

Assessment Report Universum College

The Report composed

by the team of experts,

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assessing the following five study programmes of the College:

English Language (BA)
Public Administration, International Relations and European Studies (BA)
Business and Management (BA)
Management (MA)
Computer Science (BSc)

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1. Introduction

The present document contains the evaluation report 2016 on Universum College (*the College*). It is the result of the collegial work of an international team of experts (ET) appointed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) to evaluate five study programmes. The report bases on the self evaluation report (SER) of the College, the visit of ET in the College on 1st of July 2016 and further information of the College, obtained by ET.

1.1. Preparation

The College submitted a detailed SER as the central document for the accreditation of the study programmes. The report has 417 pages and contains a brief description of the institution's history, study programmes under evaluation, staff, students, quality assurance, infrastructure, research and international cooperation, financing, implementation of recommendations from the last accreditation and five appendices. The CV-s of academic staff, syllabi of the courses and some additional documents were presented separately. The SER and other documents were made available to the expert team on 25.07.2016.

1.2. Experts and assigned study programmes

- Prof. Dr. Karmen Pizorn/ University of Ljubljana (SI): English Language (BA)
- Prof. Dr. Frédéric Mertens de Wilmars/ University of Valencia (ES): Public Administration, International Relations and European Studies (BA)
- Prof. Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson/ University of Tartu (EE): Business and Management (BA) and Management (MA)
- Prof. Dr. Peeter Normak/ Tallinn University (EE): Computer Science (BSc)

1.3. On-site visit

The on-site visit (OSV) took place as planned. The scheduled OSV started in the morning of 1st of July with a meeting with the management of the College from 9.00-9.30 (see below), followed with the meetings with the responsible persons for the study programmes (9.30-11.30), visit to facilities (11.30-12.30), lunch (12.30-14.00), meeting with academic staff (14.00-15.00) and with students (15.00-16.00). The visit ended with short consultations of ET and KAA (16.00-16.15) and a final meeting with the management of the institution (16.15-16.25). As prof K.Tõnnisson joined the ET at lunch-time, she met with the responsible persons for the management study programmes separately, at 14.00-15.40.

1.4. Meeting with institutional management

From the management of the university, the following colleagues took part: Alejtin Berisha – Executive Director, Suat Berisha – Chairman of the Board, Nazim Haliti – Campus Coordinator.

The ET was given a short overview of the history, current activities and perspectives of the College. The College is going to widen its scope in the future focusing on business, social sciences and technology. Special attention will be paid to synergy between different academic areas.

The ET is indebted to the College for facilitating the site visit – the discussions and the opportunity to see facilities were particularly valuable. The ET would like to thank the College for its hospitality.

In addition, the experts warmly thank the KAA and its representatives for their outstanding support and cooperation before and during the visit.

2. Computer Science (BSc, reaccreditation)

2.1. Introduction

The bachelor level study programme in *Computer Science* has been assessed in June 2013 and got subsequently a 3-year accreditation. There was only one recommendation:

- Provide evidence, that teaching staff, as formally required, fulfils the basic criteria: 50 % of lectures to be held by permanent staff with at least Ph.D. qualification.

Conclusion: the recommendation is taken into account – the share of **lectures** that are held by permanent staff with a PhD is now clearly over 50% (exercises are supervised mainly by the teachers with a MSc degree).

The following bases on the documents presented to the expert team, on the site visit and on discussion with the following staff members: Adelina Basholli, Mergim Cahani, Edrina Gashi, Bexhet Kamo, Haqis Karatashi, Petrit Nahi, Xemal Zenuni.

2.2. Academic Programme and Student Management

According to the Mission Statement, the College "is to provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services to a Kosovar and international student body through teaching excellence, lifelong learning, applied research and partnership building thus preparing students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful citizens and support the economic development of Kosovo and the region". Therefore, the Mission Statement does not specify any priority area of the College. The administration of the college named business, social sciences and technology as priority areas of academic activities. Consequently, the programme corresponds to the mission statement and principles of operation of the college.

The programme's quality, range and academic aims are in general appropriate to the academic degree. The programme is focusing on software engineering and does not have specialization profiles. All courses have 6 ECTS, except *Advanced Math* (optional, 8 ECTS), *Career Orientation and Internship Co-Op* (8 ECTS) and *Thesis* (10 ECTS). There are 4-5 mandatory and 2-3 elective courses each semester. The SER contains quite thorough (about one page each) course descriptions. More detailed syllabi are presented in separate files. However, there are no descriptions and syllabi for the courses *Career Orientation and Internship Co-Op* and *Thesis* presented. The study programme has four aims and contains eleven learning outcomes. One of the aims is formulated in very ambitious and general terms and in fact does not describe the factual competences of graduates: "serve as leaders in their field and contribute to Kosovo's progress and economic growth through innovation, quality design, and automation of business functions". The link between the learning outcomes of the

study programme and of separate courses is partly hidden. For example, the study programme has the following learning outcome: “function effectively on teams to accomplish a common goal”. On the other hand, only one course (*Mobile Application Development*) mentions teamwork, but even this with no criteria on the ability to work in a team.

Moreover, some important aspects of software engineering – besides of requirements engineering – are not mentioned in the course descriptions. For example, discussions about software development methodologies seems to be insufficient: the classical waterfall model is not mentioned at all in the syllabi, and the contemporary prevailing agile methodologies are mentioned only once. Similarly, some basic terms like *virtualisation, cloud computing, Internet of things, social software, interaction design, linked data, big data, information system* are not mentioned in the course descriptions and in the syllabi. Although the teachers claimed that some of these topics are discussed in some courses (for example virtualization in *Advanced computer networks* and *Computer architecture*) the fundamental topics should explicitly be mentioned in the syllabi.

Relevant competence of other departments could also be more exploited (for example, tackling the issues of IPR and licensing).

Concerning the theoretical foundations of computer science, also some questions could be raised, for example the following:

1. The *Algorithms and Complexity* course introduces finite-state machines and regular expressions for discussing halting problem, P and NP problems etc. Other related fundamental concepts like *regular languages, context-free grammars, Turing machines* are not mentioned.
2. The role of *Calculus I* and *Calculus II* courses is not clear. Although the descriptions of these courses claim that the knowledge acquired during these courses can be applied to solve problems in applied computer science, no other course refers to these courses. On the other hand, basics of number theory necessary for understanding cryptic algorithms seems to be completely missing (for example, the term *prime number* is not mentioned in the course descriptions).

Research methods seem not to be discussed in the courses as well. This raises the question whether the students are able to conduct properly research in the course of composing the Thesis.

Recommendations:

1. Harmonise the learning outcomes between the study programme and the courses it contains.
2. Revise the software engineering related courses taking into account the remarks above.
3. Consider the possibility of replacing *Calculus I* and *Calculus II* by more relevant courses. Besides of more deep treatment of discrete mathematics (including *number theory*), some other important areas of mathematics (for example, *numerics* or *data analysis*) and mathematics-related topics (for example, *modeling* and/or *simulation*) could be discussed. As the study programme is

called *Computer Science*, the courses in mathematics should first of all serve the courses in computer science, not so much follow the intrinsic logic of mathematics.

4. Consider the possibility of adding a *Research methods* course to the study programme.

The distribution of the compulsory courses is the following: software development related courses – 84 ECTS, hardware related courses – 12 ECTS, courses in mathematics – 24 ECTS, other ICT related courses (including *Career Orientation and Internship Co-Op*, 14 ECTS) and Thesis (10 ECTS). Therefore, this study programme is clearly focusing on software engineering. It has taken into account *Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate Degree Programs in Computer Science* of ACM/IEEE Computer Society and therefore corresponds to international standards. This also does agree with the analysis *Skills Gap Analysis* conducted in 2011 by *Kosovo Association of Information and Communication Technology (STIKK)*: “new curriculums in the universities especially focusing on programming and software development (with a focus on web) could be proven helpful”.

The majority of subjects have the size of 6 ECTS with 36 hours for lectures and 18 hours for exercises. The fact that the vast majority of courses have 6 credits may seem somehow artificial. However, the titles of the courses allow in its generality ensure having adequate volume of the courses.

Although the distribution 36:18 is not commonly used (especially in bachelor programmes), the teachers and students were satisfied with this. Therefore, the number of hours for independent work of the students during a course is supposed to be in average about 110; that gives the students' enough opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis. For better supporting of independent work of students, excellent students are given the status of *student ambassador*. The students have access to *Jstor* full-text database of publications. On the other hand, the students can register the topic/title of their thesis only after they have successfully completed all other courses of the study programme. This has two obstacles: 1) students do not have enough incentives to start research in earlier phases of their studies and 2) students may have difficulties in deciding on electives without having decided on the topic of the thesis.

Recommendation: consider an option of offering the students the possibility of registering the topic of the thesis in earlier phases of their studies.

The students spend in average about 20 hours weekly to independent studies. Therefore, workload required for the academic programme is manageable for students. However, some students expressed their wish of having fewer number deadlines.

The content of teaching units are sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes. SER does not describe any overarching didactic concept, nor were the teachers aware of any overarching didactic concept. Concerning the teaching methods, the SER uses very short and standard formulations: “Learning outcomes will be met by lectures, demonstration, in-class exercises, presentations and discussions” or with the additional sentence “Students are expected to read assigned material prior to attending lectures in order to allow

them participate actively with comments and questions during lectures and seminar sessions". The teachers claimed that the College supports them in introducing innovative methods in teaching. On the other hand, as mentioned above, there is certain discrepancy between the learning outcomes of the study programme and of separate courses.

The normal minimum entry requirements for a candidate to be eligible for admission to the College's courses are set out in the General Entry Requirements contained in the Prospectus (the description in SER on page 189 is confusing, text there seems to be automatically copied from previous MA programme description).

Formally the student/teacher ratio is very good: 23 full-time and 4 part-time teachers to about 240 students. However, the workload of academic staff is distributed very unevenly: some have 5 courses to teach, but some do not have any.

2.3. Staff

This relation (23:4) of full-time and part-time teachers is also very good. On the other hand, the majority – if not all – of teachers have other employments as well. As almost all teachers indicate other institutions as their employers on their personal LinkedIn web pages, and only very few the College, it can be concluded that the majority of teachers do not consider the College as their primary employer. Therefore, their devotion to the work in the College may be questioned. For example, Ervin Ramollari to whom is assigned the biggest number of courses (5), has indicated University of New York Tirana as his employer on his LinkedIn page. The College is not mentioned neither among his current or previous employers. Inserting "Ervin Ramollari"+"University of New York" in *Google search* received 468 hits while inserting "Ervin Ramollari"+"Universum College" receives only one hit (sic!). And even this single hit does in fact not relate E.Ramollari with the Universum College! Neither has he indicated his affiliation to the College in his publications.

About 40% of teachers have a PhD degree. Although this could be bigger, the teachers with a MSc degree seem also to be competent enough. The qualification of the academic staff is appropriate. Note that the department has good potential for improving the study programme because some teachers are experts in important topics that currently are underrepresented in the study programme (see above). The College has very good cooperation with STIKK and also to the industry (some teachers are employed in the ICT industry as well). Experience of this cooperation is very valuable and worth of sharing with other colleges and universities in Kosovo.

The table where basic data of the Programme are collected (page 183 of SER) has also an item "Person in charge for the study program". Although this person is supposed to carry the primary responsibility on the quality of the study programme, his duties were not described in SER nor were satisfactory explained during the meeting with the academic staff.

2.4. Research and International Co-operation

As the management of the College explained, the College is teaching oriented. There are no regular research seminars in computer science conducted in the

College neither a research project in CS. Although some teachers have relatively good publication record the research is mostly conducted outside the College – the staff has indicated other institutions as their affiliation in their scientific publications in the most cases. The College has spent about 6% of their budget to Research and Projects (page 379 of SER), but the share of research in it was very small. Moreover, the relation between the course content and the formal qualification and research of the teachers is relatively weak in some cases.

International cooperation in research is conducted on individual level – there is no international research and development joint project in computer science where the College acts as a partner. Concerning teaching, the university has participated in some Tempus projects. Many teachers have conducted some of their studies in foreign universities and still keep academic contacts with these universities.

Recommendation: find the opportunities for inclusion of the College into international consortia for applying funds by international programs, especially by Horizon 2020.

As the share of research conducted inside the College is relatively small, the opportunities to be involved in research are relatively restricted for the students. Some research can be done during the *Code Weekend Fest* and in the course of preparation of the thesis. The fact that the students are not well prepared for conducting research (the study programme does not contain no course in research methods and research methodology) certainly is another factor that restricts participation in research projects.

3. Political Science – majoring in Public Administration or International Relations and European Studies (BA, reaccreditation)

3.1. Introduction

Professor Mertens de Wilmars met with Professors Dr. Memet Memeti, Dr. Bekim Podrimqaku, Dr. Lush Culaj and two others teachers. The exchange – in English, French and Italian! - was direct, honest and friendly with the mutual understanding goal and the goodwill to emphasize the academic programme's positive and negative aspects.

The material support in the meeting was the academic program's descriptive *BA Political Science in Public Administration or International Relations and European Studies* included in the SER and it was discussed about next: programme's goals, teaching's methodology, student's practical, methodology and research's line, the teaching staff profile and the academic programme content.

During the meeting, we noted several contradictions between the SER version and the clarifications gifted by the interviewed professors but after discussions it seemed more clear.

On basis of the documents and the meeting, the first and main observation indicates the BA has to be split into 3 modules instead of 2 because the programme

and the content is too poor or not so representative respect to the European Studies and International Relations (see point 4 below).

The evaluation and the recommendations relative to the study program are based on the analysis of the documents transmitted by the agency KAA, the interviews and the site visit.

3.2. Student Management

The student management seems to be right related to the student's join conditions in the BA. Besides, the number of students admitted (400) is reasonable but *Universum College* has to preview groups of max. 40 students which allow an intensively training development as well as a close student's assistance by the teachers.

In this way, students have an important – and stronger - role because of the reduced pupil number, they become into a mentor or “coaches”. They will be not only training in theoretical and practical lessons but also on the career opportunity preparation and the concept of *Career Orientation* as an evaluable activity seems interesting because the students are forced to get their responsibilities under control for a professional future. Nevertheless, the subject (*but separated* of the internship) has to be organized early and not during the semester IV.

Recommendations:

1. Provision should be made for tutorial system: every student must get a mentor/coach from the master admission to the end. The mentor must support, motivate and help to the student during its career. The mentor should deal with two students' tops and the mentorship frequency once a week (for example 1 hour/student).
2. The module “internship and Career Orientation has to be split into two parts. First one, Career Orientation at the end of the 1st Year. It's the right moment for the student to do a “balance” of his studies and consider the future perspective in professional terms but overall in choice terms about the BA core disciplines.

3.3. Teaching Methodology – practical works

Regarding with teaching methodology, the SER and the meetings have not given precisions in concrete terms about didactic and pedagogic methods and means that will be in use. The SER shows nevertheless the importance between the theoretical and practice programme parts. Every BA subject will have several practices that the student must complete. However, it does not show the kind of practices the students will do.

The authors of the programme consider the study of the Political Science with a ratio of 70-30% between theoretical and practical part of every subject. The programme would preview other ratio from the 2nd year which consist in more practical perspective and less theoretical dimension.

In terms of internship, the meeting and the SER indicate an agreement with the Ministry of Finances but the sectors or administrations are not mentioned concretely. The students can participate in an internship in a local or national administration (which one?)? In the NGO's? In private sector? The information about it are not very clear. If exist agreements with this kind of institutions and companies, it's necessary indicate which ones and what expect and require from the students.

Recommendations:

1. To detail more the learning outcomes and specify them for public administration, international relations and European studies.
2. To draw up a "Teaching Guide" for every subject, showing next points clearly:
 - Course Summary
 - Results expected (learning) with more precisions
 - Description of module's contents with precision.
 - The workload (classroom activities and non-attending activities)
 - Teaching Methodology with more description
 - A continuous assessment process *and common* in all subjects of the program: Final exam 40% - Individual work 30% - Collective/Group's work 30% of the total marks.
 - The ratio theoretical – practical activities would be:
First year: 70-30% and from the Second year: 60-40%
 - Recent - after 2005 - bibliographic references (basic and additional) and minimum 3 references in English in the SER.
3. In every "teaching guide", indicate with precision the content of the practical part of the study with the elements mentioned above.
4. To extend the offer of practices in the Institutions and Kosovo private organizations or companies trough agreements that included the type of practice to do, the number of hours, the student's evaluation and the supervision by a person of the partner institutions.
5. Through the university, make an effort to find some resources in order to offer any grant for the best students and let them make some practices outside Kosovo.
6. In that way, establish cooperation agreements with Internationals Institutions (EU, Council of Europe, etc.) through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
7. Suggest two weekly hours of tutorial supervision.

3.4. Contents of the Programme

In general terms, all the subjects correspond with this type of BA. Nevertheless, from the SER and the meeting, several lagoons have been detected.

1. The main problem is the modules configuration. If it's justified the creation of a module for Public Administration, it's a non-sense to preview ONE module for two subjects with different contexts and perspectives. *International Relations* need to be studied more in depth.

In addition, the second part of this module, called "European Studies", doesn't correspond to the reality! Generally, European Studies spend 60-90 ECTS and here we have only 42 ECTS!

Recommendation:

Option 1: change the module's title by other more introductory

Option 2: create 3 modules (Public Administration/International Relations/European Studies)

2. In the programme, EFL – English – take a part too much, with 60 ECTS! instead of using them for the module subjects.

Recommendation:

As maximum, the programme could maintain the subject "Professional English for Public Administration, International Relations and European Studies. The students have to study English out of the BA programme.

3. **Specific Recommendations** according the overview of the programme:
 - *Constitutional Law*: place the subject in first year and first semester
 - *History, Structure and Functioning of EU*: obligatory instead of elective
 - *European Law* (in Public Adm.): which one? Institutional or material?
 - *Economic Globalization /International Organiz.:* obligatory instead of elective
 - *Economic policies*: change the title! Include social and cultural dimensions of EU.

3.5. Research and International Cooperation

About the research, the meeting and documents received do not show us a research plan in despite of indicate in SER the importance of the research and the establishment of a research group. The research lines aren't indicated. Nothing about International Relations and EU studies!

About International Cooperation, the SER doesn't indicate if exist something about the BA, for example with European universities.

Recommendations:

1. To draw up – with the external expert help – an own EU/IR/PA research's plan. This plan must indicate the research lines, its goals, expected implementations, human and material resources, planning, etc.
2. This research plan must include a doctor's join team in every branch (PA/IR/EU).

3. Establish connections with others Kosovo's Universities and European Union too, in order to treat the research subjects deeply.
4. Take stock of every publications and the master scientific academic staff activities. Encourage the scientific academic participation in publications and international activities.
5. Establish an ENGLISH international and national electronic review.

4. Business and Management (BA, re-accreditation) and Management (MA, re-accreditation)

4.1. Introduction

Both BA and MA programmes in Management correspond well to the institution's mission as well as to formal and informal principles of operation. The aim of the programmes is to equip the graduates with applicable knowledge and skills for being effective managers in various organizations in the market economy heavily needed in nowadays Kosovo. The programmes are intended to provide solutions to different challenges in Kosovo covering the general knowledge of management and training the professionals who will be working as managers in various specific fields. The College is aiming to "produce" graduates who in addition to knowledge in various management subfields have also enough insights and practice in being effective worker/manager in "real life or social situations" while putting quite a lot of emphasis in both curricula on transferable skills.

4.2. Curriculum and Teaching

Both BA and MA programmes in Management are considered in current curricula development as the main programmes in the Universum College. More than half of all the College's students are studying management and these programmes are also generating the biggest part of the school's revenue.

BA programme is a general management programme offering logical and expected courses commonly taught in most similar programmes. Hence, more emphasis than in similar programmes is put on 3 things: 1) research methods – the program is offering special research courses already during first two semesters 2) internship – the curriculum has just one course giving 8 ECTS "Internship Program and Career Orientation" (all other courses are giving 6 ECTS) 3) transferable skills – the "soft knowledge and experience" are delivered and tested through various courses and methods. The curriculum is offering four specializations: 1) Management – around 50% of the students are following this track 2) Marketing and Communications - around 10% students; 3) Banking and Finance - around 30% students and 4) International Business – around 10% students. Most students are studying in Ferizaj – 50%, Gjakova and Prishtina both ca 25%. According to the SER, business and management students are very successful in gaining employment once they have

completed their degrees. Ca 70% of the BA graduates are quickly employed after graduation or continue their studies in various Master programmes.

MA in Management is the only Master Programme offered by the College. It is aiming to provide theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of Management that is needed in various sectors, both in big and small organizations. Currently MA programme has three specializations: 1) Management – around 50% of the students are following this track 3) Finance – around 30% students 3) International Business – around 20% of the students. Additionally, the College is planning to open two new specializations: 1) Public Sector Management 2) Tourism Management. According to the management of the programmes, already now they have to turn down ca 40 interested candidates each year who specifically would like to study public sector management and also tourism is a growing sector in Kosovo while generating already now 7-9% of GDP of the country.

BA programme consists of 180 ECTS credits and MA programme consist of 120 ECTS. Both structures meet the legal requirements. The study subjects in both programmes are spread appropriately. Each semester the students should obtain 30 ECTS. All courses on BA level would give 6 ECTS (except one internship course on BA level) and all courses on MA level would give 10 ECTS. The Master Thesis itself gives 30 ECTS. The first year of the studies on MA level is the same for all students of the programme and during the second year they will choose certain track.

During the last 3 years and based on the suggestions of previous accreditation some changes within the curricula have happened (e.g. most of the intended learning outcomes were rewritten, the ECTS for the courses were changed, internship part was made relatively more important on BA level, on MA the literature was updated and more emphasis is put on entrepreneurship within the courses etc.). The overlap of academic content between the various parts of the curriculum is rather comprehensible and transparent. It is suggested to pay more attention to possible options to include more international expertise/ lecturers to the curriculum. Also more effort is needed while rewriting next round out the intended learning outcomes for the both program as well as for the courses.

Since the management of the programme is considering the current programmes more as “a practical management program”, the future changes within curriculum could be based on this approach. Also the student pointed out the desire to have more practical skills - communication, negotiation, psychology, international marketing etc. courses. On BA level the management could consider rescheduling some courses (e.g. HRM could come before organizational Communication and Social Responsibility courses), Strategic Management could be a required course, the same number of electives could be offered for all tracks, it could be wise to consider to have among “elective courses” all other courses taught in different tracks (like on MA level), etc. On MA level some courses/parts of the courses could talk about fashionable topics as well e.g. Asian market, Internet trade, green producing and marketing, etc. Though also the currently existing curricula are working fine and there are so many well working and competing approaches to teaching management, the school could make its final judgement what special additional development on course structure is appropriate in current context and circumstances. Even if the programme puts already quite a lot emphasis on

connecting the programme with social partners (also the list of existing cooperation agreements is rather long) and many great internships have happened, it could be useful to start to discover options for international internships as well.

Looking at the current course syllabi, course descriptions and the reading materials – they look appropriate for the both programmes. Information about assessment methods/ home assignments is delivered well to the students. It is suggested to continue to keep eye on updated literature and to include piece-by-piece more literature in English language. In syllabi there are currently listed mostly textbooks as reading materials. It is suggested to consider also scientific articles from journals as required (or at least suggested) reading materials since the new and relevant/ up to date knowledge is often delivered more/ faster throughout the articles than within the books. In addition, even if the College is trying to promote scientific activities among the students, more emphasis could be put on this field. On the other hand, the College has been very active and successful in translating various management textbooks from English to local language with support of international donors. Also the employment barometer is a project the school could be proud of.

Generally classes have been well received and students appreciate the experience teachers bring into the classroom. Even if the programme is not based on an overarching didactic concept (there was not any concrete concept that the programme would follow, mostly it was mentioned the keywords “practice oriented”, “student centered”, “based on the needs of the market” etc.), the teachers are aware of different possible approaches and teaching methods. A common training offered to all new teachers at CELT is for sure a big value for the College and for creating a common framework and shared understanding for all.

Different teachers are communicating to each other and adopting/ testing different concepts offering to the programme additional value – the students will get to know various competing approaches to teaching and learning. The College has a formal and well-functioning peer-to-peer review/feedback system. According to the interviews with the management and students the teachers are actively using real life projects and case studies. Students are required to complete various home assignments/coursework and to present results to others, to discuss and to defend their arguments.

The admission criteria and admission procedures measure up to international standards. A grey area exists due to the system that the students can basically take unlimited times exams (even though it happens very rarely that they need to do more than 1 or 2 retakes). In the future more strict system might be applied.

Summarizing the analysis about the curriculum and teaching, the scope and content of both programmes are generally sufficient and appropriate to ensure the aims of the programmes. Taking into account the positive argumentation and recent developments described above, it is also suggested to allow open and accredit additional profiles on MA level.

4.3. Research and Internationalization

Even if according to the mission statement one of the College’s aims is to focus also on applied research, the College is mostly focusing on teaching. On the other hand

teaching staff has still managed to publish quite a lot articles and papers. The full number of publications might be considered low for Western standards, but could be considered very positive for such a relatively young college in Kosovo. Even if the number of publications/presentations as such might be considered as a very positive outcome in Kosovo, the research coming out of the teaching staff could result in more high level peer-reviewed international academic publications in the future (e.g. currently almost a half of the publications are conference proceedings, publications in schools' journals, papers presented at the seminars, etc.).

The College has made already quite a few steps towards internationalization while looking for possible educational partners abroad, for possible common projects, exchange programs and guest lecturers. Every year 7 BA students are studying a semester in Turkey, new contract with Romania is coming along very soon. Also international recruitment for teaching staff could be considered in the future.

For the future it is recommended to continue to use guest speakers /international expertise on the programme (currently there is a required that each module should have at least 1 guest lecturer). It is also suggested that some of the optional courses will be delivered fully in English in the future. Currently verbal English is not much used and written texts in English are mostly listed under "additional suggested reading". Based on the meetings with the students, they would be ready to take more foreign language challenges on board.

4.4. Staff

The College has rather impressive staff in management field. Quite a few of them have studied or made their degrees abroad and they share positive and innovative approach to teaching and to developing the management studies in Kosovo in general. Both the management and teaching staff in the field is motivated and competent. Based on the SER, ca 30 people working for the programmes. The qualifications of the teachers are appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution. Most of the courses are led/ supervised by PhDs. The College is also financing teachers' professional development on competitive basis with max 1500 euros per year. There are at least ca 30 applications for each positions allowing the College to have a real choice while pursuing its human resource policies.

Considering the number of the students in the programme (altogether 787 students on BA level and 249 students on MA level) and all teachers involved, the ratio between academic staff and students could be considered good (ca 1:35). Communication among the management and academic staff is happening on constant basis. They have various staff meetings and bigger meetings within college. Also constant in-house beginners' trainings are happening. Quite a few of the staff have been also teaching abroad.

4.5. Recommendations

In the future developments, the following aspects should be kept in mind:

1. Continue running the "introduction course" for all new teachers. Consider delivering additional common trainings for the whole staff about curriculum

development, writing learning outcomes, new approaches to assessment and teaching methods;

2. Introduce more “soft management” courses while developing the programmes further. Some fashionable topics could be included into modules as well/more “negotiations, green producing, Asian studies, etc.
3. Introduce content in English language and offer more opportunities for practicing verbal English.
4. Consider more academic articles are the source of up to date information;
5. Reconsidered the system of maximum number of possibilities to take exams;
6. Continue to include guest speakers/ social partners in regular courses.
7. Focus on opening up new opportunities for international exchange and internships;

Summary Recommendation: Based on the argumentation beforehand both BA and MA programmes in Management are well enough prepared and delivered. Some aspects could get more attention/more focus in the future, but in general the curriculum is delivering what it is promising and the management of the programmes is well qualified and equipped to innovate and update the programmes on running basis.

5. English (BA, accreditation)

5.1. Introduction

Universum College has proposed for accreditation a first cycle (BA) three-year, 180 ECTS credit programme entitled *BA in English*, which is planning to register 60 students. This would be the first accreditation of the proposed programme, nevertheless the College has attempted to accredit the programme before but unfortunately without success.

The rationale behind the proposal is that there are high demands for people with excellent English Language proficiency skills in the labour market in Kosovo and that there are no other programmes, which would fill in this gap. Universum seems to see an opportunity to create a profession with general expertise in English without any substreams (specialisations) or more specific profiles and which would most likely be needed in the Kosovar labour market. However, as some of the experts in their reports have pointed out, there is a danger that graduates will not be able to reach the required competences to adapt to such a wide variety of employment opportunities. For example, in the current proposal graduates are supposed to be able to function in the business English environment, translate literary and non-literary English texts, be competent translators of journalistic texts, become independent German language users etc. Therefore, the first recommendation relates to the structure of the programme, which should somehow be streamlined. In accordance with previous experts, we believe that it is

highly unlikely to develop students' competences in all the proposed fields of work, i.e. Albanian-English translation of literary and non-literary texts, English of journalism, business English and linguistics, German language in only three years etc. It is well-known and has been discovered in a number of research studies that language skills and most of other academic skills tend to be built gradually and over a longer span of time. For example, the three streams (specialisations) could be:

- BA in English, English in Business and Media
- BA in English, Translation
- BA in English with German

The name of the programme may stay the same, however, in the supplement document (diploma supplement in EU terms) has to state clearly which specialisation a student has taken. We would also suggest that in the future years, Universum develops MA programmes which will upgrade students' competences, such as, for example, an MA programme in translation studies (Albanian-English-German), MA programme in Business English and Journalism etc.

We leave it to the programme developers which streams (specialisations) to finally design and offer, however, it is to be noted that prof. Andrew Goodspeed came to exactly the same conclusion and his recommendation was: "Identify two or three primary specializations (which may be entirely elective), and focus upon those, making progression among them dependent upon successful completion of the previous elective." How these electives progress, and which electives are required to be chosen for each specialisation, is not clear. The self-evaluation report unfortunately does not explicitly state this.

In addition, it has to be made absolutely transparent to the future students that the proposed programme does not lead to any teaching profession in primary or secondary schools. Therefore, no courses with a focus on pedagogical or educational focused topics are to be included in the programme.

5.2. Curriculum and Teaching

The curriculum is designed in the way that the courses included in the programme cover the most important content and skills needed for a competent graduate in the English language. However, it has to be made transparent which courses are mandatory for each specialisation in order to make sure that graduates do actually acquire the knowledge and skills stated in the outcomes.

The curriculum structure has been much improved from the first proposal, however, it would need a few changes which are discussed below.

The first recommendation refers to providing more **evidence-based outcomes** of students in English language proficiency skills. These skills may be assessed using the CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) descriptors and its levels. Thus instead of naming ELI -1, ELI-2 etc, it would be more transparent and widely-recognisable if the writers of the programmes used the CEFR descriptors, for example ELI – 1 could become ELI – A2, ELI – 2 could become ELI – B1, ELI – 3 could become ELI – B1+, ELI – 4 could become ELI – B2, ELI – 5 could become ELI – B2+, and ELI – 6 could become ELI – C1. Due to the work

demands, C1 language proficiency level is most probably needed to be able to function in different working environment successfully and efficiently. It is therefore reasonable to add another subject ELI-6 in Semester II, Year 3, as the English language proficiency is the core of the whole programme and has to be regularly and properly taught and assessed. The CEFR document is accessible on this website: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf

Moreover, the need for ELI-6 was already expressed by the expert of the previous report, however, Universum has not responded to this. It is clear that the course called "MUGS" which was already questioned by the previous expert has not been changed. It seems to be one of the courses focusing on the development of English writing skills and as such needs to have a continuation from the writing course in Year 1 which is rather strangely called academic writing which the students in year 1 are very unlikely to be able to do. What is missing is a course on writing skills in Year 2, which should be added.

The next recommendation is related to the **time structure** of the linguistic courses proposed to be taught in the programme. The current order is the following:

Year	Semester	Linguistic course
1	1	Introduction to Linguistics: Albanian Phonetics and Phonology
	2	Introduction to English Language Linguistics
2	1	English Language Syntax
	2	English Language Lexicology
3	1	English Language Morphology
	2	---

According to how most of the English language programmes in non-speaking countries are structured, and the main principles how languages function and are learnt, the Universum is advised to reschedule the order of the courses (and add English phonetics to one of the courses and some changes in the names) as follows:

Year	Semester	Linguistic course
1	1	Introduction to English Language Linguistics
	2	Albanian and English Phonetics and Phonology
2	1	English Language Morphology
	2	English Language Lexicology
3	1	English Language Syntax
	2	---

Next to the time structure of the linguistic subjects, the developers are asked to consider the need for keeping the course entitled *Introduction to English Language Linguistics* as this is not a theoretical programme focusing on linguistics as such.

Further, the following recommendation refers to the proposed elective courses, which should be designed in the way that they enable students to reach the competences needed (and stated) for each stream (specialisation). The report has to

state which courses have to be taken by a student of a particular specialisation. For example, it is not clear how many ECTS somebody who will graduate from the BA in English, and has been specialising in Business English and Media, needs to collect aiming electives and which ones. Currently, there are only Introduction to Journalism, Translation for Administration and Business and Web-based Journalism and the Universum needs to add something like English for Business and Administration or similar. This should be applicable to all types of specialisations.

Elective course *EFL Intermediate to Advanced* overlaps with the course ELI (English Language Integration) and as such seems to be redundant.

Many of the course syllabi include **out-dated textbooks** and **reference books**. The programme developers need to replace them with new versions or new titles and also propose most appropriate ones, which would fit the content of the course. In addition, resources from authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, journals, online texts should be added to the literature to all of the courses.

5.3. The Staff

In previous evaluations the staff of the English programme has been a concern. In this application, provided that the data given by Universum are accurate, it appears that the staff meets the minimum requirements demanded by the regulations of the KAA.

5.4. The Resources

At present, the library resources have been much improved and there are many English language books, which are adequate for the programme, for example a number of fiction books and also some reference books targeting English language learning. However, more textbooks (e.g. on phonology and phonetics, morphology, syntax etc.) and more reference books such as different types of dictionaries, grammar books etc. are still missing, esp. more copies of the same book. The recommendation is, therefore, to get hold of more books, which would be targeted at specific topics of the courses involved in the programme when it starts.

The facilities of Universum are modern and adequately structured. The classrooms seem to offer an encouraging learning climate and should be adequate to satisfy the proposed English programme's requirements. The computer laboratories have been upgraded with new machines and recent software programmes and should offer a good support for language learning.

5.5. Research and Internationalization

As the programme has been proposed for its first accreditation, the planned activities for doing research internally and externally cannot be assessed according to their performance. However, we would like to recommend that the proposed dissertations students need to write inspire them to do autonomous research, however, carefully guided by competent supervisors. Supervisors should also be encouraged to group students in investigating certain research questions with close

guidance by their supervisors which should further lead to writing up joint research articles submitted to international peer-reviewed journals.

The staff should become involved in Erasmus+ scheme and other international projects as much as possible, and be supported to do quality research studies, which should be published not only in the Kosovar but also in international journals. There should also be financial support for the staff to attend international conferences on the topics related to language, linguistic, translation, learning and teaching English for specific purposes, English literature, English and media etc.

6. Proposals for the Decision on Accreditation and Reaccreditation

The team of experts **recommends (re-)accreditation** (with conditions specified in the specific study programme reports above) all study programmes submitted for accreditation or reaccreditation by the College as follows.

Accredit for 3 years the following study programme:

1. English (BA).

Reaccredit for 3 years the following study programmes:

1. Computer Science (BA).
2. Political Science majoring in Public Administration, International Relations and European Studies (BA).

Reaccredit for 5 years the following study programmes (in all three campuses):

1. Business and Management (BA).
2. Management (MA).