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BIZNESI COLLEGE
BANKS AND FINANCE IN BUSINESS BA

RE/ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

MAY 6th, 2021, PRISHTINA



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: May 6th, 2021

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. dr. Magdalena Platis*

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 2020-2021 for BANKS AND FINANCE IN BUSINESS (BA) – REACCREDITATION*
- *Syllabi for the BANKS AND FINANCE IN BUSINESS (BA) – appendix to SER*
- *CVs – appendix to SER*
- *Guidelines for practical work – appendix to SER*
- *Lease Contracts – appendix to SER*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual, July 2018*
- *KAA - THE MANUAL FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS – February 2021*

Additional documents – requested by the ET:

- *Latest 2 minutes of the meetings dedicated to the review of the abovementioned program where notes were taken about possible changes and opportunities for change.*
- *1-2 minutes of the Teaching Councils of the abovementioned program with quality assurance issues that generated conclusions and recommendations for continuous quality improvement.*
- *The role and activity of the Quality Assurance Coordinator of the abovementioned study program.*



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- *Quality assessments mechanisms and report for the overall program (the abovementioned program).*
- *The reports of the surveys data collected from students, graduates plus the links where results of these evaluations are made publicly available (SER has only the link with the data collected from stakeholders), if possible, for the abovementioned program.*
- *The procedure of evaluation of the quality assurance arrangements for the abovementioned program.*
- *A list/table of the academic staff in the study programs who are full-time employees and part-time staff.*
- *The consultation program of the academic staff involved in the program.*
- *The list with the current cooperation agreements for internships for students enrolled in the program.*
- *Video of the facilities.*

Additional documents received by the ET:

- *Annex 1 provides the last three minutes from the meetings held by HTSC of BIZNESI College.*
- *Annex 2 provides the last two minutes from the meetings of the Teaching Council of the study program Banking and Finance (BA)*
- *Anex - 5 -1 Summary report on the questionnaires conducted with the alumni of BIZNESI COLLEGE Eng Final*
- *Anex - 5 Summary report on the questionnaires Bank and Finance in Biznesi Alumni Eng Final*
- *1. Pergjigje ne dokumente BF dhe MF Eng 10may21 – other explanations to the requested documents: The role and activity of the Quality Assurance Coordinator of the abovementioned study programs; Quality assessments mechanisms and report for the overall program (the 2 abovementioned programs); A list/table of the academic staff in both study programs who are full-time employees and part-time staff; The description of some consultation program of the academic staff; The list with the current cooperation agreements for internships for students enrolled in both programs.*



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Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, July 2018*
- *Criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability*

1.2. Site visit schedule

06 of May

09.00 – 09.40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (<i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i>)
09:45 – 10:20	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
10:25 – 11:15	Lunch break
11:15 – 12:05	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 1. Banks and Finance in Business BA
12:10 – 13:00	Meeting with the heads of the study programme 2. Management and Finance MA
13:05 – 13:40	Meeting with teaching staff
13:45 – 14:15	Meeting with employers of graduates
14:20 – 14:30	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
14:30 – 14:40	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program



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

A general overview of the Biznesi College (BC) reveals that the institution was established in 2004 as a private Institution of Higher Education in Kosovo (PIHE), its establishment being based on the Regulation no. 2003/04 on the Promulgation of the Law on Higher Education, adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo and the Administrative Instruction on Licensing of Private Providers of Higher Education in Kosovo, no. 14/2003. The Biznesi College is licensed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology according to Decision no. 412/02-1 and 2/3593.

It is also important to reveal the fact explained in SER (page 4) that Biznesi College in Prishtina was accredited by a decision of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, to continue its activity in higher education in Prishtina since 2004, as well as from 2011-12, in the College Branch in Gjakova; from 2014-15, at the College Branch in Vushtrri, from 2014-15, at the College Training Center in Prizren, as well as from 2016-2017 with the College Branch in Prizren.

At present, the Business College manages the bachelor and the master level of studies. According to the decision for accreditation by KAA, as well as the decision of MEST for licensing, Biznesi College currently conducts its academic activity in four study programs of bachelor level and two programs of master level, and one program - level III according to National Qualifications Framework.

According to SER (page 7), the Biznesi College through this program has tried to offer a curriculum that differs from the programs offered by other public and private local higher education institutions. The program "Banks and Finance in Business", in the bachelor cycle is designed at a high level of compliance with similar programs of the University of Ljubljana www.uni-lj.si/eng), University of Split <https://www.unist.hr/en/> and several other Colleges in Europe.

The program "Banks and Finance in Business – BA" is designed as a full-time, studying while at work (part-time), generating 180 ECTS (60 ECTS/academic year). The tuition fee for students is of 800 Euro per academic year. In addition to all these, the number of the study places requested in SER is of 200.



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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The Biznesi College mission, as provided on the institutional website (<http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/frmArtikujt.aspx?ID=5282>) refers to the following: *The Biznesi College continues its positive academic tradition, creates transformative academic environments and experiences in order to realize the full potential of its students, it implements advanced teaching standards, scientific research and helps the economic development of the country at large.* The accent is put on teaching and learning, research and also includes the institutional preoccupation for the development of the country. The mission of the program, as mentioned in SER (page 10) refers to the following: *it provides sufficient educational and scientific knowledge in the field of economics, management and finance, based on the application of modern teaching methods; ongoing scientific research in this field; human capacity building according to the needs of the market economy in the country and the region; continuously reviewing and enhancing this mission, through scientific research activities. The program also contributes to the preparation of competitive students for the labor market, as well as to become future leaders in the field of Banks and Finance in Business (BA) that will serve the overall development of society.* Therefore, the study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution, as it covers the three pillars of the mission; nevertheless, the ET recognize that the mission of this program is identical with the mission of the Management and Finance MA program which covers another study-cycle.

Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes. The description provided in SER (pages 10-11) is not satisfactory about this standard, but during the discussion with the representatives of employers, participants at the online meeting mentioned that they take part in the program development and they also provided some examples of their own suggestions which were considered by the program management: to introduce more IT subject-related to provide more IT skills for students to be better prepared in the field of the e-banking platform, to better harmonise the theory with the practice. The employers participants confirmed that they receive surveys from the college to fill in and that they also have opportunities to dialog with the program management when they are invited as speakers on specific topics.

In describing the didactic and research concept, SER (page 11) mentions the relationship between academic staff and students, which in fact is not the meaning of the standard. Studying the program description (SER, page 8), there is a very unclear didactic and research



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concept between this BA program and the program of the MA in Management and Finance. The following description is put in both SERs: *The Bachelor study program in Banks and Finance in Business is a curriculum of advanced research-based studies that provides professional-scientific education in this important field of study. It is a high-level study model designed to provide complete knowledge in banking and finance in general.* Moreover, the BA can neither provide advance research in the field nor high level study, as this is meant to be level 6 of the qualification with specific competences in the field. Therefore, ET is reserved in considering the didactic and research concept well defined.

The college has some formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students: <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/frmArtikujt.aspx?ID=30>. The regulations that are made publicly available refer to upcoming and current students and include details (briefly described) on admission and registration, application deadlines, funding, accommodation, semester enrolment, student union. The college has also a Student Handbook: <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/pdf/2.%20Handbook%20of%20Studies.pdf>.

Unfortunately, in SER, there is not much information on this matter, the report connecting the program with the institutional Strategic Plan, which for the existing guidelines, is not enough. The ET considers the documents provided on the website as abovementioned.

The college has adopted the Code of Ethics in 2019 (http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Regulation_on_the_Code_of_Ethics.pdf). As this is an institutional level document, ET admits that staff and students in the BA program of Bank and Finance comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.

SER did not provided evidence on the management and delivery of the program reviewing process (SER page 12). Some additional documents provided to the ET proved that the management has a preoccupation for discussing during meeting the possibility of program improvement, such as the Minute of the Meeting of the Study Council of the Study Program Banking and Finance BA held on 03 July 2020. Nevertheless, studying the website the document called *Regulation on Curriculum Development and Review* (<http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/22.Regulation%20on%20Curriculum%20Development%20and%20Review.pdf>) contains the piece of information that each Department/Faculty holds at least two meetings during the academic year and as needed dedicated to the review of the curriculum. Other documents at <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/frmArtikujt.aspx?ID=5276#> are quite recently adopted.



Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Reconsider the mission of the program not only in compliance with the institutional mission, but also in compliance with other programs and decide which field does the program cover (the field of banking and finance does not cover the management area as such, but only in connection to the banking industry management);*
2. *Clarify the didactic and research program in association to the study-cycle level and make a difference from the master level; reflect this in clearer program objectives for didactic and research activities.*

2.2. Quality management

According to SER (page 13):

- *The self-evaluation process of the study program is performed based on the Statute of the College
http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Statute_of_Biznesi_College.pdf and Regulation on quality assurance with reference number No.380-1/19 dated 30 September 2019
http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Rregulation_on_quality_assurance.pdf f.*
- *This process is carried out by the Office for quality assurance according to the dynamics foreseen at each semester end (before the exam term) the whole process is supervised by the Vice Dean for Teaching.*
- *The quality office drafts the evaluation report, proposes the necessary measures and submits it to the Vice Dean for teaching. The study program provider in accordance with the proposals identifies all the advantages and disadvantages of the program, and the same are taken into account in the program review procedures.*

The abovementioned description does not reveal if all staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity. On the contrary, one weakness mentioned in SER (page 16) is the *hesitation of stakeholders (academic staff, administrative staff, students) during the survey in the quality assurance process*. In other words, academic and administrative staff is not totally prepared for being actively involved in quality assurance processes. In addition to these, Article 48 in the Statute of the College (http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Statute_of_Biznesi_College.pdf) deals with *The rights and duties of academic and administrative staff* which at the date of the evaluation



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do not include clear obligations on self-evaluation and improvement in their area of expertise. All trainings that were mentioned during the online site visit as applied to the academic staff revealed the interest in digital platforms for teaching. At the same time, teaching staff participating in the meeting confirmed that they did not make any changes in their learning outcomes and objectives as they did not have students and it was not the case.

Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes. In the additional documents, different minutes were provided: meetings held by HTSC of BIZNESI College and meetings of the Teaching Council of the study program Banking and Finance (BA). They did not show clear measures for improvement, but they proved they took into consideration the improvement as an option. Participants in the meeting are able to agree/disagree with the presented reports.

SER (pag 14) shows that *at both levels there are responsible persons, the Quality Assurance Office and the Quality Assurance Coordinator who permanently follow the changes at the level of the Institution and the study program based on relevant quality assurance documents.* Moreover, in the additional documents, it is mentioned that *the role of the coordinator is of a liaison between the Study Program and the Office of Quality in all activities carried out by this office for quality assurance. It is the logistics for all the activities of the Quality Office. In the Study Program of Banking and Finance, especially during the process of surveying students and evaluating the performance of the teaching staff of the study program.* Therefore, quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.

In the Minutes of the meeting of the Study Council of the Study Program Banking and Finance BA held on 03 July 2020, provided as additional document: *It was suggested to the members of the Study Program Council to focus on: reviewing and analyzing the objectives of the SP, the learning outcomes of the courses in the structure of the Study Program and the harmonization of the competencies provided by the program for the students of the program with the competencies defined by the Framework Qualifications.* According to the regulations and reports publicly available at <http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/QUALITY%20ASSURANCE%20OFFICE%20Summary%20report%20for%20the%20questionnaires%20conducted%20by%20the%20students%20of%20BIZNESI%20COLLEGE%20BACHELOR'S%20LEVEL.pdf>, quality evaluations integrate questions related to the overall program, teaching and learning process, competences and learning outcomes for students.



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At the evaluation date, the current quality assurance procedures and mechanisms include responsibilities and duties at different management level and also committees. According to SER (page 14) main issues considered are: the content of the program in the light of recent research, ensuring that the program is up to date; teaching workload, progress and providing students with knowledge; the effectiveness of assessment procedures for students; the expectations, needs and satisfaction of students regarding the program. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence on how the conclusions in these reports are overall considered and how the performance of the program can be effectively improved. The program management has no tool to apply or to check the program performance as the current report are institutionally managed without any distribution of the respondents on program level and study cycle. For instance in the Report at <http://eng.kolegjibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/QUALITY%20ASSURANCE%20OFFICE%20Summary%20report%20for%20the%20questionnaires%20conducted%20by%20the%20students%20of%20BIZNESI%20COLLEGE%20BACHELOR'S%20LEVEL.pdf> where students filled in the questionnaire, only approximately 20% of the students replied (392 out of 1915) and there is no question for them related to the program. Therefore, ET is reserved in considering that assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance in the absence of clear evidence.

Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and different stakeholders; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available with the exception of the alumni, but the report on their perceptions was provided to the ET as additional documents. None of these reports contain the distribution of the responses among programs.

All questionnaires for different internal and external stakeholders are managed at the Quality assurance Office which is at the institutional level. As previously mentioned, the reports do not cover the program level directly and clearly. Therefore, further development of the study program based on these surveys are quite difficult. Even the requested documents were specifically related to the BA program in Banks and Finance, the reports provided to the ET were at the institutional level. Unfortunately what was provided in SER (page 15) has to do only with the requirements for students and not with the overall evaluation of the program.

According to SER (page 16): *The Biznesi College conducts regular periodic reviews of the study program once every three years. Regular periodic review not only takes place as part of the accreditation process, but also ensures that the study program is tailored to the needs of students and the needs of the labor market. Regular periodic review specifically examines the learning outcomes of the study program, teaching and learning methodology, assessment and examination methods, research and subject curriculum in particular.*



At the date of the visit, ET could not find evidence that the quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved. Most of the quality assurance documents, although elaborated at an institutional level, were quite recent, since 2020 or even 2021. This standard would need some time to be proven as met or not. Therefore, ET considers this standard as not applicable for the date of the evaluation.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Include in the internal procedures the obligation for all staff to participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity – academic and administrative staff;*
2. *Create an annual training program (of few days) based on the exchange of best practices with other universities in Kosovo; topics covered should be different every year (examples – quality assurance issues, results of the internal quality assurance system, standards of quality assurance at program level and practices of evidence based, quality improvements in teaching and learning etc);*
3. *Create a program evaluation document based on standards to evaluate the program performance annually;*
4. *Cooperate with the Quality Assurance Office to include in all the surveys the evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates that can be provide for program level.*

2.3. Academic staff

SER (starting with page 18) provided evidence on the staff at the college level – full time and part time. In the additional documents received by the ET, additional lists of staff were provided for the full time and part time engaged in the BA program in Banks and Finance. Based on their CVs, the ET could observe the staff academic title and their qualifications. According to the MANUAL FOR ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF pages 7 and 8 available at [http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/MANUAL%20FOR%20ACADEMIC%20AND%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20STAFF\[32353\].pdf](http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/MANUAL%20FOR%20ACADEMIC%20AND%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20STAFF[32353].pdf):

- *For staff with teaching-scientific title (assistant professor, professor for the first appointment), the period in the title is 5 (five years), but the employment contract is for*



period of four years and five months from the day of appointment. This contract includes expectations for successful completion of teaching (about 70% of the workload) and research (about 30% of the workload).

- *For staff with teaching-professional title (lecturer/senior lecturer) the period in the title is 4 (four) years, but the contract is for a period of three years and three months from the date of appointment, which is in accordance with the legal period for title.*
- *The part-time academic and administrative staff is employed on special contracts appropriate to the tasks, period of work required and other specific details. All positions are subject to performance management in accordance with the rules and procedures of BIZNESI College.*

The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions. According to the tables included as additional documents, for the BA program in Banks and Finance, 18 people are full time and 11 part time, which means that 62 % are full time staff. 83 % of the full-time staff have the PhD, which means that for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD.

According to SER (page 51), *Biznesi College has organized trainings based on the program for the professional development of the academic staff. An example is the training for information technology equipment.* Other examples provided include STATA program, field research, ECTS. Trainings on teaching during pandemic and how to use especially Zoom platform was mentioned several times during the online meeting with the program and faculty management, as well as with the teaching staff. Therefore, ET considers that opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who is facing difficulties. Unfortunately, no training was considered on interactive teaching methods.

The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, should include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service. SER (page 52) refers to the Regulation on Bachelor Studies, where article 18 states that: *The teacher shall help the students during the teaching, doing the independent tasks and preparing for the proof of knowledge by organizing a schedule for consultations.* Unfortunately, this is only a statement and not an evidence. In the list of the additional documents, ET requested the consultation program of the academic staff and unfortunately this was not provided. At the same time, during the discussion with the teaching staff, regarding their involvement in the community service, they mentioned their expertise in



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providing consulting services only, which is not the same thing as community service activity or civic engagement. Therefore, Et is reserved in considering the responsibility of the teaching staff as complex as the standard reveals.

Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly on the basis of several components: Evaluation by students (25%), Inter-collegiate evaluation (15%), Evaluation by the Dean (15%), Scientific publications and participation in conferences (25%), Contribution to the College contribution to the community (20%). These are described in the MANUAL FOR EVALUATION OF TEACHING PERFORMANCE, STUDY PROGRAM AND COLLEGE available at <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/MANUAL%20FOR%20EVALUATION%20OF%20TEACHING%20PERFORMANCE,%20STUDY%20PROGRAM%20AND%20COLLEGE.pdf>. This document was adopted in January 2021 and did not have time to prove its effectiveness and limitations. Therefore, although results of the evaluation are not yet made publicly available, ET appreciates that the evaluation procedure is complex and covers the main relevant components.

In SER (page 55) it is mentioned that to improve teaching, academic staff use a variety of methods: *Discussion, Case Studies, Visual Presentations to Promote Discussion, Role Playing, Problem Solving Experience, Fostering Critical Thinking, Group Work Activity. For the evaluation of learning outcomes, the teacher takes into account different approaches, such as: exams, quizzes, written assignments, presentations and individual or small projects, taking into account the student workload for the respective subject.* Nevertheless, a concrete strategy for improving teaching strategies and learning materials used at the BA program in Banks and Finance would be necessary. In fact, a weakness recognized in SER (page 55) is the reluctance of academic staff to determine training needs. In addition, during the discussion with the teaching staff mentioned case studies and project-based work mainly. In addition, the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 of the college includes an area dedicated to Teaching and Scientific Research and focus mainly on research, which means that teaching strategy is still needed - <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/1.BIZNESI%20COLLEGE%20STRATEGIC%20PLAN%202021-2024.pdf>.

Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers. According to SER (page 55): *Teachers retire according to the law (Law No. 04 / L-131 on state-funded pension schemes) when they have reached the age of sixty-five (65). After this age the teacher can be hired as a part-time teacher until the age of 70.*



Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Identify the training needs for all academic staff including particular needs, such as using specific online professional tools to be used in teaching, to stimulate interactive and modern teaching (apart from virtual platforms such as Zoom, which is simple and limited or Moodle); they should focus on subject related topics and on innovative teaching methods;*
2. *Create and make publicly available the consultation program for students of all academic staff;*
3. *Identify 1-2 civic engagement actions for staff and students to provide community service; make the civic engagement actions publicly available;*
4. *Create a plan at the program/faculty level for improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.*

2.4. Educational process content

The program objectives are described in SER (page 56). Unfortunately, they are totally identical with the objectives provided for the MA in Management and Finance. Moreover, these objectives are very general defined and not clearly modelled on qualification objectives. They should be subject-related and based on interdisciplinary aspects as well as on the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies in the field of banking and finance for the bachelor level of studies. Objectives should consider competences which should be structured on field based such as: understanding the role of the banking system and of the different types of banks, understanding financial markets, understanding the role of the business and individual investors and transversal ones, such as: analytical skills, attention to details, work ethics, technical skills, resilience, stress management.

There is a lot of room in the process of adapting the study program to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are not specifically combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives. The program should be designed according to the study cycle – qualifications being different at first cycle than for the second cycle (BA from MA). Here is an example of such a differentiation:

https://www.ehea.info/media/ehea.info/file/WG_Frameworks_qualification/85/2/Framework_qualificationsforEHEA-May2005_587852.pdf.



The disciplines within the curriculum are partially in a logical flow. They partially 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. In SER (page 56) a set of 10 learning outcomes has been provided. In fact, the management of the program and faculty as well as the teaching staff confirmed that they all have paid a lot of attention to the understanding and formulation of the learning outcomes. As for the logical flow of the disciplines – some revision is needed:

- Microeconomics is included as part I, but there is no Microeconomics II, like Macroeconomics where there is I and II;
- English for Economics part I does not include I and it should be added as later on students will study English for Economics part II;
- All subjects being divided into part I and II should be studied in two semester one after another, as a continuous study;
- Semester III has only one elective course and should be two of 5 credits; if not, then Informatics in business should not be elective, but compulsory subject;
- Semester IV – has 37 ECTS and only one elective course. It should have at least two electives. English should not be elective at all as the need of internationalization is huge for the field and would increase the graduates employability;
- Other suggestions; European Economic Integration subject should become International Finance and Investment; Management should become Management in Banking Sector; Marketing should also become Marketing in Banks;
- Tourism management has no logical reason to be part of the program content;
- Practical work is not integrated as a discipline and it should have ECTS allocated as this is regulated with some documents (certificate, diary etc).

The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabi 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 syllabi were provided as appendixes to SER.

The instruction language is Albanian. Therefore, no further actions are needed. At the same time, ET is reserved in considering the student-teacher relationship according to the standard as this could not be checked anyhow as there were no students to discuss with.

Teaching staff confirmed their openness to student request for additional clarifications, if needed. Otherwise, they explained that the rules apply to everybody with no discrimination.



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The teaching methods used in the BA include for every subject a theoretical and a practical part, mainly based on case studies and on project - based learning.

According to SER (page 58): *Before the beginning of the course, the student is informed about the forms of assessment from the presentation of the syllabus conducted by the teacher based on Regulation no. 146-1 / 20 dated 30 June 2020 for Bachelor studies (for more see article 27 paragraph 13 and 14), <http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Rregullore%20%20Ang%20Bachelor%20e%20Kolegjit%20BIZNESI.pdf>. Therefore, 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.*

In the disciplines syllabi, there student assessment is described with the following components: Presentation and group work: 0-5%, Individual presentation: 0-5 %, Activities: 0-10 %, Seminar work: 0-10 %, Test I: 0-15 %, Test II: 0-15 %, Final exam: 0-40%. In this way, 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.

Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or KAA inconsistently assessed. According to SER (page 58): *In cases when the standards of student achievement are insufficient or when they are not evaluated as provided in the course syllabus then according to the Internal Regulation of the Business College no.380-1 / 19 dated 30.09.2019, article 44 paragraph 6 http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Internal_Regulation_of_Biznesi_College.pdf, It is provided that: if the student is absent during the course and reaches the quota of 25% of absences then the student is disqualified due to absences, evaluated with a grade of 4 (four) and repeats the course in the next semester when the course is provided.*

The study program includes practice stages, but unfortunately the intended student learning outcomes are not clearly specified and effective processes are not followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are not allocated ETCS credits.

In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units. A list was provided as additional documents to the ET and it contains 24 entities.



Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Reconsider the objectives of the program for the BA level and structure them into discipline-specific objectives and transversal ones, or at least in general and specific ones;*
2. *Redefine the qualification objectives for the BA level and correlate these with the teaching methods;*
3. *Revise the logical flow of the subjects included in the program curriculum according to the abovementioned comments;*
4. *Revise the number of elective courses and ECTS;*
5. *Integrate the practical work of the students in the curriculum; provide credits for it.*

2.5. Students

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. This regulation was adopted in 2020 (<http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Rregullore%20%20Ang%20Bachelor%20e%20Kolegjit%20BIZNESI.pdf>) and it is called REGULATION ON BACHELOR STUDIES IN BIZNESI COLLEGE. Article 8 describes the admission procedure.

According to the Regulation mentioned previously: *Candidates who meet the following conditions are accepted to register: a) Prove their citizenship with official document; b) Have an official document of completion of high school in Kosovo or abroad (equivalent to the criteria set by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology).* Therefore, all students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.

The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process. The Manual for students available at <http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/2.Manual%20-%20Per%20studentet%20Eng%20%20-%20Kolegji%20Biznesi.pdf> explains that a group for learning could be between 2 to 6 members and focus on the importance of the aims of learning.

The college has a regulation for the bachelor studies (<http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Rregullore%20%20Ang%20Bachelor%20e%20Kolegjit%20BIZNESI.pdf>)



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20Kolegjit%20BIZNESI.pdf), but at the date of the visit there is no evidence that a feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed. This will be monitored after one year at least. Therefore, the next ET will clarify this issue during the discussion with the students. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record. According to SER (page 63): *After the end of each exam period, the teacher of the respective subject is obliged to draft and sign the minutes on the evaluation of students who have undergone the exam, after the completion of all procedures related to the evaluation, the final results are registered in the Electronic Student Management System (SEMS) and is not given the opportunity to intervene in the system for any kind of change related to student assessment.*

At the date of the visit, from the dialog with the program representatives, it was mentioned only some flexible treatment from administrative point of view, but the teaching staff considered that apart from some additional clarifications on the teaching, all students have to follow the same rules. Therefore, ET considers that the program does not ensure flexible treatment of students in special situations with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations. The comments in the SER on this issue are not relevant (pages 63-64) as it mentions the article 28 (Complaint for violation of rules in the exam) from the Regulation on bachelor studies which is something else.

Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and these counts for the quality indicators. For instance, according to the same Regulation on bachelor studies: *The final grades of the exams are recorded in the minutes by the lecturer and signed by the secretary, program director and the dean; the Teaching Secretariat has the duty to maintain, control, and inform the lecturers about the maintenance, the careful completion of the course register.*

Apart from the institutional Code of Ethics, (<http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Regulation on the Code of Ethics.pdf>), the QA representative mentioned that the institution provides a possibility to monitor the plagiarism potential through a partnership with the University of Montenegro. ET considers that this is not a clear and effective mechanism to ensure that work submitted by students is original.

Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals. The rights and obligations are defined in the Statute of Biznesi College no. 380-1 / 19 dated 30 September



2019 Articles 68 and 69, available at: http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Statute_of_Biznesi_College.pdf, as well as in the Regulation of Bachelor Studies No. 146-1 / 20 dated 30 June 2020, Article 38 published at:

<http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/Rregullore%20%20Ang%20Bachelor%20e%20Kolegjit%20BIZNESI.pdf>. The same document clarifies the students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs.

ET could not find the consultation program of the academic staff. The consultation program was requested as additional document and what was provided was only a short comment on the evaluation of the syllabus. In SER (page 65) it is also stated that students can contact their tutors via e-mails.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Invest in a software to ensure that the student work is original;*
2. *Create a mechanism to provide regular feedback to students on their performance and results of assessment (apart from compliant system);*
3. *Create a mechanisms to ensure flexible treatment of students in special situations with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations; include these descriptions in the current regulations or set up a specific one at the faculty/program level;*
4. *Make an official and stable consultation program publicly available for students of all academic staff.*

2.6. Research

The BA in Banks and Finance covers a very practical field of study. Nevertheless, the research concept is nowhere clearly defined. SER (page 66) specifies that *the Vice Dean of Education and Science for the study program through the Dynamic Plan for the development of projects and research has set the objectives for the given period of action. The defined topics are related to the respective field and affect the program in an interdisciplinary way.* Unfortunately, all the research related documents are either too general or at the college level. The program objectives in the research area are not declared in any of the provided or published documents. The list of the program objectives provided in SER (page 56) mention only a very general research orientation: *development of scientific activity in the field of economics, banking and finance.*



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According to the MANUAL FOR EVALUATION OF TEACHING PERFORMANCE, STUDY PROGRAM AND COLLEGE adopted in January 2021 and available at <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/MANUAL%20FOR%20EVALUATION%20OF%20TEACHING%20PERFORMANCE,%20STUDY%20PROGRAM%20AND%20COLLEGE.pdf>, 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. Therefore, scientific publications and participation in conferences is 25 % of the performance evaluation. According to the same regulation: academic staff has to publishing at least 1 (one) scientific paper on the platforms according to the Administrative Instruction of MEST no. 01/2018 on the principles of recognition of international platforms and peer-reviewed journals (Web of Science, Scopus, EBSCO, World Cat, DOAJ); and to participate or publish in at least 1 (one) conference, congress and workshop.

Policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms but they do not refer to the program level: <http://eng.kolegjbiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/The%20policy%20for%20scientific%20research%20in%20BIZNESI%20College%20PDF.pdf>, but at the institutional level.

The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific papers are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country. The evidence is provided through the CVs of the academic staff, with list of articles and journals. There are different articles which are not clearly published in the field of teaching, but they can be considered in the field of the program, being interdisciplinarity based.

Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications and several consultancy activity. Several members of the academic staff are experts in the field and provide expertise in the country.

According to SER (page 69): *Professors have published at least one paper in the scientific journal of Biznesi College and in international journals with impact factor (for more refer to the table of Standard 3.1 of this Report)*. Unfortunately, not all professors publish at least an average of one research / applied research publication per year for the last three years. For instance, prof Raci Kujtim (based on his CV), published very few papers, one in 2009, one in



2011, one in 2013 and two in 2018; prof Hamza Berkan has no publication (he has been recently hired); prof. Fellenza Beka Bajrami has no publication (although hired since 2018); prof. Zenelaj Skender has one publication in 2017 (hired in 2014).

Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.

Academic staff should be 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. Unfortunately, in the course description which is included the syllabi, no proof can be observed regarding research findings integrated into teaching. This can be easily done by including in the course objectives and in the content (chapters) topics related to latest trends in the field, and research related subjects.

Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. According to SER (page 70): *The regulation of the College for intellectual property is in force, (for other details see the Regulation for intellectual property No. 27-1 / 21 dated 29 January 2021)* [Link: http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/INTELLECTUAL%20PROPERTY%20REGULATIONS.pdf](http://eng.kolegibiznesi.com/Materialet/PDF2/INTELLECTUAL%20PROPERTY%20REGULATIONS.pdf).

Students should be engaged in research projects and other activities. Teaching staff could not provide an example of student participation in research activity together with themselves but provided a colleague involvement in authorship together with a student. Other examples are offered in SER (page 70). Students are not very open in taking part in such activities, this being a weakness also considered in SER.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Set up few research objectives in compliance with the program content;*
2. *Define a specific field related policy (or simply, an internal program level decision) on what can be recognized as research in the field of banking and finance;*
3. *Organize a research conference for students to present their papers;*
4. *Create a CV template at the faculty level and encourage all academic staff to present their own CV in the same format; decide the order of the publication list but avoid the chaotic presentations (right now, a 2020 publication is between 2013 and 2016, as an example, due to some errors which can be avoided);*



5. *Include in the course description (syllabi) research related subjects to demonstrate that professors include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

According to SER (page 72): *The facilities of BIZNESI College in the center in Prishtina, and the branch in Prizren have a spatial area of 4,500 m², of which, 2,500 m² indoor environment and 2000 m² outdoor environment.* Several tables have been integrated in SER regarding the facilities, the financial resources, the infrastructure and equipment, the library indicators etc. Regarding the space owned or rented suitable for the educational process, the lease contract was provided as appendix to SER. Therefore, ET appreciates that a 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.

There is also a financial plan at the level of the study program that demonstrates the sustainability of the study program for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. An adequate software for study disciplines included in the curriculum, with a license to use is CMD, according to SER (page 75).

The program has the college library available in an area of 50 m² and the reading room in an area of 60 m². The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories is related to the study group size.

According to SER (page 76): *the library has 50 m², while the reading room has 40 seats; a number of places in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; exercise room 50 seats; their stock of books from the literature of Albanian and foreign specialties, sufficient to cover the disciplines within the curricula, of which at least 50% must represent book titles or specialty courses of well-known publicists, from the last 10 years.*

The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program can be more adapted to students with special needs, especially in the branch of Prizren.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Increase the number of books and journals in English;*



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2. *Invest in journals that can better support research in English in the field of the program;*
3. *Invest in same facilities for students with disabilities in both branches.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

ET appreciates the effort of the faculty and program management to provide proper clarification to all questions during the site visit. Quality standards are meant to help internal decisions not only in the period of the external evaluations, but during the continuous activity. In time, decision making will become more fundamentally based on quality indicators and that will mean a beginning for building a quality culture. Main limitation of the evaluation process was the English capacity of reporting and providing clarifications, but all participants have done their best. In addition, the SER showed that due to the same reason, some standards could not be perfectly understood.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program **BANKS AND FINANCE IN BUSINESS BA** offered by THE **BIZNESI COLLEGE** is *substantially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study program for a duration of *3 years* with a number of *200* students to be enrolled in the program.

4. APPENDICES (if available)

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Expert Team

Chair

Magdalena Platis

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)