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UNIVERSI COLLEGE

INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

01.07.2020, Ljubljana-Bucharest-Tbilisi



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 28th May 2020

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- Prof. Dr. Elene Jibladze, Ilia State University
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Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation

Sources of information for the Report:

- *A Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the AC*
- *Information obtained during the online meetings conducted with the management of the institution, teaching and administrative staff, students, graduates, external stakeholders and employers of graduates;*
- *Web-site;*
- *Supplementary documents requested by the ET;*
- *Video presenting the campus of the college and checked by the KAA representatives.*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- KAA Accreditation Manual;
- Benchmarking of HEIs in Kosovo;
- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (only for reference/triangulation)



1.2. Site visit schedule

28th May 2020

09.00 – 10.30	Meeting with the management of the institution (<i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i>)
10.30 – 11.10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative services
11.10 – 12.00	Lunch break (<i>to be provided at the site visit place</i>)
12.10 – 13.00	Meeting with the heads of study programs
13.00 – 14.00	Meeting with teaching staff
14.00 – 14.40	Meeting with students
14.40 – 14.55	Short break
14.55 – 15.40	Meeting with graduates
15.40 – 16.20	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
16.20 – 16.30	Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA
16.30 – 16.40	Closing meeting with the management of the institution

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

Universi College was established on 18 February 2005 as a private higher education institution with its previous name “Eurosporti” (basically suggesting the programmes for Sports Education). In 2008, a collaboration agreement was signed with Iliria College upon MEST request. After two years of collaboration (2008-2010) with Iliria College, the decision was made to re-name the college into “Universi College” (in original Albanian - Kolegji Universi). Currently, the Universi College offers two study programmes:

1. The Department of Physical Culture, Sport and Recreation; and
2. The Nursing Department

At the Bachelor- level programme:



- Physical culture sports and recreation (accredited 2016-2020), in the process of reaccreditation
- General Nursing – (accredited 2016-2020), in the process of reaccreditation

At the Master- level programme:

- Health and Sports - (accredited 2013-2016), in the process of reaccreditation

2. INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

The institutional evaluation consists of 11 sub headings through which the administration, organisation and management of the institution, as well as teaching and research are assessed. They are presented in the sections below – each of them including a presentation of the current status as resulted from the analysis of the ET based on the SER, the online discussion and the additional documents provided. Each section also includes a brief overview of the standards met and not met by the evaluated institution, a conclusion about the compliance level for each general area and a set of recommendations that the college could take into account in order to improve in the future. When compliance levels for sub-standards are presented, the ET used a grading scale like this: marked with 0 those criteria that are not fulfilled, with 1 those that are partially met and with 2 those which are fully met by the evaluated institution.

2.1. Public mission and institutional objectives

The Universe College (hereafter - UC) has the following mission according to the SER:

to create and develop sustainable knowledge through quality teaching and learning; this is enriched by implementing theoretical knowledge into practice and encouraging students to do scientific research in order to assist them to be the future professionals in the field of health and sports

The Statute (as of 01.01.2018) provides the same mission. The other documents, - Business Plan 2019-2022, has the slight deviation (due to some small differences in English translation):

to create and develop sustainable knowledge through quality teaching and learning, where it is enriched with the application of theoretical knowledge in practice, encouraging students in scientific research for the future of health professionals and sports.

The defined mission is clear, brief, and informative enough. The ET considers the requirements of KAA's template for 3 pillars of teaching, research and community services, and therefore provides its following assessment. By the opinion of the ET, the indicated pillars are:

1. *In teaching: to create and develop sustainable knowledge through **quality teaching**...*



2. *In research*: by implementing theoretical knowledge into practice and encouraging students to do **scientific research** in order to assist them ...
3. *In community services*: ...future **professionals in the field of health and sports**

During the online meeting between the ET and the UC, it was clarified that the scientific research is mainly organised and delivered in the area of physical education and health. Therefore, these specific pillars are met in the above-mentioned mission.

The UC also received recommendations on the UC's mission statement from the last year's accreditation experts (Standard 1.2). Despite the mission has not been specifically discussed, the UC has initiated the revision and improvement procedures of its mission by consulting with its internal and external stakeholders. The UC has revised and improved its mission, and it thinks that a refreshment had a good impact on the improvement of the professional advancement of the UC. The UC also made a statement that, if needed, its mission will be again revised upon consultations with the College's stakeholders. The ET thinks that the current state of the mission has been defined in a satisfactory manner.

The Universi College's mission is included in the other public official documents and web-site of the UC. At the same time, the ET did not find the direct confirmation in the SER that it was recognised by the managerial staff, academic staff and the students (1.3 standard). However, from the online meeting, the ET got the confirmation from the session with top-management:

that the Senate created a working group which organized a workshop gathering students, graduates, stakeholders etc. to work on the initial draft of the mission. Then, an email was sent to everybody regarding the mission, and afterwards the public discussion was taking place. The result was sent to the Council and Senate and the steering board for final approval. It is now published on the website.

The ET misses the institutional objectives in the description of standard 1.1, and the web-site also does not list objectives. There are six "strategic initiatives" or "strategic objectives" with sub-objectives mentioned on the p. 16 of the SER. The other document - Strategic plan 2016-2021 (p. 3) has so-called "specific objectives" listed in five central domains of the UC, linked to: (1) *Faculty*; (2) *Education*; (3) *Research, Scholarship, and Creativity*; (4) *Outreach and Public Engagement; Staff* and (5) *Organizational Stewardship*. Therefore, the ET is not quite sure which particular listed objectives were meant under the "institutional objectives" of the UC and recommends the college to correct this inconsistency.

During the online meeting, the ET asked about the UC' institutional objectives, and got the following answer:

- the Strategic plan focuses on the quality of teaching (changes /plans in hiring new staff, training of the existing staff and `We care` program)



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The ET got the feedback to the first draft of this Report, and the Universi College has already planned in their action plan to clarify the institutional objectives and place them on the website. The web-site of the UC also includes this mission (version of its Business Plan 2019-2022) on its web-page: <https://kolegjiuniversi-edu.net/mission-and-vision/?lang=en>. The same web-site provides 2 missions – one which is mentioned above, and the other one which is called “core” mission.

The core mission of Universe College is to create and provide the most favourable conditions for students and academic staff so that vocational education and research are primary for both our teachers and students.

Generally speaking, the ET thinks that having two missions, - the mission and the core mission, is quite excessive for the institutional level of the private small UC. Usually private colleges have their mission and core values. The big universities (usually public ones) address the growing societal and economic challenges to fulfill their so-called "Third Mission" in society and economy, which implies taking responsibility to provide services to society or outreach. At the same time, the UC explains on the web-site that it is done “to maintain the confidence of parents and students in genuine educational and research studies”, and it is a “prerequisite for us to continue our operations in the field of higher education in Kosovo and the region”, and the ET accepts it.

The web-site also includes the vision of Universi College. The vision of Universi College is to be

“a model institution of excellence in higher education, a leader in the sustainable development of health and sports knowledge in Kosovo and in the region”.

The UC also refers that institutional mission serves as an effective guideline for long-time strategic planning, including innovative and unique quality education and in scientific research.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Define clearly its institutional objectives and provide them on the web-site*
2. *Explain whether there is any difference between institutional and strategic objectives, and what are the priorities*
3. *Check the internal environment, especially its academic circles whether the mission of the UC meets the middle-term and long-term objectives*
4. *Make sure whether the UC really needs two formal mission statements, providing the internal consultations*
5. *Ensure that the institutional objectives are updated and incorporated into the Strategic plan*



2.2. Strategic planning, governance and administration

The strategic plan 2016-2021 is an important document, prepared for 5 years (formally meeting the requirements of the KAA manual with its priorities regarding institutional development that are defined for its time frame. The SER answers that it was drafted in consultation and cooperation with the academic community. The Strategic plan is designed and modified in close cooperation with the academic staff, management and other parties.

In its explanation of the UC Strategic plan, the SER opens the strategic planning section with the approved six strategic initiatives for the five years (2016-2021), and provides explanation for each of these strategic initiatives. At the same time, the ET analysed the text of Strategic plan which shows that:

- *first of all, Strategic plan is quite general without addressing any specific needs of the UC. For instance, the UC's educational programme "We care" (which is the first programme announced in its section of the strategic planning of the SER) is not mentioned in the Strategic plan itself;*
- *second, Strategic plan lacks SWOT, yearly objectives, long-term goals and clear outcomes*
- *third, Strategic plan does not seem to provide the visible regular adjustments, it does not look like it is monitored on a short- or medium-term targets or outcomes;*
- *there are no division within these 5 years plan, what to do by the year of 2020, 2021; and what has been prepared by this date with action plans;*
- *Strategic plan is not perceived as a live and working document: there is only one academic year 2020-2021 left, but it seems that there were no any adjustments made to this document*

It is written, that the long-term and short-term strategic plan have been designed based on the annual budgetary policies and providing Business plan 2019 - 2022. However, Business Plan 2019-22 provides financial-budgetary plans, but none of the strategies are listed here. There is no report of implementation for either of the above-mentioned plans, thus making it impossible to assess the capacity of the college to fulfill its strategic objectives. The ET strongly recommends the college to monitor periodically the achievements made by the institution in relation with the objectives set by these plans and report them to the internal community and external partners – for example, by publishing the progress reports on the website.

The ET got the feedback to this Report that it going to set up the working group and adjust the strategic plan and to implement the prepared recommendations. The ET just advices to be consistent in their documents, define the UC priorities in the strategic plan and objectives as well as reflecting the changes that take place.



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Some of the most important programmes are not in the Strategic plan. For instance, “We care” programme. The ET has asked about `We care` during online meeting, and there was some explanation about it provided: the college is supporting 9 candidates, and out of which two (2) are supported from this program (it requires the beneficiaries to spend 5 years after PhD working in the college). The ET recommends the college to correct this inconsistency and take measures for such slips to repeat in the future. The purpose of discussing the Strategic plan with all the internal stakeholders is to ensure that the most important objectives and projects for the future of the institution are reflected in this document. A slip like this only indicates the failure of the consultation process.

The UC’s strategic plan formally reflects some, and not all elements of the internal environment (with infrastructure, academic staff, study programs) and external one (with the political, social, economic aspects as well as, law and information technology) as factors that may affect the development of the institution. The continuous monitoring, controlling and evaluating of the UC fulfilment are supervised and evaluated periodically from the accountable mechanisms in accordance with target and outcomes - 2.5. It is not specified whether there is a monitoring system.

The UC does not provide the clear explanations for the standards 2.6 - 2.7 - 2.8, but its SER just makes references to the documents and to the “*structures ...clearly presented in this hierarchy*”.

Regarding the 2.6 standard, it refers to the general legal provisions, and recommends to check one document “Decision-making on disciplinary measures”. At the beginning of the SER, the ET finds (p. 6-7) the general information on the Institutional leadership, management structures and administration and staffing arrangements; it provides some information how the college’s managerial and administrative structure work at the institutional level (2.6 and 2.8). The governing bodies of the College are determined based on the College’s statute which is respected and followed by the governing bodies in carrying on their activities and functions. The information for the students’ bodies is explained in the Statute with the representations of their interests in the Students Parliament and the Students Council. As far as the administration is concerned (2.10), the SER explains that the administrative staff is crucial also when it comes to collaborating with regional/international universities as part of the Erasmus+ programme. The college must clarify which are its decisional and consultative bodies, their competence and responsibilities, ensuring both a fair representation of students in all these bodies and a check-and-balance system between the decisional and executive bodies – for example: by making sure that their competence does not overlap and by defining in appropriate documents of the college their roles and the relationship between them.



Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure that the Strategic plan is updated, becoming the “working document” with all incorporated elements (SWOT, yearly objectives and long-term goals, clear outcomes)*
2. *Make sure that all documents are linked to each other, but not the fragmented one.*
3. *Include the regular adjustments*
4. *Monitor the Strategic planning and governance based on a short-term and long-term targets/indicators*
5. *Re-check all documents in terms of their correspondence (in all languages)*
6. *Clarify the competence and the roles of the decisional, executive and consultative bodies. Ensure democratic elections, when relevant, for choosing the members of these structures.*

2.3. Financial planning and management

The UC has developed its business plan for the years 2019-2022 with the purposes to demonstrate its sufficient financial resources. The income demonstrated in the Business plan in 2019 shows that 314,000 euro (from the students' enrollment, etc.) is less than the expenses (315, 010 euro). The UC demonstrates the optimistic scenario (with the growing income every year), but does not explain or demonstrates the clear reason for this. Nevertheless, even under this optimistic scenario, there is a growing gap between the key income (from enrolments fees) and expenses, and it is increasing from one year to the other (from 2020 up to 2022). The only way to provide the sufficiency of the resources is to earn additional income. The ET advises to diversify the sources of income. It also advises to think about the commercialization of their nursery services which is becoming one of those important directions for social assistance in the EU market to meet the needs of an aging population and to improve the conditions of elderly people, it is critical to train future nurses and nurse scientists in this field.

The Business plan does provide these sources of additional income which are coming from the renting out the sports hall after the lecture time, the various tests from the sports medicine labs, etc. There is also the personal budget of the founder that is mentioned. The ET assumes that this optimistic scenario works out, but recommends to think about some additional strategies to be involved into the international projects, students' exchanges, research and turn their sport facilities and nursery facilities as the growing sources of income.



In the business plan, the College has presented its annual budget and a three-year budget. The SER makes also reference to its financial policies based on the Finance Regulation (which is relevant for the conditions of Kosovo). The ET understands that currently the UC attracts the services of the outsourcing company - Likuiditeti company, which deals with the accounting and budgeting.

Business plan for 2019-2022 presents the annual budget and 3- years based on the Finance Regulation (Finance Regulation is attached with the general information) with its regular reporting. By the end of every year, the financial statements are provided with the expenditures and activities according to the annual budget (Financial Statements 2019-2020). The ET notices that there is a significant difference between accounts receivable and accounts payable. Share capital (153,999.29 €) and Investment capital (741,659.55 €) provides more optimistic picture compared to the Business plan, but description and explanation is not provided. The ET recommends to make some additional scenario with a forecast for the UC how the financial sustainability will be changing and to diversify the sources of income through the additional services. The UC's feedback was received to the first draft of this Report, and addition scenario of development (like neutral or pessimistic) including externalities will be reflected.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Provide more realistic pictures with 3 scenario – optimistic, neutral and pessimistic to see how the financial sustainability will be changing*
2. *Diversify the sources of income*
3. *Monitor accurately the expenditures and commitments against the budgets with annual reports that should be published on the website;*
4. *Consider improving the accounting system so it will be more helpful with budget - planning, budget-monitoring and reporting.*

2.4. Academic integrity, responsibility and public accountability

`Universi College has its own Code of Ethics which aims at establishing the rules of behaviour for the College members, including here the academic, administrative, supporting staff and students` (SER, p. 23) – thus requiring all internal stakeholders to act with high standards of ethical conduct. The code was provided as an appendix – no.10 – to the SER and it is complemented by the Regulation of the Learning Process which includes aspects regarding the `students' assessment on their ethical behaviour`) also annexed to the SER (Appendix 11). They are both available on the website along with the `Regulation on Ethics in Scientific and Publishing Research`.



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The Code of Ethics was developed in agreement with the national legislation of Kosovo and it is completed by the provisions within the „Regulation on the educational process” and the „Regulation on ethics in scientific and research publication”. The latter was adopted in 2018, however this is rather an administrative document for organizing research activity and lacks clear provisions on an acceptable research conduct. The ET recommends completing this document with provisions regarding the conduct of research – for example, it could include ethics on using personal data of patients and / or the ethics of testing on animals, relevant for the research in the health field. These are the matters that the College representatives practice during their academic work and have mentioned with the ET during the online sessions. Hence, these common practices have to be translated into the general provisions in writing.

The „Regulation on the educational process” also includes elements relevant to the ethical conduct within the college. For example, in article 21 it tackles the issue of an appeal suggesting that it must be submitted in 24 hours after the announcement of the results. The ET draws the attention on the small number of appeals submitting asking whether it is not a problem of accessibility to this right, since submitting a physical request of re-examination might not be possible in weekends or national holidays. The college could consider allowing for online submission of these requests or prolonging the responsible period in order to streamline the overall process.

The Code of Ethics covers subjects like code of behaviour, academic freedom, integrity and plagiarism. However, there is no reference to forms of harassment or bullying explicitly. The code could be completed with measures reducing or preventing these phenomena. *It would also be ET’s suggestion that the College pays more attention to the anti-plagiarism measures and builds awareness about plagiarism, as the awareness in this regard is still low (across the higher education system).* Special efforts should be put into encouraging both students and teachers to report on misconduct, corruption, abuse or plagiarism in order for the college to be able to gain and maintain the trust of its partners and the general public in Kosovo.

The code of ethics also includes a reference to `Do not use the classrooms and other facilities of the institution for activities that are not related to teaching` which seems to the ET to be contradictory to the intentions of the college to support and encourage the involvement of students in extracurricular activities. In order to avoid this contradiction, the college should clarify, what kind of behaviour is considered unacceptable within the College premises without jeopardising their intentions to support students’ extracurricular activities.



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The enforcement of the Code of Ethics is allocated to the Council of Ethics which `analyses and discusses the ethical issues related to the university life` (SER, p.23). Anyone can report a breach of the Code of Ethics or a misconduct to the council of Ethics and this structure will analyse the case and make a decision on the respective disciplinary measures. The ET recommends that the code includes disciplinary measures adapted to all the internal stakeholders it addresses too, as now they seem more fit for students and not faculty members or the administrative staff.

The ET also feels that the college could do more to enforce the provisions of the code. *For example, ensure that students have a person they can trust to address to when they witness a misconduct and want to report it. Also ensure that the identity of the whistle-blower is protected* – especially if a student is the victim or the witness of an abuse from the part of a faculty member it might be difficult for them to report it to the Council of Ethics if its members are all faculty representatives the same college – which is a small community thus encouraging faculty members to develop close friendships. Given the situation it is important to have procedures for a member of the Council of Ethics to reuse him/her-self from a case that involves a close faculty member (friend). It is also related to the conflict of interests. The ET recommends the college to develop disciplinary measure adapted to all potential situations of misconduct – done by students, faculty members and administrative staff members.

There is no evidence that the Council of Ethics has recorded or analysed any report of misconduct. Some difficulties might be generated by the rather small academic community, as pointed out above. Especially in a cultural context like the Balkans, extra-efforts are required from the part of the college to encourage the academic staff members to report on each-other's misconduct – which is seen as a `faux-pas`. The management of the College has to find proper and the most adequate methods to help the members of the community understand that tolerating plagiarism or corruption will forever damage the quality of the college, its credibility and international visibility. Publishing the activity reports of this council might also help increase the awareness within the academic community. ET understands that changing habitual behaviour is hard, especially those that have cultural underpinning, which is why, it suggests to put more effort into institutionalizing a new way of approaching collegial relationships than before.

The web-site of the Universi College is informative. It contains information for active students, prospective students and information about and for the Alumni. The information about the academic programs is well presented and provides guidance for those, interested. However,



information about the student tuition and practiced fees are missing as well as relevant documents of the institution, decisions of the decisional bodies of the college etc. *The ET recommends the college to update the UC website with this information.*

Overall, the premises of ethical conduct and its importance is understood and is demonstrated within the College. ET's recommendations are geared towards a) institutionalisation of created regulatory framework and b) formalising already practiced ethical behaviour.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Develop 'Regulation on Ethics in Scientific and Publishing Research' further to reflect what are the principles of good research.
2. *The College should pay more attention to the anti-plagiarism measures and build awareness about plagiarism.*
3. *Ensure that students have a person they can trust to address to when they witness a misconduct and want to report it and protect the identity of the whistle-blower.*
4. *The college has to update their website with relevant information.*

2.5. Quality management

In its strategic plan, out of 6 strategic initiatives three (1, 3, 4) clearly belong to QA assurance. College prioritises on qualified academic staff (#1), strives to create supportive culture to teaching (#3) and promotes inter-departmental cooperation for improved quality of study areas (#4) (SER. P. 12). At the regulatory level, the College has adopted QA regulation in 2018, which spells out main principles of the QA in the College, as well as the organizational setting for the QA. The QA Committee is the decision-making body consisting of five members, including a student. QA Office is and a QA coordinator (ET assumes, it is QA officer that is meant here), respectively, represent an implementing arm of the QA Committee. However, this office combines some of the academic matters that usually belong to the teaching and learning (or academic) officers. Functions such as overseeing drafting of the academic schedule, monitoring of examinations and alike. Incorporating the functions of academic and a QA under one office/organizational unit is perfectly reasonable, as long as these functions are clearly distinguished and defined separately. *ET advises to address this discrepancy in the QA regulation (Article 5 and 6) and separate functions of the QA from the functions of the academic/teaching and learning officer.* Given the fact that the QA officer is combining these two, abovementioned functions, and that the QA work in itself represents an intense workload, ET is sceptical that only one person (which is the man-power that is allocated to this work not)



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can effectively do this. *The College leadership needs to decide, how to ensure effective work of the QA office, either by adding a new member to the QA team, or separating out QA and non-QA functions (as mentioned in the recommendation above) or distribute different QA functions throughout other units in the College.*

The QA regulation points out that the main way of attending to quality is to monitor and evaluate curriculum – **input**, teacher performance – **process**, student attainment (exams and internships) – **output**. However, there is not much mentioned about outcomes of the teaching. Also, there is a strong emphasis on teaching and learning component of the College, but no mention of the QA of research, or community work, for that matter. *ET recommends that the College decides upon the ways it can ensure quality in research and community work, and reflect it in their QA regulation.*

One example of the assessments translating into action is faculty development efforts. During the online interviews, the College representatives explained that the faculty was provided trainings in SPSS, other research methods and syllabus development. The College representatives also mentioned that they have an introductory training for the newly hired staff members in order to help them get on-board smoothly. This information is implied in the Staff Development Plan 2019-2020 document, however somewhat vaguely. This document is more an aspiration of the College on what they desire to do. While it is grounded in a good understanding of the College leadership, on what is needed to foster quality education in the institution, it lacks timeline, benchmarks and indicators, specific activities on how will their plans be achieved. In other words, this document does not provide guidance to implementation of staff development strategy of the College. *ET advises to rework the document into the Staff development strategy and provide an action plan in addition.* Otherwise, the College risks to keep producing extra paperwork to their administrative workload.

The College also has a QA plan for 2019-2020, which comprehensively describes the assessment mechanisms of both, teaching and learning, and support processes. For instance, teaching and learning process is assessed through five different surveys, including student satisfaction surveys and teacher self-assessment reports. Support services are monitored through review of weekly staff reports, ad hoc meetings with students, or casual meetings with administrative staff. The assessments are carried out on regular bases, either per semester, or annually. The assessment reports that the College has provided are ample and are informative. In some cases, the reports lead to the improvement recommendations. In this way, ET could trace almost all steps in the quality cycle but evidence that the recommendations have led to certain improvements. However, it should also be mentioned that the QA office has been



working for about a year and the assessments target 2019-2020 academic year. Hence, ET is confident that the QA office and the QA Committee will make use of collected evidence and put their own recommendations into practice.

Given two main governing documents for the QA – QA regulations and the QA Plan 2019-2020, it does not have a document which streamlines QA procedures. *It is advisable that the QA Committee and the QAO develop and adopt the procedures to provide foundation for the regular and accurate practice of the QA processes. This includes the procedures for the regular review of the internal QA mechanisms (As current QA mechanisms have recently been introduced, those have not been reviewed). This could be incorporated in the QA Regulations, if the College does not want to create a separate document, e.i. QA manual that will combine principles, rules and procedures, and mechanisms for the QA.*

As quality assurance matters have been recently introduced in the Kosovo higher education system, and the institutions have just got acquainted with it, in the coming years, it will be a challenging task for the Universi College making its internal QA mechanisms into a well operational diagnostic tool. It is important that the College avoids the trap of using the QA mechanisms as a mere response tool to the external quality assurance demands, i.e. accreditation requirements.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Address this discrepancy in the QA regulation (Article 5 and 6) and separate functions of the QA from the functions of the academic/teaching and learning officer.*
- 2. The QA Committee and the QAO to develop and adopt the procedures to provide foundation for the regular and accurate practice of the QA processes.*
- 3. The procedures for the regular review of the internal QA mechanisms are developed and adopted.*
- 4. The College leadership needs to decide, how to ensure effective work of the QA Office, either by adding a new member to the QA team, or separating out QA and non-QA functions*
- 5. Rework the Staff Development Plan into the Staff development strategy and an action plan to accompany it.*



2.6. Learning and teaching

The College has adopted a Bachelor studies regulation and a regulation for the Masters studies, as well as a regulation for the educational process. They were all appendixes to the SER (appendix 11, 14 and 15). The ET recommends the college to monitor the implementation of these regulations by the members of the academic community. The monitoring procedures should enable the college to guarantee that all its programmes meet high standards of teaching and learning. Procedures for approving a new study programme, for the revision of an existing one and/or closing a study programme should be developed and publicly available. The SER mentions that the syllabi of each study programme is constantly updated (the nursing care syllabus was offered as an example in appendix 18). The ET recommends the college to include in the revision process representatives of the students, graduates, employers and local relevant public authorities.

Institutional standards for quality assurance regarding the teaching and learning should be developed and adopted by the college based on both the KAA manual and the ESGs – European Standards and Guidelines. The standards for the medical programmes (those programmes in the health area) since they are `regulated`, they should also be correlated with the European recommendations for the field.

The courses in a curriculum are allocated ECTS credits and they are planned to ensure a logical flow. Following the national legal framework, the student learning outcomes associated with each programme should be consistent with National Qualifications Framework and with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, but the learning outcomes defined for each study programme offered by the college was not analysed by the ET. Such an evaluation is the subject of the study programme accreditation process.

The SER informs us that `The College has invested in a software (database) for the questions to be sorted` (p.37). As it is written there, the mentioned software helps the college to organize multiple-question exams. And it is the responsibility of the professors to ensure that the questions included in the software, and therefore in the exam, will grant an evaluation of the achieved learning outcomes. The ET recommends the college to consider developing an Regulation for examination if it doesn't already have one – the SER mentioned that there are `exam regulations` on the website (SER, p. 40), but the ET did not find them there, nor among the appendixes. It could refer to a more complex type of evaluation that could better measure the achievements of the students in report with the learning outcomes – as some of them can't



be evaluated through a multiple-choice question. Practical, oral and written exams could complement, when relevant, the multiple-choice exam – which could continue to use the software mentioned by the college.

The academic staff is selected based on the national legislation (aspect checked by the KAA) and the `Regulation on Academic Degrees and Titles` (appendix 6). For example, for a position of `regular professor` a candidate has to have a PhD degree and demonstrate academic competences and scientific experience in the field as well as high educational and pedagogical skills. To check on these the college requires previous experience. The ET recommends the college to also consider an alternative pathway for new-comers who might not already have teaching experience or results in research, but who demonstrate availability to develop themselves and be loyal to the college.

They are encouraged to take up opportunities to continuously develop their teaching strategies. This is because improving the teaching and learning is one of the priorities of the college. However, the SER did not include a list of the training opportunities provided to the faculty members recently or an explanation for how the training needs are defined. Students mentioned during the online discussions that they were satisfied with the teaching which was interactive and they felt like it was student-centered. The ET recommends the college to develop their staff development plan and include trainings aiming at improving their digital skills as well as their capacity to adapt to the different learning needs of the students in the existing staff-development plan.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Develop a list of standards for teaching and learning (Key Performance Indicators) that would consist the base for internally evaluating the quality of the study programmes offered by the college.*
2. *Constantly monitor that the academic community is following the regulations – including the Bachelor studies regulation, the Master studies regulation and the regulation for the educational process.*
3. *Consider developing a regulation for exams and implementing a more complex examination that would combine oral, written, practical and multiple-choice kind of exams, when relevant to assess the achievements in relationship with the preset learning outcomes.*



4. *Include the training opportunities related to digital skills and teaching strategies into the staff development plan. It should be linked with appropriate funding for it to reach its objective.*

2.7. Research

According to SER, the Universi College has a research development plan, however ET could not locate this document. However, the Statute of the institution provides main pillars of the scientific work in the College and its approach to research development. Regulation on Ethics in Science and Research is additional document developed by the UC which partially covers research activities, scientific research, and research evaluation. Nevertheless, these cannot substitute the development plan, as the statute is a legal document and cannot be (and should not be) subject to frequent changes, while development plan should evolve according to the progress, achievements and challenges that the College faces during its implementation and strategic goals of the institution. ET recommends to develop a proper research development plan to guide the College through several years, with a certain timeline, resource allocation projections, and specific indicators and alike.

While the document is not in place, academic staff of the College has an ambition to set its footprint in the international research arena. The interviews clarified that the College has approached their goal from several angles – first is the “WE Care” project, which attracts young PhDs to the College by providing financial support to their doctoral studies in exchange to the 5-year term of working with the institution. ET considers this to be a great initiative and that the College should carry this forward for the years to come. Second, College invests in research capacity building of their current staff by providing relevant trainings in research methods. English language proficiency is a challenge here as well as in other higher education institutions in the country. The College provides English language courses to their staff, however, it is voluntary. Third, College has been successfully seeking out funds and partners to upgrade their labs and equipment, conducive to the research as well as teaching purposes. As College leadership mentioned, the laboratory equipment of over 30000 Euros were granted to them by the German partners who will cooperate with their Nursing Department.

The ET considers that the applied research is the stronghold of the College. The tests that is done by academic staff and students in the sports medicine lab is a good example of this. This is, at the same time, commercialised research, which College provides to the interested parties for a fee. This is also a good example of the community engagement, as research based on these



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data can very well benefit the community. While these tests are useful as raw results, those could also be used as secondary data for scientific publications as well. *ET considers, the College should capitalise on applied research and base its strength in the data collection and community diagnostics. This way it will be not only research-active, but helpful to its larger community.*

Academic staff is obliged to produce a scientific paper per academic year. With the teaching load, it is uncertain, whether they will be able to do so. And if they are not, it is unclear, how it is going to be reflected on their further cooperation with the College. Moreover, it is unclear, how not producing research papers will be reflected upon institution's strategic goals of producing high quality research? During the interview, most of the full-time academic staff at the session had another job, apart from the teaching responsibilities in the College. Adding this to the equation makes the goal of research excellence even less attainable.

The SER mentions that academic staff produces research output under the name of the institution. These works can be found on the College's web-site under the 'Research' icon, where each academic staff has its research history available. This is a good example of information accessibility. However, when going through the academic staff members' portfolios, the ET discovered that several of them were identical. For instance, Abdullah Havolli and Arbesa Havolli both have a portfolio of Abdullah Havolli; Blenda Luta and Naile Nitaj have a portfolio of Blenda Luta; Shqipeoje Shala and Shukrije Statovci have a portfolio of Shala. *The ET hopes that this is not done on purpose, as it does not see the necessity to list all of the academic staff members in the research section, if they have not developed their research portfolio yet.* Hence, ET strongly advises College leadership to remove inaccurate information from the web-site.

The ET is sceptical that the College with limited resources will be able to produce quality scientific work of the international value in the coming years. This is not to say that the academic staff is not motivated, or that ET doubts College's aspiration. This is to stress that tremendous financial, time and human recourses are needed for the new scholars to establish themselves at the international arena. And the countries that have a large gap in producing scientific research will face challenges at the level of 'how' to do modern research, 'how' to be published and 'how' to publish with impact. Unless there is no state-wide support system mobilised in this area, it will be hard for a single private institution to see results in less than 10 years. Hence, ET suggests that the College seriously studies the specifics of research-intensive-universities, their structural and financial abilities and their strategic approaches to



research. Based on this understanding, the College should decide, what kind research they are a) capable of doing now, and b) can do in 3-5 years' time without depleting their resources. This will lead the College to a more realistic research development plan for internal use and for external accountability.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Develop a research development for several years, with a certain timeline, resource allocation projections, and specific indicators and alike.*
- 2. Capitalise on applied research and base College's strength in the data collection and community diagnostics.*
- 3. College leadership has to remove inaccurate information from the web-site.*

2.8. Staff, employment processes and professional development

The SER reflects the fact that the UC has developed the Academic Staff Handbook, in addition to other regulations and policies for staff recruitment in accordance with the study programmes' requirements and in compliance with MEST's instructions. Its recruitment policy the UC has included to its Statute and regulations.

The Academic Staff Handbook describes requirements for full and part-time jobs, for academic as well as non-academic positions. The conditions, qualifications, responsibilities are described and included as well in this Handbook. There are also descriptions of some specific titles like Doctor of Honor ("Dr. Honoris causa") and "Honorary Member of the College" granted for achievements, support and contribution to this College.

The UC includes an example of the job advertisement as an annex to the SER used for proving the academic position that corresponds with their requirements. In overall, there are 17 full-time (out of them 9 – with PhDs) and 25 (3 with PhDs) part-time members of the academic staff in the UC. Description of all the job responsibilities for each job position is given to the hired candidate with a clearly stated objectives, duties, responsibilities and their rights.

As far as the orientation is concerned, the Dean of each department gives all the information about the job and College's programme to the new comer, and provides the manual and regulations for the academic staff. The SER reflects that Dean also introduces the new comer with the other staff of the College.

The ratio of students per full time staff member is adequate for both programmes - Physical Culture, Sports and Recreation and General Nursing with an adequate staff. According to the SER, the staff is informed about the criteria and processes of performance evaluation by the Dean and the



Regulation for quality assurance. At the same time, criteria and processes for performance evaluation are presented in a very general form without specific description.

The ET thinks that for the staff performance evaluation, the SER provides the satisfactory amount of information - various questionnaires for students, academic staff, with self-evaluation, teacher observation forms. The patterns of questionnaire include all required elements: from aims, instructions and up to incorporates suggestions. The student's evaluations are confidential, and include all necessary information.

According to the SER, in the case that results of evaluation are not satisfactory (with less than 70%), Office for Quality Assurance takes further care of the issue in cooperation with the dean of the respective department. The ET takes into account the college is quite small, and therefore, the decision is taken on the ad hoc basis. The ET thinks that it is acceptable and more efficient.

The institution has an excellent the "We care" programme for PhD training. According to the standards in the general area „2. Strategic planning, governance and administration” of the KAA manual, -the ET has asked about `We care` during online meeting. There was the following explanation about this programme provided during online meeting: it requires the beneficiaries to spend 5 years after PhD in the college. Currently the college is supporting 9 candidates, and out of them there are two (2) people who are supported from this programme. From the provided description, the UC supports all 9 candidates under this programme who are doing their PhD studies under this description. The ET thinks that from this prospective, it is the future investment into its stable sustainable resource – the dedicated staff.

In overall, there are fair procedures of staff recruiting and fair opportunities for personal and career development (*Academic Staff Handbook*).

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure that criteria and processes for performance evaluation are presented in a more detailed and clear manner so that it helps faculty members to strive for reaching these standards. Clarify the share of each type of evaluation within the overall performance evaluation.*
2. *Provides more information and details for staff professional development, including the description for "We care" to the members of the academic community.*
3. *Continue the efforts of staff development, beyond the `We care` program and based on the result of the performance evaluation.*



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2.9. Student administration and support services

The college has set its admission processes according to the legal framework of Kosovo. The admission requirements for the BA programmes only mention the Matura Exam diploma – which is mandatory - or equivalent obtained in a foreign country but recognized as equivalent, while for the MA programmes the admission requirements include a diploma from a BA level study programme. This information can also be found on the website of the college. The SER does not mention any entrance exam. The ET does not know which is the criteria used to select from the interested candidates, if any selection is done in order to be able to check whether they are fairly assessed. The college should consider clarifying this aspect – whether they rank potential students by their results at the Matura exam or by their results from the secondary education.

The SER mentions that the study programmes the college is offering are modular (p. 59), but then the college mentions that courses are organized in semesters. Both modular (with classes organized in an aggregated manner, thus offering the chance of an intensive study of a small number of subjects) and semestrial organization of the content within a study programme (when several disciplines are organized in a 1-2h/week manner planned over the period of 10-14 weeks) are popular within the European HEIs. The Universi College should decide which of these two models it prefers. The ET praises the efforts of the college to adopt a ECTS system and to implement it. The ET recommends the college to constantly evaluate the workload required from students in order to pass an exam of a discipline. This workload should be reflected in the number of credits allocated to each discipline – now a majority disciplines have allocated an equal number of 6 ECTS/discipline.

The college only allows for transfers at the beginning of the semester, in accordance with MEST regulations. The college provided in appendix 30 of the SER the `Regelation on Transfer` which included relevant conditions for approving a transfer. It would be useful if it would also include the conditions for the transferred students to take up exams to cover their eventual gaps – for example: is there any fee for sitting these exams? Moreover, the regulation should also mention the conditions for transferring students from Universi college to other HEIs in Kosovo or abroad.

The website of the college (<https://kolegjiuniversi-edu.net>) presents some relevant information about the range of programmes and courses offered, programme requirements, student services,



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the campus etc. However, information about the student tuition and practiced fees are missing as well as relevant documents of the institution, decisions of the decisional bodies of the college etc. The ET recommends the college to update their website reflecting this information.

For the new students, the college has prepared a manual `with all the necessary information for the services offered for the students by the College, which serves as a basic guide for the new students` (p. 60), but the SER does not mention an orientation program. The SER at appendix 31 included the student handbook which contains 18 pages of relevant information for new students including the rights and responsibilities of the students. The handbook should be periodically revised together with the students / student organizations to ensure its content is relevant to the target group. Moreover, the Appendix 30 (Transfer regulations) mentions that the college signs a contract with the transferred students `which stipulates the rights and obligations of the parties`. The ET recommends that such a contract should be signed with all students and it is a good idea to also refer to the tuition fee and payment procedures as well as penalties in the case of breaching the contract conditions.

A range of scholarships and financial support are available to students in order to both stimulate and reward performance – 5 scholarships are awarded for this purpose, as well as to socially support students with disadvantaged backgrounds – they benefit of a discount for up to 30% of the tuition fee. From the appendix 2 of the SER, the ET could find out that these discounts are allocated to students who are civil servants at the level of the Central Government of Kosovo or the Municipal level, or are veterans, member or internees of the KLA o their immediate family members. It is not very clear whether there is any other financial support addressed to students from disadvantaged backgrounds – for example, students with disabilities or orphans. If yes, the ET recommends the college to promote this opportunity more intensely as the information might help potential students to make the decision to continue their studies at this college. The appendix 33 of the SER provided the list of scholarship criteria for the academic year 2020/2021. Analysing it, the ET observed it was a list for scholarships awarded based on performance. It included the following sentence: `*Students who decline a grade and pass the same exam twice may not receive a scholarship`*. The ET recommends the college to consider eliminating this criteria from the list as receiving an scholarship – no matter if it is a performance scholarship or a social financial aid – and fighting against a potential abuse from a teachers should not in any case be conditioned. Appealing procedures are meant to protect students from potential abusive teachers and having the right to decline a grade or pass an exam twice should not hinder a students' opportunity to receive a scholarship, if he/she deserves it.



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The ET recommends the college to also publish these criteria as well as those based on which the tuition fee discount is granted.

The college is collecting data on the satisfaction of students about the programme through the developed questionnaires – which are part of the QA system and discussed in detail in section 5 of this report. At this point it is not clear how and when did the college use these data to improve itself. The ET recommends the college to complete the image provided by the satisfaction surveys with data collected from the different bodies of the institution – e.g. statistics from the student services or the administrative staff. The analysis of these data at the level of the QA structures could complete the image about the efficiency and efficacy of the college in reaching its strategic objectives. However, the college should not forget about the importance of ensuring the protection of the collected and stored data as well as the importance of making publicly available the resulted reports. At the moment of writing this report, the above-mentioned documents were only enumerated on the college website, but not uploaded there. They will help inform future development decisions for the college, but they have to protect the anonymity / identity of different members of the community.

The college has a Code of Ethics and the aspects of misconduct and plagiarisms are discussed at length in section 4 of this report. The college has also mentioned in the SER that it has an appeal procedure in place, and its existence was confirmed by the online discussions – as all those present knew about this procedure. It did not seem very popular among students and it might be interesting to see why is that (if it is any issue of trust in the procedure or just a coincidence that students don't feel the need to contest their gradings). The ET did not see this procedure, thus we recommend the college to ensure that it guarantees impartial re-evaluation of the exams for example by using independent committees that do not involved the teacher that first graded the paper.

The college offers career planning consultations, consultations for getting employed, personal and psychological counselling (SER, p. 63) as well as transportation from Podujeva (p. 62). The SER does not mention the college having a dormitory or canteen/cafeteria, but some food and drinks machines Everyone mentioned they are comfortable using the cafeteria available across the street. However, the counselling opportunities offered by the college did not seem very popular among the students – almost none of them reported, during the online discussions, having used these services. The ET recommends the college to monitor the efficiency and efficacy of these services during the performance evaluation of their activity in order to identify any potential access or relevance issue that might prevent students from using these available



resources. The discussions with students on a permanent basis about their student life might help the college identify the best ways to address their needs – whether there are social (e.g. by offering them housing and cafeteria/canteen options) or academic (e.g. by offering them additional academic support to cover the gaps the students might be facing). These discussions might complement the satisfaction surveys the college is implementing.

Besides the student services, the college also offers to the students the opportunity to get involved in extracurricular activities, some of which are also relevant for the surrounding community – for example the measuring of vital signs for the general public is both beneficial for the participants as well for the volunteer students who get to put into practice what they have learnt in theory during their studies. The college should also consider keeping the premises of the college opened for students beyond their scheduled classes so students can use these facilities to work on individual or group projects, prepare some other volunteering activities etc. This open-space policy as well as spaces adapted for students to socialize within the college campus can help them feel welcomed and encouraged to spend more time on the premises. This might help them be more involved in the college's life. Moreover, the college could allocate a small fund to cover the costs for different student projects.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

Recommendations:

1. Clarify the admission criteria and publish them on the website;
2. Reevaluate the ECTS credits allocation among the courses so that they reflect the student workload required to pass the exam of the discipline.
3. Update the website with the missing information about the offered study programmes – e.g. the tuition fees. Publish the reports prepared by the QA structures.
4. Ensure that the appeal procedure guarantees an impartial reevaluation of the student's paper by assigning this task to an independent committee that does not include the teacher that firstly evaluated the paper.
5. Monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the student services, check that students have real access to them and take steps towards making them more popular among students.
6. Consider offering the spaces and financial support to the individual students/groups of students with initiative of organizing extracurricular activities with and for students.



2.10. Learning resources and facilities

The Business plan of the college includes financial provisions of the costs for the next three years. The costs include facility maintenance expenses and investments of 2000 euros into 2019 up to 4394 Euros in 2022. Moreover, there are services costs included. From the budget tables, the income overcomes the expenses, therefore one can evaluate that if the necessities are estimated corrected, the college has sufficient financial resources to ensure adequate financing for acquisition of equipment and services. For example: the college mentions in the SER that they have sufficient computers for the activity within the college. More on the financial situation and planning of the college is discussed in the section 2.3 of this report.

„The College has 6 classrooms, 4 for lectures with 50 seats, one with 100 seats and another one with 80 seats; a library, a computer lab, a sports medicine and physiotherapy where various tests and researches are done related to sports and sports medicine. There is also the nursing lab, a cabinet with equipment for sportive matches analyses through computer and the sports hall which cover an area of 1800m²” (SER, p. 66). They are clean and adequate for the learning environment as it was easily seen in the video submitted by the college to the KAA and ET. The SER mentioned that the college periodically undergoes the legally required external audit of its facilities. Moreover, the SER also mentions that ‘The College meets the minimal conditions for students and staff with special needs’. The efforts to make both the premises and the learning materials more accessible are encouraged by the ET to continue.

At the moment, most of the materials and books available in the library are in Albanian and the SER does not mention any online databases/ journal that the college has access to. The ET recommends the college to actively monitor that the library provides relevant learning materials for the students in relationship with the recommended bibliography for the disciplines they study. As it was also mentioned in the section 7 dedicated to research, the ET recommends the college to continue its efforts of ensuring access to online databases and research journals that would give both faculty members and students access to up-to-date research results.

The college has provided the list of the equipment owned by the college and used by its members of the academic community. There is a complete list of them and a responsible person of monitoring them. ‘The College has 40 computers and laptops available 24 hours for the staff and the students. They are equipped with the appropriate software and have internet access’. Moreover, ‘There is a computer or laptop and a video projector in each of the classes and there is a person in charge from the support staff’ – SER, p. 67. The ET recommends the college to consider organizing training opportunities for its faculty members ensuring they have the skills to use the computing equipment and appropriate software.



Compliance level: Substantially compliant

Recommendations:

1. *Ensure that adequate financial resources are allocated for investing in infrastructure and learning materials so that a qualitative learning environment is guaranteed and that strategic objectives regarding learning and teaching are met. Also, monitor that the library provides the minimum learning materials to cover the recommended bibliography for the study programmes offered by the college.*
2. *Continue the efforts to ensure access to international databases and research journals and motivate both students and faculty members to access these resources.*
3. *Offer training opportunities for faculty members to develop their skills in using the computing equipment and the software made available by the college.*

2.11. Institutional cooperation

Cooperating with local and international institutions is portrayed as one priority for the college management and an aspect that they constantly work on – they are mentioned among the strategic goals in the `Strategic Plan 2016-2021` (Appendix 3 of the SER). To prove the importance this area has for the college, a ViceRector has assigned the portfolio of `Foreign Affairs` and there is also a `Regulation for cooperation`. The ET recommends that the college sets strategic objectives for both local and international cooperation in order to be able to direct the available resources to these priorities. They can be included in the general strategic plan of the institution or within a specialized document dealing with the institutional cooperation and/or the international area of the college's activity. The internationalization is a complex area that usually includes more than cooperation with international institutions – for example: objectives regarding the internationalization `at home` can be considered (including international relevant subjects in the curricula/syllabus, adapting the campus to be more welcoming for international students or foreign visiting professors, increasing the English commandment level at the level of students, faculty and administrative staff etc.).

The college already has a *`dozen of cooperation agreements with academic institutions and not only academic but those that would benefit the College and its students`* (SER, p. 71) – and their list is available on the college website. Moreover, the college is a co-founder of the Balkan University Association (BAU) – a structure whose aim is *`to determine a leading vision for the future through the universities, the libraries, the research centers in Balkan region on the base of common global values by considering the necessities of the time`* (Source: <http://www.baunas.org/content/aims-and-objectives.html>).



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Some of the cooperations of the college have been operationalized in common projects – including initiatives co-financed through the Erasmus+ instrument. Knowing the complex and complicated political context in Kosovo, the ET praises the efforts done by the college to get involved in international partnerships and projects: *‘it is worth mentioning the mobility project ERASMUS + and MEVLANA, through which projects, the students and the staff participate in the respective institutions to advance their knowledge’* (SER, p. 72). The college also welcomed 2 international students and 2 members of the administrative staff from abroad.

Part of its arrangements, the college was supposed to be the co-organizer of the annual conference in Dubrovnik regarding the sports, medical and human sciences which was supposed to be held in April 2020, but got postponed due to the international epidemiologic situation caused by the CoVid-19 pandemic. This conference is only one of the international events the college is organizing periodically as part of its efforts to support its students and faculty members to become internationally visible. The SER mentions that financial support is offered for both students and faculty members to participate in scientific conferences abroad and publish their research paper in internationally relevant journals. However, the ET did not find the corresponding budget lines in the financial documents provided. The ET recommends the college to allocate resources for research-related activities and increase the transparency around this financial instrument so that it motivates more students and teachers to try to apply and benefit from these resources.

As mentioned in the beginning of this part of the report, cooperation with local institutions and potential employers is also important for the college. Their relationship with these third parties is a good one – aspect confirmed by the online discussions conducted by the ET with representatives of the employers. They were all satisfied with the graduates of this college. The SER mentions that the college encourages its faculty members to participate in the life of the community – for example by sitting in local committees that discuss local strategies. The ET recommends that the college considers participation in such activities as part of the performance evaluation that is considered for the promotion of its staff members in order to motivate them to become more involved in the community issues.

The collaborations established by the college also translate in practical opportunities for the students. The ET recommends the college to continue this endeavor and to increase the efforts put into promoting the internship opportunities they create for their students. Clear regulations and procedures regarding the practical component of the student training would be useful in order to ensure the quality of these stages. They should also be granted ECTS credits corresponding to the expected workload that a student is supposed to cover for these stages –



since they are a relevant and essential part of their training and the process of developing skills and ability corresponding to the specific learning outcomes.

The ET recommends that the local employers and representatives of the local authorities are invited to be part of the consultative bodies of the college in order to review the study programmes and to discuss future collaboration opportunities – for example in opening new study programmes relevant for the workforce market as well as initiating collaborations in the field of research.

The college communicates with its graduates, but the ET feels that a more institutional approach could benefit everyone – e.g. establishing an Alumni structure, developing procedures of keeping and updating the data basis with the contacts of all graduates. The ET recommends the college to consider involving graduates in the life of the college – for example: in fundraising, recruitment or college promotion. The ET also recommends to check EACEA site with the new opportunities for the Balkan countries.

The ET also considered the feedback to the first draft of this report from the Universi College provided to all chapters, and it is satisfied that the ET comments are taken into consideration, and will be implemented to improve the UC's activities till 2021.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Set strategic objectives for the international cooperation and direct (financial) resources to those priority areas and consider elements of the internationalization at home.*
- 2. Consider options for improving the English commandment of students, faculty members and staff members, and create mechanisms to ensure the quality of the internships and practical stages for students.*
- 3. Clarify the manner in which participation in international conferences or mobilities is valued within the performance evaluation done for the promotion of a faculty member.*
- 4. Involve partners – representatives of local institutions and employers – in consultative bodies that review the study programmes; and alumni - fundraising, recruiting promoting the college and in consultative bodies reviewing the study programmes.*



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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND JUDGEMENTS OF THE ET

The ET states that out of 11 general areas of this round of institutional accreditation of the Universi College (UC), the ET accounted 5 substantially compliant and 6 partially compliant general areas in this round of institutional accreditations. The ET also received quite positive impression from the online meetings during the challenging time of the COVID-19, the importance of the socially responsible disciplines (such as nursery - with the patterns of ageing population in the broad geographical regions of Europe) and the external demand for this profession to improve the conditions of elderly people. At the same time, the Self-evaluation report (SER) and some reporting information was less satisfactory. Due to a very tight difference between the standards in institutional evaluation, the ET revisited this case few times before preparing this final decision, with various doubts between granting accreditation for a short period (for example, a conditional accreditation for one year, - to give the college a second chance to improve itself) and not granting it. Taking all of the abovementioned into account, the decision was a very difficult one due to the rigid requirements of the accreditation mechanisms which states that: *“The overall compliance level is determined by the compliance across all general areas. The most frequent compliance level across the general areas determines the overall compliance level. In order to be granted a positive decision for the program and institutional re/accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a substantial compliance level in the overall judgment”*.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that according to Kosovo regulations, the Universi College (UC) is **“Partially compliant”** with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual – the UC meets 5 general areas in substantially compliance’s manner and another 6 out of 11 general areas in a partially compliance’s manner. Unfortunately, in this situation and considering the national legislation, the ET cannot grant the institutional accreditation to the UC, therefore recommends **not to accredit** the Universi College.*

4. APPENDICES

Not applicable.

Expert Team

Chair



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