)<br>3. AU Student Conference with the theme: New Challenges in "Modern Medicine " 2014-2015 academic year |
| 5. Participants in scientific activities  | 200    |   |
| 6. Students involved in research  | 6      |   |

Note: item 5 "Participants in scientific activities" could be evaluate and therefore endorsed by this EEG

- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion   | Evaluation according to standards  |
|---|--|
| <b>Standard II.1 - Capacities for scientific research</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 1</b> A third cycle study program (doctorate) is integrated in research activity of Higher Education Institutions;</p> <p><b>Criterion 4</b> The institution has the capacity to perform supervision of each doctorate student in research activities and respective didactic duties;</p> <p><b>Criterion 6</b> Academic staff must show achievements in the research field through such creative activities as: presentations, scientific publications, magazines, books or monographs;</p> <p><b>Criterion 7</b> Indicators of high level research activity are publications that contain statements from publishing and scientific research activity</p> | <p>The PhD program is integrated within the AU teaching system and its development in the organization of the research activities of the PhD students is complemented by other institutions such as the Public Health Institute and the Department of Pediatric Oncology of the QSUT, as well as by international institutions such as the Italian Universities of Pisa, Palermo, as far as teaching. In these participating Institutions there are teachers with proved academic and research experience witnessed by their score of publications, competitive at international level.</p> <p>EEG stresses again the need to allow PhD students to familiarize as soon as they start their PhD program with</p> |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

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|---|--|
| by other scholars outside doctorate study program, especially international, regarding the outcome of scientific research in the institution that offers doctorate programs;  | laboratory research activities<br>The institution has the capacity to perform supervision of each PhD student in research activities and corresponding teaching duties |
| <b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are substantially met</b>  |  |
| All premises and indicators related to the PhD program are very good. Teaching staff is very well prepared and with a good score of publications in international journals with peer review and impact factor; complementarity between the activities of the 3 major participating institutions; “in house” capabilities to carry out experimental research activities, particularly at the participating Public Health Institute “Hulo Hajderi”; possibility to perform additional research work abroad. These premises must be materialized, keeping in mind particularly the fact that research activities should be initiated as soon as possible and already in the first year of the PhD program. |  |
| <b>Recommendations:</b>   |  |
| 1. Efforts should be made to enlarge the research experience of the PhD students, for example by making specific collaboration agreements with the external supporting institutions   |  |

**11. National and international cooperation, in function of doctoral study**

**Description part**

Table 14 lists the scientific activities in the framework of international cooperation. It is apparent that most of these activities relate to classical ex cathedra learning activities. A certain number not very well defined refers to activities that studies perform and/or follow outside the participating Institutions. Given the relatively short time since the initiation of the PhD program, training abroad and mobility of students are still lacking.

**Measurable indicators:**

- EEG should analyze and evaluate: the national and international cooperation (verify the data, according to Table 14)
- EEG should analyze and evaluate: the Cooperation with scientific institutions (verify the data, according to Table 15)

**Table 14**

| <b>Scientific activities in the framework of international cooperation</b> |  |     |
|--|--|-----|
| 1  | Number of students participating as partners in national and international projects                  | -   |
| 2  | Number of Students participating in scientific activities, outside of HEI / presentations abroad     | -   |
| 3  | The number of foreign lecturers, who are invited to teaching   | 2   |
| 4  | The number of classes held by invited foreign lecturers  | 260 |
| 5  | Number of participants in training, in the field of abroad research                                  | -   |
| 6  | Mobility of students to and from HEI - 7 The number of international awards in the field of research | -   |

**Table 15**

| <b>Institutions and scientific organizations, which is cooperating with</b> |
|---|
|---|






External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University


|   |  |
|---|--|
| Statistics Institution, INSTAT, Tirana  | Research   |
| University Study Center, Tirana   | Research   |
| National Center for Medication Control  | Research   |
| Albanian Chemist Order  | Research and organizing mutual academic events                 |
| The Obligatory Healthcare Insurance Fund  |  |
| University Hospital ‘Shefqet Ndroqi’ in Tirana                                      | Research   |
| Public Health Institute   | Research, lab support for the fulfillment of the course thesis |
| University Hospital “ Mbretëresha Geraldinë” (Center for Molecular Diagnostication) | Research, lab support for the fulfillment of the course thesis |
| University of Pisa, Italy Staff exchange  | Staf exchange  |
| University of Palermo, Italy  |  |

As summarized in table 15, the AU actively collaborates with a series of Albanian and International Institutions on various aspects related to its institutional activity. At national level are important the collaborations with the Public Health Institute and the University Hospital. Teaching staff exchange with Italian Universities of Palermo and Siena is also important to increase the exposure of the student to international researchers.

- Relevant documents, taken during visits to the institution

**Evaluation according to the Standards**

| Standards/criterion  | Evaluation according to standards  |
|--|--|
| <b>Standard III.4 - Internationalization of doctorate study program</b>  |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 5</b> Doctorate study program encourages doctorate mobility by paying a considerable amount of expenditures for academic training outside doctorate study program;</p> <p><b>Criterion 6</b> Doctorate study program encourages mobility of doctorate students by paying a considerable amount of expenditures for presentation of research results in national and international scientific activities (symposium, conference, congress);</p> <p><b>Criterion 7</b> The institution has an agreement, at least with one Western university, guaranteeing programs of exchange of academic staff and doctorate students and realization of joint research projects. For Albanological Sciences cooperation could also be with a Higher Education Institution or research centre in Kosovo and lands where Albanians live;</p> <p><b>Criterion 8</b> Doctorate study program creates the necessary space to develop joint doctorate study programs with homologous universities in the region, Europe and beyond;</p> | <p>The PhD-PS program is part of the third cycle studies in Albanian University. As stated before the PhD program is carried out in cooperation with both local Institutions and, at least for teaching, with Italian Universities. Funding to be used to favour the students’ mobility and interaction with foreign partners, are presently not available; thus these essential aspects of a PhD formation should definitely be implemented.</p> <p>Beside the international interaction with University of Pisa through two professors that teach at the PhD courses, other international contacts with other European Universities may provide added value to the PhD program, as all these International Institutions may host and/or provide teaching and research facilities to the PhD students.</p> <p>In the future it will be important to internationalize even more the PhD program by both opening it efficiently to students of other balcanic countries and to obtain, by agreement with other international similar PhD programs, the status of Joint Supervision/Joint Program.</p> |




External Evaluation Report of Phd in “Pharmaceutical Science” of Private Univesity  
Albanian University

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Criterion 9</b> Doctorate study program provides for 3-4 modules (not less than 15 ECTS) to be conducted, organized in theoretical studies and doctorate students have the exam by professors of partner universities, known in the world, for quality and research, publishing activities in the relevant field of study. Exception cited in criterion 7 applies for Albanological Sciences;</p> <p><b>Criterion 10</b> Doctorate study program promotes involvement of professors from foreign universities as scientific supervisors or as scientific collaborators of doctorate students.</p>   | <p>This could only be reached by providing a PhD title that can be recognized abroad, particularly in EC countries. The PhD study program provides around 30 credits of modules offered by partner univeristies. National standards indicate a limit to 15 credits.</p> <p>Agreements with external Institutions have resulted at present only in theoretical and teaching support. There is no evidence of research support provided by these institutions to the PhD students.</p> |
| <p><b>Standard II.1 - Capacities for scientific research</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Criterion 5</b> The institution has agreements with other academic or research institutions at home and abroad, supporting the exchange of academic staff and doctorate students and academic and research activities of doctorate school;</p>  | <p>Although collaborations seem to be effective with Institutions where experimental research is performed, such as the Public Health Institute in Tirana and others, students of the PhD-PS program are performing mainly statistical and epidemiological studies and not really research theses based on experimentation.</p>  |
| <p><b>Conclusions of EEG: Standards are partially met</b></p> <p>The internationalization of the PhD program is already in its constitution and in its rules. International entities such as University of Pisa and University of Palermo, Italy, are partners. To further increase and establish strong and permanent international connections, EEG estimates that the PhD program should pursue and satisfy two additional conditions: 1) establish itself as a leading PhD School in the balcanic area; 2) obtain the status of Joint PhD program with similar PhD programs at least within the EC area. All the preliminary conditions are present. Now, to reach these goals additional efforts should be made “ab initio” to privilege the high quality experimental activity and production following recognized international parameters.</p> <p>The credits offered from partner universities in this study program are around 30 instead of 15 credits as required by the rules of national standards.</p> <p>Collaboration with external institutions should materialize in both teaching and research support. At the present, only the first frame is evident.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As it stands, the PhD program does not encourage mobility of the students since ad hoc funding is not available. Efforts should be made to accomplish this important aspect.</li> <li>2. The Institution should make additional efforts to become appealing for countries of the balcanic area</li> <li>3. The Institution should make additional effort for internationalization by pursuing, for example, the possibility to obtain the status of joint PhD program with foreign Universities.</li> </ol> |  |

**SWOT ANALYSIS**

**Strengths**

1. The University structure and teaching facilities are appropriate
2. The Academic staff is qualified both in terms of teaching expertise and experience in research




3. The administrative staff is well prepared and ready to support the management of the PhD course.
4. The candidate selection for the PhD program has been carried out on the basis of stringent parameters, with both written and oral examination, partially following the rules of international institutions

#### Weaknesses

1. PhD students enter relatively late in the experimental activities of the program, due to an initial overwhelming charge of teaching duties that cover the entire first year.
2. The relative paucity of research laboratories inside the University campus.
3. The PhD program is not fully covered, in its specific research activities, with dedicated grants, forcing most of the research activity to be performed outside the Institution.
4. PhD students are engaged in unrelated working activities that prevent them to participate on a full-time basis to the PhD program.
5. Very little scientific productivity in terms of scientific publications.
6. The hosting University does not support the PhD program with *ad hoc* specific budget dedicated to cover additional costs for the training of PhD students within and outside the country.
7. Teaching staff enrolled on a full time basis is insufficient since the required ratio of 60% between internal and total staff with academic titles of Professor, Associate Professor or Doctor is not met.
8. The role of the external collaborating persons and institutions is not completely clarified.
9. Research laboratories and in-house library do not provide full support to the practical activity of the PhD students.
10. None of the thesis projects has a real experimental basis focused on pharmaceutical research activity, as it should be for a PhD program of this kind. It derives that no research skill has been developed by the PhD students during their study program.
11. A more suitable research infrastructure should be set and provided by the AU institution
12. In some cases, the thesis supervisor has different scientific background and expertise with respect to the argument of the thesis.

#### Opportunities

1. Implementation of higher level educational system, such as the present PhD program, will help, if reorganized, to form specialized professional’s instrumental for the advance of the country competitiveness in line with the country specific requirements
2. The obtainment of the PhD degree in “Pharmaceutical Sciences” may offer, if implemented, new and better job opportunities for the students in several disciplines in rapid development in the country.
3. The success of the PhD program will catalyze future initiatives in the field of Public Health and Higher Education
4. The success of the PhD program will be a way to attract wider student community.

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### Threats

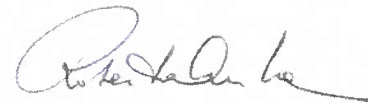
1. The present organization of the PhD program may not allow to reach the required targets in the 3-4 year planned period
2. There is the distinctive danger of forming PhDs without the necessary scientific background to perform a research career in the field of Pharmaceutical Sciences

### Recommendations

1. It is highly recommended to initiate the research “bench work” activities from the first year of PhD program
2. The Institution should make additional effort to dedicate additional funds to the PhD program.
3. Scientific supervisors should be more sensitized to apply for research funds to national and/or international agencies.
4. PhD program should be seen as a full-time job and in this frame, PhD program should be incompatible with other jobs. It derives that PhD students should be supported, in the near future, by specific fellowships.
5. The study program should be reorganized (credits from partner institution, credits coefficients, number of projects, the length of the program, the subjects)
6. The publishing activity should be monitored strongly and also supported by AU
7. The thesis projects and the supervisors should be revised and final thesis should be evaluated by a mixed national/international committee
8. More efforts should be dedicated to enlarge the audience of students enrolled the PhD program. At present only Albanian students coming from the hosting institution have been enrolled
9. As it stands, the PhD program does not encourage mobility of the students since ad hoc funding is not available. Efforts should be made to accomplish this important aspect.
10. University and Institutional partners involved in the program should sensitize policy makers to better adapt the rules of PhD programs towards international standards

### External Evaluation Group:

1. Prof. Dr. Roberto Accolla



2. Prof. Asc. Entela Haloci

