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## ***UBT COLLEGE***

### ***Master Programme on Information Systems and Management***

## ***REACCREDITATION***

## **REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*June 2021*

*UBT College, Faculty of Information Systems*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 28th May 2021**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Josip Balen*

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

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

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self evaluation report*
- *Syllabuses - MSc*
- *Academic staff list nad CVs*
- *Video presentation*
- *Faculty of Information Systems Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025*
- *The list of Publications*
- *Books at the UBT Library for Information Systems Program*
- *Academic Promotion Regulation of the UBT College*
- *Research description*
- *List of international partner institutions*
- *Code of Ethics*
- *Regulations for student complains*
- *UBT Staff development policy*
- *Stakeholder Survey*
- *Graduate Students Survey*



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- *Teaching performance assessment*
- *Questionnaire for evaluation of administrative staff performance*
- *Survey with employers - results*
- *List of the partnership agreements*
- *Sample of the partnership agreement*
- *Staff training plan*
- *Regulation - Scientific research and publication*
- *Regulation and procedure for staff recruitment*
- *Industry Board Member List at Faculty of Information Systems*
- *Quality Assurance Regulation of the UBT COLLEGE*
- *Quality Assurance Manual, Faculty of Information Systems, UBT 2020*
- *List of Community Services Conducted by Teacher*
- *Accreditation Report External Expert Team, UBT College, July 2017*
- *An example of a complaint procedure made by students*
- *Regulation for student complaints UBT College HEIPP*
- *Standards for Election Into Titles of Higher Education teachers, scientific employees and higher education associates and research assistants as UBT*
- *Regulation for UBT College Studies*
- *Guidelines for online exams organization, PBHE College UBT*
- *Regulation for student registration*

#### **Criteria used for program evaluation:**

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA, July 2018*

#### **1.2. Site visit schedule**

##### Expert Team

- Prof. Dr. Josip Balen – Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, Osijek, Croatia

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#### Coordinators of KAA

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

#### Site Visit Program

<b>Meeting with the management of the Faculty</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
09.00 – 09.40	Prof.Dr Edmond Hajrizi, Rector Blerton Abazi, Head of Department Arta Abdullahu, Coordinator of the faculty Hasan Metin, Head of Research
<b>Meeting with the heads of the study program</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
09.55 – 10.45	Agon Memeti, Head of the study Programe Mirjeta Domniku, Head of the study Programe Tomor Çela, Head of the study Programe Muhamet Avdyli, Head of the study Programe
<b>Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
12.30 – 13.10	Ylber Limani, Quality Assurance Officer Besnik Skenderi, Research and Development Edon Maliqi, Student Support Dashmir Istrefi, Infrastructure and Resources Nehat Dobratiqi, Teaching and Learning Process



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<b>Meeting with teaching staff</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
13.15 – 14:05	Naim Preniqi, Academic Staff Muhamet Gërvalla, Academic Staff Fidane Spahija-Gjikolli, Academic Staff Gelina Maliqi, Academic Staff Zhilbert Tafa, Academic Staff Xhemajl Mehmeti, Academic Staff
<b>Meeting with students</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
14.10 – 14.50	Ilir Ferizaj, Student Bujar Shkodra, Student Bujar Ibrahim, Student Njomzë Pallaska, Student Anita Gërguri, Student Natyra Ymeraga, Student
<b>Meeting with graduates</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
14.55 – 15.35	Bujar Lushta, Alumni Albion Rexhepi, Alumni Selim Kolgeci, Alumni Mexhide Sokoli, Alumni
<b>Meeting with employers of graduates</b>	
Time	Participants in the meeting
15:40 – 16:20	Fatos Fondaj, Stakeholders - Katrori ITS Gzim Ademi, Stakeholders - KEP Microfinance Adonis Bllacaku Stakeholders - BpP Bank (Bank for Business) Gent Siqani Stakeholders - Prosperoware IT Solutions



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

UBT was established in Prishtina, Kosovo in 2001 as IEME – Institute for Enterprise Management and Engineering and in October 2004 became the UBT – University for Business and Technology. UBT holds the license of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) No.808/02-1 dated 18.10.2004 in Kosovo and it is Accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. UBT is based in Prishtina and it operates in six different campuses: UBT Prishtina, UBT Innovation Campus (Science and Technology Park) – Lipjan, UBT Prizren, UBT Ferizaj, UBT Gjilan and UBT Peja. UBT consists of 19 Faculties with 25 Accredited Study Programs and one quarter of all courses are given in English or other foreign languages. In total, it has more than 500 employees and 300 visiting staff and over 17.000 registered students (80% bachelor, 20% master) with more than one hundred foreign visiting students per year.

The UBT College is governed by the UBT Governing Body, Academic Council, President and Executive Council and the Faculty of Information Systems works under the College management. Every statutory body has standing and ad-hoc structures, sub-committees and working groups. The Governing Board is collectively responsible for the management and control of affairs of the College and for ensuring that an effective system of internal control and representation is implemented in the institution. The Faculty of Information Systems is led by the Dean, assisted by two program coordinators and by several other teaching assistants with various faculty duties. The Faculty Council is the principal academic body of the Faculty and it is responsible for implementing academic policies and overseeing academic performance of the Faculty. Furthermore, it is authorized to adopt study programs, to propose departments of study, issue guidelines about study programs, curricula and authorize the award of scientific degrees. The Faculty Council is composed of Faculty management, study program chairs, staff representatives, student representatives and industry representatives. The Faculty of Information Systems operates in two locations and is attracting students from various areas of Kosovo, Presevo valley, Macedonia and Albania with the mix of both genders. The provision of education activities has been catered and tailored to meet the demands of contemporary developments in the industry and society. The Faculty is responsible for the academic strategy, student examination, teaching and learning, research



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and development, links with industry, operational and procedural aspects including quality policy implementation.

The main goal of the Information Systems and Management Master's program is to provide students with theoretical and practical knowledge and skills required to manage IT projects, oversee application development, and develop an organization's IT strategy. After finishing the program successfully, students gain the competence and ability to formulate solutions for business and technology problems of all kinds and thus achieve the necessary qualifications to assume management positions and responsibilities in various fields.

## **2. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

### **2.1. Mission, objectives and administration**

The UBT College is in line with National Economic, Education and National Research and ICT Strategies and the Faculty of Information Systems follows the key strategic research goals of UBT College and develops according to its vision and role. The Information Systems and Management Master's program is designed on the basis of Kosovo Qualification Framework and the good practices suggested by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the International Association for Computer Information Systems (IACIS). Relevant academic and professional advice was considered during the program creation since the industry representatives and the industry board members reviewed the study program and gave their suggestions for the program curriculum improvement. During the meeting with the employers of graduates it has been confirmed that they have been participating in regular meetings with the management and that they have been consulted regarding the specific issue connected to the study program orientation, specialization, learning outcomes and market needs. Furthermore, industry representatives participate in modernizing the program content through various workshops, guest lectures, research papers, etc. An example of a good practice is that useful information regarding the study program quality has been also collected from the external stakeholders, such as alumni and industry representatives.





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The overall goal of the study program is to provide students with theoretical and practical knowledge of the various aspects of information systems and management needed for effective and efficient business management. The aim is to compare theoretical concepts, models and tools with real world problems and to train students in advanced problem-solving issues in the information systems field. The study program has a well-defined research concept but the overall didactic concept could be further improved since it has been noticed that the teaching and assessment methods are not fully following the learning outcomes defined on the study program, as well on the course level. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended study program learning outcomes but for several courses (mentioned under 2.4) there is inconsistency with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The Faculty Council is the principal academic body of the Faculty. The Council meets at least twice per semester and is responsible for implementing academic policies and overseeing academic performance of the Faculty. It is authorized to adopt study programs, to propose departments of study, issue guidelines about study programs, curricula and authorize the award of scientific degrees. The base for the administration of studies is the Statute of the College and the Regulation for Undergraduate/Graduate Studies. Changes in the organization of studies are made with decisions of the Academic Council. The Vice-Dean for Teaching in cooperation with Subject Leaders determine the Plan and program for the academic year. The Plan and program is posted on the official Faculty website. Academic staff and students are obliged to comply with the provisions of the Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct at UBT College. Furthermore, after the meetings with management, heads of the study program and academic staff, experts gained an impression that the staff and students comply with all internal regulations.

All the formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues are publicly available at the Faculty web page and are regularly reviewed and updated. However, only basic contact information regarding the academic staff is available on the Faculty web page and this should be updated by adding teaching and scientific information.



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<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution.	X	
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	X	
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.		X
Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	X	
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	X	
Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Match the teaching and assessment methods to learning outcomes on the study program and course levels.*
2. *Update the profile of the academic staff on the official faculty web page by adding teaching and scientific information.*



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## 2.2. Quality management

The Faculty has a designated Quality Assurance Officer and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee that work in conjunction with UBT Quality Assurance Committee and Quality Manager and with various central institutions. The Faculty Quality Assurance Sub-Committee is composed of three members and includes a teaching staff representative, administrative staff representative and a student representative and the overall quality assurance processes and quality management structure is very well organized at the both levels, the College and the Faculty level. At Faculty level, the Faculty Council is mainly responsible for protecting academic standards and making recommendations in relation to academic matters. It is primarily tasked with ensuring that academic policies relating to teaching and learning are consistently applied across all programmes with ensuring the implementation of the academic regulations according to the Academic Council Regulations on Undergraduate/Graduate Study and Quality Assurance Manual.

The quality management tools such as surveys, annual meetings, study audits and quality meetings are integrated into normal planning processes and in general all the academic and administrative staff, students, as well as the external stakeholders participate in the Faculty and the study program evaluation and the quality improvement processes. However, the provided templates are not fully addressing the learning outcomes, and therefore should be improved. Another issue is the quality of learning outcomes on the study program level and also on the specific courses (mentioned under 2.4) and there is an inconsistency with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. During the online meetings it was stated that one of the issues connected to the quality of the learning outcomes is that there is no policy defining the quality or the guidelines for writing the learning outcomes on the national level. Furthermore, it has been stated during the meetings that the graduates did not fill in the survey and since their feedback is very important for the study program quality assurance it is necessary to find a model and motivate graduates to fill in the surveys/questionnaires.

All results collected through surveys and questionnaires are stored in the institutional database, analyzed and the results related to the teaching process quality are delivered to the academic staff privately. As one of the threats in the self evaluation report it is mentioned that

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there is a resistance of a part of academic personnel in short-term to perform constructive self-evaluation of their teaching and pedagogical skills and achievement of learning outcomes. This threat should be analyzed carefully, the specific academic staff should be identified and appropriate measures should be taken in case of further resistance to the quality assurance process. Furthermore, results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program and the Faculty undertakes a regular periodic evaluation of programs once in every three years.

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

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Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Improve surveys and questionnaires for all groups of stakeholders by addressing the learning outcomes.*
2. *Motivate graduates to participate in the quality assurance process by filling the surveys and questionnaires.*
3. *Handle the threat related to the resistance by a part of academic personnel to perform constructive self-evaluation of their teaching and pedagogical skills and achievement of learning outcomes.*

**2.3. Academic staff**

Procedures for selection, appointment, appraisal and development of academic staff comply with the legal requirements since they are conducted in accordance with the Law on Labour and Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Kosovo. All internal procedures are based on the following documents: the UBT Regulation, Procedure for Staff Recruitment and the UBT Quality Manual. They should ensure the fair and transparent criteria for staff selection and during the online meeting with academic staff it was confirmed that from their experience their employment procedure was conducted according to the law. The Human Resource Manager is responsible for developing, managing, evaluating and implementing appropriate selection, appointment and recruitment procedures.



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Academic staff at the Faculty of Information Systems in total counts 58 full time teachers and in general the full study program is covered by full time employees that have only one teaching position at the UBT College. Furthermore, 41 full time academic staff reported in the self evaluation document hold a PhD degree, and therefore the condition that for each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD degree, is satisfied.

The attached academic staff CVs are covering the majority of the academic and scientific activities for all teachers and therefore and from the available information it can be concluded that the qualifications and experience of the academic staff for the proposed study program are satisfied. Staff development is an integral part of the Faculty strategic planning process and staff training plans and reports are created and submitted on a yearly basis. Academic staff have different opportunities for additional development of professional and teaching skills since during an academic year several trainings, workshops or lectures covering different fields are organized. The academic staff is in general attending those training sessions, however they do not receive any credits for it. The established Institute for Development of Education and Academic Affairs (IDEAA) is mainly focused on providing effective pedagogical skills and training. An example of a good practice is that the academic staff can also get funds for online training and certifications. However, since the expert team noticed issues with the defined learning outcomes at specific courses mentioned in the 2.4 it is necessary to organize additional training/workshop/lectures that will help the academic staff to review and compile effective learning outcomes for the courses they deliver. Although the majority of academic staff have scientific profiles on online scientific platforms (such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate), on the official Faculty web page only basic contact information is available and this should be improved by adding teaching and scientific information as a part of the academic staff profile.

The responsibilities of academic staff include their full engagement in all activities within the Faculty. The current workload for a full time academic staff has a fair division between the teaching (40%), administration (20%), research (30%) and academic community and community service (10%). Although the teaching workload is within the defined limits, with the higher number of enrolled students it could go above the limit. Few examples of

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community service were presented at the online meeting with the academic staff and submitted additionally in the document (*Community Services Conducted by Teachers* in the past two years) and the expert team feels that it should be improved and that a higher number of academic staff should get involved in the local and national community service.

The academic staff appraisal process within the Faculty is conducted by students regularly on a semester basis. At the end of each academic year the review report consists of a record of staff productivity in the areas of research, teaching, service and administration, is compiled. The whole evaluation and reporting procedure is very well prepared by the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee and the main goal is to ensure that staff appraisal is performed in accordance with UBT Staff Employment, Performance and Progression Policy and Regulation for Staff Appraisal. Furthermore, the Dean and the Faculty Council and Academic Council Committee are participating in the process and the Dean is responsible for performing the initial staff performance evaluation. All results are stored in the institutional database, analyzed and delivered to the academic staff privately.

The Faculty Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (TLA) document describes the strategy of active learning and it is a part of the Faculty Strategic plan 2020 - 2025. It includes the improvement of the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials accompanied by the appropriate facilities, technology and equipment. At the Faculty of Information Systems there are currently no academic staff who have retired.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the	X	

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Administrative instruction on Accreditation.		
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	X	
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant





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#### **ET recommendations:**

1. *Organize additional education for the academic staff regarding writing the effective learning outcomes.*
2. *Improve the community service of the academic staff.*

#### **2.4. Educational process content**

The educational content of the master study program will enable students to acquire a deeper understanding and knowledge of important facts of information systems, information system design and information system organization and management. The program contains the first two semesters with mandatory courses that provide students with wide knowledge in the field of information systems, infrastructure and security, law and management. The third semester contains five different specializations with three mandatory and two elective courses and the goal is to provide students with specific knowledge from the field of the specialization. The last fourth semester contains two mandatory courses providing research knowledge and internship opportunity and the master thesis. In total 120 ECTS credit points are needed for students to finish the master study.

The study program complies with the level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework and with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The Faculty assures that the competences and skills of graduates are in accordance with labour market demand through consultation with industry representatives that was confirmed during the meeting with employers of graduates and through practical work, seminars, projects and exercises for students. Employers of graduates are in general satisfied with the knowledge and skills of the graduates acquired through the study program, but are advising to improve the management, project management and soft skills.

The courses within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which are not available online (on the English version of the UBT web page) but are explained and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester. Course syllabuses contain student assessment mechanisms which are also clearly communicated to students at the beginning of every course. Various teaching methods are used to support active learning and independent work and achieve learning outcomes such as lectures, laboratory exercises, seminars, practical work, projects,

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discussions, etc. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and learning outcomes on the study program level meet the determination of the general and specific competencies. The courses within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which are explained and discussed with students in the beginning of each semester (at the first class of each course). Course syllabuses contain student assessment mechanisms which are also clearly communicated to students at the beginning of every course. The expert team noted that part of the study program courses do not have well-defined learning outcomes or that the learning outcomes are not adequate for the master level study program (e.g. IT Infrastructure and Security, Project and Change Management in IS, Enterprise Models in IS, Law, Ethics and Implications of Digitalization, Information Systems and Security, Database Security, Geo-Information Science (GIS), GIS Data Management Techniques, Data Processing and Statistical Methodology, IS in Health, Human-Computer Interface, etc.). Therefore, the expert team recommends reviewing all the learning outcomes on all courses and improving them to become more adequate for the master level study program. Furthermore, learning outcomes of the courses should be in line with the study program learning outcomes and also uniform across all courses in the study program. Moreover it was also noticed that at several courses the literature is outdated (eg. Emerging Technology, Innovations and IS, IT Infrastructure and Security, Project and Change Management in IS, IS Analysis, Design and Modelling, Enterprise Resource Planning Systems (ERP), Information Systems and Security, GIS Analysis, Modelling and Techniques, etc.), as well as that some of the literature is missing crucial publishing information (eg. Law, Ethics and Implications of Digitalization, Managerial and Financial Accounting, Database Security, Network Management and Computer Security, etc.). Therefore, it is necessary to review all the literature, remove the old and inadequate and add new literature in the course descriptions (syllabuses). Last but not the least, it is also advisable to review and improve all course descriptions and aims.

Although the study program is modeled on the qualification objectives, the five specializations offered in the third semester are too many for the master study program due to the statistically low number of students during the past few academic years resulting in only few students per specialization. This approach seems organizationally very difficult to implement, as well as unprofitable for the Faculty. Furthermore, since the specialization is conducted in only one semester with only five specific courses (only three mandatory and two elective), it is questionable how much specific knowledge from each field of the

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specialization can be transferred to students through only three mandatory courses. Therefore, it is necessary to lower the number of offered specializations and reconsidered the structure and organization. Moreover, it is necessary to provide more support to students in specialization selection by organizing presentations for each specialization or by providing a more detailed description of the specialization curriculum and job opportunities. Additionally, the number of elective courses is very high (fourteen in total) for the current number of students and it is recommended to reduce it and leave the ones that fit the best to the study program curriculum.

The organization of the exam deadlines, their number and schedule, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the students regarding the registration and taking of the exams are regulated by the *Regulation of the Faculty for University and Postgraduate Studies* and it can be concluded that student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively. The content of the exam is determined by the syllabus of the course, while the exam method, evaluation and duration of some parts of the exam are regulated by the Faculty Council. If a student considers that the examination is not carried out in accordance with the Regulations and UBT College Statute, he/she can object to the grade awarded. The objection is submitted to the Vice Dean for Teaching and Learning within 36 hours of awarding the grade. The Vice Dean evaluates students' objection and brings a decision within 24 hours of receipt of the objection. If the objection is accepted, the student earns the right to retake the examination before the Examination Board. Therefore, the whole student appealing procedure assures fairness and fast feedback.

Based on the feedback gathered from students and graduates and the submitted documentation it can be concluded that the study program is student oriented and enables student advancement in the field. Students are participating in questionnaires at the end of each semester where they evaluate the academic staff and the content of the courses. Students confirmed that they are informed about the results and measures taken based on the results of these questionnaires.

The Career and Internship Services program is administered and coordinated by the UBT College Career Office and responsible for the management of internships. However, the internship at the master study program is not mandatory, rather it is individualized and

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predicted as a part of the course Application of ERP Systems organized in the industry and overseen by the Faculty mentor. The management and the heads of the suady program stated that mandatory internship is not necessary due to the aforementioned course, and also due to the facts that majority of students at the master study are already working plus that most of the practical assignments are project-based and focused on teamwork. Therefore, the recommendation is to conduct master theses in collaboration with the industry. However, the recomment the UBT College has cooperation agreements with different institutions and organizations which also include student internship.

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

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syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.		
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	X	
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	X	
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	X	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	X	
Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.	X	
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	X	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical		X



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training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.		
Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Review all learning outcomes, improve them to become adequate for the master level study program, as well as make them more uniform across all courses in the study program.*
2. *Remove old and inadequate basic and additional literature in the courses' syllabuses and add new one.*
3. *Lower the number of specializations.*
4. *Lower the number of elective courses.*
5. *Provide more support to students in specializations selection.*
6. *Conduct master theses in collaboration with the industry.*

**2.5. Students**

The admission criteria for enrollment in the Master study program are clearly defined and publicly announced on the study program web page and are in accordance with the current law and practices. There is a clear and formally adopted student admission procedure at the Faculty level that the study program respects based on the Faculty Council Admission Regulation. In the University Studies Regulation the profile of the bachelor program that is desirable for enrolment in the master program is described (BSc on Information Systems). Admission to the study program is done on the basis of a public call by submitting the application to UBT College.



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The study groups during the lectures are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process (50 to 60 students in lecture study groups) but during the (laboratory) exercise the size of study groups could be smaller (currently between 20 to 30 students). However, in the second year of the study program the total number of students is low (approximately 15 students during the last year) and due to five different specializations usually only 2 to 3 students are present at the lectures and the exercises that seems very difficult to organize and unprofitable for the Faculty. Students reported that the vast majority of lectures and exercises are organized even if there are only a few students present.

Student knowledge is assessed continuously during the course based on various activities and assessment methods and at the end of each course usually by written and oral exams, as determined by the Student Regulations. During the meeting with the students it was mentioned that the feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is usually given within a reasonable time, and also that the academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Students are required to behave during the exam process in accordance with academic principles and the UBT College Code of Ethics. Violation of academic conduct norms are a basis for initiating proceedings in front of the Faculty Ethics Subcommittee. The student is entitled to an appeal if he/she considers that the exam has not been conducted in accordance with the UBT College Regulations and Statutes (*Regulation for student complaints UBT College HEIPP*). Based on the additionally submitted documentation it can be seen that the whole procedure is documented but on one document the date is missing so the expert team do not have information on the procedure duration. It is mentioned that the plagiarism detection program Turnitin is used for detection of potential violations but it is not clear if the usage is mandatory and for what purposes. Therefore, the expert team recommends the faculty management to further improve the plagiarism check methodology by verifying all work submitted by students and by having more academic staff at exams with a higher number of students.

The Faculty maintains a list of student registries and all activity logs (such as exams log, applications, list of students taking the exam, exam reports, student books, student files containing information on student review activities and grades, final results obtained during

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these activities, as well as the list of students involved in international projects and collaborations) using the Student Management Information System (SMIS). The documents related to exam results are kept indefinitely while colloquium documents are stored for one academic year which is an acceptable period. The UBT College collects and analyzes the pass rate and grades of students in all courses through the SMIS and the obtained data is used to further improve the quality of the studying process. Also, students have to participate in mandatory questionnaires every semester where they evaluate their teachers and the content of the courses. Students confirmed that they are informed about the results and measures taken based on the results of these questionnaires and that the progress in a case of poor results can be seen.

In the self-evaluation report it is stated that a Disability Assistance at UBT College provides support to students with disabilities and that students with disabilities are required to enroll accordingly at admission to UBT College to ensure that they receive appropriate assistance during their studies. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is regulated in formal internal documents and the transfer is monitored by the Transfer Commission. All students' rights and obligations are made publicly available.

There are several examples of good practice when it comes to the students' support and activities such as counselling and support to students during the enrollment process and during their studies at the weekly meetings with tutors, the Career and Internship Services program administered and coordinated by the UBT College Career Office providing help to students regarding their areas of concentration, career orientation and support for further study or job placement, organization of a lifelong learning certified courses for students in collaboration with Microsoft Academy, CISCO Academy, International Project Management Association, courses, European Quality Organization, publication of student magazine UBT News, etc. Students have confirmed that aforementioned activities are useful for their studies and career.





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<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	X	
Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements.	X	
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	X	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments are given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	X	
Standard 5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	X	
Standard 5.6. Flexible treatment of students in special situations is ensured with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all examinations.	X	
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators.	X	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	X	
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	X	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal	X	



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internal documents.		
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Improve the plagiarism check methodology.*

**2.6. Research**

The Master study program research objectives are present in the curriculum and learning outcomes which is in line with the Faculty and the UBT College mission and strategic goals defined in the *Strategic plan 2020-2025*. UBT College has a strong orientation towards research which is visible through organization of various research clusters and institutes, building supportive research environment (such as the new innovation park), financially and operatively supporting research work, publications, conference visits, PhD studies, publications of an interdisciplinary peer reviewed International Journal of Business and Technology with papers in the field of technology and business, organizing an annual International Conference organized by UBT College in various fields for the past ten consecutive years, with a special track devoted to the Information systems field, posting publications in the platform Knowledge Centre, organization of scientific research seminars, opportunities for research projects offered by the department and research centre, etc. Regarding the Master study program UBT College has also a research centre on Information Systems Research Centre that is providing support for research projects and other related activities in the study program field. However, the number of scientific projects that have been conducted by the Faculty academic staff is still small and it should be increased.

The general regulations on scientific work are defined in the document “Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications (October 2019)”. Policies that support high quality



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scientific research and publications are partially covered by the UBT Staff Development Policy document created for each academic year containing an individual plan for each staff member. The Research Office continuously records staff performance with scientific research publications and creates special research files for the staff. The expectations for research activities are clearly specified and they are following international standards in the field of the study program. The minimum standards are set in the employment contract and scientific performance is considered during staff evaluation and promotion processes. UBT College is allocating financial resources for scientific publications and all academic staff members have an opportunity to get financial support for journal fees and conference registration and accommodation expenses while publishing their work under the name of UBT College. Furthermore, UBT College is also providing important financial and organizational support for the academic staff involved in PhD study.

Scientific activity and publication productivity varies among academic staff. While part of the academic staff has a proven track record with a high quality and quantity of publications in international journals and conferences, the other part has much lower scientific productivity and the quality, and therefore it is necessary to motivate them to improve their productivity. However, all academic staff satisfy the minimum request of producing the minimum of one scientific publication per year. During the meeting with the academic staff several examples of including the recent scientific findings and results into the teaching process, as well as including the students into project and scientific work has been given and the recommendation is to continue with this practice and improve it further.

The policy on intellectual property and procedures for commercialisation of ideas are clearly defined at an UBT College level through the document “Research and Innovation Strategy”. In the case of staff members, these policies are also referred to in their work contracts. UBT College provides several opportunities for academics and students based on the research project engagement and during the meeting with students it was confirmed that they are in general involved in the projects and other related activities.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>



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Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	X	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for academic staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	X	
Standard 6.8. (1) Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research	X	



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developments in the field.		
Standard 6.9. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Identify academic staff with low scientific activity and find a model to improve it.*
2. *Increase the number of scientific projects on the Faculty.*

**2.7. Infrastructure and resources**

Based on the self evaluation report and the delivered videos it can be seen that the quality of an overall infrastructure at UBT College and the Faculty of Information Systems is more than satisfying and thus enabling the implementation of the study program. There are a variety of premises such as amphitheatres, laboratories, classrooms, studios, library, dental clinic, clinical room, advisory center, translation room, reading hall and offices. The number of seats in lecture halls, seminars and laboratories is satisfactory and sufficient in responding to the needs of the study program. Computer laboratories are equipped with 264 PCs or laptops in total and have between 20 and 60 seats available. Since several laboratories are shared with the Computer Science study program and since the planned number of enrolled students in the study program is high, organization of the exercises could be challenging. Overall, it seems that the Faculty has enough premises, human resources and equipment to satisfy the needs of this study program but with a reduced number of students. Furthermore, UBT College infrastructure has been certified to meet the minimum standards for students with special needs. It is commendable that the UBT College is further expanding and the plan is to build the new dormitory (which construction was initiated based on the requests made by



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students who need accommodation close to the UBT College) and the new innovation park, during the next academic year.

From the provided financial plan for the next three years for the study program it can be seen that the predicted income is covering all predicted expenses. The Faculty has several sources of income such as consulting services and trainings, projects mainly in collaboration with the industry and the public sector, as well as from the donations from local and international donors. UBT College owns one of the largest libraries in the region with more than 80.000 titles, as well as an electronic library where students and academic staff have access to online scientific databases (such as EBSCO host, J-Store and Sage journals) with access to scientific papers and professional literature.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	X	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	X	
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own	X	

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book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.		
Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	X	
Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	X	
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Reduce the number of students that will enroll in this program to maximum 100 per year.*



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

UBT College is a large non-public institution that has an important role for the local but also regional higher education landscape. The recent rapid growth of the College and the Faculty in the number of the employees and the study program in the number of students is proof that there is a healthy relationship between the quality and content of the study program offered, the students interest and the needs of the labour market. This growth is also accompanied with the achieving a high degree of institutional maturity in terms of organization, management and leadership.

Based on the research of extensive submitted documentation and an online visit to the Faculty of Information Systems that was very professionally organized, the expert committee for the re-accreditation process prepared this report based on defined Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA (July 2018) and gave an overview of the current situation. The teaching and administrative processes of the Faculty of Information Systems are adjusted to the needs of students and the general goals of the proposed study program Maser on Information Systems and Management, which are also in line with the mission and strategic goals of the Faculty and the College. However, there are several improvements that are necessary in order to further improve the quality of the evaluated study program:

- Review all syllabuses and improve their quality with a special attention given to the learning outcomes and the literature. Furthermore, organize additional education for the academic staff regarding writing the effective learning outcomes. Learning outcomes must be adequate for the master level study program and uniform across all courses in the study program.
- Reduce the planned number of enrolled students from 100 in order to keep the educational standard and quality, and avoid infrastructure and workload issues.
- Lower the number of specializations since the five offered specializations are too many for the master study program due to low number of students per specialization which is causing organizational issues. Reconsider the structure and organization of the specializations since one semester with only three mandatory courses seems too less for providing a specific specialization to students. Additionally, provide more

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support to students in specialization selection and lower the number of elective courses.

- Improve surveys and questionnaires for all groups of stakeholders by addressing the learning outcomes and motivate graduates to participate in the quality assurance process.
- Increase the visibility of academic staff by improving their profile information on the official faculty web page and by increasing their community service.
- Develop a model to improve the scientific activity of academic staff with a minimal productivity and for increasing the involvement of students in the scientific and project work.

Considering the documentation provided and discussions with the program development team, experts gave the following compliance level:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Compliance Level</b>
Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
Quality management	Substantially compliant
Academic Staff	Fully compliant
Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
Students	Fully compliant
Research	Fully compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Fully compliant
<b>Overall Compliance</b>	Substantially compliant

The Expert Team wants to point out that the self evaluation report is well written with a detailed elaboration on the majority of the standards, which has greatly facilitated the re-accreditation process. We believe that you have a good study program that has a bright

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future, and we encourage you to improve it further and to continue with good practices. In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Master on Information Systems and Management offered by the Faculty of Information Systems is Fully compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of five years with a number of 100 students to be enrolled in the program.

#### 4. APPENDICES *(if available)*

None

#### Expert Team

#### Member

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Signature

  
Josip Balen

15.06.2021.