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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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

AAB College
Study Program: Radiology

REACREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Pristina, May 30, 2019



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1.1. CONTEXT

This Programme Accreditation took place as part of a wider evaluation of the institution and other study programmes during the course of one day.

Date of site visit:

30 May 2019

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Milan Pol
- Prof. Dr. Alan Brickwood
- Prof. Dr. Peter Parycek
- Prof. Dr. Zdravko Lackovic
- Prof. Dr. Ulrike Webersberger
- Ms. Oana Sarbu

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Avni Gashi, Acting Director of KAA.
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation.
- Arianit Kreasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation.

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) comprising an Institutional Evaluation, submitted in advance by AAB
- Information obtained during the site visit;
- Meetings conducted with the management of the institution, teaching and
- administrative staff, students, graduates, external stakeholders and employers of
- graduates;
- Supplementary documents requested by the ET (by request a draft of photocopied BW Radiology manual was presented to ET).

Meetings were held with the management of the institution, quality assurance representatives and administrative services, heads of study programmes, teaching staff, employers and external stakeholders. The initial meetings with management, quality assurance and administrative service were common to institutional evaluation and a total of seven programmes being evaluated on the day. Due to time constraints most of the



meetings concerned with the evaluation of this BA Radiology, and a MA Health Management proposal, were also coincident.

A brief guided tour of facilities, relevant to the proposed study programmes, was undertaken.

Criteria used for program evaluation:

KAA Accreditation Manual (2018) together with formats for the preparation of expert report by Expert Teams (ET), Compliance Calculation Template.

1.2. Site visit

The site visit was on the 30th of May at the Faculty site and organized as follows:

09.00 – 10.30 Meeting with the management of the institution (no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion)

10.40 – 11.50 Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative services

12.00 – 13.00 Meeting with the heads of study programs

13.00 – 13.50 Lunch break

13.50 – 14.50 Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure

14.50 – 15.40 Meeting with teaching staff

15.50 – 16.40 Meeting with students

16.50 – 17.40 Meeting with graduates

17.50 – 18.40 Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders

18.45 – 19.00 Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA

19.00 – 19.15 Closing meeting with the management of the institution



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

Established in 2002 AAB College describes itself as both the first and the largest non-public institution of higher education in Kosovo.

Currently, AAB has a total of 14 faculties that offer BA and MA degree programs, 15 729 students, and over 500 full-time and part-time academic staff. AAB College currently operates in 3 cities of Kosovo, that in Pristina, Gjakova and Ferizaj all accredited branches by KAA decision.

In line with the rapid growth of the College, there have been changes in the structure and how the study programs and faculties are organised. Most important is a delegation and decentralization of multiple responsibilities from the Rectorate level to the Deans level. The Deans thus have taken on more responsibilities in the selection and management of personnel, as well as in the management of material and financial resources. Consequently, faculties within AAB College enjoy academic freedom and independence of action in terms of operation, organization of conferences, research and other academic issues. This autonomy and independence is guaranteed by the *Statute of the AAB College* as well as with other relevant policies governing the general areas of AAB. The Faculties are limited in terms of financial management because the budget management is not decentralized at the Faculty level, but is maintained at the general level.

The Faculty of Radiology is the newest faculty among other faculties at the AAB College and it has a small number of students. The Faculty is established in year 2017 after first accreditation of the Bachelor program on Radiology Technician. Summary of a data on radiology program is as follows:

Level of qualification according to NQF	BSc (6 NQF; EQF)
Academic degree and the full name of Diploma:	BSc on Radiology
Field of Study according to the Erasmus Subject Area Codes (ESAC)	12.9
Profile of the academic program (specialisation)	/
Minimum duration of studies	3 years, 6 semesters
Form of studies	Full Time
Number of ECTS	180 ECTS
Number of study places	70



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Person in charge for the study program	Bujar Gjikolli; Izet Sadikul Daut Gorani; Sehad Kadiri, Veprim Shehu
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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to SER the objectives of the Bachelor study program Radiology Technician in AAB College are to train future radiology professionals capable for independent work with the radiology equipment to create high quality images, provide radio therapeutic treatment using the safety measures in preventing the risks from the radiation during the work, and use the radiology software technologies for post processing the radiological images, in order to make sure that the quality of educational content within our faculty meets the needs and the requirements of the health system in Kosovo.

Specific objectives of the Faculty of Radiology are the following:

- Increasing the mobility of academic staff and students at European Universities
- Increasing the cooperation between relevant stakeholders in order to make sure that the educational content of the faculty meet the requirements of the labour market
- Increasing the internship opportunities of our students to clinics and relevant institutions
- Increasing capacities of our academic staff, specifically at the PhD level
- Increasing the capacities of the infrastructure, and equipping laboratories with the latest technology in the field of radiology

The study program of Radiology is in compliance with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Benchmarking Document issued by the European Federation of Radiology Technicians Societies issued in February 2014

Compliance with KAA standard

Standard 1.1. The institution has a defined mission statement that includes three main pillars: teaching, research and community service. YES

Standard 1.2. The mission of the institution has been defined and, if the case, revised, based on a consultation process involving external and internal stakeholders. YES

Standard 1.3. The mission is recognized by the members of the academic community of the institution. YES

Standard 1.4. The institutional mission provides an effective guide for strategic planning, decision making and operations of the institution. YES

Standard 1.5. Medium and long term institutional objectives are consistent with and support the mission. YES



Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

No at this moment

2.2. Quality management

During last period, a considerable part of the administration services was digitized, including e-Management (planning and reporting), e-Kiosks (issuing of certificates), recording of the student's attendance in lectures (electronic identification system), teacher - student communication management (eProfesori), electronic evaluation of teachers by students, salary system (based on e-evidence), and many others. All of these have been original solutions designed by AAB's team designers, which have enabled the staff to work more efficiently and decrease their workload, and also have helped more the student's performance.

Compliance with KAA Standards:

Standard 2.1. The institution has a strategic plan for a period of minimum three years. YES

Standard 2.2. The strategic plan is drafted in close consultation with the academic community at the institution, as well as external stakeholders and private sector. YES

Standard 2.3. Strategic planning is integrated with annual and longer term budget processes that provide for regular adjustments. YES

Standard 2.4. The strategic plan takes full and realistic account of aspects of the internal and external environment affecting the development of the institution. YES

Standard 2.5. The implementation of the strategic plan is monitored on short and medium term targets, and outcomes are evaluated. YES

Standard 2.6. The institution has a decision making system and internal operating regulations in conformity with current legal provisions. YES

Standard 2.7. The election criteria and processes of the decision makers and other elected positions are clear, transparent and published in institutional regulations. YES

Standard 2.8. The responsibilities of the decision making bodies are defined in such a way that the respective roles and responsibilities for overall policy and accountability, the senior administration for management, and the academic decision making structures are clearly differentiated and followed in practice. YES

Standard 2.9. Student representatives are members of all decisional, executive and consultative bodies. The mechanism for electing student representatives is clearly explained in internal regulations. There is a democratic, transparent and non-discriminatory election procedure that does not limit students right to represent and to be represented. The institution is not involved in the process of electing student representatives. YES

Standard 2.10. The higher education institution has an administration that is effective in terms of organization, staffing levels and qualifications, and functions rigorously. YES

Standard 2.11. The responsibilities of administrative staff are clearly defined in position descriptions and they match the qualifications of the individual. YES



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Compliance level: Fully compliant

2.3. Academic staff

As mentioned above, the Faculty of Radiology is a recently established faculty and has a relatively small number of students. It is worth mentioning that initially the program was accredited only for one academic year and for a limited number of students, respectively for 30 seats. One year after, KAA decided to extend the accreditation validity for another year, and yet again for only 30 students. This has limited Program to enrol a bigger number of students. According to SER capacity could accommodate at least 80 students per academic year. Currently Radiology employs 18 members of academic staff and there are also clinical mentors who supervise students at the clinics during their practise. According to SER regular academic staff cover more than 50% of courses taught within our program whereas the other part of studies is taught by part time staff. Some of the teaching staff is comp internationally trained.

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. YES



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. YES

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. YES

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. YES

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. YES

Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties. NO

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. YES

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. NO (not publicly available)

Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials. NO

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 Not applicable

Compliance level: Compliance level: 85% fully compliant

ET recommendations / comments: *While professional characteristics of teaching staff is satisfied or even high - much more effort is needed to improve research performance.*

2.4. Educational process content

The Central Office for Quality Assurance drafts a Working Plan that includes the following activities:

- Standardization of course descriptions (syllabuses);
- Monitoring the implementation of course descriptions (syllabuses);
- Monitoring the online platform - namely monitoring the work of the academic staff on how much they publish electronic materials in the online platform;
- Attending weekly meetings with academic staff organized by the Dean;
- Internal assessment for accreditation (if applicable);
- Monitoring student's success;
- Trainings for colleagues in the field of curriculum, teaching methodology, etc.;
- Assessment of academic staff by students, assessment of administration and student services after the end of the semester/
- Drafting of semester reports after the end of the semester.



Teaching courses/modules:

Teaching courses /modules during sixth semester are focussed on issues relevant to radiology like: Imaging radiological anatomy, Radiological imaging equipment.

However during semesters there are modules named: *Practice*. Surprisingly Concretization means / IT: LCD projectors, Power Point presentations, projector. (seems like theoretical “practice”, place of practice not described). The same phrases are used to describe practical in other semesters. Meeting with Faculty staff revealed that in fact significant part of practical is done using radiology devices obtained only for student practical. This should be corrected in SER.

At the end of the study (semester 6) there is the Module: Bachelor thesis (300 hrs, ECTS:10)

With only few exemption all recommended literature is in English,

During the study students can choose several elective courses: Legislation of the health system, English or German language (students will be levelled based on their knowledge), Informatics and statistics, Communication skills, Health promotion and education, Legislation of the health system, Scientific research

Compliance level: 60% Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- *English (medical English) should be obligatory course (practically all textbooks are in English language. IN The knowledge of student representatives was relatively good however, spontaneous contact with individual student of AAB College demonstrated pure understanding of English*
- *Literature in Albanian language should be available ASP. Minimally high quality manuals should be available during for next academic year.*
- *Course on **therapeutic radiology** should be included minimally as elective course,*
- *Module: **Ethics and the medical tourism**, (60 hrs, 2 ECTS) during 6th smester should imperially be reorganized. Medical ethics should be independent*



module. Such module should also contain lecture about KAA Medical tourism might be elective course.

1.4. Students

According to SER: Radiology program is offered to candidates who have completed the upper secondary education. Priority is offered to students of health sciences, natural sciences and / or similar. The program is offered to interested employed medical staff that serve in radiology departments without appropriate Bachelor degree. Because of student's limitation an admission test was organised.

During the study, students attend 4500 up to 5400 hours of theory instructions and training practices with the inclusion of self-directed learning. Students will attend lectures, exercises and will conduct independent studies and seminars. On the other hand, they will fulfil the fund of over 2300 hours of laboratory and clinical practice at the premises of AAB. Some of these hours are conducted at the clinics that AAB cooperates with. Students will perform their practical work being supervised by clinical mentors together with AAB College teachers.

Student representatives are members of decisional, executive and consultative bodies. The mechanism for electing student representatives is part of internal regulations. The institution is not involved in the process of electing student representatives

Compliance with KAA Standards

Standard 5.1. 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. YES

Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements. YES

Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process. YES

Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed. YES

Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record. YES

Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations. YES

Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators. YES

Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original. NA

Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals. YES



Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents. YES

Standard 5.11. 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. YES

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations: *No at this moment*

1.5. Research

According to SER the teaching staff of the Faculty of Radiology is composed by highly internationally trained radiology professionals, willing and ready to share their knowledge and experiences to the students. Full time teachers are employed ensuring the quality of the process implemented. RFull-time academic staff cover more than 50% of courses taught within our program whereas the other part of studies is taught by part time staff. Currently Radiology program employ 18 members of academic staff and there are also clinical mentors who supervise students at the clinics during their practise.

Some of the teachers went abroad for their PhD they still use these connections for research projects. Detailed list of publications (peer reviewed journals, textbooks, conference proceedings, abstracts) of the teaching staff for regional and international were provided in the CVs.

According to KAA Accreditation manual:

- *Standard 7.6. 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.*
- *Standard 7.9. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.*

However, in PubMed data base under the terms AAB College and Kosovo we found only 6 publications and only one associated with Radiology

Compliance level: 60% Partially compliant

ET recommendations:



1. *Create a research plan for the study program – clear research objectives, research themes and resources;*
2. *Motivate academic staff to increase research production by considering research results as promotion criterion;*

1.6. Infrastructure and resources

According to SER the facility consists of lecture halls, labs, student leisure areas, quiet reading facilities, cafeteria, sports halls, etc. AAB College has signed a cooperation agreement. With University Clinical Centre of Kosovo part of Hospital and University Services of Kosovo (covering all regional hospitals in Kosovo) and the Main Family Centre in Pristina, with whom AAB College has signed a cooperation agreement.

In regards to the professional trainings, the Radiology Technician Bachelor study program has one x-ray machine and one ultrasound machine needed for training the patients positioning's are purchased only for the needs of student's training and are fully functional. Additionally, the rooms are equipped with computers for every student and any IT equipment needed for the lectures and practice part is shared with the Faculty of Computer Sciences, if there is a need for it. The cabinet/ laboratory for 3D post processing of radiology images with 40 computers is dedicated to the radiology technicians students to exercise the reconstruction and post processing of MRI and CT images.

At the AAB campus in Pristina there are 2 libraries. The contract with digital library J-STOR for 2019 has been renewed. Also, students and other researchers have access to other sources such as: DOAJ (Open Access Journals), OPEN J GATE, EBSCO, Science Common, Edward Elgar, The New England Journal of Medicine, and other hard copy journals and JSTOR as a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources.

Compliance with KAA standards (7. Infrastructure and resources):

- *Standard 7.1. 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. YES*
- *Standard 7.2. 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 YES.*
- *Standard 7.3. 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: YES*
 - a) *owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; YES*



- b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; **YES***
- c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; **YES***
- d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula. **YES***
- c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; **YES***
- d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula. **YES***
- *Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the specialty disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment. **YES***
 - *Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: **YES***
 - a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; **YES***
 - 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; **YES***
 - 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; **NO***
 - 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; **YES***
 - e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission. **YES***
 - *Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs. **YES***

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

No at this moment.



3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Impressive part of site visit was a meeting with stake holders. It was emphasized by two owners of private clinics that they are ready to purchase MRI equipment but that there are no competent radiology technicians to work with such equipment. Additionally leader of Occupational Medicine point out that during examination of young candidates to join Kosovo Army they had to ask Radiology Program students for help. Overall conclusion is that radiology technicians are highly needed for Kosovo diagnostic medicine.

Recommendation of the Expert Team in previous External Review Report that are not implemented

- *The Institution is advised to constantly improve the laboratory facilities in terms of Infrastructure, equipment as well as the access to consumables.*
- *AAB Institution should seek to constantly increase the institutionalized international and national collaborations at the level of staff and student education.*
- *The site visit was overshadowed by serious worries that insufficient funds will be available for laboratory and clinical-based ‘research’ work*

Recommendation of the Expert Team 2019

- *Research Publication of teaching staff in internationally visible medical journal practically does not exist. AAB College should develop all possible measures to make its research internationally visible:*
 1. *Create a research plan for the study program – clear research objectives, research themes and resources;*
 2. *Motivate academic staff to increase research production by considering research results as promotion criterion;*
 3. *Include in the Program scientist from Kosovo who work in known universities abroad*
- *English (medical English) should be obligatory course (practically all textbooks are in English language. SER claim: The study program will be offered in Albanian, so students do not undergo any admission examination in English language. Students are expected to have basic knowledge of English language as many features and elements of the study program, including some parts of literature, are found in English language. Meeting with student representatives demonstrated reasonable understanding of English. However, unorganized communication with unselected students on AAB premises shows that many of them have problem answering most simple question.*



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- *Literature in Albanian language should be available ASP. Minimally high quality manuals (collection of hand-outs”) should be available already during for next academic year.*
- *Radiology can be divided into diagnostic and therapeutic radiology. Course on therapeutic radiology should be included minimally as elective course,*
- *Positron emission tomography (PET) should be included minimally as elective module (there are information that first PET will be available in one private institution)*
- *Module: Ethics and the medical tourism (60 hrs, 2 ECTS) during 6th semester should imperially be reorganized. Medical ethics should be independent module. Such module should also include KAA Ethical Standards. Medical tourism might be elective course.*

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Radiology offered by AAB College is *fully 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 up to 80 students to be enrolled in the program.

Expert Team

Chair

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member

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(Signature)

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