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Dardania College
English Language and American Studies, B.A.

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

June 2019, Prishtina



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 20-21 May 2019

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- Avni Gashi, Acting Director of KAA
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Sources of information for the Report:

- Dardania College's SER (Self Evaluation Report);
- Meetings with management, staff, students, administrators, and graduates of the institution;
- Site visit infrastructure and materials observations;
- Additional materials requested by the Expert Team and provided by Dardania.

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- KAA Accreditation Manual



1.2. Site visit schedule

20 May

19:45	Meeting at the Reception of the hotel
20:00	Working dinner

21 May

09:00-10:30	Meeting with the management of the institution
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



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

Dardania College is a private higher educational institution founded in 2004. It is housed in a one-building campus in central Prishtina, which is the location for administrative offices, student instruction, and other correspondent infrastructure (library, computer rooms, etc.).

One of the programs proposed for reaccreditation is the B.A. program in English Language and American Studies. This program was initially accredited for AY 2006/2007, and was at that time conceived of as being English Language and Literature. During the review process for accreditation in 2010 the program was reconceived and accredited as being English Language and American Studies. That program has been reaccredited in 2013 and 2016.

The mission of the English Language and American Studies is, as stated, ‘training highly qualified professionals who will be capable of practicing their future profession as well as pursuing further their academic interests.’ This is consistent with the institutional mission to provide ‘quality education to young generations in order to contribute to the overall development of the Kosovar society.’ It is envisioned by the staff of the English Language and American Studies that successful graduates of the program will be well placed to use English in professional purposes such as translation/interpretation, hospitality, NGO work of various kinds, support of international agencies and groups, etc. The staff also believe that the program is effective preparation for MA studies in English, American Studies, or other related fields. There remains a problematic element for this program that the graduates of this program are not expected to be allowed to teach, by law.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

As noted above, the mission statement of the English Language and American Studies states that it is to train ‘highly qualified professionals who will be capable of practicing their future profession as well as pursuing further their academic interests.’ This is slightly vague, as perhaps is necessary: the graduates of this program are not permitted to teach in state schools on the strength of this degree. This appears to be a slight source of confusion to the students, who did not appear to be aware of this restriction. Nonetheless, in conversation with the ET, the program staff noted that their intended mission is to provide successful graduates with skills adequate to suit them to numerous varied professions where English would be useful

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(business and commerce; hospitality; corporate interpretation; diplomatic interpretation; journalism; NGO employment; coordination and logistical support for international agencies; etc.). They also believe that the program is sufficient to build the skills and knowledge necessary to make English Language or American Studies MA programs accessible.

The program itself is consistent with other programs in Europe intended for non-native learners of English. There is a clear focus on development of skills, with an increasing complexity and difficulty as the student progresses. English language development skills (English Language 1, English Language 2, English Language 3, English Language 4, English for Academic Purposes 1 and English for Academic Purposes 2) are sequential, mandatory, and logically sequenced. The material in (e.g.) English Language 3 is different and more complex than English Language 2. This allows for effective development of English language usage, which is inevitably a major consideration in non-native contexts. The program staff emphasized that language skills courses are particularly crucial in the Kosovo educational market, where many students arrive with some basic knowledge of English, but where initial English language instruction may have been inadequate to the program's expectations.

The balance of Mandatory and Elective courses is reasonable. Initially, there is less choice for the student and more program restriction. As the student progresses, however, he or she has more opportunity to tailor the courses taken to his or her personal interests. Thus, for example, there is no mandatory course on translation, yet a student who has interest in translation may take (beginning in year 2) four distinct elective courses on translation: Non-Literary Translation; Literary Translation; Theory and Practice of Translation; and Consecutive and Simultaneous Translation. Similarly, Year 3 elective courses 'Business English' and 'English for Legal Purposes' seem well suited to broaden the potential professional preparation of the students. It would be desirable to see more options based upon usable skills (such as, perhaps, 'English for Hospitality and Tourism') added to this curriculum, as several of the later elective courses appear unclearly focused; 'Popular Culture' may be fun, but it is not clear how watching 'King Kong' and 'Gone with the Wind' materially builds skills in the fifth semester.

There must be a question about the desirability of having so many literature courses in this curriculum. Literature is a wonderful method of building cultural understanding as well as linguistic competence, yet in both conversation and in graduate employment information



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provided it was verified that graduates simply do not enter into professions where literary knowledge is particularly required (teaching of literature; literary criticism and book reviewing; publishing of artistic texts; etc.) In this curriculum, students are required to take mandatory literature classes in every semester, which may not be ultimately the best use of 41 ECTS credits across three years. In conversation with the ET, the program staff noted that this was culturally valuable, but that it was also rooted in their attempts to comply with what they understood to be program recommendations from previous accreditation ET reports. While Dardania should in no way be censured for building so extensive an offering in literature, they are also encouraged to think dynamically about whether literature might be more productively left to elective courses (after, say, a mandatory introductory survey), or indeed might be productively abbreviated into two surveys, one of British Literature and one of American Literature. This would seem to align itself with the didactic conception of the program, the employment opportunities for graduates, and the general focus upon providing options for selection in the elective process.

There is a required diploma paper, which is a valuable opportunity to demonstrate learned expertise whilst also researching a subject of personal academic interest. It is somewhat surprising to see that this accounts for only 6 ECTS credits—fewer indeed than ‘English for Academic Purposes 2’. It might be worth considering, as Dardania considers and assesses this program, whether or not it might be wise to make that diploma paper a more substantive (and highly credited) demonstration of research and writing ability, instead of a paper credited equally with ‘Modern American Literature.’

Both staff and students expressed the belief that student surveys and student input were considered and valued in program assessment and curriculum design. Students verified that they felt that their opinions were valued; that their student surveys were taken seriously by the program management and teachers; and that they had adequate opportunities for expressing concern in cases where complaint was necessary. This confirmed the separate expressions of the program staff, who stated that the program aims to be responsive to student concerns and suggestions, and that policies existed to make the elicitation of student opinion unthreatening for students.

It is not clear whether or not there are specific Key Performance Indicators at the level of the program. The program does, however, appear to monitor the students with appropriate attention, and was able to produce student graduation rates, student attrition rates, graduate



employment information, and similar program data when requested to do so. The staff also confirmed that the program has a mechanism for addressing contested grades or assessments, notably the right of appeal to a commission. (The students appeared to understand this policy).

In general, the program seems responsive to students and their concerns. It is not clear that they fulfil KAA's 'Performance Indicator 1.5,' in the simple sense that there appears to be no provision for either students with disabilities or non-native speakers of Albanian. In terms of access for students with disabilities, the ET was concerned that Dardania's location does not seem to have appropriate access (ramps on or near staircases; an elevator/lift; etc.). This is not program specific, yet it might negatively influence someone (say) who uses a wheelchair and is interested in the program in English Language and American Studies. A more program specific question relates to the provision of a mandatory component of the first year of study: Albanian Language in Public Use 1 and 2. As confirmed by the staff to the ET, this was intended to build competence in the use and analysis of the students' native language, which is a common element in similar programs throughout Europe. Yet it must be noted that there is no provision for non-Albanian students to participate in similar courses related to their own native languages (Serbian, Turkish, Roma). In conversation, the program staff noted quite simply that the program did not have non-Albanian students, but this is perhaps a circular argument: they may not be there because the program is not clearly structured with multiple options for non-Albanian students.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Reconsider the necessity to have six full semesters of mandatory literary offerings, and perhaps either reduce those offerings, or shift them to elective possibilities.*
2. *Consider adding more applied language courses based upon data from graduates about where students are employed and what professional skills they need for the local labor market.*
3. *Consider recrediting the 'diploma paper' in Semester 6 to be a larger project with more ECTS significance.*
4. *Be open and clear with students—from the first semester—about the legal restrictions that constrain graduate opportunities to teach.*



2.2. Quality management

The program staff asserted that they participate in formal and informal reviews of student data and curriculum design. They also confirmed that the student evaluation processes were consistent and understood by both staff and students, and that they had personally benefitted from these quality assurance mechanisms. The program staff noted that they receive information from the College Office for Quality Assurance, although it is not clear how useful that information is. The program representatives, in the meeting with the ET, were familiar with the curriculum and the logic behind the planning.

It is unclear how often the whole staff of the English program participate in program-wide reviews of the curriculum, yet even relatively young staff affirmed that they had been consulted in basic quality assurance discussions, such as the preparation of the curriculum under review, the desirability of the courses offered, and their student survey results. It should be noted that, in the program proposal, the ‘weaknesses’ listed include the ‘inexperience’ of younger staff, the lack of ‘sufficient experience in applying contemporary approaches,’ and inexperience in using the evaluation results to improve ‘their own and students’ performance.’ This suggests that the basic mechanisms may exist and function, but that the staff—particularly younger staff—need greater assistance in applying the information that these mechanisms generate.

In regard to Standards 2.3 and 2.4, the English Language and American Studies program seems to use the various available elements of Dardania’s resources well, including the provision of foreign language options, the provision of IT instruction, and the availability of computer rooms. The library’s resources (addressed later) should here be noted simply as being relatively weak in terms of electronic access to materials.

There is a somewhat surprising distinction between the focus on course specific learning outcomes and the less clear expected outcomes for successful graduation. The course syllabi contain learning outcomes, and are generally consistent with what would be expected of comparable programs elsewhere. The program staff noted that learning outcomes are a general focus of the staff. Yet it was noted also during the site visit that there is no effective demonstration of graduate competence; one graduates by finishing the program, not clearly demonstrating (say) the intended C2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It would be advisable, as a quality maintenance initiative, to begin program-wide discussions—including students and graduates—to define basic expected competences



necessary for graduation, or at least expected of those who successfully complete the six semesters of the program.

The ET is satisfied that, in relation to Standards 2.7 and 2.8, Dardania does a good job of eliciting opinion from students, graduates, and staff in regard to the strengths and flaws of the program in English Language and American Studies. As noted above, the staff mentioned that they felt consulted about the program and supported in the pedagogical process. It is the impression of the ET that the majority of program assessment and evaluation decisions are tied to the accreditation/reaccreditation processes of the KAA, but the ET is convinced that the English Language and American Studies program staff take those processes seriously, and consider seriously recommendations from previous ETs. Indeed, one staff member expressed concern about the high proportion of literature courses in this curriculum—which this report has also expressed—but affirmed that the program’s leaders felt it appropriate to attempt what was previously recommended by an earlier ET (to develop literature offerings). Program reviews are thus apparently conducted at least every three years, thus fulfilling Performance Indicator 2.4, although it is unclear how other experts are involved in this process (i.e., it is unclear whether or not external experts are consulted by Dardania regarding program development).

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Establish clear support and training mechanisms to enable younger staff to use the quality maintenance mechanisms for appropriate personal, methodological, and course improvement.*
- 2. Conduct program-wide discussions, using the available data and international colleagues and comparable program standards, to establish expected graduate competences and linguistic ability levels.*
- 3. Conduct ‘off-year’ program discussions and reviews, not based upon KAA accreditation processes, but to evaluate the program for international comparability. This could be assisted by identifying and contracting an international expert or educational consultant.*



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2.3. Academic staff

It must initially be noted that the materials provided in relation to the academic staff were somewhat inconsistent between the SER and the subsequently requested clarification of teaching roles after the site visit.

The academic staff selected for this program are competent and evidently committed individuals. There is a sustainable balance between younger and more experienced staff on the program. The ET is slightly concerned about the reliance of the program upon part-time staff who are full-time employees at other institutions. Although the ‘English Language and American Studies’ staff appear to meet the basic requirements of KAA, it must be noted that it is difficult to build a sustainable program with too heavy a reliance upon staff whose primary commitment is to other institutions. It should be a general aim of the program to build institutional loyalty and full-time commitment into the staff, so that part-time involvement may be minimized. This is noted, again, not to disparage the part-time staff currently contracted, but to emphasize the importance of long-term full-time staff in building and strengthening any academic program.

The staff contracted appear to have clear understandings of their contractual expectations and the expected teaching load (and any additional administrative support that may be necessary). It also appears that Dardania has met the basic minimum standards required in Standards 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. It may be noted that some of the documentation used to establish this compliance, however, is either contradictory between SER and later materials requested by the ET, or the documentation appears out of date (one c.v. provided—in 2019—refers to the individual expecting to defend his doctoral dissertation in 2011). Yet the materials appear generally consistent in suggesting that Dardania has met the basic Standards for 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 as required in the KAA Accreditation Manual.

Staff professional development is a slightly vexed question. The staff and management asserted that they have professional development assistance, particularly training sessions on topic of detected weakness (subjects mentioned include ‘critical thinking’ and ‘digitalization’). Yet there is also a somewhat paradoxical note in the SER proposal for the English Language and American Studies program regarding the inexperience of younger staff to apply the proper conclusions of the data generated by the various quality maintenance mechanisms (mentioned above). It would be desirable to make certain that there are



opportunities for new or junior staff to self-identify training necessary, and to request it without negative professional consequences.

Regarding Standard 3.7, the staff affirmed that they understand their contractual obligations, teaching expectations and loads, and availability for student consultations. It is less clear that the program—or the institution generally—has clearly stated what is expected of staff in terms of community service or the provision of culturally valuable assistance outside the classroom. As Dardania specified that it intends, as part of its mission, to be culturally valuable and socially relevant, it would be desirable to clarify what is expected of each instructor in this regard.

In light of Standards 3.8 and 3.9, the staff (as noted above) confirmed that they understand the various student consultation and staff evaluation mechanisms used by the institution for quality maintenance. Again, it is the self-identified weakness of the program that the younger staff may require assistance in implementing the expected changes resultant from these mechanisms.

Standard 3.10 is not clearly met. In at least one case, one instructor who is apparently intended as a full-time instructor is apparently (based upon the c.v. supplied) to be 77 years old at the time of this review.

Most performance indicators are met. Both teaching staff and the Quality Assurance Office noted that there are reviews of student assessment results, with the encouragement to take the noted criticisms or praise seriously. Training is provided centrally, but it is unclear how often this derives from staff identification of weakness; much of the provided training appears to derive from institution-wide initiatives based upon centralized identification of training topics. It would be useful to build a program-specific training mechanism to identify—through staff self-identification of weakness, or student suggestion—necessary or desirable training.

Regarding Performance Indicator 3.4, staff expressed the belief that student evaluations and staff performance reviews are utilized to identify promotional merit and the continuance of contract.

Compliance level: Partially compliant



ET recommendations:

- 1. Staff c.v.s should be updated so as to reflect the current status and accomplishments of the contracted staff.*
- 2. Any instructor identified as Full Time must not be older than the age of retirement.*
- 3. A program specific training program should be instituted. This would permit staff to identify their own training needs or desires, or to respond to student suggestion.*
- 4. Clear community service or social engagement expectations should be formulated for the teaching staff, and those expectations clearly explained and supported.*
- 5. It is advisable to move towards a lighter reliance upon part-time staff members, and the identification and nurturing of a committed, full-time staff for the English Language and American Studies program.*
- 6. As noted in previous reviews, and identified in the SER, it would be advantageous to hire a full-time native speaker of English to be engaged in the provision of this program.*

2.4. Educational process content

As noted above, this program is notable for its commitment to providing a wide variety of possible job skills, based upon student inclination and interest. Thus, for example, although the mandatory courses are primarily based upon the acquisition and development of language skill and knowledge (i.e., language skills courses, Phonetics and Phonology, Syntax, etc.), the elective offerings offer an admirable variety of options for students to pursue their own interests. It would be useful to make certain that these are tested in ways that are both academically defensible but are also aligned with labor market expectations and alumni comment.

Again, as noted previously, the program is appropriately aligned with expectations in the European Higher Education Area, at least in areas where the language expectation for the English of incoming students is not uniformly high (as in the UK or Ireland, as native speaking countries, or the Netherlands or Sweden, where primary and secondary English language instruction is of a very high level). It would appear plausible that a successful graduate of the Dardania English Language and American Studies program would be capable of participating productively in numerous English language or Anglophone culture MA programs in other countries in Europe.



Standards 4.3 and 4.4 are met, with one exception. As previously commented upon, the program is well distributed among mandatory and elective courses, and it builds complexity and expected difficulty as the student progresses. The curriculum has a solid variety of available options to allow students to influence his or her educational path, based upon interest or professional desire. The program's learning outcomes are expected (in Standard 4.3) to have seven learning outcomes for the program; the materials provided list five.

The syllabi produced are reasonable, and meet the expected standards. There are occasional areas of re-using certain phrases or sentences in courses that follow sequentially, but this is a minor criticism, as those courses are based upon substantial similarities of material.

Standard 4.5 is difficult to assess. The staff engaged clearly have the requisite English language ability to provide the instruction required of them. In both the SER and in conversation, however, it emerged that incoming students sometimes have weaker than desirable language abilities. The program description in the SER notes several causes: 'low quality pre-university instruction, differences in the quality of instruction between urban and rural areas, social and economic factors...', all of which seem to the ET to be plausible. But it is very much in Dardania's interest to recruit students of adequate English proficiency, even if it results in lower initial student intakes per cohort/generation.

Standards 4.6-4.9 appear generally to be met. The students and staff mentioned that the atmosphere in classes is positive and encouraging, and students mentioned that they felt comfortable with the student-teacher interactions. They also noted that they felt comfortable with the basic assessment mechanisms used; although they may not always agree with each individual grade, they did not feel that assessment was arbitrary, purely subjective, or incontestable. As a general note, the basic program structure suggests that incoming students should enter at at least B1 level and will ideally reach C2—but it is not clear that the incoming students are required to attain B1, nor that there is a clear consequence for a student who finishes the coursework, but has not attained C2.

There does not appear to be a clear opportunity for students to engage in internships or social engagement opportunities. It would be desirable to research and pursue potential chances for internships or community service opportunities in developing English usage and expanding student perceptions of the various uses of English in the Kosovo context.



Most performance indicators (4.1-4.3) are generally met, although it is unclear how effectively the teaching staff employ online resources and research websites. It is not wholly evident what resources are indeed available to the staff (for example, the library demonstration of online resources did not seem highly convincing that it was a useful—or even commonly used—resource). Additionally, in regard to 4.3, it is unclear how effectively the general categories of learning outcomes are assessed and improved. It appears to be the general responsibility of the individual instructor to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning outcomes and their attainment; it might be useful to build a program team to make an extensive survey of the collective totality of the program’s learning outcomes, and how they are assessed.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Establish seven learning outcomes for the program as proposed.*
2. *Survey employers and alumni about the applicability of the desired learning outcomes to the employment market.*
3. *Uphold expected entry-level language level testing, and perhaps accept fewer students who are nonetheless better ready to take advantage of the program.*
4. *Investigate the possibility of incorporating socially beneficial internships into the curriculum.*
5. *Consider investing in access to a research database appropriate to the subject, to assist staff in incorporating digital resources.*
6. *Consider establishing a program team to evaluate the appropriateness, measurement, and consistency of learning outcomes across the program’s three years.*

2.5. Students

The students interviewed from the English Language and American Studies program were articulate, engaged, and supportive of the program and its teachers. They expressed positive impressions of the curriculum and the instructors. The only notable concern was that the ET had the strong impression that the students were not aware that teaching is not a clearly available employment option for graduates of the program. Whilst this may be an unavoidable element of Kosovo law, it is appropriate to be absolutely clear with students that they may not have access to one of the common employment opportunities (teaching) that people seek after obtaining a degree in English.



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The admission procedure seems to be clear, although it is not clear that the expected B1 level for successful entry is always maintained. It is recommended that the program apply this standard rigorously, even if it means initially accepting fewer students. During conversation with the ET the ET asked the program staff if they felt that reduced admissions targets—but strongly maintained admission levels—would be helpful, and the staff agreed. It is therefore recommended to aim at an admission cohort of 50-60 at most, instead of the intended 100. By applying serious linguistic admissions standards, Dardania would demonstrate a strong ethical commitment to accepting only those students who have the most reasonable chance for success.

Students are not accepted into this program without attaining a high school diploma. This therefore satisfies 5.2.

Standard 5.3 is slightly more difficult to assess. The program representatives noted that the incoming students often have notably variable levels of linguistic ability, which results in classes of significantly mixed ability. This can intimidate weaker students, or bore more accomplished students. The staff did not suggest that this was an insuperable problem, but again (as noted immediately above) it is recommended that strict linguistic admissions criteria be upheld, which should help to minimize differences in the classes. The students did not express frustration with the general composition of their class group, and were enthusiastic about the general class atmosphere created in the classroom.

Students and staff agreed that the assessment mechanisms and grades are understood and are fairly applied. (Standards 5.4 and 5.5). It is not clear how flexible the program is in accommodating student difficulty or upsetting situations that may require scheduling modifications or postponing tests or assignments; this appears to be left to the individual instructor's discretion. It is also unclear whether completion rates are kept for individual courses, but the general data for the program was provided by Dardania when requested.

Standard 5.8 is not met. There appears to be no clear system to examine the originality of student work, and that burden falls upon the instructors apparently unassisted. Plagiarism or copying must be detected by the instructor's diligence, without technical assistance. It is strongly recommended that Dardania invest in some manner of plagiarism detection software (such as Turnitin), and to make that resource available to the instructors.



Students and staff both verified that the students' rights and obligations were clearly understood, and that these were consistently upheld and supported. The students (and graduates) expressed an understanding of how to appeal disputed grades.

The ECTS credits seem reasonably calculated and appropriate to student workload, making transfer into or from the program reasonably easy to accomplish.

Academic staff expressed an understanding of, and willingness to comply with, requirements for student consultation and staff availability.

Several performance indicators appear unmet. 5.1 suggests that non-traditional or vocational attainments may be recognized, but it is unclear how this is incorporated into the Dardania ECTS-based system. Similarly, 5.3 suggests that tests, assessment mechanisms, and grading methodologies should be compared and integrated, but these still appear to remain the general responsibility of the individual instructors. A program team could easily be established to harmonize assessment standards and testing procedures.

It is unclear how effective the materials provided are. There is an 'English Room,' as well as the library, but these are under-stocked for the breadth of the program. Additionally, the materials available heavily incline towards inexpensive paperback editions that lack critical materials or annotation. As noted above, it is also desirable to invest in a research database subscription for the students and staff. Although heavy investment in academic press criticism is difficult, it is recommended that the program staff work with Dardania's management to identify the most necessary material acquisitions and digital resources.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Enforce the linguistic standard expected of incoming students, and aim for not more than 50-60 students per year/intake cohort.*
- 2. Be absolutely clear with student, even in the first year, of what the legal restrictions on their possibility of becoming teachers may be; this may influence their choice of elective courses.*
- 3. Provide technical support for plagiarism detection, either through a dedicated program or through subscription to a plagiarism detection service.*



4. *An assessments and standards team could usefully assess grading and testing methods across the program.*
5. *More serious investment in program-specific materials (digital or print) should be made. If physical resources are acquired, special attention should be paid to obtaining appropriate scholarly or annotated editions.*

2.6. Research

The English Language and American Studies program intends to build greater research capabilities in students until the final semester, when the student must create a diploma paper. This is reasonable although, as noted earlier, it is worth considering increasing both the ECTS value—and subsequent consequence for graduation—to this diploma paper.

Academic staff are required to participate actively in the research community, usually as demonstrated by attendance at conferences or the publication of scholarly articles. The academic staff all seemed aware of this requirement and did not express any particular objections to this requirement. They (correctly) noted that this is an almost universal expectation in higher education employment. (Standards 6.2 & 6.3) Staff c.v.s suggest that they are indeed making general efforts to participate in the scholarship of their fields. With a relatively small staff, not every instructor is lecturing on a field of his or her specific research publication record, but the ET did not notice any egregious incongruities between basic scholarly interest and teaching obligations. The publication rate meets Standard 6.7, which specifies at least one publication per year. Standard 6.8 was verbally affirmed by the staff (this relates to the necessity to publish under one's institution of full-time employment).

Standard 6.9 is not clearly met, in that it is not clear that a specific policy on intellectual copyright on staff research exists. The ET believes that, in the case of the English Language and American Studies program, this linguistic and cultural research may be of high academic merit without having clearly exploitable economic implications.

Performance Indicators 6.1 and 6.3 are partially met. All program staff affirmed that they are expected to participate in scholarly activities, and that part of their job profile and assessment is based upon this success. It was also stated that the staff believe that there is monetary assistance available to support scholarly activity, such as paying conference registration fees, or assisting in publication support. It was less clear to the ET how often this money is actually paid out—i.e., how often a staff member might expect to receive this assistance. It



would be desirable to make clear what monies may be available to each individual academic staff member, and how regularly. Junior staff mentioned being assisted to complete their degree instruction, and it is a general principle of the program that senior staff try to ‘mentor’ junior staff in both teaching and research fields.

Performance Indicator 6.4 does not appear to be met. It is not clear how Dardania attempts to provide social benefit through the research activities of the program staff. Performance Indicators 6.5 and 6.6 are of uncertain application to this program; they relate to industry contacts and the generation of research income. The fields of English Language and American Studies do not commonly generate large institutional income. It would be advisable to seek social benefit or community applications for the program staff’s research, and not to expect significant resource generation from this research.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Consider expanding the ECTS value, and academic expectations, of the 6th semester ‘diploma paper.’*
2. *Clarify the research support available for each staff member, and how often, and under what conditions or criteria.*
3. *Try to identify ways of collaborating with companion social entities, or providing social benefit, through structure and conduct of staff research.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The instruction for the English Language and American Studies is undertaken entirely in the Dardania building in downtown Prishtina. It has multiple classrooms appropriate to the program, including mounted writing boards on the wall, projectors, and reasonable class sizes. There is a library, an ‘English Room,’ and computers are available. The administrative and management offices are located in the same building, making student or staff ability to avail themselves of administrative assistance easy. The staff and administration are adequate to support the program.

As noted previously, the Dardania building does not appear functionally accessible to students with disabilities. Any student with difficulties walking—needing the use of



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wheelchairs, or relying upon crutches—would encounter significant difficulties in attending the classes or reaching the library.

Dardania's financial resources appear capable of maintaining this program for three years, assuming that the documentation provided to the ET is accurate and the data precise. The physical premises are adequate to the program's support and delivery. It is unclear whether Dardania possesses translation support technology (translation booths, headphones and microphones), but these are desirable without being absolutely essential. The basic linguistic and humanities focus of this program means that technical and material support expectations are lower than they might be for programs in 'hard sciences' such as chemistry or physics.

It appears that Dardana's resources are adequate to meet the basic requirements envisioned in Standard 7.3, although as previously noted there should be immediate investment in plagiarism detection software and database subscription (7.3 c). Standard 7.4 is met, in that the lecture rooms are comfortable and well structured.

Standard 7.5, subsections c, d, and e, are partially met. As noted above, the library resources—and those in the 'English Room'—rely heavily on paperback copies of out-of-copyright 'classic' novels and poems. The general selection is not large, but seems sufficiently varied to support basic inquiry, curiosity, and research. It would be desirable to make a more serious effort to obtain scholarly editions, based upon the recommendations of the program staff, and an assessment of the curriculum. It is not particularly applicable that these materials should 50% from the last ten years, as required by Standard 7.5 (c); it is not strictly speaking necessary to have an edition of (say) *A Tale of Two Cities* from the last ten years, provided that it is a readable copy. Meeting Standard 7.5 (e) would be much easier with a subscription to a program specific (or program useful) research database.

Standard 7.6—regarding access for students with disabilities—is not met.

The Performance Indicators are partially fulfilled. The staff expressed general understanding of the resource acquisition restrictions necessary to the program, but also acknowledged that Dardania's bibliographical resources could be updated and improved regarding the specific program. It would be advisable, in light of Performance Indicator 7.2, to identify a program specific resource officer, to serve as liason with the library and oversee acquisition priorities and the development of the 'English Room.'

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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Make serious efforts to increase accessibility for students with disabilities, particularly those that relate to impaired or slowed movement.*
2. *Focus upon acquisition priorities that emphasize scholarly or annotated editions over the acquisition of inexpensive, unscholarly paperbacks.*
3. *Identify a research database that is appropriate for the program's support and development.*
4. *Appoint a program staff member to serve as a program resource officer, to advocate for (and oversee) appropriate development of useful materials—and to structure a development plan for the 'English Room.'*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The ET would like to thank the main English Language and American Studies program representatives, Dr. Mejreme Ymeri and Dr. Jusuf Mustafi. The ET would also like to acknowledge the time, insights, and contributions of the English program staff, students, and graduates, whose assistance is here acknowledged without specifying individuals.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program English Language and American Studies offered by Dardania 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 year with a number of 50 students to be enrolled in the program.

4. ADDENDUM TO ANSWER DARDANIA'S REPLY TO THE FIRST DRAFT

The Expert Team is glad to note that Dardania appears to have read carefully the evaluation of their English Language and American Studies program, and the ET hopes that the recommendations herein prove helpful to the institution.



It should be observed that in their reply Dardania requested that the program be allowed to run with an enrolment of 100 students per cohort. The original report has recommended that the student intake be capped at 50 or 60, given the basic size and structure of the program, and the availability of staff.

This report continues to recommend that 60 students would be an appropriate intake, although this report will permit an intake of 75, as being within the reasonable number of serviceable students. But it should be noted that, during the ET's site visit, the program representatives expressed a willingness to have the student numbers capped at around 60 students, as a means of limiting the admission of the least promising applicants.

The ET would like to suggest that a cohort intake of 60-75 students should meet the needs of the program, whilst not expanding to include the admission of the academically unready or linguistically incompetent. This report therefore authorizes an upper limit of 75 students per generation, but encourages Dardania to be selective in admitting students to the English Language and American Studies program, to encourage the admission of the most diligent as being most likely to succeed in the program

Expert Team

Chair

(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

Member

(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

Member

(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)



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