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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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Kosovo Accreditation Agency

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## **Dardania College**

### **Social Care and Welfare**

### **Re-accreditation**

## **REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**



*Brno, June 2, 2019*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Dardania College has submitted the programme Social Care and Welfare (bachelor level) that was last time evaluated in 2017 with a positive result (accreditation for 3 years). A current submission relates to re-accreditation requirement.

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit:** 21 May 2019

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Milan Pol, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic*

**Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):**

- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliu*
- *Arianit Krasniqi*
- *Avni Gashi*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self-evaluation report*
- *Strategic and action plans*
- *Regulatory documents of the Dardania College*
- *Site visit*
- *Interviews*

**Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations**

- *Standards and guidelines of KAA*



## 1.2. Site visit schedule

### 20 May

- 19.45 Meeting at the Reception of the Hotel
- 20.00 Working dinner

### 21 May

- 08.40 Meeting at the reception of the hotel
- 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



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

The Dardania College is a private higher education institution which started its operation in 2004. During its existence, the College has undergone several cycles of accreditations. At the moment, it is submitting the documentation for institutional accreditation and well as for the accreditation of five programs on a bachelor level (some with specialisations) in the field of business administration and economics, political science and public administration, applied psychology and managerial studies, English philology and American studies, and social care and welfare. Also, it applies for the accreditation of two programs on a master level (one with a specialisation) in the field of business administration and economics, and public administration. The Dardania College is located in Pristina.

The program Social Care and Welfare has been established relatively recently and it aims at filling the gap in the job market by preparing social workers in Kosovo, and this way to contribute to the development of society.

## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The program *Social Care and Welfare* is in compliance with the Dardania College's institutional mission and can be viewed as appropriate. Explicitly, "the education of qualified professionals who will be able to exercise their future profession and further pursue their academic interest" is emphasised, and the focus on "the promotion of values of care and welfare to society, family and wider community in Kosovo and beyond" is declared (SER, p. 207).

The main objectives of the program correspond with the mission and are a logical continuation and specification of it. They include relevant knowledge, skills, insights as well as attitudes to be developed, both in theoretical, and in practical dimensions. Also, they emphasise students'



learning during their studies and the importance of students' readiness for their lifelong learning in the field.

Since I have evaluated this program in 2017, I can confirm that the program developers took into the consideration most of the recommendations formulated by the team of experts during the re-accreditation process in 2017 and this way strengthen the program in some aspects.

The study program has sufficiently defined and justified didactic concept, and in some extent also the research concept relevant for the field of study (program).

There are formal procedures and policies related to the realisation and evaluation/monitoring of the program, and these policies and procedures are available to those involved in the program (staff and students). Most of the policies and regulations are regularly reviewed.

There are provisions to deal clearly and in an acceptable manner with ethical dimensions of the program.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 1.1.</i> The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
<i>Standard 1.2.</i> Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
<i>Standard 1.3.</i> The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X	
<i>Standard 1.4.</i> There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	



<i>Standard 1.5.</i> All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
<i>Standard 1.6.</i> All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances		X

**Compliance level:** 83 % - Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Make sure all policies and regulations are reviewed frequently and on a regular basis.*

**2.2. Quality management**

Main quality management processes are in place in relation to the study program. The Dardania College implements evaluation procedures and has developed structures for quality assurance. As for the procedures, mainly the data from students are collected (both formally by student questionnaires at the end of each semester/course, and informally throughout the study process). Also, other data regarding the student achievements and staff performance are gathered, evaluated and considered for possible improvements of the program. The attention is paid to evaluation of inputs, processes as well as outputs, and learning outcomes are in these procedures taken into account as a main reference.

The infrastructure for quality assurance is in place with the central Office of Quality Assurance, and with program-related Committee for Quality Assurance (CQA) that involves both academic staff, and students. Possible complaints can be collected in an anonymous ways and there are procedures for dealing with them.

During the interviews, students reported positively about the above mentioned practices and indicated readiness of academic staff to change, adjust, and adopt different approaches if the requirement is justified and in compliance with regulations.

It can be said that a prominent area of quality management is teaching, while research and administration are paid a lesser attention to in this context.



<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 2.1.</i> All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	X	
<i>Standard 2.2.</i> Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	X	
<i>Standard 2.3.</i> Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	X	
<i>Standard 2.4.</i> Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students	X	
<i>Standard 2.5.</i> Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
<i>Standard 2.6.</i> Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.		X
<i>Standard 2.7.</i> Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
<i>Standard 2.8.</i> The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
<i>Standard 2.9.</i> The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.		X

**Compliance level:** 77 % - Substantially compliant

**Recommendations:**

- Focus QA in full strength on all relevant areas related to the program.
- Make sure QA arrangements for the program are regularly evaluated and improved.



### 2.3. Academic staff

The teaching staff complies with legal requirements as they are defined. There are qualified staff members from relevant fields to the program and a core team more closely related to the very social care and welfare is gradually being built. Staffing for the program is therefore gradually improving, as seen from the list of academic staff, full-time as well as part-time, the calculation indicates a favourable situation.

Staff is occasionally undergoing relevant staff development experiences and its performance is being regularly evaluated in several different ways (with main, but not exclusive emphasis on teaching performance). Quality enhancement strategies can be viewed as those focused mainly on learning and teaching.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 3.1.</i> 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.	X	



<i>Standard 3.2.</i> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
<i>Standard 3.3.</i> 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.	X	
<i>Standard 3.4.</i> 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.	X	
<i>Standard 3.5.</i> 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.	X	
<i>Standard 3.6.</i> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
<i>Standard 3.7.</i> The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
<i>Standard 3.8.</i> 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.		X
<i>Standard 3.9.</i> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
<i>Standard 3.10.</i> Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.		X

**Compliance level:** 80 % - Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Emphasis student-centred teaching/learning and research methodology-related staff development training.*



## 2.4. Educational process content

*(Insert all comments or observations, commendations and suggestions relating to this general area and its allocated standards, as specified in the KAA Accreditation manual. Consideration should be given to the adequacy of processes and results achieved in each of the standards.)*

The program has 180 ECTS and is structured according to standards for bachelor degree programs in Bologna system, and from the documents provided by the Dardania College it seems that ECTSs are calculated well.

The program's aims, content, structure, didactic concept and teaching methods are in principle appropriate to bachelor degree and they correspond to the international standards.

As for the aims, the program intends to fill in the gap in the job market. There is an evident lack of social workers in Kosovo and, hence, opportunities for the employment in the field. The program aims to contribute to the development of society, too.

As for the content, the program is multidisciplinary, consisting primarily of courses from psychology, pedagogy, law, economics, and management. Multi-disciplinary nature of the study program is justified and explained by academic staff as necessary condition for completing the study program aims and for developing competencies and reaching outcomes by which students will be able to perform on the job. Multi-disciplinary approach contains, however, some challenges, too. This is therefore important to keep strong profile of the program with the main focus on social care and welfare. In my view, such a profile of the program is gradually developed and this is a positive sign.

The program contains in main part of obligatory courses, but it also provides opportunities for electives – their proportion and range is acceptable throughout all the six semesters. The course flow is logical and consistent. The ratio between theoretical and practical part is balanced, too.

Academic staff and students have described various teaching practices, ranging from ex-cathedra lectures to case studies, discussions and group work. Internship is based on memorandums of cooperation with institutions that provide placements. Two mentors, one from the hosting organization and one from the College monitor the quality of internship. Balancing the proportion between academic, professional and practical contents is a challenge for academic staff, and recurrent issue in their discussions.



Students were appreciative about their teachers, their performance and also their approach to students and their needs.

Study literature is scarce in Albanian language and all students are not fluent in foreign language (the English, e.g.). Academic staff therefore puts efforts into translating chapters and materials, encourages English language learning, and translates key concepts into the Albanian language.

Overall, the workload is manageable for students and also supportive of achieving program's aims, competencies, and outcomes.

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



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

**Compliance level:** 83 % - Substantially compliant

Recommendations:



- Work on further development of the core of the program and keep building all the curriculum around it/with regard to it.
- Improve availability of obligatory study literature in Albanian language.

## 2.5. Students

Admission requirements and procedures seem to be clear and transparent. Students who are enrolled are required to possess high school graduation diploma or equivalent. Size of study groups seems to be acceptable, students get adequate and prompt feedback on their performance, assistance mechanisms are available and provided, if needed. There is an effort to fight against plagiarism, but the College has no effective software for this, therefore the main expectation lies on the academics which is not a favourable situation.

Students' rights and obligations are formulated and made publicly available to students. Consultation for students from the side of academic staff is available, and some other student services (career centre, and more) are in place, too.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 5.1.</i> There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
<i>Standard 5.2.</i> All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
<i>Standard 5.3.</i> The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
<i>Standard 5.4.</i> Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	



<i>Standard 5.5.</i> The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
<i>Standard 5.6.</i> Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
<i>Standard 5.7.</i> Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.		X
<i>Standard 5.8.</i> Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		X
<i>Standard 5.9.</i> Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
<i>Standard 5.10.</i> The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.		X
<i>Standard 5.11.</i> Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

**Compliance level:** 72 % - Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Intensify ways of fighting against plagiarism.*

**2.6. Research**

Academic staff at Dardania College has been involved in research activities inside and outside the institution, and these research activities feed back into teaching and some course contents in some extent. Research activity directly related to the field is not vast, it is however growing gradually and will need to grow further. During the interviews, some staff members informed about their relevant research projects that could serve as a basis for the development of this dimension of the study program, some also informed about their efforts to involve students into these activities. One of the research centers (a newly set up structure) directly relates to social work field and could possibly be an opportunity for intensifying a research focused on the field of social care and welfare.



There is also extensive information about publications of the academic staff available. Despite to some good achievements, there is a large room for improvement of research in the field of social care and welfare at the Dardania College.

Since this is undergraduate, bachelor program, students are not extensively engaged in research, yet their research activities and engagement can be seen in their final papers/thesis.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.		X
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> 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.		X
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.		X
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, and technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
<i>Standard 6.7.</i> 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.		X
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	X	
<i>Standard 6.9.</i> Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to	X	



courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.		
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		X
<i>Standard 6.11.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.		X

**Compliance level:** 54 % - Partially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. Emphasis research activity of the core staff directly focused on the field of Social Care and Welfare.

**2.7. Infrastructure and resources**

The Dardania College has an adequate building and other premises in which it can meet the requirements of the program. Facilities are relatively new, with adequate classrooms, video-conferencing room, library, and computer lab.

The College has an acceptable financial plan, however there would be appreciated bigger budget for this particular program that would enable the program leaders to staff more adequately the core subjects' academics and to develop a relevant infrastructure of the program further.

Library seems to be still in need of further development so that it can serve adequately.

Provisions of students with special educational needs are also in need of improvement.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>
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	Yes	No
<i>Standard 7.1.</i> The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
<i>Standard 7.2.</i> There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	
<i>Standard 7.3.</i> The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;</li> <li>b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities;</li> <li>c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence;</li> <li>d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.</li> </ul>		X
<i>Standard 7.4.</i> The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
<i>Standard 7.5.</i> The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</li> </ul>		X



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<i>Standard 7.6.</i> The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.		X
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**Compliance level:** 50 % - Partially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Improve library and provisions for SEN students.*

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

- Standard 1 – substantially compliant
- Standard 1 – partially compliant
- Standard 1 – partially compliant

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Social Care and Welfare offered by the 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 years** with a number of students to be enrolled in the program as proposed by the Dardania College.



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### **Expert Team**

**Chair**

**Milan Pol**

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(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)