



Republika e Kosovës  
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

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***AAB COLLEGE***  
***FACULTY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION***

***BA (BACHELOR OF ARTS)***  
***PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION***

***RE-ACCREDITATION***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**



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*29.03.2021, Prishtina*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit (SV): 29th of March 2021**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Peter Parycek*

**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*
- *Leona Kovaci, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*
- *Ilijane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER)*
- *Additional Document (Reasoning for curricula changes; further faculty details)*

**Criteria used for program evaluation:**

- *KAA-Guidelines*



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## 1.2. Site visit schedule

Date: 29th of March 2021

<b>09.00 – 09.40</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated
<b>09.45 – 10:45</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1: Public Administration/ BA - Prishtina
<b>10:50 – 11.50</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 2: Public Administration/ BA – Ferizaj
<b>11:50 – 12:30</b>	Lunch break
<b>12.30 – 13:10</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
<b>13.15 – 14.05</b>	Meeting with teaching staff
<b>14.10 – 14.40</b>	Meeting with students
<b>14:45 – 15:25</b>	Meeting with graduates
<b>15:30 – 16:10</b>	Meeting with employers of graduates
<b>16:10 – 16:20</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
<b>16:20 – 16:30</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



### **1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation**

*"AAB College is the largest non-public institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo and the region."*

*"Currently, within AAB College operate a total of 14 faculties which offer study programs at BA and MA level. AAB College offers teaching in its main campus in Prishtina, and in the two branches in Gjakova and Ferizaj accredited by decision of KAA and licensed by MEST."*

*"AAB has ensured 90% of the permanent qualified staff according to the strict requirements of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA), it has digitised the academic and administrative processes with original programming applications and solutions, it has increased the number of bachelor and master programs, it has increased the number of students, it has significantly improved the quality and number of student services, etc." (SER, p. 3)*

*"The Faculty of Public Administration is an academic unit within AAB College that offers study programs of bachelor level (BA) and master level (MA), respectively level 6 and level 7 according to the NQF/EQF. The Bachelor Program in Public Administration, has two profiles: 1) Public Administration and 2) Political Science and Diplomacy, with a total of 180 ECTS, whereas the Master of Arts program in Public Administration and Diplomacy (MA), is of level 7 NQF/EQF, with a total of 120 ECTS. The minimum duration of bachelor studies is 3 years, respectively 2 years for master studies, and the number of credits is 180 ECTS, respectively 120 ECTS (60 ECTS per academic year)." (SER, p. 3)*

*"The Bachelor program in Public Administration was initially accredited in 2017 by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) with the decision no. 1587 dated 14/12/2007, and was two times re- accredited, in 2011 with the decision number 284/11, dated 13.07 / 2011, and in 2013 with the decision number 513/13, dt. 08/07/2013." (SER, p. 4)*

COVID 19 is a challenge for the higher education sector, but also an excellent opportunity to learn what content will be provided to students in the future as asynchronous information in the form of video, audio or text via learning platforms; what kind of content will be taught online interactively; and what content will be conducted on campus.

*Recommendation:*



- *ET recommends analysing these experiences in detail and also collecting the expectations of the students. Future students will likely expect a good mix of asynchronous online content, synchronous online instruction, and traditional on-campus instruction. Especially for employed students, this will play an increasingly important role in their choice; the actual location of the university will play a secondary role. The critical challenge now is to build on the experience and derive strategic decisions from it.*

## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The SER describes in good quality mission, objectives and administration. During the site visit, the management of the faculty was able to provide examples and context.

COVID19 crisis was managed very well due to the electronic processes throughout and good technical equipment. Within 24 hours, the transition to online teaching was completed, and all courses were held. The quick adaption to online teaching was also confirmed in further discussions with the students. The good technical equipment can be confirmed by the ET based on other accreditation procedures that have been carried out in recent years. The biggest challenge was the final exams; ABB used a self-developed automated online exam system for the whole institution.

For management issues mandatory daily online-stand-up meetings were introduced for ensuring communication exchange between the faculty members. Three-day training for online teaching was conducted, but not for all teaching assistants.

Faculty management estimates between 70 and 80% of classes will be taught on campus again and 20% to 30% online in the future. Evaluations are currently being carried out, and student expectations are being gathered.

The ongoing development of the mission, goals, overarching didactic and research concept could be demonstrated by the changes made in the curriculum and a detailed overview of their goals (additional document). These developments are based on accreditation reports, discussion within the faculty, and integration of external stakeholder perspectives. The most



significant changes since the last accreditation were the introduction of the Debate Club, increase in EU content, additional compulsory English courses, compulsory BA thesis and introduction of international lecturers and practical work in the fifth semester. An overview of the international lecturers was provided in additional documents.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.</i>	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. ET recommends establishing a strategic task force for the future of teaching after COVID 19.*
- 2. ET recommends intensive discussion and development of mixed teaching methods (online, hybrid, in-class) and highly recommends designing an overall concept per semester and not delegating to the individual lecturer.*



## 2.2. Quality management

The quality management maturity level for AAB is, in general, well developed. The usual standards like self-evaluation, continuous improvement of the faculty and the program are well established. (Standard 2.1, 2.2, 2.3) The faculty management and the quality management provided evidence about the program development during the SV; in the SER, five concrete developments are documented: bachelor thesis, internship, international lecturers, EU related courses and improvements in publishing by staff (p.44). A detailed list of the international lecturers, topics and dates have been provided in additional documents; insights into their ongoing development have been delivered in additional documents. (Standard 2.7)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the biggest challenge was online exams. AAB developed an automated online exam system, which randomly selects a defined set of questions out of 200 to 300 questions. A unique exam is created for each student. The questions are divided into three categories, from multiply choice questions to more challenging questions, to open-ended questions; the teaching assistants correct the third category, category one and two are automatically corrected. Based on the statistical analysis, the online exams produced similar results in terms of grading with a tendency towards lower grading, overall, between 3 to 6% less successfully; this indicates that the online exams are effective. The students are not satisfied with the online exam, due to the new nature of the examination and the general stress caused by COVID19.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a three-day training for online teaching were conducted, but not for all lecturers. Less than 100 teachers have received the intensive and comprehensive three-day training due to the high external price. Currently, further training is planned and executed. The extent to which train-the-trainer was conducted was not entirely clear. The SER already included an analysis of the online teaching. A pie chart shows that more than two-thirds of the students agree that the professor has similarly involved the students compared with in-class teaching. A quite positive and surprising result because online teaching was rated well overall by many universities in Austria, but the interaction was rated as requiring improvement in many cases. Nevertheless, it provides the ongoing development of quality assurance processes. (Standard 2.9)

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No





<i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
<i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
<i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
<i>Standard 2.4.</i> Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	X	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (e.g. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

All KAA standards are fully compliant; nevertheless, the ET recommends focusing on one of the most critical strategy questions: the future of teaching. The quality management office has a curial role in developing and questioning the future of teaching by laying the foundations with quantitative and quantitative analyses of online teaching and student expectations.

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. ET recommends rigorous evaluation of student's expectations for future teaching through surveys, focus groups and interviews and detailed evaluation of online teaching.*
- 2. ET recommends further online teaching training and ensuring that all faculty members have attended a least a one-day training.*



3. *ET recommends testing further possibilities for interactive online teaching through the combination of break-out rooms and online whiteboards like Miro, Mural, Conceptboard or similar tools.*
4. *ET recommends designing hybrid scenarios for the winter semester 2021.*
5. *ET recommends evaluating internal regulations about ensuring the possibilities of synchronous interactive online teaching, online examination etc., for post COVID19 mixed scenarios.*

### **2.3. Academic staff**

The SER AAB Prishtina, SER, Branch Ferizaj and CV offer a mixed overview about the faculty due to the two different locations and the regulation of providing two different faculties. Both SERs include the same table of faculty members on page 23. The SER does not offer two different lists of responsible professors for the two different faculties, which is necessary to evaluate standard 3.1 and 3.5. After the SV, AAB provided an updated list of the faculty, but the additional document still does not separate the faculty for AAB Prishtina and AAB Ferizaj.

Both SER provide a list of a separated core faculty; 7 full-time professors on the AAB Prishtina campus and six full-time professors for the branch Ferizaj.

The seven main responsible staff members are provided (SER Prishtina, p.19) for the program executed at the campus in Prishtina:

- Dr. Petrit Bushi
- Dr. Xhemazie Ibraimi
- Dr. Agim Beqiri
- Dr. Basri Muja
- Dr. Ylber Aliu
- Dr. Jeton Kelmendi
- Dr. Ramë Buja

Unfortunately, only the name, status, qualification/position, academic degree, and workload are provided, but not their specific responsibility, so it is pretty challenging to collect the information from CVs, additional documents, and syllabi to evaluate standard 3.1. The following table was developed by the ET based on SER, additional documents and CVs:



Name	CV	Courses	Publications	
Dr. Petrit Bushi	Doctor of juridical science	3 Courses: Introduction to the; Law Financial Law; Public Procurement.	0	
Dr. Xhemazie Ibraimi	Doctor of Administrative Procedure	1 Course, Administrative Procedure	2 in 2018, 1 in 2019	
Dr. Agim Beqiri	Doctor of Science in the field of public administration	2 Courses: Organization and Management of the Administration; Political Sociology.	3 in 2018, 0 in 2019	
Dr. Basri Muja*	Dr. phil./ Political Science	CV is available but not allocated to a course, neither in the SER nor in the additional documents.	0	
Dr. Ylber Aliu	Doctor of Political Science	3 courses: Low on Labour; Organization and Management of the Administration, EU Institutions and Policies	2 in 2018, 0 in 2019	
Dr. Jeton Kelmendi	Doctor of Political Science	SER no further references; additional documents: Media and politics	0	
Dr. Ramë Buja	Doctor of political science	Introduction to International Relations Comparative Policies	0	

The quality of the provided information regarding staff members and courses is just sufficient. The fit of scientific background based on studies and publications is mainly in line with the courses. The number of publications is not sufficient; four of the seven leading staff members have not published at all, either scientific papers, or books, or conference papers.

The SER stated, *"the period 2014-2019 has participated in international conferences and has published about 117 publications in international scientific journals distributed by years. The articles are published in journals that are on platforms such as WEB OF SCIENCE, SCOPUS, EBSCO, DOAJ, WORLDCAT, platforms accepted according to the Administrative Instruction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)."* ET agrees the academic output has substantially improved, but it is still critical, especially for the leading staff members. Perhaps the remaining faculty members publish more, but based on the current information, an exact mapping of the members to the two locations is impossible. The core faculties fulfil standard 3.1, but a final evaluation for the whole faculty is not possible, and therefore, standard 3.1 is not fulfilled.

The legal requirement is that for each study group and 60 credits, at least one full-time staff member with a PhD degree must be employed. The program consists of 180 credits and one study group; therefore, three full-time staff members holding a PhD must be employed; AAB has employed seven full-time professors (core-faculty), so Standard 3.2 is fulfilled; a second



study group is possible, but due to the non-stringent information and the lack of publications for some of the staff members it is a critical factor, one group is highly recommended a second one is recommended based on the overall size and quality of the faculty. (Standard 3.5)

The legal requirement is that for each study group and 60 credits, at least one full-time staff member with a PhD degree must be employed. In the specific case, the program consists of 180 credits and one study group, so there must be at least three full-time professors employed; AAB has employed 6, so the Standard 3.2 is fulfilled; an additional study group would theoretically be possible, but due to the non-stringent information one group is recommended. (Standard 3.5)

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#### **Comments ABB**

1. Of the full-time members of staff, 25 hold a PhD degree from the fields of public administration, law, and political sciences.
2. Based on the formal criteria set out under the Accreditation Manual, AAB College has employed a total of 13 full time members of academic staff with a PhD degree which allows us to have at least 13 study groups (1 study group = 1 full time PhD professor). We have requested 750, respectively 500 students in Prishtina campus and 250 students in Ferizaj campus.
3. There is no strict separation of staff to only be in Prishtina and Ferizaj campuses because they are mobile, and they teach their respective subject in both campuses. What it is important is that, both campuses have seven, respectively six full time members of staff with PhD degree

#### **Response ET:**

1. The calculation of the ET is based on that information provided in the SER and the core team consists of 6 senior full-time faculty members, holding a PhD. The SER of Ferinzaj and the SER of Prishtina are listing in total 25 PhDs and 6 are assigning to Ferinzaj and 7 to Prishtina, in total 13. If these additional 12 full-time faculty members are taken into account, then another 12 full-time lecturers could be used for the calculation.
2. The calculation is not plausible, because "1 study group = 1 full time PhD professor", who is eligible to cover 60 credits and not for the entire program.
3. Legally the two locations must be evaluated separately and therefore the additional 12 staff members, need to be allocated to one location.



Based on the information, the BA program in Public Administration is covered by 72% of regular staff members (p. 19); because of the missing allocation, it is not possible to check in detail. Final evaluation is not possible, because of the mixed faculty table, but based on the size of the overall faculty, it will properly cover the regulated 50%. (Standard 3.4)

Ongoing staff development is well established at AAB College and was also taken up by the faculty. (Standard 3.6, 3.8)

Faculty members are actively participating in conferences based on SV-meeting and information provided in the CV; Students praised the excellent accessibility and responsiveness of the lecturers during the SV meeting. (Standard 3.7)

The discussion with the teaching staff was refreshingly open and also highly reflected. ET would like to thank for the discussion and highlight the faculty's significant improvements, especially in the area of academic activities.

Standards	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part-time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.</i>	partly*	
<i>Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on accreditation.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.</i>	properly*	



<i>Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.</i>	partly**	
<i>Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self- evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.</i>	X	

\* Final evaluation is not possible, because of the mixed faculty table, but based on the size of the overall faculty, it will properly cover the regulated 50%.

\*\*limited to one study group with 80 students.

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- ET highly recommends completely reversing the documentation and listing of the faculty for standard 3.1. For evaluating standard 3.1, it is necessary developing a table, which includes teaching courses, specific specialisation (PhD thesis topic), scientific publication overview for the respective field, science to science and science to public activities.*
- ET highly recommends improving the consistency of teaching staff documentation of AAB Prishtina and branch Ferizaj.*

**2.4. Educational process content**





The SER offers a good overview of the bachelor study program through clear qualification objectives and a multi-disciplinary approach. The heads of the study programme highlighted their multi-disciplinary program but agreed in the discussion that law is still the dominant part of the program. (Standard 4.1) One quite surprising objective is establishing knowledge in the field of document management and archiving. During the meeting with employers, it was highlighted that the need for these competencies is regulated, so they expect a great demand for archiving skills on the labour market.

The learning outcomes are very general described but comply National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. (Standard 4.2)

As mentioned in the first paragraph, the multi-disciplinary program has strong legal roots, as the law faculty developed the first curriculum. Since the last accreditation the head of study programs made the following changes:

- increase in EU related courses ("EU Administration" third semester for both profiles; "European Law" fifth semester for the profile general administration; "EU Institutions and Policies" sixth semester for the political science profile);
- the course "Statistics" changed to mandatory;
- English course is extended from one semester to two semesters;
- compulsory bachelor thesis.

All in all, the dominance of the law courses has been reduced but is still relatively high compared to international standards. However, the positive changes are to be highlighted, and finally, a curriculum is the faculty's decision. Nevertheless, with respect to the EU-Membership preparations, it is critical not to include more EU related elements in the very traditional curriculum. And within the respective subjects/syllabi, there is also modest or no EU relevant content at all. (Standard 4.3)

Students highlighted the debate club as course innovation, which provides cross-programme student exchange.

Documentation of the syllabi is well developed (Standard 4.4). The student-centred learning approach is mentioned and well described in the SER and was confirmed by students and graduates. (Standard 4.6)



Online examination already discussed in the section quality management is well established, and the results are monitored. (Standard 4.8)

The recommended internship has been developed in the third year, the fifth semester, with the subject on Administrative Clinic (practical work) (Standard 4.11).

Numerous cooperation agreements have been signed and established; the meeting with employers demonstrated the positive development and the incorporation of necessary topics into the curricula. (Standard 4.12)

Standards	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.</i>	partly*	
<i>Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.</i>	partly*	
<i>Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their</i>	X	





<i>studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.</i>		
<i>Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or students inconsistently assessed.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.</i>	X	

*\* In respect to the EU-Membership preparations, it is critical not to include more elements in the very traditional curriculum. And within the respective subjects/syllabi, there is also modest or no EU relevant content at all.*

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant



### **ET recommendations:**

- 1. Due to the current development and the political rapprochement with the EU and the associated legal implications, ET highly recommends increasing EU related content in the program and in respective courses.*
- 2. ET highly recommends teaching two to three courses in English in order to apply the language and to create exchange opportunities for incoming students, e.g. Erasmus.*
- 3. ET recommends further curriculum development; one possibility could be creating a more generic public management bachelor program by reducing law courses in the first, second, third and fourth semester. Some of the law courses could be moved to a new third profile in the third year. Management related courses would be established instead of law courses.*
- 4. The described standards in Standard 4.2 are "compliant" but are described in a very generic way; more substantial program specific elements for standard 4.2 are recommended.*

### **2.5. Students**

The meeting with students was delightful due to the good English spoken by some of the students and the excellent translation by the interpreters; ET thanks the students and the graduates for the discussion. Both students and graduates are delighted with the college, the faculty and the staff members. The head of the student parliament was present at the meeting, and she emphasised that their opinions are taken into account and integrated into decision-making processes. During the COVID19 crisis, students were involved in the decision-making processes, and they also actively support the university.

The switch to online classes worked very well, and all courses were held. Online exams worked, but they would prefer paper-based exams in the future. When asked about the future of teaching, the range of responses was a mix of 60% to 70% on campus and 30% to 40% online classes. Part of the graduates who finished in the summer semester 2020 confirmed the impression. Problems were only encountered with some of students' internet connections.

When asked about room for improvement, there was little feedback, at least the request for more opportunities for exchange programmes, more practice and also the suggestion for shorter



exchange programmes. Graduates brought in that they knew little to nothing to improve and that AAB has a higher level of maturity than the other higher education institutions.

The graduates consistently stated that they were well to very well prepared for the workplace and benefited greatly from the soft skills in particular. The graduates in attendance found a job very quickly and were also very well prepared for the interviews, letters of motivation and especially the written assessments.

<i>Standard</i>	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
<i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
<i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
<i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
<i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
<i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
<i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	
<i>Standard 5.9.</i> Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
<i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	X	
<i>Standard 5.11.</i> Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	



**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *ET recommends increasing exchange programmes, developing shorter formats and increasing practical experience exchange.*

**2.6. Research**

During the discussions with the faculty members, a good impression of the research activities was given. Some researchers have produced excellent publications in recent years, and the situation has improved considerably in recent years. Unfortunately, not all faculty members have fulfilled the designated minimum of one publication within the last three years. If 2018 is also included in the consideration period, then 5 out of 18 researchers have not met this target. A differentiation between Prishtina and branch Ferizaj is not possible. The biggest shortcoming is the lack of research focus, which is very much due to individual initiatives and less common research priorities. In addition to the lack of internal cooperation, there are unfortunately no cross-faculty research projects, which is a great opportunity, mainly because AAB also has faculties in media and computer science.

Teaching research is practised in some courses; it was described in great detail by Matilda Pajo during the meeting. The quantitative methods have been strengthened by revising the curriculum; the subject statistics have been changed from an elective to a compulsory subject.

In addition to the curriculum, AAB also funds research projects in which faculty members conduct research together with students and receive additional money for this. This applied research activity is particularly favourable because real problems are researched, and thus a transfer to society is ensured.

Standards	Compliance	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.</i>	partly	



<i>Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognised as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 6.9. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.</i>	partly	
<i>Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialisation of ideas developed by staff and students.</i>	X	
<i>Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.</i>	X	

**Compliance level:** Partially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. ET highly recommends developing a research strategy and research focal points.*
- 2. ET highly recommends increasing the research output.*
- 3. ET highly recommends establishing cross-faculty funded projects by AAB.*



4. *ET recommends evaluating to establish a design school similar to the D-School at Stanford University to bring students from different faculties together in a design course to solve problems in a prototypical way.*
5. *ET recommends expanding the funded teaching research projects.*

## 2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The SER highlights that the spaces and infrastructure, in general, have increased because the teaching process now takes place on the new campus of AAB College, which has more than 30.000m<sup>2</sup>. The ET knows the new campus well, which is very well equipped and sets high standards in the region. Financial resources and longtime execution have been sustainably provided by appropriate execution.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	Yes	No
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	X	
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups,	X	





subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.		
<p><i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <p>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years;</p> <p>d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for;</p> <p>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p>	X	
<i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *ET recommends continuing the improvement of the online library and online access.*
2. *ET recommends evaluating joined agreements with other higher education institutions for journal paper access.*



### 3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

ET expresses its sincere thanks for the great organisation of the online meeting, especially the excellent interpreters who ensured a continuous flow of discussion. The maturity level of the faculty has improved significantly, and, in some areas, the European standards are already being reached. The field of research still needs significant improvement.

ET would like to congratulate the entire team for successfully mastering the COVID19 crisis. On this basis, the strategic question of the future of teaching now needs to be addressed and not to return too quickly to the mode before COVID19. ET recommends looking at this question as an opportunity, e.g., developing mixed models; discussing entirely online models for employed students; or acceptance testing through offering the same content in two different didactic models.

*In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Bachelor program in Public Administration offered by AAB is substantially compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit/ the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number in the range of 160 - 240\* students to be enrolled in the program.*

*\*After reviewing the comments by AAB, in which the number of faculty staff members holding a PhD was increased, an additional study group can be justified. The recommendation of 160 students in the draft report can therefore be raised to a maximum of 240.*

#### Expert Team

**Peter Parycek**

**27.04.2021**

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)





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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
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