UBT

MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS BACHELOR PROGRAMME (BA degree)

ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

May 2021, Ljubljana

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Dr. Yelena Istileulova, Fulbright Scholar, DAAD expert of Hub Peer Support project*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim Gashi, KAA Director*

- *Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report of UBT, 2021*
- *Appendixes with Regulations/documents/information*
- *Web-site;*
- *The requested documents on the 21st of April (with the answers received by 27th of April, 2021):*

1. The recommendations from the previous accreditation for MBE programme and their analysis by UBT College;

2. What is the decision of the MBE Bachelor Study Program for its degree (BSc, BA, any other?) and the mode of study (physical, online, hybrid/blended, etc.)/part-time; full-time? If the decision is not taken yet (as understood during the session as of 19.04.2021), what are the results of the analysis (competition´s analysis or any evidence) by UBT College?

3. SER (in its 1. Mission, objectives & Administration) mentions performance indicators 1-1-1.5, but does not include any data. Can you provide any available statistics, please?

4. The SER does not explore much on its Career office (and Alumni relations/other names are also provided during online sessions). There are also different names that were used for this office – Career Center, Career office, – Could you please provide the regulation and explain how does it function on the example of your programme and its specialisations?

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5. *Could you please provide the different types of Questionnaires used in the survey process in its digital forms (Albanian language – is ok). What are the evaluation results for MBE programme and the key conclusions for the 2019-2020/or 2020-2021?*

6. *What is the training programme that was provided to the academic staff during 2019-2020-2021 by the Institute for Development of Education and Academic Affairs/other structures; especially when there was a shift towards the online programme?*

7. *Video of UBT College/with some related MBE programme (in its 7- Infrastructure and Resources), and explain: (1) what are the projected data for the Financial plan of the study program and its justification (e.g., 600 students? 50/70 teachers? for research/consulting?, for how many specialisations? etc.); (2) How many students with special needs are in UBT College/Any infrastructure for these students? (3) Why 7.4-7.6 are missing? (Why doc. "On Infrastructure and facilities" is not included in SER?)*

8. *Faculty strategy 2020-2025 (revised in 2021), includes the UBT Total Students Table for 10 specialisations (2019), without explanation. Could you provide the explanation to this Table?*

9. *list KPIs of the Scientific Research Plan (2.5 page´s document) and provide any quantitative or/and qualitative data? was it approved?*

10. *Could you please, provide one short example of cooperation for the programme´s specialisations? (based on its 498 Agreements)?*

11. *Instructions that describe the official procedure for the plagiarism´s check in Albanian language*

12. *What are the UBT and the MEB´s Faculty quality indicators to assess the quality?*

In addition to the provision to the answers to the ET questions, which have also been included in the report (removed from here) and with the submitted documents, the other 23 additionally supplied documents have been provided to that Final Report, where some of them were considered.

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (as of 11.07.2018);*

- *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance;*

- *Triangulation method;*

- *Rankings and Benchmarking of HEIs in Kosovo;*

- *References to articles on Kosovo´s higher education*

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1.2. Site visit schedule

2. Site Visit Program

19th April

09.00 – 09.40   Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated *(no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion)*

09.45 – 10:30   Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff

10.35 – 11.35   Meeting with the heads of the study programme

11:35 – 12:10   Lunch break (to be provided within the faculty premises)

12.10 – 12:50   Meeting with teaching staff

12.55 – 13.40   Meeting with students

13.45 – 14.25   Meeting with graduates

14.30 – 15.10   Meeting with employers of graduates

15.10 – 15.20   Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts

15:20 – 15:30   Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

No	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs			
1	Management, Business and Economics, BSc, Prishtina Campus	Prof. Dr. Yelena Istileulova	Florin Aliu	Ermal Lubishtani	Fidane Spahija-Gjikolli	Ermira Shehu Ilir Hajdini

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1.3 A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

This Bachelor-degree Programme of Management, Business and Economics (MBE) of UBT is the programme under evaluation, which has been applied for accreditation this 2001 year. The last accreditation for bachelor degree´s MBE programme was received in 2015 being awarded for 5 years. The duration of this programme is 3 years with 180 ECTS in total (30 ECTS per semester), and the programme is prepared for its „in-class teaching" format. In the case of the repeated scenario of Covid-19, it can be implemented in its online mode of study.

As far as the UBT is concerned, it was established in Prishtina, Kosovo in 2001 as the Institute for Enterprise Management and Engineering, being renamed in 2004 as the University for Business and Technology. UBT is based in Prishtina, and it currently 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 was established in October 2004, following the experience of the Institute of Enterprise Engineering and Management (IEME). Its Master's Programme in Management, Business and Economics was re-accredited last year, in 2020 and valid till 2023. *UBT offers a wide range of programmes, at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with the aim of contributing to Kosovo's long-term socio-economic development. The institution has successfully undergone a number of external institutional and programmes´ accreditations. According to the website of institution, -* https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/ubt-en/about-ubt/*,* **the mission of the UBT** *is the following one:*

> *UBT offers a dynamic and innovative 21 century academic environment. UBT provides a supportive and challenging opportunity for the students, faculty and staff in participatory and self-governance setting.*
>
> *Building on a tradition of teamwork between Students, faculty, staff and administrators, UBT is committed to enhance its participation as an active member of community by providing learning opportunities driven by teaching and research excellence, intellectual interaction and creativity.*
>
> *UBT is a preeminent center of intellectual and cultural activity in Kosovo, improving the region's quality of life through the skills, knowledge, experience and engagement of its faculty, staff, students and alumni.*

This programme is an outcome of efforts of the entire academic staff of MBE and a Special Working Group. These efforts have, in a best way, considered and made use of the experience from the programmes of the European Universities.

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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

In the recent document, the UBT Quality Manual (2020, October), it is written that the UBT mission is:

- *to meet the higher education demands and needs of a democratic country, aiming to build its economy and society to become a part of the European and Global (knowledge and labour) markets.*

This mission statement is different from the mission provided at UBT website, arising the questions which mission is the latest one, which is approved and which of them has been discussed and accepted?

According to the official Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of UBT, the mission of **Management, Business and Economics** programme is:

- *to apply excellent teaching and scientific research outcomes, within a comprehensive student environment.*

The main goal is repeated for its **professional responsibilities** but does not refer to **social responsibilities** (*which could be useful and relevant to mention here due to the social responsibilities´ issues which are also included in 2.7*):

- *to prepare graduates to be ready to take on responsibilities and to enhance their leadership role in business, professions, industries, public services and society at large.*

The previous accreditation of the Bachelor degree´s programme took place in 2015 according to the supplied documents, the time when the new standards have not yet been introduced in the Kosovo (but in general, UBT is acquainted with the new standards because of its Master level´s programme). Therefore, when the question was addressed about the previous recommendations in 2015, the following issues have been mentioned (provided for the requested issues in the written form):

(1) Internship and projects, when the internships were recommended to be provided with 6 ECTS;

(2) The recommendation about the literature for subjects;

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(3) the advice about the changes to be made on the undergraduate thesis including the issues of projects, and good research practices.

The mission of the UBT (provided above in p. 1.3) is seen in its "active member of community by providing learning opportunities ***driven by teaching and research excellence***, intellectual interaction and creativity…improving the region's quality of life through the skills, knowledge, experience and engagement of its …students...

In addition to the consistencies with the National Qualification Framework (NQF), the SER refers to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, but does not explore or explain things in details. The previous programme was implemented under the previous system which did not include the issues of the EHEA, 2015. At the same time, the study programme at Master level was accredited already after the new rules of 2018 have been introduced.

As for the present, the additional explanation is provided on the MBE study programme that it is the most demanded one in UBT after the technical sciences (Computer Science, medical sciences etc), and the faculty of MBE is growing in terms of students, staff, and infrastructure.

In terms of the previous advice from the ET, the majority of accreditation recommendations of 2015 were related to the Bachelor Thesis have been implemented. They were related to the elective courses (2 electives) and foreign languages courses.

There is no clear rationale explained in the SER why the UBT programme is compared to the programmes of 3 universities like the American Oakland University, Vienna University of Applied Sciences and Copenhagen Business School. The programmes are different by nature, context, and by languages and there is no reference that these universities are the partners to its related UBT´s programme.

At the same time, the current programme is compared to the programme in the American University, then to the professional practice-oriented education and the third – to a business school. There were also several guest lecturers from the EU and USA that participated in UBT especially in spring semester/ and summer schools (however, their names and Universities are not specified). During the online session, the same question was referred to the representatives of the UBT, and it was not directly answered.

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Due to the accreditation issues, it is important to clarify how the situation has been changing since 2015 up to now, 2021 and what is the current demand for this programme exists now on the market of Kosovo. Thus, the **internal competitive analysis** for its "Management, Business and Economics (MBE) Bachelor Study Programme – how many similar programmes exist in Kosovo at present and how they are competitive to each other in terms of prices, employability, modes of teaching and learning, and other criteria would be needed in addition to the external analysis.

The additional document supplied to the ET showed the competitive analysis implemented for the Bachelor programme of **Management, Business and Economics**. It provided the relevant information for the Management, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and some programmes like Marketing & sales; International Business and Accounting, Auditing and Taxation (implemented in 9 universities´ programmes for universities, which have been institutionally accredited). The information provided for competitors also reflects the competitive environment of the labour market of Kosovo. BA degree in economics, business and management provides the flexibility to allow all these students to pursue a demanding major in a social science, and be prepared for the jobs in a variety of areas.

In order to help UBT improving its position in Kosovo market, the ET recommends an administration of UBT to make an analysis benchmarking the UBT´s performance based on the 2021 rankings of Webometrics against external criteria of
- visibility (50%),
- excellence of scholars (40%)

If UBT´s administration analyses how important the visibility factor (related to website´s structure, mission, objectives and administration), it could raise its position in the country´s rank as well (currently on its 15 places in country´s rank).

University for Business and Technology

https://www.ubt-uni.net/

World Ranking	Continental Ranking	Country Rank	Impact	Openness	Excellence
7286	1863	15	9997	3060	6683

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The below indicators and methodology may help UBT to improve its internal rankings:

INDICATORS	MEANING	METHODOLOGY	SOURCE	WEIGHT
PRESENCE		This indicator has been discontinued		
VISIBILITY	Web contents Impact	Number of **external networks** (subnets) linking to the institution's webpages (normalized and then the maximum value is chosen)	Ahrefs Majestic	50%
TRANSPARENCY (or OPENNESS)	Top cited researchers	Number of **citations** from Top 210 authors (excl. top 20 outliers) See Transparent Ranking for additional info, specially the reasons for exclusion	Google Scholar Profiles	10%
EXCELLENCE (or SCHOLAR)	Top cited papers	Number of **papers** amongst the top 10% most cited in each one of the all 27 disciplines of the full database Data for the five year period: 2015-2019	Scimago	40%

There are some **identified inconsistencies** between the information provided on the website: https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/, information from the SER and the information provided during the online session. First of all, the following listed programmes are included due to **5 specialisations** of MBE:

1. Finance, Banking and Insurance,
2. Accounting, Auditing and Taxation,
3. Management, Entrepreneurship and Innovation,
4. Marketing and Sales,
5. International Business.

Second, at the same time, the website of UBT shows **only 4 specialisations**:

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Third, SER brings the following statement (which probably look like the technical mistake): "*new students ...will have a very diverse study programme with* **three** **(5 (?) specializations** (SER; p. 6 – two different specialisations are written in the same phrase) – which also raises the question which particular statement is correct**.**

During online session, it was mentioned that the UBT is the best hub, can be considered as the unique in terms of quality – in PhD programmes; and has the best library in the region; and it has a very good employability – within 6 months after graduation, the students find the job.

In terms of the demand (industries/sector-related and job profile-related), the data is different - competitive report, SER and recommendations from the site visit listed different number: 500 was the initial number, and then there were numbers from 550 to around 650 students. The current ratio for MBE illustrates the demand from 67% female vs. 33% of male students for this study MBE programme at UBT.

There is official 73 documents placed on the website – the policies and regulations of the UBT College publicly available to the staff and students: *https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/ubt-en/about-ubt/regulations-and-policies.*

As far as the administration is concerned, there is a survey submitted (additionally supplied annex 5.4.: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PERFORMANCE) that confirms that it is evaluated. However, it is not clear who evaluates the administrative staff performance.

The internal regulation is also provided, and there is a reference that the most common problem for Kosovo related to plagiarism is addressed in the SER "Antiplagiarism software tracking system are now applied (Turnitin software)" – related to Students´ chapter (5.8 standard). The additionally requested document provides the evidence that the plagiarism check is to be performed:

"…*The supervisor then reviews the thesis and approves it or provides comments to the student for eventual improvements. The supervisor should respond within a reasonable timeframe (about two weeks) to the student if further improvements are needed. Once accepted, plagiarism check is performed and the supervisor sends the final version of the thesis to the faculty, while keeping the student in the*

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cc via an e-mail. Nonconformance with plagiarism issues will be addressed to the ethics committee as per faculty regulations".

At the same time, the online session refers to the fact that the software is not yet available in the Albanian language, but only in English language, so it does not tremendously change this situation until the whole BA programme is carried out in English language.

It is also not quite unclear in terms of (a) how exactly the research concept as well as the didactic concepts are going to be integrated at the Bachelor-degree level with 5 specialisations, assuming that UBT includes the following feature:
- "*Insufficient interest by private and public sectors in Kosovo in identifying private sector and community needs for research*".

This includes the questions of (b) how is the scientific research outcomes is provided on the Bachelor of MBE and what is the motivation and/or interest for it? Or what could be the research pillars related to MBE students of Bachelor programme? The BA-degree study is accepted by ET. It is just the only difference is that the BA-degree students are not oriented for research (versus the BSc students who follow a more scientific methods of study with the research approach).

According to the submitted justification, this is the BA-degree for MBE programme for students enrolled on a full-time based study with the preferences in the traditional face-to-face lectures:
- administration and Academic Council already adopted this approach "BA-degree" in line with the stakeholders;
- Mode of study is however not quite clear, but the preferences towards "face-to-face" lectures-in class are made;
- At the same time online, hybrid/blended mode of study are also considered (and it is also a recommended option in the case of the other scenario of development – pessimistic one).
-

The other weak points of this chapter of SER are related to the following points:

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- Inconsistency of information in terms of the declining demographic trends (SWOT, SER) and the information provided during the online session – the growing demographic trend;

Kosovo's State Agency of Statistics reported that 49% of young people were unemployed in 2019) in addition to the high migration level out of country, linked to the high trend for emigration and the high unemployment. Because there have been a favourable trends and optimistic scenario mentioned during the visit, the ET brings the official statistics. The projection of population are also not quite favourable for young group of people (in contrary, to what has been told). According to KOSOVO POPULATION PROJECTION, 2017 – 2061 p. 24, there is a descending trend of young people who might want to study in Kosovo provided for the relevant age groups (from 15- to 19 years old, commencing from the year of - 2017 till 2027) – at the horizontal line of time:

Forecast by age groups from 2017 till 2027

15-19	170.926	170.577	167.928	166.100	153.459	147.068	142.447	140.666	139.080	138.527	142.645
15	34.191	32.125	29.679	29.703	28.514	27.599	27.670	27.982	28.101	27.862	31.539
16	41.263	34.087	32.067	29.626	29.650	28.462	27.503	27.620	27.931	28.050	27.811
17	31.381	41.137	33.982	32.009	29.572	29.596	28.364	27.408	27.569	27.879	27.998
18	32.042	31.285	41.011	33.878	31.951	29.518	29.493	28.265	27.312	27.519	27.828
19	32.050	31.944	31.189	40.885	33.773	31.893	29.416	29.391	28.167	27.217	27.468
20-24	154.376	154.752	155.886	156.295	166.123	168.314	167.268	164.237	162.296	150.236	144.523
20	32.372	31.952	31.846	31.093	40.759	33.668	31.782	29.314	29.288	28.068	27.121
21	31.259	32.044	31.854	31.748	30.997	40.632	33.357	31.672	29.212	29.186	27.970
22	30.459	30.943	31.716	31.756	31.650	30.901	40.256	33.045	31.561	29.110	29.084
23	29.965	30.151	30.627	31.388	31.658	31.552	30.615	39.879	32.733	31.451	29.008
24	30.321	29.662	29.844	30.311	31.060	31.560	31.260	30.328	39.502	32.421	31.340

The other official source, also refers to Kosovo and its high migration rate with a loss of 15.4 percent of its population between 2007 and 2018, which is the greatest decline in all of Europe. (Source: *https://www.europeandatajournalism.eu/eng/News/Data-news/2019-escape-from-the-Balkans*).

Mission, objectives and administration

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 1.1. The study programme mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution	X (0.5)	
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the	X (0.5)	

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National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area		
Standard 1.3. The study programme has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	X (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	
Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of references and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the *programme are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances*	X (0.5)	

Comments: There are 3.5 points collected out of 6 maximum points which provides 58 % of compliance.

Compliance level: partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The external analysis of rankings together with the internal analysis of similar programmes is recommended for administration to clearly see how the competitors of the similar programmes are different and where it is possible to improve UBT´s visibility;*

2. *It is recommended to have only one institutional formulated mission which is officially approved placing this mission for the website and SER of the institution and programme levels (otherwise, the different missions are provided at the documents and web-site leading to a confusion); The same recommendation is related to the listed specialisations (and other data) on the web-page, SER and other report of the programme where the number of specialisations should be aligned;*

3. *ET advices to keep in mind the alternative blended learning model reflecting the global trends;*

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4. *If there are no any mechanisms to track the plagiarism issues in Albanian language, then the written instructions and motivational mechanisms are to be introduced for students, which is also valid and implemented by the members of academic staff;*

5. *Research/didactic concepts related to the Bachelor degree programme are recommended to be considered for its further implementation; and didactic concept should also reflect the digital teaching pedagogics;*

6. *Reflect where and how the social responsibilities´ principles are embedded (commencing from infrastructure)*

2.2. Quality management

The QM issues provided in the SER include quite limited and general information, and very often - without any specific data, and that is why there was a request on the additional material which has been supplied to the ET. The SER does not mention the "self-evaluation" in the standard 2.1 of its report, and therefore, it is not clear how the self-evaluation report was prepared.

The SER lists the (1) Academic Council, (2) Quality Assurance Committee, (3) Quality Manager (at the institutional level), and (4) Quality Assurance Officer and (5) Quality Assurance Sub-Committee, but does not provide the specific details which issues and how the areas of responsibilities are divided.

The additional comments of UBT has been received that the UBT Quality Assurance Regulation, with its 12th article which includes the description for Academic Council (dealing with the academic policies to teaching and learning, recommendations for the selection, admission and retention of students, approvement of the new programme proposals, reviewing annual programme reports with recommendations), UBT QA Committee (9 members and faculty´s representatives: review the policy in line with European Standard Guidelines, oversee the implementation of QA processes and procedures in teaching, learning, curriculum development, student assessment, student support services and public information).

Additional comments what is Faculty Council (The Faculty Council on quality assurance reports at least once a year and adopts quality improvement measures, that nominates QA sub-commission for regular monitoring of QA) and improvement measures. Faculty QA Sub-Committee - Faculty assurance

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sub-committee consists of five (5) members. Quality Assurance processes at Faculty level are overseen by Quality Assurance Sub-Committees.

Again, after the provided details, there are more uncertainties about the additionally appeared QA "sub-commission" and "sub-committee", and it is unclear whether it is a Faculty or institutional levels.

The Academic Council gives consent to the proposed criteria for quality assessment and adopts guidelines for improvement of scientific research, artistic and educational activities. At least once a year discusses reports on quality assurance and adopts measures for improvement. The Academic Council nominates its members to the UBT quality assurance committee for regular monitoring of quality and for forming proposals.

It is written that at the programme level, the MBE Quality Assurance Manual, which is not found among any documents, is based on UBT Quality Manual (*the explanation from UBT is: "UBT Quality Manual was updated in October 2020, the SER was finalized prior to this"*) Therefore, some search has been implemented, and the "self-evaluation" is mentioned only **once** in the recently introduced **UBT Quality Manual** in October, 2020 (provided on the website):

● involvement of external international experts in the process of quality assurance and in **self-evaluation**

The additional comments have been received from UBT: Regarding the term "self-evaluation", there is a specific article, Article 15 – SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS on the UBT Quality Assurance Regulation, that describes this process.

At the same time, another UBT Quality Manual (so-called 3rd version) as of 03.09.2019 has been discovered on the web-site where the self-evaluation process is mentioned in various places, including instructions how to prepare a Self-evaluation reports, Article 9, Source: https://www.ubt-uni.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/UBT-Quality-Manual.pdf

There are some complications with the QA documents, because the new version of the institutional UBT Manual (the version of 2020, which is assumed as the latest and approved version) does not explore on the QA self-assessment, the previous version of 2019 does explore more details, and the programme document which is mentioned - MBE Quality Assurance

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Manual is not provided to the ET and not found at the website. (UBT reflected that the version of 2020 was developed in October, when the SER was already finalised).

The ET requested the additional documents to prove the QA procedures at the programme level, and there was one relevant document found. The document was provided, it is without title and explanation, provided below). It is understood that there were 5 members, who are involved in the QA procedures and might also be involved (or not always/not all of them are involved) in the self-evaluation reporting procedures at the MBE programme level:

Subcommittee on behalf of the Faculty - QUALITY ASSURANCE
Nr.   Name and Surname   Qualification   Position
1   Ylber Limani   PHD   Representative of the Faculty Management
2   Sema Kazazi   PHD Cand.   Representative of teaching staff with research positions
3   Osman Sejfijaj PHD   Representative of teaching staff with research positions
4   Kaltrina Sylaj MSc.   Representative of administrative or technical staff
5   Shpat Musliu   Student Student representative

The explanation was provided by UBT to this first draft Report, that:

"*the quality on the programme level is managed by the Faculty Quality Assurance Sub – Committee, which is responsible to ensure that the aim and objectives of the program are achieved as planned*", outlined in Article 12.4 in the "*Quality Assurance Regulation of the UBT COLLEGE*".

So called "I20 – Indicator 20" with the reference that it is an output form of the QA procedures is not found among the range of submitted documents.

Quality Assurance Regulation, provided to the ET being adopted in October 2019 based on the Statute of the UBT College by the Academic Council. The **QA Regulation** includes procedures, roles/responsibilities, mechanism, with the article 13 on the Manual (Article 13) – based on the European ESGs, Reports, Self-evaluation reports.

There are also responsible teams for quality assurance at both – institutional and programme levels from the UBT. The Programme has a designated Quality Assurance Officer and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee that work in full harmonization with UBT Quality Assurance Committee and Quality Manager. The Regulation/Policy check was implemented by ET at https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/ubt-en/about-ubt/regulations-and-policies/

The proof that the QA processes are working well and dealing with other aspects of institution is not quite convincing because there are only 3 sentences provided in the SER, and therefore,

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it is very difficult to make judgements, and because the Regulation was adopted at the end of 2019. It is written that the foundations of the QA processes include strategic plan, a target programme and an action plan, but the Action Plan is not provided.

The online process was more helpful, but did not allow to explore all necessary things in details. That is why there was the additional reason to ask for the proof – for the listed documents, and the results of surveys carried out by UBT.

The samples of Questionnaire (physically distributed) for 2018 provided the data and information, and reveal that some few elements are still missing (ex.: the indicated time spent for filling in the Questionnaire, - which could be important for the stakeholders). The sample of the online Questionnaire was also provided for the ET´s consideration with a satisfactory information.

The brief summary of the academic staff evaluation by students – for the Winter Semester 20/21 is provided for filling out the Questionnaire. According to the submitted results, there is a regular Staff evaluation, performance which take place during the last year. On the other hand, the ET thinks that when it comes to input – it should be decided what to take and what to remove (documents, procedures, policies) further in the process.

The major parts of the advices coming from the Evaluation processes are tried to be integrated in the process (partly covered in the 2.1 point) of the institution and its units. However, the issues related to English language and other languages of students (recommended from the previous accreditation) are remaining at the same level and the programmes are delivered in Albanian language only. At the same time, the Quality Manual (2020) refers to the other languages *of the programmes - in English, German, and French, but they are not visible in any other documents.* Various versions of the Quality Manuals available on the web-site also confuse the process of assessment. It should be noted, that English language is used during the summer time´s courses. MBE organizes two summer academies/courses on the following topics: "Entrepreneurship and Innovation and Economics", and "Finance, Banking and Insurance", with the programme provided in English, where the speakers and participants from different countries can participate, and the successful participants are awarded 3 ECTS for each academy/course, which they can later substitute with a comparable elective course, after the administration approves it.

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The ET observation is that the initial contradictions are perceived in the documents which are developed and approved under the same name, and under the recent dates. At the same time, these documents (regulations, different missions of the same institution, QA policies, number of specialisations) as well as the purposes of the established institutions, centers (eg.: Center for research...associated with research, but provides the training programmes), etc. may conflict and contradict with the other documents (one reason is that they are not adjusted yet), and therefore, the provided information does not fully support the recently approved documents.

SER does not provide a convincing and analytical information with explanation (one of the objective reasons is due to the high degree of changes that take place in Kosovo market, which should be reflected with quite reflective degree of reaction from the UBT towards the signals). The online session demonstrated some difference of opinions on the same issues (which is a normal process) and all additionally supplied documents and the provided checks and additionally supplied documents reveal only the conflict within the same information. Therefore, it is difficult to make the judgement whether the QA processes ensure that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.

2.7-2.8 – could be assessed positively, because there are a lot of efforts undertaken, but how often it is re-assessed and re-considered, re-evaluated and approved – remains under the question (although UBT has added QA Reports, article 14, and QA Regulations, Article 13).

The Quality Management process do not clearly include the approach linked to the student-centered learning principle recommended by ESG, 2015 (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA). The check of the QA documents including the Manual showed that this approach is still missing.

Quality Management

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	**No**
Standard 2.1. Al staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement process in their sphere of activity	X	

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Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning process	X (0.5)	
Standard 2.3. QA processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery including services and resources provided by other parts of the institutions	X (0.5)	
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different component within it, the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students	X (0.5)	
Standard 2.5. QA processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance	X (0.5)	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available	X (0.5)	
Standard 2.7 Results of the internal QA system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student's workload, academic success and employment of graduates	X	
Standard 2.8 The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses	X	
Standard 2.9 The QA arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X (0.5)	

The chapter covers 6 points out of 9 which is 66 % correspondence points, a level between a partially and substantially compliant level

Compliance level: between Partially compliant and Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

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1. *Various versions of the Quality Manuals available on the web-site confuse the process, and it is recommended to stick to only one version – which is officially discussed and approved.*
2. *It is recommended to place the Quality Manual at the programme level, and UBT´s website under the MBE programme level (only because it is declared that it exists under the name "MBE Quality Assurance Manual")*
3. *Student-centered learning is recommended to make as a main focus.*
4. *It is recommended to introduce more courses (at least, elective) in other language of the programmes different from Albanian – commencing from English language*
5. *It is recommended to include the time spent for filling out the questionnaire (especially for the Stakeholders)*

2.3. Academic staff

The academic staff in the SER includes 70 teachers (including the part-time teachers – 7 of them), and 63 teachers employed on a full-time basis with the list of names, and their teaching workload, together with their administration and research workloads. There is a list of academic staff members with their publications as well (66 members of academic staff).

Although the research list of the members of academic staff is 70 or 69 (the additional note mentioned that there was a number of 69), the comments refer that one member does not publish (which is ok, because there are 63 teachers are on the full-time basis).

There are some specific requirements that are included from the Section 8 of Labour Law no. 03 / L-212, Article 26 of the Law on Higher Education of Kosovo, and the key provisions are also available in the Statute of "UBT" related to the teaching staff.

Regarding p. 3.4 – SER refers to 95% of the academic staff teaching at the bachelor level is full time staff, which is much higher than the required requirements of 50%. At the same time, the ET calculation shows that 63 full-time out of 70 teachers provides 90% academic staff.

Prior to the lockdown period of pandemics, UBT had organized a meeting with staff to introduce the new platform incorporated within Moodle which would be used for online lectures. During the last March with the abrupt shift to the online session there was an

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understanding that the written manual/procedures/instructions were provided to the members of the academic staff to move to the online mode of study.

At the same time, there were no specific training modules online for the members of academic staff organised right away on the topics of how to teach on-line, and no trainings provided for the didactics principles that could be followed during the digital teaching. At the same time, the training programme had been organised much later with other lectures and training for the trainers/academic staff.

The list of training for the academic staff is provided with some confirmations about the various topics, and the evidence of various training has also been received.
At the same time there is no information on the Strategies for quality enhancement which include improving specifically the online teaching strategies and the online quality of learning materials, with the online urgent measures. Example: Training organised by IDEAA (LOCATION: UBT – Prishtinë, 26.03.2021), which is the affiliated structure (UBT and IDEAA). In addition, there are other specific trainings:
- *ECTS Credits calculation: 24 Dec 2020 at 15:00 – 17:30, UBT Pristina, Room OO2*
- *Blooms Taxonomy and using Declan Kennedy Guide): 24 Dec 2020 at 15:00 – 17:30, UBT Pristina, Room OO2*
- *Accreditation: 22 Dec 2020 at 15:00 – 17:30 UBT Pristina, Room OO2*
- *EON-XR Educator Training, 12 Dec 2020 at 10:00. UBT Pristina, Room OO2*
- *Integration of academic staff in the academic process, 3 Dec 2020,UBT Pristina, Room OO2*
- *EON-XR Educator Training, 5 January 2021 at 10:00 CET*
- *EON-XR Educator Training, 26th January 2021 at 10:00 CET*

Brief summary of the academic staff evaluation by students - Performance evaluation for the Winter Semester 20/21 confirms that the academic staff is evaluated.
Program Council Workload Policy, which is mentioned in the SER; is not included in the Statute. The related 3.8 standard related to the results of the evaluation are to be made publicly available – is not found on the webpage of the UBT College, and it is also should be connected to the QA procedures. Other standards are met. The results of the evaluation are not clearly located on the website providing the publicly available results.

Academic staff

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Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	**No**
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 (0.5)	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
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	X (0.5)	

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.*		
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X (0.5)	
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	

Out of 10 points, 8.5 points have reached the good results – which is 85% of areas, therefore, substantially compliant

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *To embed the official criteria for Results of some evaluation (for the best teachers) and make best teachers visible - publicly available on the website.*

2. *To include the development of proposals and pro-active positions in terms of consulting, research, etc.* in *the self-evaluation plans*

2.4. Educational process content

The educational process content provided at UBT level includes MBE among the other programmes of the Bachelor degree´s level and at the Master level, making it one of the most important educational process:

1. Management, Business and Economics (MBE) (also – at Master level)
2. Computer Science and Engineering
3. Mechatronics Management
4. Law
5. Architecture
6. Information Systems
7. Political Science
8. Construction Engineering with Infrastructure
9. Media and Communications
10. Food science and bio-technology
11. Nursing school
12. Pharmacy
13. Stomatology
14. Construction management and engineering

15.   Public policy management

The standard 4.1 and 4.2 include general information of the key principles how the study programme is modelled, but do not explore much why 3 years of BA degree are selected - 180 (the minimum ECTS) and not 240 ECTS credits. The law on higher education in Kosovo, Article 4 defines the structure of studies (https://akkks.rks-gov.net/uploads/korniza_kombetare_e_kualifikimeve_2020.pdf)

The other site: https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2018/10/ilovepdf-merged.pdf refers to article 26, paragraph 2 which defines the requirements of minimum for studies regulated by the Administrative Instructions issued by the Government.

In general, UBT College refers to the principles and standards of the European Higher Education Area reflecting the principles and objectives of the Bologna process.

The additional information is provided that the new books are usually introduced to students as they become available as technological changes occur. The courses such as: Digital Marketing, Brand Management, International Business Negotiations, fiscal policy and other updates have been added. The check of the competences and learning outcomes showed that majority of them meet the requirements providing 7 learning outcomes (as a minimum, but still should include more knowledge, skills and competences) for the study programme under evaluation. Despite the programme is in Albanian, it is recommended to give a thought to the language of instruction (which could be introduced at the interdisciplinary elective subjects´ level first).

The numbers of students in 2020/2021 have increased and expected to reach about 500 students enrolled per year on constant bases in Pristina. Students to Academic staff ratio at UBT College is 70 members of the academic staff with high number of PHDs in the region for a study program in Economics, Business and Management science. Moreover, as stated in the institutional report, the staff is given 10 hours of workload on average, and the official professor´s ratio per students is 1: 19 (students). According to the Academic Strategic Plan 2020-2025, it is a plan to establish national and international exchange programmes https://www.ubt-uni.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Actions.pdf, but the planning process is still missing the inclusion of some (at least elective) courses delivered in English language.

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From the discussion, the Moodle – used (as the additional opportunities, but not the risk), and it is certainly the advantage of the UBT college to have "best teacher educated abroad" (from online session) with good teaching capacity. Therefore, some programme´s course (at least some elective ones) could have been considered in the English-language delivery mode due to the globalization trends.

As it was understood, the management of this programme is trying to do the increase and to double the number of students; with the general amount of about 600 students (mentioned which contradict to the number in the SER – 500 students, also quite a high number), and therefore, under the introduction of additional language, it is the level of the English language capacity which should be more seriously taken into account under the admission process.

During the online discussions, the following trends have been mentioned which have been recommended by the Employers for UBT to be considered:

- Quick changes in and within specialisations;
- A shift – general trend; Banking is changing; digital banking (digital skills); tailor-made but fit to all; innovate; (extra hours); crypto-currency;
- Entrepreneurship week which is actually taken place by the top-management (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-wJOMX22f4&ab_channel=UBT-HigherEducationInstitution)
- importance to keep students with the strategy to move to the regions (low number who want to leave the capital);
- Considering possibility to combine with the Online teaching (the current trend which will be increased); (physical/face-to-face format is preferable);
- Programme in English (during the Summer Academies held annually);
- Demographic changes – students per inhabitants; there was a trend mentioned that the students live abroad (in Switzerland), but study in Kosovo;
- Global changes with the specifics of the external environment – when government changes the rules – was an advice to take into account by the Employers;

The ET advice is to improve the interdisciplinary aspects which are missing currently on the account of elective courses as well as the expanding the foreign language capacity (following the specifics of the EU policy – development of at least 2 foreign languages,

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with immersing into one global language of communication – English) – especially from the prospective that UBT already indicated few foreign languages in the QA Manual.

4.8 standard does not include enough information in the SER, but the available information (Syllabi) with the lack of some data on learning outcomes, literature and some other details suggest that this issue require more serious approach with the updated literature for some subjects. The policies are not entitled about the 4.10 and they are recommended to be provided with the opportunity to make a claim to the programme coordinator. SER does not provides information on its career office as well.

The specifics are missing in the SER itself about the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with various stakeholders, and internship (dealt by the Career office). SER does not provide the number of MOU or the structure of these agreements, how many of them have been signed, and how it is be distributed inside Kosovo region (no date), and abroad (submitted by UBT). The ET checked the additional annexes with 498 Memorandum of understanding (MOU) and CEEPUS, as well as the joint projects– from Austria, Albania, Bosnia up to France, UK, and the US, but it is not clear how many of them are active. The comments that have been received to this report, refer to 12 most active Memorandums signed.

Educational process content

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study programme 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, the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students´ personality	X	
Standard 4.2. The study programme complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA. The individual components of the programme 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	X (0.5)	

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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.		
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/syllabuses of each subject/module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study programme under evaluation	X (0.5)	
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.	n/a	
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of teaching 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 (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	
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	X	

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develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.		
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	

Out of 11 related standards (with one – unavailable), 8.5 standards meet criteria which is 77% currently considered which corresponds to the substantially compliant standard.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *To improve the interdisciplinary aspects which are missing currently (for instance, the relevant political and/or legal issues could be added in the range of elective courses)*

2. *Double-check the syllabus´s subjects for the availability of 7 learning outcomes (skills, knowledge, competences) for the study programme under evaluation;*

3. *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with various stakeholders – should be analysed*

4. *Policies and procedures in the event that students feel that the evaluation was inappropriate, should be developed more clearly*

2.5. Students

The website provides the information on the admission process of the MBE at the BA level:
https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/bachelor-programs/management-business-and-economics/admission/
The information available in the website corresponds to the information provided in the SER.
SER describes the required documents required during the admission process.

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Handbook of students is supplied to the ET, which includes the rights of students, linked to the academic process which is covering:
- Students´ rights by UBT regulations;
- UBT and student obligations stated in the UBT studies;
- study contract and obligations from both parties (students/UBT College;
- study conditions for relevant student categories;
- requests and complaints for the administration service and staff in general;
- requirements for improving administrative services,

The information related to the students´ participation rights is partially found in the UBT Student Council in accordance with https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/new-students/international-students/support-and-advices/students-council/ (in terms of students' ideas, interests, and concerns, and raising funds for school-wide activities, including social events, community projects, helping people in need and new reforms for UBT.

After this document was made available, the links have been provided to the information available to some student rights: https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/ubt-en/about-ubt/regulations-and-policies.

Procedures are not considered as an effective, because this part of description is missing. The general information is provided for the graduates – through some collected UBT alumni´s data who work mainly in the following 7 areas:
1. *their own businesses;*
2. *establishing the family business;*
3. *SMEs;*
4. *consultants in various fields;*
5. *researchers or executives in the public sector;*
6. *banking and insurance sectors;*
7. *continued with Ph.D. degrees*

As far as the career center is concerned, there is no clearly presented chain of communication between the students, and the stakeholders, and the stakeholders (during the online visit) did

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not mention the connection through the career center, relying more on the informal channels of communication.

It was not very clear in the SER, which "work" exactly is meant that includes "15 pages of research papers" (standard 5.3), and the comments have been provided that "this refers to the seminars/ assignments for the students for different courses that students are required to perform research". However, it is still not reflecting the issues of this standard.

Out of four dimensions, only one is addressed: structure of the tasks and activities, and other three are not clearly addressed in SER: student or teacher-centeredness, type of knowledge and students´ age and/or educational level. The study groups are dimensioned to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process in its entirety by offering various support throughout the student study time period until their graduation.

Standard (5.4) for the mechanisms for assistance if needed is not addressed in SER. In standard 5.6 it is generally mentioned that the faculty owns records regarding students enrolled in MBE, and for those in special situations, also they are not explained. Students' conditions are taken into consideration. Transfer of students (5.10) from one institution to another is based in the administrative instructions from the Ministry of Education (2008), and also there is a reference towards administrative instruction (No. 13/2018).

There are no mechanisms of assistance explained, but the additional request provides the answer related to the notification of results, consultations and submission of student results completed by specified deadlines. Other mechanisms of assistance provided to students may include: "*regulations, policies, office hours, administrative staff, ICT staff, tools, people, professor contact, Moodle, SMIS system, central administration, library access, open hours everything as stated is in place at full compliance*".

The standard 5.8 which refers to the "Anti Plagiarism software tracking system are now applied" (Turnitin software) could be considered, if the work is done in English language, however, the students' study in Albanian language, and therefore, Turnitin software cannot be helpful so far.

Students

Standard	Compliance

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	Yes	No
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 (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is 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 (0.5)	
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 internal documents.	X	
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 (0.5)	

Out of 11 standards, there are 9 areas – making it 81 % of substantially compliant area

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Interactive teaching and learning process is recommended to approach in terms of other dimensions - Student-centered learning, European dimension, type of knowledge*

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(explicit - documented information), implicit - applied information, and tacit - understood information)

2. *Rights of students should be clearly introduced being visible in all documents and the web-site*

3. *Plagiarism in Albanian language should be addressed: the detailed instructions for the students and teachers should be made available.*

2.6. Research

The study programme identified 38 research-related topics – from General Economics and Macroeconomic Policies and their Impact on Economics up to Public Policy provided for MBE programme, but the resources mentioned are more related to the institutional-wise ones.

The development plan is not included among the documents, but the Scientific Research Plan refers that research topics were identified by the MBE Programme and the Center for Research for Economics and Strategy (37 listed topics). SER refers to 2 publications expected from the teachers. The peculiarities of research issues should be noted in SER: it refers only to the contracts of the UBT academic and research staff, and the requirements are to make 2 publications every year. None of the policies, procedures and the documents at the institutional levels are mentioned.

Regarding the weaknesses in research, **first of all**, the provided SER does not make any reference to *the Regulations on Scientific research and publications* (October, 2019), which is available on its website, - https://www.ubt-uni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Regulation-Scientific-Research-and-Publications.pdf and how MBE programme refers to this Regulation.

Second, SER does not refer to *the Committee of scientific research* (article 3 of the Regulations) – which was going to be established (in 2019), but it is not clear whether it is established at the institutional level, and whether it regulates any policies at the programme´s level. In addition, the *UBT Journal* is not specifically mentioned.

Third, MBE Faculty has 70 teaching staff, and the list for research publications is provided for 66 people. In addition, the academic council of the MBE department which should be dealing with research is mentioned only a couple of times in the report, and related *to research per se* – only once, and its role is unclear. The SER does not explore this issue.

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Fourth, MBE Programme defines the research topics together with the Center of Research for Economics and Strategy, but the role of this Center is not clear at all. The comments that have been provided later on (to this report) about the main functions of the Office of Research Development which coordinate research between Research Centers brings even more unclarities, and it still does not explore the activities of the Center.

Fifth, during the online sessions, the so-called *Research and Development Center* (meaning *Institute for Development of Education and Academic Affairs*, which is the affiliated structure) was mentioned only in the connection with the organisation of the training (teaching) activities only; and in fact, the additional documents submitted to ET, also confirm it.

Sixth, there are another 10 research centers at UBT, and only one of them is mentioned in the SER. Therefore, there is an unclear role of all those centers in research, the association is found for one of them with the training activities (N 4, below). It is also interesting to note that the UBT Technology Transfer Center (TTC) mentioned in the SER in association with the support for the staff and students of UBT and protection of the intellectual property is not listed among the Research centers, - it all remains unclear how many people are working in all these centers, which functions they perform and which KPIs they provide.

According to the UBT, ww.ubt-uni.net/en/the-technology-transfer-centre-creates-the-opportunity-of-preserving-and-patenting-the-innovative-ideas/ as of 26/02/2019, the Technology Transfer Centre (TRR) and according to the webpage – TRR, Innovation and IPR) creates the opportunity of preserving and patenting the innovative ideas, related to the intellectual property (6.9 standard), industry engagement and the commercialization and generated research, and claims to transform innovative excellence in research results. The website refers that this center supports and creates the research community of UBT.

Research or Excellence Centers are the organizational spaces where research activities are su
not only a departmental, but an interdepartmental level.

1. Information Systems and Cyber Security Research Center
2. Mechatronics Research Center
3. Center for Research in Economics and Administrative Sciences
4. Center of Research for Economics and Strategy
5. Health Sciences Research Center
6. Energy Engineering Research Center
7. Research Center for Architecture and Civil Engineering
8. Research Center for Law and Justice
9. Center for Global and European Studies
10. Media and Communication Sciences Research Center

Seventh, Scientific Research plan which is found among documents – is a very formal document, which is formally compiled, and just includes the common listed areas already mentioned (36-37 areas), but does not provide specific KPIs or participation in the planned research activities.

Eighth, the most common problem – the problem of plagiarism is not addressed.

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Nineth, the most important issue of motivation on research and publications is missing.

Finally, the listed weakness for "*insufficient interest by private and public sectors in Kosovo in identifying private sector and community needs for research*" confirms that research does not play any the significant role, and it is the objective reality at the regional level. UBT has all necessary conditions to become the Hub for research at the Kosovo region, with its excellent resources, but there is no obvious efforts and motivation in place yet.

Therefore, there is still a perception, that the institutional level exists separately from the programme level, because the reference made towards contracts, and not to the policy documents (standard 6.3), and no clear policies and norms are clearly visible at the MBE.

Although in the Statute, there is an information found on the Academic Council related to research, it is very scarce:

Article 22. The principal responsibilities of the Academic Council are as follows;
a) Implement procedures for securing academic standards and review and evaluate program contents;
b) Discussion of general issues related to strategic development plans related to the academic part, **scientific research**, student enrollment (number and criteria) and subjects in the Institution;
c) Reviewing and approving curricula based on the recommendations of faculty councils;
d) Review and approve the language in which the studies are conducted based on the recommendations of the faculty councils;
e) Determining the rules and procedures for assessing quality assurance in studies;
f) Determining the rules, criteria and procedures for evaluating the student's degree of achievement, based on the recommendations of the faculty councils;
g) Adopting procedures for awarding scientific and academic degrees, honorary titles, diplomas and certificates;
h) Approval of procedures to define student status.

In general, the whole SER include only very general information and lacks analytical data in the report, therefore, the requested additional information is to be requested, and every piece of additional information should be searched among the hundred documents, and website.

Regarding standards 6.4 and 6.8 – related to the actual publications. On the one hand, there is a list of 66 academic staff members provided with their publications – which are related to the topics announced (although it is not quite clear, whether they are employed on a full-time basis at the MBE programme). On the other hand, there is factual information in the SER, that there were 72 abstracts submitted for the 9th UBT International MBE Conference in 2020, while the number of full papers was 29. It means that the rate of involvement was 40%. However, the reason about the low involvement is not listed – whether it was the low quality of papers, and that is why they were not accepted, or it is the other reason - because the abstracts were formally submitted, but they were not finalised in the full paper at the end.

Pursuant to the SER, the improvement of the current situation implementation is connected to the new measures and the new performance evaluation system, and the expectation that the

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quantity and the quality of the publications of the MBE staff will be improved. UBT students can be potentially involved in research activities, because there is a course on research included at the BA level, but SER does not explore the involvement of students in research. SER refers to the participation of students in one project in 2018. There is a reference that 40 projects have been developed since 2014 with participation of the UBT students for public/private companies, but there is only one - the Innovation project was mentioned, implemented by UBT students and UNESCO in 2018.

Some more links four publications of UBT staff with students have been additionally provided to the first draft of this report.

Research

Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives 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 (0.5)	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	
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 (0.5)	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	
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 (0.5)	

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 (0.5)	
Standard 6.8 (a). 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 (b) 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 developments in the field	X	
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 (0.5)	
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities	X (0.5)	

Comments: standards 6.8 are repeated, and that is why the ET divided them to a and b. Thus, there are 7 points related to 11 standards are covered (including 6.8 a and 6.8 b – as 2 standards). Thus, 63% of the issues are addressed that corresponds to the partially compliant criteria

Compliance level: Partially compliant and substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The roles of the Center for Research for Economics and Strategy, as well as the other Centers are not clear, especially in the cooperation between the MBE programme and research policies. Therefore, the clear policies, roles and function of the listed Centers are to be developed in the official documents/Regulations.*

2. *The role of the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) as a platform should be described and embedded in the available regulations, including the issues how the MBE programme´s students and academic staff can be involved, and what are the motivational issues;*

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3. *Individual Research Action Plan are recommended for the full members of academic staff. It may voluntarily include the responsibilities of each individual teacher for the involvement of students in the research capacity development in the fields of his/her specialisation in the development of specific expertise;*

4. *Plagiarism problem should be addressed in research: the instructions should be developed how to deal specifically with the Albanian-language articles. The plagiarism related to the English-language articles should be addressed separately, in addition to the Albanian language;*

5. The role of academic council of MBE should be clarified – related to both the research per se, the research centers, and motivation of the academic staff´s involvement being connected with the plagiarism and other sensitive issues;

6. *Scientific Research plan is recommended at MBE which comprises the general areas of the individual research plans at the programme level of MBE*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The perception of the long-term implementation of the bachelor-degree study programme MBE includes a short and general explanation in the SER related to human capital, infrastructure (first of all, in Prishtina) and the issues of the local and international relations with 19 years´ experience. It includes one sentence that there are laboratories, library, the student office to ensure sustainability and potential to follow the selected specializations.

According to the report, "*laboratories usually have 20-30 seats available*", and the lectures – accommodate 50 - 60 students, a sufficient space for specialization within the groups. At the same time, the number of students that the SER refers to 500 students, and it is not quite clear how they will be accommodated within these spaces for 10 times lower capacity.

In terms of specific resources, the software is related to the Microsoft: Office suite, SAP (authorized licenses), and specific accounting: EXPERT accounting, SPSS data processing software, and Stata. In addition, the website for MBE programme provides more information on the general resources, however, it is perceived that MBE includes here the information for the whole institution UBT:

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Source: http://study.ubt-uni.net/mbe/

On the other hand, the SER includes the SWOT on infrastructure, referring to 100 laboratories equipped and 100 research institutes at UBT, but it does not mention about their specifics, and how they are divided, because there are no any references to MBE study programme.

The ET also recognises that this programme is not closely linked to any laboratory (usually needed for chemical/medical or other specific departments).

The ET requested to provide any available video of the UBT college related partly to any issues of the MBE programme. The additionally requested video for 1 minute has been provided to ET and left the positive impression about the available building and its surroundings and the current infrastructure in Pristina, suitable and clean spaces and the accommodated classes and lecture rooms for the MBE programme.

There are not any students with special needs mentioned in the report, and the video does not include the references to the special facilities and infrastructure about it. The UBT College clearly does not address the issue of social responsibilities (except the case when there is a reluctance of staff to be involved in the issues of the mission). UBT has a library of 250,000 books, including online resources (Jstore, Sage, EBSCO), and the report includes the information that MBE students can also refer to materials available on the Moodle platform, provided by professors.

At the same time, the students of special needs are not specifically addressed, although one sentence is mentioned. There is an easy access to UBT facilities with the lectures on the ground floor, which provides students with special needs the access to premises.

First of all, there is no statistics provided – how many students with special needs, and second, whether the policy of the UBT incorporates any issues of being addressing to the cohort of students/teachers as well as the programme adopted to students with special needs;

Finally, there are 15 various and different groups of students listed and the additional one (16th – which the decision is made on individual basis, who might apply for the study discounts), but there is no any listed group with the special needs included in this list: "*Until now, we haven't*

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had any difficulties in terms of dealing with students with special needs". The other positive message is that "UBT has made all kinds of preliminary preparations to support students" – and the obligation is taken that "all lectures of that group will be planned to be held on the ground floor".

The financial projected income and expenditures are provided for the period of 2021-2023, but do not provide a clear explanation on how the sources of incomes are formed from the fees, consulting services, research and donations and why the UBT thinks that this particular optimistic scenario will be the most reliable ones.

The additional information has been submitted to the first draft of this report, that the donations are made through grant winning applications (USAID, IOM, US Embassy, GIZ, UNICEF etc) and the research projects - Erasmus+ projects, JeanMonet, H2020, MEST, ADA etc.

However, the ET considers that the provided information is related to the competitive grant projects, which are not quite related to the donations (which are usually provided on the voluntary-based solutions, charity, humanitarian aid, and the donations may take various forms, including money or services.

Infrastructure and resources

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
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 3 years.	X (0.5)	
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,	X	

with utilisation licence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own 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	

There are 5.5 points allocated out of 6 possible points which corresponds to the compliance level of 91%

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Provide the definition what is "the student with special needs", and include the needs´ analysis; and the range of "special needs" defining these groups/categories of students in Kosovo;*
2. *Connect the areas of social responsibilities in terms of resources, administrative support, regulations, functional support of the ease of access and infrastructure to the needs´ analysis of students.*

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

The ET would like to thank the management team of UBT´s Faculty of Economics for its active engagement during the online session for the Bachelor (BA) degree programme of "**Management, Business and Economics**" (MBE). There have been discussions, exchange of various opinions and an effective organisation of the online site visit. It is evident that a good level of attention has been paid to the study programme both by the Faculty´s management as well as the stakeholders of the labour market. The ET recommends to pay more attention to the visibility of the website with the correspondence of information in terms of the content and data. Having considered the SER, and additionally submitted comments and information, and information available on the website, the following compliance was given to each standard:

Standard	Compliance Level
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Partially compliant
2. Quality management	Partially compliant & Substantially compliant (66%)
3. Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
4. Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
5. Students	Substantially compliant
6. Research	Partially compliant (63%) & Substantially compliant
7. Infrastructure and resources	Fully compliant
Overall Compliance	**Substantially compliant**

ET recommendations:

1. *Look at UBT from the visibility point of view commencing from your website, mission of the institutional level and correspondence at the programme levels, and the listed specialisations and rankings of similar programmes;*
2. *Approach both research and didactic concepts, considering digital didactics (the combination of didactics and technology);*
3. *Make the reference to the Institutional QA Manual which is used at the programme level;*
4. *Embed the official criteria for results and make best teachers visible;*
5. *Improve the interdisciplinary aspects which are missing currently in the curricula*
6. *Introduce the written instructions and motivational mechanisms to track the plagiarism issues (in both languages – English and Albanian ones);*

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7. *Check the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in terms of the active and working agreements' point of view;*

8. *Approach the interactive teaching and learning process in terms of broadening other dimensions - Student-centered learning, European dimension (EU case studies), type of knowledge (explicit - documented information), implicit - applied information, and tacit - understood information)*

9. *Broaden the Rights of students making them visible in documents and the web-site;*

10. *Clarify the roles of various Centers, their connection with various units, commencing from the Center of Research for Economics and Strategy up to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC). Start from their cooperation for the MBE programme and research policies. Therefore, the clear policies, roles and function of the listed Centers are to be developed in the official documents/Regulations.*

11. *Embed the social responsibilities´ principles in terms of resources, administrative support, regulations, functional support and infrastructure to the groups of students with needs, defined by the institution itself (UBT).*

In conclusion, the ET considers that the study programme "Management, Business and Economics" offered by *the higher education provider UBT* is ***Substantially compliant,*** but due to some deficiencies detected in the chapters of *1, 2, and 6*, the ET recommends UBT to correct these deficiencies within one year. In this case of conditional accreditation of a study programme, the education provider also has the right to enroll new **250 students** in that particular programme.

Expert Team

Chair

Yelena Istileulova		**20.05.2021**
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

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