Pjeter Budi COLLEGE

INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

6th of June, 2020

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1. Introduction
1.1. Context

Institutional Reaccreditation Procedure at Pjeter Budi College

Date: 18th of May 2020

Expert Team

- Prof. Dr. Melita Kovacevic, University of Zagreb
- Prof. Dr. Magdalena Platis, University of Bucharest
- Ms. Oana Sarbu, PhD student, University of Bucharest

Coordinators of KAA

- Naim Gashi, Executive Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation

Criteria used for insititutional evaluation

- Standards and guidelines of KAA

Sources of information
- Information obtained during the on-line visit;
- Meetings conducted with the management of the institution, teaching and administrative staff, students, graduates, external stakeholders and employers of graduates;
- Additional documents requested by the ET

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1.2. Site-visit schedule (on-line)

18th May 2020

09.00 – 10.20	Meeting with the management of the institution *(no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion)*
10.30 – 11.10	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative services
11.10 – 12.00	Lunch break *(to be provided at the site visit place)*
12.10 – 13.00	Meeting with the heads of study programs
13.00 – 14.00	Meeting with teaching staff
14.00 – 14.40	Meeting with students
14.40 – 14.55	Short break
14.55 – 15.40	Meeting with graduates
15.40 – 16.20	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
16.20 – 16.30	Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA
16.30 – 16.40	Closing meeting with the management of the institution

1.3. A brief overview of the institution

The College "Pjeter Budi" was established in 2005 by decision of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Studies according to the Law on Higher Education No. 2003/14 and Administrative Instruction No. 14 / 2013 on the licensing and registration of private holders of higher education in Kosovo.

Pjeter Budi College provides BA and MA programmes in the fields i customs and

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freight forwarding, tourism and hotel management, business administration, insurance, law and management.

2. INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

The institutional evaluation consists of 11 sub headings through which the administration, organisation and management of the institution, as well as teaching and research are assessed.

2.1. Public mission and institutional objectives

Pjeter Budi College approached the evaluation process without submitting any additional documents prepared in English, though upon a request of the ET they provided them after the on-line site visit. The fact that no additional documents were provided prior to the on-line site visit certainly did not facilitate the whole process of evaluation and did not leave the impression of the institution being well prepared for the process which is important for any institutions regardless of its geographical position. Also, it did not contribute to the overall impression of the institution being carefully and with a full commitment prepared for the evaluation.

The PB College has defined a mission statement, however it is not transparent what is its third pillar since in different parts of the documents and SER it is defined differently. Once it is innovation, once mission relies on learning, perspective and deduction (education), or as it is stated in the SER PB offers equal opportunities for all by conducting contemporary teaching, professional practice, research and investigation in relevant fields in order to achieve social impact and by stating this, it refers to the Standard1.1. By saying this, it follows a statement on college cooperation with other institutions outside the College, and no elaboration on the mission statement has been provided.

Although there is a short statement on a consultation process involving external and internal stakeholders, there is no information on the process, what kind of consultation, who exactly participated etc. During the interviews it was also not possible to collect more relevant information. Obviously, the institution would need to have this process implemented in a much more intense, transparent and evidenced way. It has been reported by the members of

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academic community that the contributed to the process of defining the mission of the institution and that they recognize the mission, as well as the SER reports that academic community, but not explicitly referring to the whole academic community, but managers and teaching councils should ensure the full relevance of the mission.

Objectives are not well defined and they are not formulated in a kind of logical way; they jump from one area to the other; they do not correspond fully to the mission as well as they are not presented as a medium and long term objectives. The fact is that such a mission and accompanied objectives cannot provide an effective guide for strategic planning as well as for efficiency in decision making and overall institutional functioning.

The PB College would definitely need to devote more time to work out clear mission which will distinguish this institution from the other institutions in the same social context and which will enable them to prepare all the documents and processes and mechanisms for institutional well functioning.

Compliance level: Non compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *It is important to redefine a mission in a clear way, based on three pillars which will profile the institution in optimal way as well as to apply adequate procedures and to take into account perspectives of different stakeholders*
2. *All the stakeholders must take a part in developing strategic documents, and in order to do that institution needs to define procedures and to follow them*
3. *It would be important to take all the steps based on the intrinsic motivation for the best of the institution itself, and not to be motivated primarily and only by the external requirements for the accreditation process*

2.2. Strategic planning, governance and administration

Peter Budi College developed strategic plan for five years 2020 to 2025, and according to the observed data it has been done through consultation with different stakeholders. However, a serious drawback is that it is not aligned with the budget processes and it is not clear how the

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regular adjustments will be performed in case of a need. Additional problem for the process of evaluation was that finances are included in the SER but written in Albanian which make this portion of a documents absolutely not transparent. There are budget planning for next five years, spread across different categories, but it is not clear which parameters had been used as much as the institution did not provide any descriptive arguments and explanations related to the budget and financial planning. In the SWOT analysis they identified, for example, as a weakness non-involvement in TEMPUS projects, projects that as a EU scheme/programme already do not exist for more than a couple of years (there is another scheme introduced, replacing TEMPUS projects) All these facts lead the ET to conclude that the institutions is not well informed, not occupied and immersed in all relevant academic processes and, as such, also not up to many tasks that it should perform.

Because of that, the strategic plan definitely does not take full and realistic account of all the aspects of external and internal environment. Although the report refer to the context of the country, and it claims its focus on enhancement of the labour market, it is not realistic at all when aiming at excellence in teaching, research and innovation showing a very low level of the institutional self-awareness and recognition of own capacity. It is hard to reach excellence in teaching which could happen only if number of prerequisites are met and many factors could be controlled, but to talk about research excellence, as well as in innovation, it is a goal of many well established research universities. While being very good in research, it is still a long way to become excellent in research (and innovation). As an example of the institutional attitude, during the interviews, the institutional representative of the college government claimed to perform research in artificial intelligence, which is indeed very demanding field both in terms of human resources as well as infrastructure. In dialog with other academic representatives, no one was aware of research being performed in that area, the ET could not find any evidence in research outcomes, and in obtaining information on IT equipment, it was. Reported to have only computers for personal use or for students' IT classroom.

There are no defined short and long term targets, so monitoring will not be easy to implement and there is no way to evaluate outcomes. Action plan that it has been provided is not transparent at all, it is more presented as an 'outline', more like a draft of the action plan than needs to be further develop and much more specific. For the evaluation process it is absolutely inappropriate to use only first letters, we guess of people responsible, but with no defined their institutional role and positions. Throughout of the documents, the terms of aims, goals, and objectives are used interchangeable with no clear rational for that, while during the

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interview the ET could not receive any explanation for that. Similar non transparency was observed for the use, on the one side *a strategy*, and on the other side, within the same chapter, *strategies*. This approach certainly did not contribute to the overall transparency of the submitted document, neither did reflect a clear structural approach of the evaluated institution.

The whole institutional system of staff, both administrative and academic, did not provide enough evidence that all the necessary procedures that would ensure transparency in election as well as clearly defined positions and responsibilities, are in place. For example, in the Regulation on Criteria and Procedures for Delivering and Recognition of Academic-Scientific Titles, Art. 8.1.2.1. says that for the Full professor title, person has to have A significant number of monographs, textbooks, publications in international scientific journals…; for associate professor position Monographic works, publications in scientific journals…; while for Assistant professor Having published monographs, scientific publications in internacional journals... In other words, it is ahigh level of inconsistency which for sure cannot contribute to transparent procedures and decision making. This is even more enhanced with the Art. 21. that says Selection and appointment of academic staff is decided by the Dean of the College based on "ad hoc" decision. By saying this, the ET guess that dean refers to the Rector. Selection and appointment of academic staff is decided by the Dean of the College based on "ad hoc" decision.

Governing bodies and the management is presented in the SER where the Rector is hardly mentioned (in one chart only), and it turns out that the CEO is the main figure or at least mentioned most frequently. There are no clear and well and in transparent way described roles and responsibilities of decision making bodies and decision makers. The system does not distinguish between the governing and managing bodies, where the managing board appears in the section of administrative structure, as well as of academic structure which does not mention Rector at all, but in the chart, as mentioned earlier (which is kept in Albanian). Although the chart has vice rectors, they are not mentioned at all in a descriptive part, and it is not clear what are their roles and responsibilities, even more so because in the chart there are two vice rectors (due to Albanian, the ET could not figure out their sectors), but in a descriptive part only one vice-dean is mentioned. During the online interview, although the ET did comment on that and asked for some clarifications, in particular related to the role of the Rector and his actual appearance in the documents and SER, no satisfactory explanation was given.

According to the documents students representatives are nominated and elected by students themselves and they take an active participation in life of the College, including decisional,

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executive and consultative bodies. ET has reservations that all these executive and consultative bodies are truly functional (see Standard 5 – QA Committee) and, in this context, if students are really heard in the College.

ET observed a number of weak elements in strategic planning, governance and administration and in order to overcome those weaknesses it would be of utmost importance for the institution to approach them with a lots of concerns and care, starting from structural and policy level to operational level of institutional functioning.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *It is important to revisit the strategic planning and to better align it with the (redefined) mission*
2. *Institution needs to improve all the crucial components of strategic planning, such as clearly defined objectives, to have appropriate and integrated annual and long term budget processes, and to implement monitoring which will enable adjustments*
3. *Institution has to define clearly and consistently through all the documents processes of election as well as roles and responsibilities of all decision making bodies and positions*
4. *Administration is an important part of well functioning HE institutions and as such it must be also properly elected with well defined criteria, their positions and duties well described and implemented*
5. *The strategic planning and all the objectives need to be fitted to the real capacity of the institution, bearing in mind all the components of the capacity, as well as to overall context in which the institution operates.*

2.3.   Financial planning and management

Pjeter Budi College provided a lot of text and documents in Albanian in SER, including for the financial planning and management. A table is included as the Budget for 5 years: 2020-2025, academic years: 2020/21 – 2024/25 (SER, pages 30-32). No comments and no explanation on the budged are integrated in SER. After the table, SER includes the SWOT analysis, which is in fact a general SWOT, not particularly developed for financial planning and management. The same Table in Albanian but in Excel is provided as annex to SER from the very beginning with the title: "Planifikimi i buxhetit per 2020 2025 Pjeter Budi". In addition, the college declares that: "*The implementation of our strategic goals will be*

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possible by: 1. Qualified human resources, 2. Quality infrastructure and 3. Financial sustainability" (SER, page 19), but their ideas as possible strategies to ensure financial sustainability refer to general issues and theoretical approaches:

- "*aligning our resources with our strategic priorities by actively monitoring the economic and financing environment, objectively assessing the short- and long-term financial implications of all our decisions;*
- *periodical reviewing and updating our financial strategies and conducting an annual assessment of our financial sustainability;*
- *increasing and diversifying our income from sustainable academic and commercial financial activities;*
- *maintaining the balance between current and capital expenditures;*
- *managing our costs and efficiency in delivering all of our activities, including procurement;*
- *maintaining a comprehensive and effective risk management, internal audit, and assurance and prudential management framework of major financial risks for College;*
- *further developing our governance framework to improve decision-making and accountability*". (SER, page 21).

None of the abovementioned so-called strategies are in fact strategies, they are just simple declarations of intention with no clear evidence of sources of incomes and possibilities of income increasing and diversification. The budget reveals that in total expenditures, there are credits to pay, but no scholarships for students to allocate, which is a huge sign that the college has not been able to manage the expenditures. Therefore, based on these (and not only these) the college cannot demonstrate that it has sufficient financial resources in the short or medium term to effectively address to its mission as well as objectives set out in the strategic plan.

In terms of financial policies, no regulation on financial stability is published (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/statute-and-regulations/). Therefore, ET considers that the college does not have a realistic budget and that no financial policies which address its financial sustainability have been elaborated. The budget will never become realistic as long as institutional objectives will remain not clearly defined in terms of being measurable and strategies/policies for additional sources of income will not been elaborated.

The college has a specialized office on financial issues responsible to a senior administrator. As stated on the webpage, "Finance office is implementing body of Board and Dean financial policies. Finance Office is headed by the Finance Director. This office takes care of the payments' execution and other financial matters according to the orders of College Board and Dean" (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/finance-office/). In the organigram provided as

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additional document after the online site-visit, the office is called Finance and accounting and it is subordinated to General Manager.

There is no evidence for proper monitoring of expenditure and commitments against budgets with regular reports to prove the institutional preoccupation for budgetary development in realistic terms. In fact, the entire part of financial planning and management look like the institution did not pay a lot of attention to elaborate.

Accounting systems comply with accepted professional accounting standards and as far as possible attribute total cost to particular activities. As included in the Strategic plan, there are costs allocated for specific activities, although some of the activities are considered costless. The budget allocations refer to online implementation of learning systems, implementation of a centre for research, development of a system for community service, building academic integrity.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Elaborate the budget correlating its allocation to concrete measurable strategic objectives;*
2. *Create financial policies to address to financial stability;*
3. *Create a strategy to attract students and elaborate 3 scenarios on tuition fee: positive, moderate and negative;*
4. *Create a local/institutional decentralized evidence of expenditures and incomes on cost units (faculties/study programs);*
5. *Create and publish an annual Report of expenditure and commitments monitoring against budgets, including a set of measures to be taken to achieve financial objectives;*
6. *Create a unitary description of all organizational units in all documents; never use different names for same structures or offices.*

2.4. Academic integrity, responsibility and public accountability

In SER, the Code of Ethics is explained, as main topics and content (SER, pages 33-37). It was not submitted together with SER, but as ET requested, the document was part of the additional documents received after the online site-visit. It looks like a document elaborated as a MUST, not as a necessity for setting out integrity principles within the college and

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among academic community members. The institution has a code of ethics and academic integrity through which it defends the values of ethical integrity and it addresses *"to academic staff, administration staff and students and all other persons who in some form or another are regarding college"* (Code of Ethics, Article 2).

According to SER:
- *"College Members are obliged to respect the integrity and personal and professional dignity of each College's employee" (SER, page 34);*
- *"The academic staff must, in the course of their work, act in accordance with the rules and obligations arising from the teaching process. Students should refrain from any form of copying while completing obligations arising from the learning process (assignments, seminars etc.), and when undergo to knowledge/ learning evaluation" (SER, page 35);*
- *"During the scientific research the principles of mutual agreement of participants in the scientific research process should be applied. The rights and dignity of participants in the scientific research process must be adequately protected" (SER, page 35);*
- *"Any form of plagiarism of scientific paper and idea is the greatest violation of scientific and professional ethics, i.e. the Code of Ethics. Plagiarism means the act of acquiring or copying an idea, results, written or other form of writing entirely or partly, not presenting the source used and having no deserve for it" (SER, page 36);*
- *"Falsification and manipulation of College official memos, recommendations and documents, use of official College documents and data for misinterpretation is a violation of the Code of Ethics." (SER, page 36).*

"College members may not request or accept any gift or benefit, even of a symbolic nature, which may directly or indirectly affect their activities in colleges", as stated in the Code of Ethics (page 20); therefore, ET appreciates that the code of ethics requires that all internal stakeholders act consistently with high standards of ethical conduct and avoidance of plagiarism in research, teaching, performance evaluation, and in the conduct of administrative duties, and avoid conflicts of interest.

The Code of ethics at the date of visit is not public, so the community cannot access it freely (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/statute-and-regulations/) – at the date of the visit. The academic community is not really managed to follow clear mechanisms or processes that

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enforce the Code of ethics. In the newly adopted strategy for research – Scientific Research Strategy (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ENG-Strategjia-Kerkimore-draft-propozimi1-1.pdf) for the period of 2019-2024, although there are some scientific standards, none of them mention the ethical issues. In the Strategic plan, there is a budget allocated for building academic integrity (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ENG-Plani-strategjik-Pjeter-Budi-Verz-Final-Recovered1-1-1.pdf), but this is what the college plans for the future. One more example: the documents describing the elaboration of thesis for both bachelor and master level (provided to ET as additional documents after the online site-visit) do not clearly state the students' obligations in terms of plagiarisms. In fact, the college recognize that they failed to monitor autonomy, management and falsification, and state this as a real weakness in SER (page 41), as well as the limitations of the plagiarism software which considers only an online database. This is why, ET considers that Code of ethics need to be clearly enforced in all internal processes and mechanisms and that the college needs a lot of work towards these issues.

The institution has established a designated structure (an Ethics Council) responsible for the analysis and resolution of any potential breaches in the code of ethics. "*Ethics Council is a professional body of the College Senate, established upon Rector's/ Dean's proposal and is competent for implementation of procedures in case when the rules of the Code of Ethics are violated by College teachers and associates. Ethics Council is composed of four members fromacademic units with four-year mandate and of a representative from Student Parliament with two-year mandate. Ethics Council may issue Rules of Procedure, by which shall regulate matters not provided with this Code*" (SER, page 38).

The Disciplinary Commission has provided a report for the period of 2016-2019 to the ET, as additional document based on request. This is related to the cases of delays and work objectives, and it looks like a document created especially for the ET, not as a report meant to improve things internally. The responsibilities are different from the Ethics Council to the Disciplinary Commission. Therefore, ET considers that there is no evidence that the institution is applying the Code of ethics and its associated processes and mechanisms on all activities related to management, administration, teaching and research. No results of its application are made public.

Many internal regulations, procedures, self-evaluation reports and decisions of governing bodies are not made publicly available. The Statute of the college appears only as an existing

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document, without any content (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/statute-and-regulations/), the self-report on quality assurance are not available since 2018 (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/self-assessment-reports/), no Senate decisions are public, as no other decisions of other governing bodies.

The institution is not publishing clear, accurate, objective, relevant, accessible and detailed information for all students. The only program with some more information is Customs and Freight Forwarding BA (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/customs-and-trucking-ba/); the others, have only a list of subjects to be studied in different semesters. There is very limited information on the website regarding its academic staff and only for one program (the BA mentioned above). No clear and relevant statistics on the number of students enrolled, on graduate employment information, on scholarship opportunities, neither in the students' area on the website, nor in the Student Handbook. In the area for Academic Staff Scientific Publications and Scientific Activities (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/scientific-publications-of-academic-staff/) only 17 members appear as they would have documents to be downloaded, out of the entire academic staff (reported as 13 full time and 11 part time in the additional documents provided after the online site-visit); among the 17 names on the website, 7 members have documents out of 17.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Make public (available online) the Code of Ethics and the results of its application; mention the date of approval on the document;*
2. *Make all internal regulations, procedures, self-evaluation reports and decisions of governing bodies publicly available on the website; update the documents regularly;*
3. *Invest in a more performant anti-plagiarism software for staff and students in all languages of the study programs;*
4. *Publish relevant, accessible and detailed information regarding academic staff, its research and academic activities;*
5. *Develop the site of the institution with relevant information for all stakeholders – internal and external.*

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2.5.   Quality management

CPB has Regulation on Quality Assurance which sets out the standards for quality assurance and also the organizational structures directly responsible with the procedure's implementation. The CPB's Strategic Plan (2015 – 2020) mentions QA strategic objectives, but we are already in 2020 and not so many achievements are identified by the ET.

Anyway, according to the SER – page 23, the quality assurance doesn't seem to be one of the strategic area for the institution's government.

SER and also the Regulation on QA provided by the college as additional document, after the online site-visit, presents as key drivers of the evaluation processes: Quality Assurance Office and Quality Assurance Committee. While the Quality Assurance Office has administrative responsibilities (*to prepare periodic reports on evaluation of the institution, programs, academic staff, administrative staff, students*), the Quality Assurance Committee is described as a *policy-making body composed of: professors, administrative staff, students and external experts*. Art 8 of the Regulation specifies *Commission members are elected by secret ballot at the meeting of the Scientific and Teaching Council, among members of the Office for the Quality Assurance, teachers and students for period of four years* There is no indication considering the number of members of the commission or about students 'election (4 years is not possible for a student). The ET didn't identify the Commission in the Organogram presented by the College.

Discussions with the head of the study programmes showed that they know nothing about this Committee, not identifying it in the internal quality assurance system. In this respect, it is difficult for the ET to believe that the QA' processes circle is closed and the data obtained by different tools are really analysed, disseminated and used for improvement: *"the Quality Assurance Committee prepares plans for implementation of all evaluation aspects, including research, entity engagement and work plan while reporting to Dean and Managing Council" (SER – page 45)*

During the ET's online site-visit of the College, the Rector indicated several mistakes in the Self-Evaluation Report, even if the representatives of the Quality Assurance Office mentioned the rector as the one who approved the final form of the SER. In the same time, "Pjetër Budi" College's Self-Evaluation Report didn't present any annex in English and the ET doesn't understand the perspective of the CPB's internal quality assurance system which should have been aware that evaluation and quality assurance are evidence-based processes.

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Assessment of teacher performance by students is done by the students through anonymous evaluation questionnaires. There are two kind of reports presented by the institution, using the surveys provided by students, one is a general, statistical analysis regarding the evaluation of the teaching processes and another one (named by the college Internal Evaluation Report) is an evaluation of each staff of the institution. According to the QA Regulations, the reports are published *in the official journal of the College "Pjeter Budi" - Prishtina.* All internal evaluation reports published on a college's website are in fact reports submitted to the KAA for external evaluation. https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/self-assessment-reports/

There are not any evidences of a real internal evaluation which takes into account inputs, processes and outputs with some particular attention to the quality of outcomes. Actually, the institution has not a clear strategy in terms of continuing improvement in performance, and also it seems to not understand that the proposed objectives could be achieved only with an Action Plan that presents clear and measurable actions, not *Creating the conditions to motivate, inspire; Deliver excellence with impact on the society development*; *Enhancing our knowledge sharing and public involvement etc.* The ET considers that without any consistent self-reflection, mistakes and weaknesses are not recognized and consequently, it is not place for planning for improvement.

Generally, the ET has not found any evidence that the college develops its own quality assurance system in order to maintain the quality of its operations. The internal quality assurance system is not integrated into the day-to-day activities of the college, but rather it seems to be presented in order to meet KAA's standards. From the perspective of the ET, therefore, there is more work to be done by college authorities and staff in achieving a better balance between external and internal quality assurance. The ET believes that the current system does not provide enough space for self-analysis and self-criticism, the opportunity for a department, or whatever entity, to present its unique features and to internalise the process. Overall, there is no evidence of a functional internal quality assurance system with periodic analysis at all levels of the college and annual self-evaluation reports, analysis and action plans to improve the weaknesses. There is no systemic quality management of any institutional area - strategic planning, human resources management, study programs, etc, as demonstrated in other areas of the report.

Compliance level: Non compliant

ET recommendations:

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1. *Ensure that QA responsibilities are clearly divided between QA Office and QA Committee;*
2. *Improve the role of the QA system in the processes for planning and development and its use in the daily strategic and operations management;*
3. *Increase the internal commitment for the constant quality improvement and develop the quality culture across the institution so that it supports the university in the development of its operations;*
4. *Ensure that quality assurance functions throughout the institution are integrated in a defined cycle of planning, implementation, assessment and review and that the data is used to guide enhancement and as a base for improvement;*
5. *Conduct regular evaluations to produce self-evaluations reports that provide an overview of performance for the institution as a whole and for organizational units and major functions within it;*
6. *Increase student participation in quality assurance processes;*
7. *Provide or facilitate the access of QA staff to relevant training for the positions they occupy;*
8. *Ensure that internal QA processes are defined for real improvement at all institution's levels, not only for the conformity with KAA's standards.*

2.6. Learning and teaching

The institution has drafted some policies but they all look like being incomplete. The college has a Regulation on master studies (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Regulation-for-Master-Studies.pdf), but not on bachelor studies (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/statute-and-regulations/). The former mentioned for master studies is approved in 2014 and there is no evidence that the document has ever been updated since then. The Regulation on the organization of exams and evaluation of students is also old and not updated (since 2013 - https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Regulation-on-the-organization-of-exams.pdf). ET observed that the institution has no clear evidence that the college monitors the extent to which policies and procedures are effectively implemented. All documents appear as that they are just to express some formal processes and not real implemented and implementable ones.

The institution runs several programs at bachelor and master level. Unfortunately, all sources of information go to the main program the college is proud of: Customs and Freight

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Forwarding BA. But this is not the only program of the college. During the discussion with the teaching staff, it could not be clear how performance is monitored, although the pursuit of excellence is a declared mission for teaching, research and innovation (SER, page. 13). Therefore, ET considers that there is no clear evidence on the fact that the institution is managing an effective system for ensuring that all programs meet high standards of learning and teaching starting from initial approvals, regular changes and monitoring of performance.
The institution does not pay enough attention to quality assurance. There are no quality indicators monitored and in the absence of such a set of indicators, differences in quality between programs are not clear. ET considers that the program Customs and Freight Forwarding BA is more advanced in terms of teaching and learning, compared to other programs, but there is no formal evidence on this matter, as a clear analysis has not yet been done. In fact, the college needs to take action to ensure that all programs meet required performance standards.

Study programs are based on correlations between learning outcomes. According to SER (page 49-66), the study programs are described within documents such as syllabus and curricula; they have different learning outcomes, as reflected in different skills and also, several assessment methods are used basically for final and continuous evaluation. *"The study programs are compiled to equip students with different aspects of free enterprise system. Students shall be provided with basic knowledge of business operations, processes and knowledge about business organizations in today's global economy"* (SER, page 56). The most detailed program in terms of these issues is the same - Customs and Freight Forwarding BA (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Syllable-Customs-and-Freight-Forwarding.pdf).

During the online site visit, the teaching staff group insisted on the practical experience students can get, especially during master studies, when they are involved in some practical research. The college has to pay attention to the number of teaching hours and number of ECTS allocated and described in all documents, so they are connected and correlated. ET considers that student learning outcomes are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. Professors confirmed that they have both continuous and final assessment for students and that they pay attention to different assessment methods. *"College "Pjetër Budi" in principle follows the practice of the teaching and learning process being extended in time by share of about 60% in teaching and learning from direct contact with the teacher and 40% of*

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exercises, practical, independent student research and work" (SER, page 58). Therefore, ET considers that there are effective processes in place for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities. The college has adopted a Strategy for staff development (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Strategy-for-Staff-Development.pdf), within it is stated that: "*The basis of improving the quality of the institution is the academic staff itself, oriented towards academic teaching and scientific research in* the relevant fields of knowledge, in order to apply into the domestic labour market and abroad" (Article 3). Teaching staff participate in activities to improve their teaching effectiveness. In the additional documents, some examples have been provided.

Teaching staff integrate practical work with theoretical tasks for students. They try to create a proper learning environment for students. Students appreciated during the online site visit the activities in the campus, but also the quality of internships. The students who participated at the dialog with the ET were engaged in learning and appreciated the electronic library where they have access, the practical tasks they were involved in.

The institution has not provided clear evidence that the college evaluate the effectiveness of programs through graduates and employer survey. In fact, during the meeting with the graduates (at the online site-visit), only one person said that they must have been involved with a contribution to some document, but could not remember what. In addition the focus group with employer (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2019-Business-Community-Focus-Group-1.pdf) is not a proper survey - too general, and not program related, only few questions, no clear indicators, only descriptive content, no clear solution and concrete fee-back, no clear information about the number of the participant to the focus-group. This looks like a story elaborated to be told.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Create a methodology/procedure to effectively monitor the extent to which academic policies and procedures are effectively implemented;*
2. *Set up and revise annually differentiated admission procedures to different study programs as to address to performance; make them public (website);*

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3. *Elaborate a set of concrete quality indicators and monitor them, to identify and investigate differences in quality between programs; correlate indicators to performance standards for programs, differentiated between BA and MA;*
4. *Correlate syllabus with the curriculum entirely in terms of hours allocated for the ECTS;*
5. *Revise every year the curriculum and syllabi;*
6. *Adjust the Internship Syllabus to the curriculum regarding the hours allocated for credits;*
7. *Update the Strategy for staff development;*
8. *Provide training to teaching staff to improve teaching effectiveness on an annually base;*
9. *Involve formally the graduates and employers in the process of evaluating the programs' effectiveness, based on clear facts and indicators integrated in formal surveys.*

2.7.   Research

When defining research plans, for any HE institution, in Kosovo and anywhere in the world, it is crucial to be self-aware and self-critical considering its own capacity, meaning all the three basic components, human resources, infrastructure and budget. All the research plans need to be align and adjusted considering these components; the other important aspect, which is actually just another aspect of the previous one, is the fact that not all the educational institutions need or can perform the same level of research. They cannot do it, and there is no need to do it. Considering this, it is really annoying when the institution cannot provide any hard evidence on the capacity, and even less evidence of research performance, and still writes documents in which plans and claim excellence in research.

A research development plan of the Pjeter Budi College is not and it cannot be consistent with the nature and mission of the institution because the mission itself is not well defined and it does not reflect and it does not fit in the actual local and regional context. The plan does not include any indicators, it is not measurable and it is not possible to monitor its implementation and development. In some cases, when listing objectives, there is a responsible person/s, for some objectives none, in other words it is observed inconsistence which certainly will not contribute to meet the objectives.

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The budget is not transparent in terms of allocation of a portion of budget for performing a research, and it does not actually provides any sound research planning. It is impossible to connect research plans and claims for performing excellent research with this level of superficiality when presenting the research budget. At least, what the ET can conclude that the research plans were not seriously considered, not by the governing bodies and decision making bodies of the institution, or academic staff who suppose to carry out this research plans, the actual carriers of research activities.

Institution did not develop clear criteria for validating research, and according to the provided list of publications, everything could be accepted as a research outcome, regardless if it is an abstract, a paper published in a journal not internationally recognised, in the book etc. Overall research productivity is very law and far away of the required minimum. The promotion criteria are extremely vague and non transparent, they do not reflect at all an ambition of the institution which claims an excellence in research and innovation to be one of its strategic goals.

Documents report on a need to intertwine teaching and research, students are also encouraged to take a part in some research that takes place within the institution, and during the interviews teaching staff reported on their awareness and actual actions to include their research activities and outcomes into courses they teach. Papers that ET could check are published under the name of the evaluated institution and with the authorship of the FT academic staff.

There are no fully developed policies and regulations related to TT and commercialisation. It appears that all the activities are more related to service and consultations which actually contribute directly to the income. In order to fully support TT, innovation and other aspects of commercialisation, the College would need to develop very professional, skilful administrative support.

In addition, in order to support fully ethics in research and research integrity, additional elaboration of the referent document needs to be performed. The existing document referred to some aspects of unethical behaviour in research, however some aspects of performing research stayed uncovered (for example, work with human participants, protecting their rights, issuing consent forms etc.) In addition, the existing documents are mostly focused on what it cannot be done, but there is no defined procedure how to ensure safeguarding of research integrity prior to starting performing research.

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Compliance level: Non compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *To develop research plan that is realistic and that is align with the (revised) mission and reality of the institution and context*
2. *The College has to allocate clear budget for doing research and to fit it to research plan*

3. *The College has to define set of indicators for research (as well as the overall strategic plan) and to be able to benchmark performance*
4. *In order to become more efficient in doing research, the College has to develop clear and transparent criteria how to validate research, to distinguish between different types of research and to aim towards something that is realistic and possible to perform*
5. *Institutional promotion criteria need to be revisited and to be develop in accordance with common ways of validating academic word in order to support better quality*
6. *It is necessary for the institution to familiarise itself with the different categorisations of research outcomes and to build these categorisation into their own criteria for the academic promotion as well as for other research support criteria*

2.8.   Staff, employment processes and professional development

The institution has elaborated an Employment handbook for academic and non-academic staff including rights, responsibilities, institutional expectations, information on performance appraisal, on promotions, etc (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/9-Employment-handbook-3.pdf). As this is publicly available, it is clearly available to all teaching and administrative staff. For professional development, the institution has published the Strategy for staff development (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Strategy-for-Staff-Development.pdf). There is also a Regulation on employment (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/9-a-Regulation-for-employment-1.pdf); all kind of discriminations are prohibited (Article 3). ET considers this equitable treatment for all applicants. Special conditions are described in these regulations.

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Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. Based on the required additional documents, the institution has 13 full-time academic staff, 11 part-time academic staff and 8 administrative staff (7 of them have clear position, one not mentioned). In addition, the institution is providing to new teaching staff orientation to ensure familiarity with the institution and its services, programs and student development strategies, and institutional priorities for development. The teaching staff confirmed that they benefited from such a program and that they had from the very beginning a discussion with the rector himself.

According to SER (page 66):

- *"The staff recruitment in College is done by public notice, which stays open 15 days from the publication date, but in case of emergency competition deadline may be shorter.*
- *The competition foresees terms and conditions required for the particular vacancy.*
- *The Recruitment Committee selects the candidates who run in competition, based on relevant qualifications and experience in the required academic field and presents the most successful candidate/s to the Study Program Council.*
- *The Study Program Council approves the list of staff running by the staff recruitment committee and sends it for approval to the Academic Senate".*

The level of provision of teaching staff (the ratio of students per full time staff member) is adequate for the programs offered. Teaching loads are equitable across the institution, taking into account the nature of teaching requirements in different fields of study. Teaching staff declared that they are not involved in too much research, so the workload is not overwhelming at all. Staff employed in the institution (academic, scientific, administrative) hold relevant qualifications for the position they take care. At the same time, criteria and processes for performance evaluation are specified and made known in advance to all staff based on the regulation abovementioned.

Academic staff evaluation is done through students, but not through self-evaluation, peer and superiors evaluations. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available and students are not aware if and what kind of conclusions/measures were taken for improvement. There is no clear evidence on clear requirements for staff improvement. There is also no evidence that

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the institution is closely monitoring the improvements in staff activity, especially in the segments underlined during the evaluations.

In the Strategic plan for 2020-2025 (https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ENG-Plani-strategjik-Pjeter-Budi-Verz-Final-Recovered1-1-1.pdf), an initiative regarding staff is "*Improvement of teaching and studying in achieving the best results, with the purpose of achieving the goals of the program, by developing the students' competencies*" to which a goal is set: "*Ongoing encouragement of enhancing study programs (in accordance with the Declaration of Bologna and European Area of Higher Education)*", with no resources and no staff responsibilities for its achievement. The college has an intention to train staff in pedagogical methodologies and has allocated 35 000 euro/year for this. In addition, a weakness issue is considered the "*failure in organising of professional trainings in some departments that do specific paperwork that dependent much from the processes*". (SER, page 71). Unfortunately, the institution has not elaborated a clear plan for all staff professional development.

According to the documents provided as additional one after the site visit (online), for the staff training, all staff are given appropriate and fair opportunities for personal and career development.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Create institutional conditions to motivate teaching staff to work in international teams;*
2. *Integrate the feedback of students into the academic staff promotion procedure (effectively and not declaratively);*
3. *Create a procedure for academic staff peer and superior evaluation;*
4. *Create a development plan for academic staff and another one for administrative staff.*

2.9. Student administration and support services

The overall accreditation process has been quite challenging in nature: in spite of the institution being aware that the process will be conducted in English exclusively, very little

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documentation has been made available in English so as to challenge the international experts to assess the institutional compliance with the external standards.

According to the student's testimonials and additional documents sent by the College, the information regarding the admission procedure is published on the official website of the institution. The website also includes information on the study programmes and services provided by the institution.

Even if the orientation program is presented as one of the accomplished previous recommendation, the ET didn't identify a clear orientation program for new enrolled students. All necessary information are provided by the Student Services Office which *works six days a week, from 9am to 6pm* (SER – page 72), fact confirmed by the Office's employees. It is also published on the college's website a Student Welcome Handbook.

Students are organized at College level in Student Parliament and at academic unit level in Student Council. According to the SER, additional documents and those declared by students during the online meetings, they are represented in different structures as decision bodies or consultative bodies.

The college offers scholarships by partially reducing the fee for different categories of students: students with very good learning performances (between 10% and 50% - 22 for the academic year 2018-2019 and 17 for the academic year 2019 - 2020) or students with limited economic conditions (20% - 2 students per academic year, last two years).

There is a student handbook being made online available for all the students across the institution, covering regulations, the rights and responsibilities of students, actions to be taken for breaches of discipline, responsibilities of relevant officers and committees, and penalties that may be imposed.

According to the information provided, there are processes in place to collect data referring to the student progression and drop-out rates, students' satisfaction with their programmes, the learning resources, and administration and support services. As ET already mentioned, there are not clearly evidences that data are used for supporting decision making at all college's levels: teaching, research or administrative. The internal evaluation report provided to ET by PBC has not any concrete analyses and any formal plan with specific actions. In all cases, there is no coherent usage of the data to support decision making. The college has not developed any quality assurance instrument aimed at collecting teachers' satisfaction with administration and support services.

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According to the SER (page 85), *the option for filling complaints (in case of a grading disagreement) is adopted and operational.* Actually, ET tried to identify in the Student Handbook (which is only in Albanian), what exactly students can appeal and is mentioned: the decision to award scholarships; students have the right to complain about the quality of the teaching process or about College infrastructure; students have the right to appeal against the decision taken by the College bodies, of the programs studies relating to their rights, obligations and responsibilities.

"Pjetër Budi" College has not a soft to identify plagiarism and during the meetings, students or staff members could not identify activities to prevent plagiarism. The Code of Ethics is in place to deal with academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating.

Within the Students Office, the College has a Career Development Office that deals with career planning and employment counselling. The main responsibilities of the office are:

- help students with their application forms;
- assist students in the design of CVs or other documentation needed for students who are in the process of applying for a job.

The College doesn't provide evidences for any other kind of counselling.

During the discussion with students, ET identified extracurricular activities involving students, such as:
- learning and sports competitions
- humanitarian activities
- blood donation day
- book donation day
- excursions
- etc.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Develop a set of regulations covering student appeals with a wide range of appropriate grounds for appeal included and make it publish available;*
2. *Design and periodically conduct a survey to evaluate teachers' satisfaction with administration and support services, as they are also a beneficiary of the administration;*

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3. *Ensure that the results obtained by analysing the satisfaction surveys are properly used for improvement;*
4. *Ensure appropriate policies and procedures to prevent plagiarism and other forms of cheating;*
5. *Provide real counselling for students (career, psychological etc.).*

2.10. Learning resources and facilities

First of all, ET should mention the fact that regarding the learning resources and facilities, the evaluation was made on the basis of the information received from the institution, and those declared by the participants in the meetings during the online site visit.

During the meetings, the ET found out that the institution provides an adequate, clean, attractive and well-maintained physical environment for its building. The building is not suitably adapted for students with physical disabilities and also, learning resources for special needs (as blindness, deafness etc.) are not available.
According to the proposed budget for the next period, the development of the library will be done annually, the amount varying between 11.000 and 13.000 Euros.

Complete inventories are maintained of equipment owned or controlled by the institution including equipment assigned to individual staff.

According to the library's picture from the PBC's website https://pjeterbudi-edu.com/en/pjeter-budi-2/, the library is quite small, the number of volumes does not seem very large, and the reading room seems to be a table with 10 chairs. There are no computers, even if the SER presents also *an electronic library EBSCO, LOGIN, American Corner, JSTOR, BioONE, Cambridge Journals and Oxford Online (*SER - page78*),* but the students mentioned that if needed, they received a print. ET considers that it is necessary to assure electronic access to resources and reference material.
*The College library consists of printed books, journals and other materials registered in catalogues, in accordance with the fields of study, in Albanian and English, which are systematized and evidenced as hard copies and access into electronic libraries. (*SER – page 77*)*
According to the information provided by teachers, students and graduates during the meetings, library is available for extended hours and a reliable system is used for recording loans and returns.

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The quality assurance process use to collect data considering the satisfaction of students with the learning resources and facilities, but students have no idea how data are analysed or used, they have never seen an internal report to cover the all institution at all levels as teaching satisfaction, facilities satisfaction, administrative support satisfaction etc. No equivalent instrument is in place to collect teachers' or administrative staff satisfaction with learning resources and facilities.

Adequate computer equipment is available and accessible for teaching, staff and students throughout the institution. The Organogram of the College presents an IT Office which is responsible to support staff and students to use the information and communication technology. Also, the additional documents sent by the College present some trainings programmes provided to ensure effective use of computing equipment and appropriate software for assessments, teaching and administration.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1.Ensure appropriate provision for learning resources is made for students and staff with learning disabilities or difficulties;

2. Design, periodically conduct and analyse a survey to evaluate administrative and teaching staff's satisfaction with the learning resources and facilities;

3. Provide computers with online access to electronic databases for the library.

2.11. Institutional cooperation

Internationalization and cooperation do not seem to have been priorities in the College's Strategy. The institution has not an Institutional cooperation or Internationalization Strategy and anyone from the PBC's up management is not mandated for the initiatives and results in this area. Consequently, ET didn't identify any mechanism to support cooperation with international higher education institutions, networks or organisations and the number of agreements or memorandums are insignificant for a higher education institution.

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Until now, the activity of the college has not been oriented on international promotion, no events organized in this sense or notable participations of PBC's staff or students can be identified. The absence of clearly specified attainment targets, accompanied by measurable indicators, on matters such as mobility, and international research links, which might act as reference points for future planning in this area across the College and its faculties, seemed to the ET to be a notable omission. The current trends in higher education clearly underline the necessity of internationalization and the move towards a more integrated higher education framework in Europe is only the more visible development of a broader and deeper trend. Research projects can be also a financial resource over time, the college is currently based exclusively on fees paid by students, which in the long run is not sustainable.

In terms of relationships established with local industries and employers to assist program delivery (such as placement of students for practice or employment), the ET could confirm during the online site visit that few cooperation are in place, but there is very little engagement of the local employers and members of professions in the work of committees or other structural units considering study programs and other institutional activities.

The institution has not formally established an Alumni Association, it is an informal Alumni network. During the meetings, the graduates confirmed that they received surveys and information from the college.

Compliance level: Non compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Develop and adopt an internationalization/institutional cooperation strategy to guide the institutional effort into this direction, including measurable indicators and allocated budget;*
2. *Establish e member from the upper management that is directly mandated and accountable for the initiatives and results in cooperation and internationalisation;*
3. *Ensure that staff engagement in international cooperation and contributions to the community are supported by the institution according with clear mechanisms and, also, it is included in the staff performance review system;*
4. *Increase the prioritization and resource allocation dedicated to internationalization and institutional cooperation.*
5. *Organize events of international visibility and outreach (conferences, summer schools, etc.);*
6. *Encourage the participation of staff ad students in international projects;*

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7. *Enhance the capacity of the staff in English language skills;*
8. *Increase the number of internships for students;*
9. *Really capitalize the involvement of employers in College's decision bodies.*

3. Overall Evaluation and Judgments of the ET

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for program re/accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a **substantial compliance** level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure in meeting at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation.

The Pjeter Budi's College feed back on the draft report showed that the institution is aware that there is a significant space for further improvements and they expressed appreciation for the provided recommendations.

Since Pjeter Budi College demonstrated **an overall partial compliance** with two substantially compliant areas and four non compliant ones, according to the Manual requirements, the institution did not meet the minimum criteria to be granted a positive decisions for reaccreditation. Therefore, accordingly, the Expert Team recommends **not to accredit the Pjeter Budi College.**

Expert Team

Chair

	Melita Kovacevic	**June 6, 2020**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

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	Margareta Platis	**June 6, 2020**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Oana Sarbu	**June 6, 2020**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)