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***UBT College***  
***Bachelor in Media and Communication***

***REACCREDITATION***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**



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*Zagreb, 31. May 2021*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1. Context	3
1.2. Site visit schedule	7
1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation	8
2. PROGRAM EVALUATION	9
2.1. Mission, objectives and administration	9
2.2. Quality management	14
2.3. Academic staff	19
2.4. Educational process content	26
2.5. Students	34
2.6. Research	41
2.7. Infrastructure and resources	47
3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET	52
4. APPENDICES <i>(if available)</i>	<b>Pogreška! Knjižna oznaka nije definirana.</b>



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

According to numerous indicators, the profession of media and communication specialist/managers is one of those that has been developing particularly rapidly in the last thirty years. Employers in the private sector, but also in the state administrations and even in the non-profit sector are increasingly looking for experts with a broad educational profile who could fulfill multiple functions of enabling the system to operate towards the external environment and within the organization. The terminology used to refer to holders of such functions in English is different. The terms are used: Media and Communication Manager, Public Relations Manager, Communications Manager, Public Affairs Manager, Public Affairs and Communications Manager, External Relations Manager, Internal Communication Manager (in cases where there is a special function for internal communication), and more recently - Stakeholder Relations Manager, Social Responsibility Manager, and the like.

In bigger systems, entire departments are organized in which functions are then divided according to the narrower area of organizational communication. These functions in the general organizational framework fulfill the so-called boundary spanning role. The fact that they are, metaphorically speaking, one foot in the system and one outside it, makes them particularly suitable for fulfilling at least three key roles in the organization, in addition to the basic role of protection and reputation promotion: for the role of system protection. care, communication managers most often act as crisis management coordinators, for the role of advocacy, and for the role of increasing the value of the system. Journalists have the similar role to play in the wider social context, much wider than communication specialists in organizational context, since they act as mediators of various information to targeted audiences, general media audience included.

Media and communication specialists are expected to have superior communication skills (oral, written), high social intelligence, wide general education, and be very proficient with media technology and social media strategies, In short, a media and communication expert/manager who is also a journalist should have knowledge of economics to understand business, knowledge of political science and sociology, to understand social trends, knowledge of environmental protection, sustainable development and social responsibility to maintain relationships with stakeholders, must know excellent communication, should understand psychology and a good knowledge of research methodologies in the social sciences. Such a specialist would be absolutely versed in marketing and sales, be literate as a good journalist and know how to plan communication campaigns, write texts, correct, be a publisher, and of course if the equipment and publishes texts and publications, he/she must also be a good editor. Such an expert must, then, be good at imparting knowledge and skills, must know the techniques of holding training and coaching, conflict resolution techniques

3



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---

and assertiveness, the non-profit sector, the methodology of monitoring and evaluation, must be aware of cultural events and processes in one social environment and the list goes on.

To educate such an expert must have seemed like mission impossible some thirty or so years ago and has not become any lighter task in the meantime, as the sophistication of communication technology has only added to already very high expectations. Therefore, high education institutions have, already in the early stages, started to separate education of journalists from the education of communication managers and the academic field followed with the two separate branches within communication science: journalism and public relations. This became a routine practice particularly after first generations of communication specialists started working in organizations without previous experience in journalism but only armed with BA and MA degrees in journalism. Many high education institutions in EU and USA have for practical reasons settled with a more general approach at BA level and more specialized approach in MA level (i.e., universities and colleges in Croatia have this concept: general communication foundation on B.A. level and journalism or PR and MA level.

Here, we have a more general concept of fundamental communication and media skills and competences going vertically to the MA level whereby these experts should be able to meet the expectation of a whole spectrum of jobs in journalism, media management, communication management, public relations and beyond.

This report deals specifically with the BA Media and Communication program by UTB submitted for reaccreditation.

**Date of site visit:**

20 May 2021

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof.dr.sc. Majda Tafra-Vlahović*

**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*
- *Ilirjane Ademaj, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

4



### **Sources of information for the Report:**

- *Self Evaluation Report*
- *Syllabus*
- *CVs(34)+lists of publications*
- *Regulation for Academic Advancement*
- *Annual Work Plan for the Academic Year 200/21 (with annexes: complaint procedure, Code of Ethics, Subcommittee, Student Ethics Code)*
- *List of collaborating foreign partner universities*
- *Student handbook*
- *UBT Code of Ethics*
- *UBT Quality assurance regulation*

### **Requested documents (received subsequently):**

1. *Minutes of one of the meetings on policies, regulations, terms of reference or statements of responsibility review .*
2. *One recent student survey of teacher effectiveness results.*
3. *One self evaluation report by a teacher.*
4. *List of partners in public and private sectors in Kosovo and beyond.(including ERASMUS +)*
5. *A copy of a collaboration contract with a partner institution.*
6. *Copy of a student internship evaluation.*
7. *Description of facilities available for students (seats in lecture rooms etc)*
8. *List of KPIs for teachers*
9. *Document that regulates student transfer between higher education institutions*
10. *UTB policy defining what is recognized as research for MC program.*
11. *List of students engaged in research projects.*
12. *List of IT equipment available to students and teachers.*

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

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

- A. The core principles of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area:*
1. *Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their*



- provision and its assurance;*
2. *Quality assurance responds to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programs and students;*
  3. *Quality assurance supports the development of a quality culture;*
  4. *Quality assurance takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society.*

*B The following principles:*

- a. *Public accountability: Higher education institutions need to demonstrate the quality of the education to all stakeholders and public at large, through the following:*
  - *achieving quality levels that respond to the expectations of students and employers;*
  - *underlining higher education as a public good;*
  - *communicating consistent, clear and coherent information to the public at large about the real results obtained and the intentions of improvement.*
- b. *European reference: the higher education system and institutions in Kosovo belong to the European Higher Education Area and ensure quality levels in line with and competitive at the European and international level. For this purpose, both the recognised accreditation providers, as well as higher education institutions commit to benchmark their institutional processes against comparable institutions at international level;*
- c. *Institutional responsibility: the responsibility for and the management of quality lie with each higher education provider, in accordance to institutional autonomy;*
- d. *Improving quality: quality is not an end in itself. Continuous improvement and institutional management of quality is the primary objective of the external evaluations;*
- e. *Fitness for purpose: quality assurance process should be defined and designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them;*
- f. *Institutional diversity: diversity of institutions, their mission and goals is respected and encouraged by external quality assurance;*
- g. *Transparency: a key concept helping to build mutual trust and better recognition of qualifications, programs and other provision. At*



*systemic level, transparency does not only increase the trust in the quality assurance structures operations, but also in the education itself. Institutionally, transparency encourages engagement of the entire academic community and development of quality culture.*

- h. Focus on results: learning outcomes and performance in research lie at the core of quality assurance. External quality assurance imply that higher education institutions demonstrate their results and performance in learning and in research as well as their correspondence with the actual reality of the institution, including verification of student activity in relation to the stated standards;*
- i. Stakeholder engagement: internal stakeholders should develop and implement quality assurance policies through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders;*
- j. Quality enhancement: continuous improvement of quality and institutional management is the primary objective of the external evaluation. Every self-evaluation document must present the particularities of quality culture across the higher education institution and ensure the continuous performance improvement.*

## 1.2. Site visit schedule

### 2. Site Visit Program

#### 20<sup>th</sup> May

<b>09.00 – 09.50</b>	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated ( <i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i> )
<b>9.55 – 10:40</b>	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff
<b>10:40 – 11.30</b>	Lunch break
<b>11:30 – 12:30</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: Media and Communication/ BA





<b>12:35 – 13:35</b>	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: Media and Communication/ MA
<b>13:40 – 14:25</b>	Meeting with teaching staff
<b>14:30 – 15.10</b>	Meeting with students
<b>15.15 – 15.55</b>	Meeting with graduates
<b>16.00 – 16.40</b>	Meeting with employers of graduates
<b>16.40 – 16.50</b>	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts
<b>16:50 – 17:00</b>	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program

No	Study programs	Experts	Responsible persons of study programs		
1	Media and Communication/ BA (Reaccreditation)	Prof. Dr. Majda Tafra-Vlahović	Ferid Selimi	Gjylie Rexha	Naser Rugova Ilir Zylfiu
2	Media and Communication/ MA (Reaccreditation)	Prof. Dr. Majda Tafra-Vlahović	Votim Hanoli	Mimoza Hasani Pllana	Belul Beqaj

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

UBT offers a dynamic and innovative 21 century academic environment and provides a supportive and challenging opportunity for the students, faculty and staff in participatory and self-governance setting, as elaborated on the UTB web page. Commitment to enhance its participation as an active member of community by providing learning opportunities driven by teaching and research excellence, intellectual interaction and creativity is publicly communicated as is the reputation of being a preeminent center of intellectual and cultural activity in Kosovo, improving the region's quality of life through the skills, knowledge,





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experience and engagement of its faculty, staff, students and alumni. The main campus is in Prishtina and there are branches in Prizren, Lipjan, Gjilan, Ferizaj and Pejë.

The university has the following schools/programs: Management, Business and Economics; Computer Science and Engineering; Mechatronics Management; Information Systems; Law; Architecture and Spatial Planning; Building and Infrastructure Engineering; Political sciences; Media and Communication; Energy Engineering; Nursing; Integrated Design; Food Science and Biotechnology; Public Policy and Management; Dentistry; Pharmacy. There are also nine institutes including the Institute of Media and Communication. Eighteen offices and sixteen centers. Twenty labs, five hubs. Furthermore, listed are various programs specialization within faculties including seven specialization in Media and Communication program. UTB web site also gives extensive information on research and innovation, on international activities, international programs and international students and various services by centers and media events.

Media and Communication program has been ongoing since its initial accreditation and it is now in the reaccreditation process.

### **3. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

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

Standard 1.1. requires that the study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution. Bachelor of Media and Communication program aims at providing students with in-depth knowledge on the role of communication at the local, national and international levels, enabling students to develop their skills, namely, to understand, interpret, explain and summarize the knowledge needed. The mission of this study program, as formulated in SER, is in compliance with the overall mission statement of UTB. SER emphasizes corporate responsibility of UTB and the effort to help Kosovo build a new framework for media and communication studies programs. The program is designed to provide a combination of studies: essential practical skills, such as interviews and writing for different media; social competencies and ethical principles.

Standard 1.2. requires that 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. According to SER, this is



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a stimulating program which provides students with theoretical and practical knowledge to be able to work in a variety of fields. Based on the standards of the KAA, UBT claims to have strived to meet all the criteria and standards required, based on the three main pillars: teaching, research and community service. There is a table taking reference to length, ECTS and total contact hours needed, as well as a list of some foreign institutions stated to have been consulted about the program, but no listed evidence of compliance with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education. This is rather implied elsewhere in the text but the level 6 outcomes are not listed, only the ECTS points. (Also, the table of consulted universities needs adjustment: Fakultet za gradbenistvo does not exist in Zagreb University; if what is meant is Građevinski fakultet it has no relevance for this study program).

So as to the Standard 1.3. requesting that the study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept, according to SER, the BA Media and Communication Program is designed based on previous research of the needs of professionals in media and communication in Kosovo. These results emphasize market needs in multimedia and communication. This particular standard requires clear didactic and research concept which in SER boils down to the concept that “media have the capacity to present, appear and solve problems, such as political, economic, cultural, social, literary and artistic” and the list of some teaching/research methods (case studies, projects, problem-based learning, simulated learning and terrain visits and internship) combined with favorable teacher-student ratio, focus on practical and relevant industry knowledge, and the fact each course has a detailed program. The perception is that a clear overarching didactic unique and research concept is hidden in various curricula but not fully elaborated on the level of the program.

Regarding standard 1.4. that there should be formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues and that these be made publicly available to all staff and students, SER states the compliance with the Law on Civil Servants, the Law on Higher Education and UBT regulations where the responsibilities of the administrative staff are clearly defined in the position descriptions and comply with the individual's qualifications as well as the requirements and criteria required for that position. It is assumed to be made publicly available during vacancy announcements.

Standard 1.5. requires that all staff and students comply with the internal  
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regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities. UBT Code of Ethics and Student Ethics Code develop duties, responsibilities and guidelines of ethical conduct. Management bodies regularly review effectiveness of academic staff including ethical conduct which is described in details in SER. As emphasized UBT applies a democratic, transparent and non-discriminatory electoral procedure, which does not limit the right of students to represent and be represented. In compliance with the Law on Higher Education and Administrative Instruction, UBT has established committees, including governing body members, academic and administrative staff, students and external stakeholders, to give a detailed consideration of key responsibilities such as finance and budget, personnel policies, strategic planning, quality assurance, etc.

Standard 1.6. requires that all policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program be reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances. This section of SER lists the objectives of the program under evaluation and give a generic statement about practice of management and decision making bodies and listed as indicators of expected outcomes: graduation and employment rates, student satisfaction rates, staff employment rates, but there is no evidence of revision of polices and regulation review formalized, rather implied, on operational level.

The performance indicators as listed in KAA Manual are, however, more precise. Thus, according to SER, the performance indicator 1.1 requiring KPIs at the level of the study program and data reviewed at least annually with overall performance reported to the decision making structures is met. According to SER, all data from student numbers, teaching hours, exercises, exams, and student achievement outcomes, are reviewed for each semester and reported to the Program Councils, the Directorate for Academic Affairs and other decision-making structures.

As to performance indicator 1.2. requiring that systems be established for central recording and analysis of course completion, program progression, completion rates and program evaluations, with summaries and comparative data distributed automatically to senior administrators and relevant committees at least once each year, UBT has established systems for central enrollment and conducts course completion analysis. Program progress, completion rates, and program evaluations are followed up by decision-making bodies, making comparisons, and forwarding these data to relevant committees

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~~each semester, compatibility of syllabuses and analysis of student achievement~~  
 and passing. No reference to the frequency within the process, though.

So as to the Performance indicator 1.3. requesting that policies and procedures include action to be taken to deal with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed, they are found in documents shared regarding student complaints, not in the reference on particular indicator.

Regarding Performance indicator 1.4. requesting that statistical data on indicators, including grade distributions, progression and completion rates are retained in an accessible central database and regularly reviewed and reported in periodic program reports, UTB states that all statistical data on performance indicators are collected by the Program Officer, stored electronically and physically collected and stored in the Office of Student Affairs, and reported to the Directorate for Academic Affairs. These data are easily accessible and reported to decision-making bodies by the end of each semester.

Finally, Performance indicator 1.5. requesting that the concepts of gender

justice and the promotion of equal opportunities for students in special situations such as, for example, students with health-related impairments, students with children, foreign students, students with an immigrant background and/or students from educationally disadvantaged families are put into practice at the level of the study program, it is stated in SER that in this program all social and gender groups have the opportunity to enroll and continue their studies. So far there have been no foreign or immigrant students or disadvantaged families enrolling in the program. But it is foreseen that a scholarship for students coming from disadvantaged families will be awarded.

During the discussion, there was an exchange regarding SWOT analysis in this section which seems to be not precise enough. The changes in market needs in Kosovo were debated stating the primary need is now to employ multitasking journalists which this program aims to educate.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No



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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. *As SER report is a basic document for further internal review and evaluation process and its preparation is likely to be stimulating in the overall quality improvement process, it is recommended that the document be assessed and edited to better meet the objectives of the process for future use (not for this re-accreditation process).*
2. *Improvement is recommended regarding 1.2: to include program level objectives and show evidence of compliance with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. In addition, the consultation process with institutions listed needs to be clear with reference to particular program: what are the experiences of these programs elsewhere that were taken into consideration.*
3. *The emphasis on market needs and theory-practice ration would improve if shaped into coherent well defined didactic and methodological concept.*



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### **3.2. Quality management**

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According to standard 2.1. staff should participate in self-evaluations and cooperate in reporting/improvement processes in their sphere of activity. SER lists the key teams and individuals responsible for quality assurance at the institutional level: Quality Assurance Officer, and Sub-Committee (consisting of representatives of teaching staff, representatives of administrative staff and students' representatives). At the Program level, the protection of academic standards is determined by the Program Council, which has the responsibility to protect academic standards and competencies for providing recommendations for academic matters and ensuring that policies related to teaching and learning, apply to all programs and are in accordance with academic rules set out in the Rules of the Academic Council on Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies as well as the Quality Assurance Manual. The Subcommittee on Quality Assurance regulates evaluation of academic and administrative service; quality improvement; preparation and supervision of the self-assessment process; the necessary preparations for the external evaluation of UBT; identifies the condition and performance indicators, conducts remedial and periodic activities and monitors and evaluates the academic program, student services and stakeholder engagement resources and policies.

Regarding standard about integration of evaluation processes into regular planning process, Media and Communication Program complies, since at the program level problems and stakeholders are identified; the next step involves evaluating the performance and policies and stated objectives as well as identifying gaps and shortcomings and at the final stage a report with recommendations for the Improvement Plan is prepared which is the integrated.

Regarding standard 2.3. about quality assurance processes which deals with all aspects of program planning and delivery including, services and resources provided by other parts of the institution, according to SER, Quality assurance processes are designed to improve the delivery of services and programs and include: review of quality procedures; governance, teaching and research; admission, promotion and graduation of students; staff selection, recruitment and development; student support services and the physical infrastructure for developing the practice needed for students. Ongoing feedback from staff, students, and external stakeholders, including external examiners and strategic partners, as well as reviewing the results of institutional and program evaluation processes, has contributed to the development of program planning and adaptation.

According to standard 2.4. quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program and of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes, and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students. The levels listed for the program include evaluation at several levels. Procedures for designing and approving new programs, courses, modules and quality assessments are used to modify the program by modifying, supplementing, or modifying courses and modules. Student assessment procedures allows students to influence the overall quality of the program and teaching process. The purpose of establishing student assessment procedures is to provide the Program with the opportunity to use assessment methods, compliant with the standards set by the KAA and standards from the National Qualifications Framework. On the level of





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Procedures for continuous monitoring of programs the objective is to ensure that systematic processes are managed to gather and analyze information, support the continuous improvement of programs that monitor student achievement in accordance with programs, and evaluate the effectiveness of program evaluation mechanisms. To add value to the evaluating process, promotion of a quality culture within UT is encouraged, including the support to periodic reviews of the UTB at the institution level and at the program level. UTB undertakes a regular periodic evaluation of programs once every three years. This procedure is implemented as part of the accreditation process. At the Media and Communication Program level the evaluation process serves to review learning outcomes of the program, teaching methodology, and learning the program and its courses. The evaluation process also examines program outcomes, graduates, and impact on the media industry and the community at large. The process consists of self-evaluation of the program, program strategy and the proposed revision document.

Procedures for Selection, Appointment, Evaluation and Development of Personnel: the quality assurance procedures in the staff selection process, evaluation and staff development are described in the Quality Manual. The procedure aims to ensure that the criteria and procedures for selecting staff are fair and transparent and in accordance with the criteria set out in the national legislation. The Quality Handbook also describes the procedures for evaluating facilities and equipment.

To comply with the standard 2.5. requesting that quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance, specific assurance procedures are implemented throughout the cycle of programs, this program included, to ensure lasting, long-term, and socially impactful results in the field of journalism, media, and communication. These are summarized in a number of steps: stakeholder engagement; program strategy and plans; program management, teaching, learning and research; human resources and staff development and public information. The findings in the Quality Assurance Annual Report are summarized in an improvement plan for the following year in the Media and Communication Program Annual Plan.

Standard 2.6 requires that survey data be collected from students, graduates and employers and then be made publicly available. The survey data is collected, stored, and processed in the institutional database. Preliminary statistical analysis is performed to identify and address key concerns, trends, correlations, and other descriptive variables. The student survey aims to inform the institution if teachers are familiar with existing examination methods and receive support for developing their skills. Criteria and evaluation methods are published in advance. Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Where possible, an evaluation is performed by more than one examiner. Assessment considers the mitigating circumstances, it is consistent, it is applied fairly. The public availability of the results, as the discussion has showed, is dependent upon the area and the intended use, often as part of discussion with students about areas for improvement.

According to Standard 2.7. the results of the internal quality assurance system

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~~should be taken into account for further development of the study program, and this includes~~ evaluation results, the investigation of the student workload, academic success, and employment of graduates. The BA Media and Communication Program is regularly evaluated once every three years as part of the accreditation process. The evaluation process serves to review: learning outcomes of the program, the teaching and learning methodology of the program, assessment, and its courses. It also examines program outcomes, graduates, and impact on the media industry and communication aspects of functioning of organizations and institutions. The program's self-evaluation composition is governed by the Standard Operating Procedures and includes Dean, two members of the academic staff, student representatives, representatives of alumni, program coordinator, student service representatives, representatives of the media industry and may also involve external experts.

To comply with the standard 2.8 requesting that the institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically,(e.g., every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses, The Media and Communication Program conducts a regular periodic evaluation of the program once every three years. This process is important not only to track changes in student needs and trends in the labor market but also serves to review the learning outcomes of the program to advance and adapt the teaching and learning methodology of the program and its courses.

According to standard 2.9., the quality assurance arrangements for the program should themselves be regularly evaluated and improved. SER states that Media and Communications program conducts regular internal and external audits to ensure that its governance and quality assurance policy are effective and guarantee continuous improvement. The procedure includes: Internal audit by the Governing Body, Institutional Periodic Audit and Management Quality Assurance Review. The internal audit process is implemented by international audit institutions and covers all activities of the institution: human resources management, risk management, fee collection and registration, computer audit and internal communication.

Regarding performance indicator 2.1. requesting that appropriate program evaluation mechanisms, including graduates' surveys, employment outcome data, employer feedback and subsequent performance of graduates be used to provide evidence about the appropriateness of intended learning outcomes and the extent to which they are achieved, Media and Communication Program implements the policy of evaluating the program and the results achieved through the practice of tracking and monitoring the professional activity of students during their studies and their engagement in the graduates' media market. The Program, through the Office of the Coordinator, maintains regular statistics on the results of the surveys with the graduates, through which they evaluate the program and its compliance with the labor market requirements. These assessments are used to improve the program, incorporating it into relevant courses and modules. Keeping records of student engagement in various media companies and institutions begins at study stage and after internships in many cases, students are offered employment opportunities in media and various institutions and organizations, which is also a performance indicator monitored closely. Upon completion of studies and graduation, the Media and Communication Program maintains statistics on the employment outcomes of students who engage in media companies. The interest of the

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media industry and other institutions for student employment is considered an indicator of the quality of the Media and Communication program too. The program also tracks the performance of graduates employed in the media, other institutions and organizations, and employers' reactions to them. Their performance in the workplace and the assessments they receive from employers while applying the knowledge aspects learned during their studies serve as an evidence of the appropriateness of the intended vocational training outcomes students receive during their studies. They also serve to make the necessary additions, within the modules they relate to, to improve and adapt them to the needs and requirements of the labor market.

To comply with the performance indicator 2.2. requesting reports are provided to program administrators on the delivery of courses and these include details if any planned content could not be dealt with and any difficulties found in using planned strategies, appropriate adjustments are to be made in plans for teaching after consideration of course reports. Media and Communication program prepares regular semester reports for each course on giving lectures and exercises, student attendance, student assessments of teachers and related courses. These reports are provided to the bodies responsible for quality management as well as course lecturers. In coordination with the relevant bodies, the Dean and the Program Council, the lecturers include in the respective courses the requirements arising from the evaluation reports. In cases where assessments find that certain units and planned content are not in accordance with the curriculum, or if they do not meet the other requirements, adjustments are made.

With regards, to performance indicator 2.4. that a comprehensive reassessment of the program be conducted at least once every five years and policies and procedures for conducting this reassessment are published, and program review involve experienced people from relevant industries and professions, and experienced faculty from other institutions, already stated evaluation procedure are repeated on SER, but no details given regarding the composition of these bodies, since the details were given elsewhere in the SER part on evaluation.

Regarding Performance indicator 2.5. requesting that students participate in the design and implementation of quality assurance processes SER states that students are involved in the process of evaluation and quality assurance. No specific reference is made regarding their involvement in the design of quality assurance processes, only the implementation.

Similarly to SWOT analysis in the part on the mission, SWOT analysis in this chapter also lacks precision. It turned out in the discussion that most of weaknesses listed in the analysis are actually non-existent, rather a translation related inconsistencies. Most of weaknesses and threats confirmed in the discussion turned out to be outside of the area of control of the institution and belong to wider social and legislative context.



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	
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: Fully compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Evaluation regulation, procedures and processes including self-evaluation, peer evaluation and numerous other processes implemented might lead to an evaluation fatigue among academic staff. Optimization of evaluation system should be considered.*
- 2. Surveys give valuable data that can easily be stored, but in reducing the numbers of survey data, it might be worth considering introducing qualitative data in forms of focus groups, interviews, various events enabling direct contact and*



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*communication.*

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3. *Coffee with Dean could be considered as a regular communication “skip level” practice which would enable direct insight into student perceptions, ideas about improvement and overall satisfaction.*

### **3.3. Academic staff**

Under the standard 3.1. requiring that candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment, SER only lists names of 34 tenure employed academic staff but there is no explanation in this part of SER regarding the condition of position description and conditions of employment although it could be assumed that these are indeed fulfilled as stated in the Quality manual.

Regarding standard 3.2. requiring that the teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation, SER states that the procedure is in compliance with the criteria set out in the Labor Law and the Law on Higher Education. These principles that underpin the recruitment process are those of fairness, credibility, equal employment opportunities and merit. Recruitment decisions are made in the context of staffing plan that takes into account long-term academic and operational needs. The HR Manager is responsible for developing, managing, evaluating, and implementing the relevant selection, appointment, and recruitment procedures. Again, no specific reference is made to the particular standard of compliance with the Administrative discussion, but it remains implied in the very nature of the process, and the text at the end of SER where a specific reference is made to the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation, more precisely, to former ET report and in verbal assurance during the discussion that this, indeed, is the case.

So, s to standard 3.3. requiring that 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 it is stated that all work of the academic staff in the Media and Communication is regulated in accordance with the standards set forth in the UBT Internal Regulation and the Administrative Instruction provided by the Law on Higher Education and University that, presumably, comply with this requirement.



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~~So as to standard 3.4 requesting that 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, SER states that based on the requirements and criteria set by the KAA, UBT has provided sufficient staff and not only 50% but full 100% of its academic staff have a regular employment contract with UBT and they cover all classes.

According to 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 should have employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions. SER claims that at the Bachelor level of Media and Communication program, UBT has employed three teachers as program holders and lists their names with relevant qualifications.

To comply with Standard 3.6. requesting that opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff while special assistance is given to any who are facing difficulties, SER states that the staff of UBT can receive academic titles according to the Regulation on Standards for Election to Higher academic Titles of UBT. According to the present regulation staff can be promoted to the following positions: Assistant; Lecturer; Assistant Professor; Professor (equivalent to Associate Professor). The publication requirements are listed in detail. The staff development plan is linked also with the HR compensation plan, whereby staff with higher academic titles receive higher compensation. The Department also offers training to academic staff on development of pedagogical skills on the following topics: student-centered learning, curriculum design, writing, learning outcomes, lesson planning, design and delivery, group learning, problem based and project-based learning, E-learning, assessment and integrating key skills into the curriculum. As part of Faculty Development College UBT supports the formation phase of junior faculty. In the formation phase the early career professors receive support in learning and teaching, research practices, pre-tenure leadership and life-work balance support for junior faculty PhD candidates. In learning and teaching, the early career professors at College UBT benefit from the support in curriculum design; assessment of student learning; classroom climate; teaching methodologies and program design and development. The support is provided through workshops, consultations with late career professors, cross-disciplinary faculty learning group (composed of three professors in various stages of formation), classroom observation of senior professors, and program design

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and development sessions delivered by the senior staff. In research practices the formation phase faculty receive the support in developing the research writing attitude; time management for research; targeting journals and publishers, working with editors, and responding to reviewers' comments and Young Researcher Grant Support for junior faculty.

To prove the compliance with standard 3.7. requesting that the responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service, UTB take reference to the mechanisms for the allocation of workloads being approved and implemented in the Department of Real Estate bachelor's degree and generally. Staff engage in accordance with College UBT Workload Policy. The allocation of work to full-time staff takes into consideration the activities of full-time staff in administration, research, service to the professional discipline, and service to the wider community. It also considers the following aspects: course coordination, lectures, tutorials, organization and teaching of performances and workshops, field trips, the organization of practicum, marking loads, student supervision, diploma theses supervision, student consultation hours, and academic community and community services. The service of staff to academic community are: conducting trainings within the department or other departments; serving as a faculty representative for student teams participating in national and international sports competitions; serving on a professional scientific committee, conducting trainings for community service organizations, conducting workshops/trainings for community service organizations; assisting the local and central institutions in matters related to society and community development. The workload for service to academic community and community cannot exceed 10 % of total workload according to the UBT Staff Workload Policy.

By standard 3.8. academic staff evaluation should be conducted regularly at least through self- evaluation, students, peer, and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year and the results of the evaluation are made publicly available. According to SER and the discussion the formal staff appraisal process within the Program supports the review of role performance, the achievement of goals and objectives, and the



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implementation of staff development plans. It also focuses on future goals, objectives, and development plans in the context of responsibility development and career development. The purpose of the quality review process is to ensure that staff appraisal is carried out in accordance with the UBT Staff Employment, Performance and Progress Policy. Year-end review is a report that creates a record of staff productivity in the areas of research, teaching, service and administration. The Dean is responsible for conducting the initial staff performance appraisal, using a numerical evaluation based on the point of effort distribution in accordance with the performance criteria set out in the Staff Appraisal Regulation. As no specific reference is made to publicizing these results, it can be concluded that they are made public to relevant audiences since the Dean in the evaluation process considers staffing enterprises as part of the Staff Development Plan, staff self-assessment. Finally, Initial evaluation is sent to staff members for comments and discussions and The Staff Evaluation Report is sent to the Program Council and the UBT Academic Council Committee on Selection, Promotion and Evaluation of Personnel who are all stakeholders and publics in the process.

According to Standard 3.9. requesting that strategies for quality enhancement should include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials, commitment is stated on part of The Media and Communication Program of having a staff trained in all the relevant fields which translates into working intensively with the engaged professors in the context of a quality improvement strategy in teaching to enhance the quality of teaching, and to ensure that quality has its effects on the application of the methodological side and also commits students to teaching materials and that their dissemination will be in accordance with the criteria set out in the syllabi of the subjects. The UBT for Media and Communication program provides basic materials to advance student knowledge and ensure that its staff is active and involved in all developments within and outside of UBT.

Regarding standard 3.10. requesting that teachers retired at the age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers, it is stated that all UBT staff are in compliance with the national legislation and the administrative instructions provided for





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these positions, but no reference made regarding the applicability of this standard to the Program.

Performance indicator 3.1. states that teaching staff should be encouraged to develop strategies for the improvement of their own teaching and maintain a portfolio of evidence of evaluations and strategies for improvement. In the Media and Communication program teaching is delivered through lectures, seminars, case studies, consulting, mentoring, fieldwork, course evaluation, exams, diploma thesis and oral presentation. In all of these academic criteria the student's work is in the spotlight because it is constantly monitored and monitored for the evaluation of teacher engagement. The strategy for improving teaching also relates to the fact that the work of the staff is monitored, and frequent surveys conducted by the students.

Performance indicator 3.2 requires evidence of training programs in teaching skills be provided for both new and continuing teaching staff including those with part time teaching responsibilities, including effective use of new and emerging technology. UTB pays special attention to the performance related to the various trainings organized within the program, whose main aim is to train the staff in usage of modern technology, which is directly related to the many techniques and studios that UBT possesses. Particularly Media and Communication staff are regularly in touch with external experts and influential people in the media field. This practice is also applied to part of the teaching process, engaging journalism experts in partial lectures.

Indicator 3.3. deals with the extent to which teaching staff are involved in professional development to improve quality of teaching, that it is being monitored. SER claims that as the whole work of the teaching staff is constantly monitored and quality indicators are made public in real time, the teaching staff is obliged, based on the regulation and the employment contracts, to work continuously and to improve the qualitative aspect, being continuously connected with research, study, and scientific presentations. This includes attending local and international conferences, publications at home and abroad, engaging staff in program design and research in specific areas, surveying and researching specific issues related to socio-economic, social, political, cultural current, media, etc.



Performance indicator 3.4. requires results of the academic staff evaluation be taken into account for promotion purposes and renewal of contracts. According to SER, academic staff evaluation results are vital to quality indicators because they contribute to the overall score in UBT. There is also a Media Performance and Communication Assessment Framework, which provides access to the theoretical and practical work of teaching staff. This performance and evaluation of staff performance is also used for various promotions, such as publications and conference proceedings, in particular books published by UBT, and at the same time, the UBT hierarchy takes into account and builds upon these evaluations also for the renewal of teaching staff contracts.

SWOT analysis in SER lists several weaknesses clarified in the discussion to be of minor relevance. The discussion on promotion of teaching staff included an alleged legislation related discrimination of private school and colleges in comparison with public universities. As it was pointed out, Media and Communication program, having a lot of operational opportunities for students and teachers to prosper in media industry (own TV, radio, newspaper), is committed to advancement of teachers in line with legislation and according to their potentials and student needs.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	
	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>
<b>Standard 3.1.</b> 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	
<b>Standard 3.2.</b> The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
<b>Standard 3.3.</b> Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more	X	



than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity		
<b>Standard 3.4.</b> 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	
<b>Standard 3.5.</b> 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	
<b>Standard 3.6.</b> Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	
<b>Standard 3.7.</b> 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	
<b>Standard 3.8.</b> 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	
<b>Standard 3.9.</b> Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	X	
<b>Standard 3.10.</b> 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**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. The item on applicability of EON Virtual Reality Technology, as the discussion showed, should not be in this part of SER .*
- 2. Regarding alleged discrimination of opportunities for promotion of academic staff in private vs. public universities, consideration of lobbying opportunities and partnerships with public universities might be worth considering.*



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### 3.4. Educational process content

According to 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 of developing the students' personality.

Taking reference to the Law on Higher Education and the KAA guidelines, UBT states its commitment to designing the Bachelor program in Media and Communication in order to achieve the qualification objectives. These include the curriculum, course delivery, professional skills acquisition, disciplinary competencies, and teaching methodology. Special attention has been paid to employing staff with relevant scientific degrees. Program courses are listed in the document and syllaba are attached. The first-year focus is on journalism, its historic roots, speaking a writing skill, languages (both Albanian and English) basis of communication science. In the second-year other media are introduced, radio television, public relations, practical work and, particularly relevant for future employment beyond journalism – management be that on general level as management in organizations or on more specific level – management of media organizations. On the third year, students get deeper insights into new media, sociological aspects of media communication and management, and insights into law, marketing, basics of research, and European civilization. Internship is also part of the program. All three years, therefore, are some kind of combination of three major areas: theoretical social sciences mainly communication and sociology; practical work, and expert knowledge in media. These cover mainly what is required (academic competencies, capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and developing the students' personality) and, as far as this expert is familiar with similar programs, in representing optimal ratio of theory and practice, resembles similar programs of Media and Communication studies elsewhere in EU countries. BA levels do not have final theses in many programs, but, here, it is introduced carrying 10 ECTS, particularly also because many of the students do not necessarily take MA studies but may go immediately to the job market, hence, this feature of finalizing this phase of education in the final, as it is called, thesis.

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.

The BA program in the Media and Communication Program is in line

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with the requirements arising from the National Qualifications Framework in order to meet the requirements of individuals and educational and training institutions. The program offers high quality in order to meet the criteria and standards set by the NQF.

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.

Outcomes for the Program, so as skills of graduates are the following: write about events and communicating with the public (follow different events; evaluate the event; give explanations; provide support; assess events and situations; Communicate effectively in a communication context; communicate with the stakeholders; communicate with peers; communicate the bad news; communicate with relatives; communicate with people with disabilities; communicate in seeking informed consent; communicate in writing (including emails); communicate in dealing with issues-events; communicate by phone; communicate with those looking for an interpreter.

In addition: apply ethical and legal principles; maintain confidentiality; apply ethical principles and socio-political analysis; obtain and register informed consent; prove the event; require accurate data; apply national and European law on Media and Communication; apply evidence-based principles, skills, and knowledge [Media and Communication; apply the evidence in practice; determine and perform a proper media search: critically evaluate the literature published in Media and Communication; Effectively use information and information technology in a communication context; keep accurate and complete records; use computers; access information sources; store and receive information; Promote media and communication and work effectively; provide care to the public; recognize their own communication needs and make sure they do not interfere with professional responsibilities; act in accordance with the professional and media rules of communication and practice; accept and provide professional evaluation; to work in a team and be ready for professional and ethical responsibility during exercises of the Journalism's proficiency.

Standard 4.4. requires that the disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, learning outcomes, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.

All syllaba, were attached and meet the required criteria and are checked for compatibility. The syllabus includes program title, semester, ECTS

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credits, subject code, course content, purpose, objectives, teaching, learning methodology, assessment methodology, tools used, and literature.

Standard 4.5. is referring to the language of instruction. If it 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.

Standard 4.6. is about relationships. 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.

Relations between teacher and student are built on a sound basis, as stated by SER, by considering the interactivity during lectures and exercises; learning outcomes are discussed with students based on the subject syllabus. This particular standard is difficult to check unless there is an administration evidence of debates on outcomes.

Standard 4.7. requests that 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.

According to SER and the discussion, UBT has taken care to find and use the appropriate strategy for achieving results. Given the expected student outcome, teachers follow the method of interacting with students as well as assigning assignments. As in the previous standard, this one also requires special format of following integrated methods into the curriculum on a more formal approach when it comes to flexibility, so that is not all left to the free will of the teachers and can be evaluated more precisely.

Standard 4.8. requests 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. As SER and the discussion, particularly with students show, student evaluation mechanisms have been developed fairly and objectively. Students are informed on how they will be evaluated through syllabuses, through Moodle, through SMIS and are being evaluated according to syllaba previously accredited by KAA.

Standard 4.9. is about appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms be 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. Based on the rights of students who have been admitted and enrolled, as stated in SER and confirmed in the discussion, UBT





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has created opportunities for the development of lectures, seminars and other teaching activities for their maximum benefit. Students may also use the libraries provided by the institution. Student knowledge will be assessed continuously throughout the course and at the end of each course, as determined by the Student Regulations. The final grade is in the form of numerical or descriptive presentation specifying the level at which the student has acquired the knowledge and skills required by the proposed syllabus for the given subject and the amount of all credit points achieved during the exam lectures. SER gives the list of grades in letters and numbers 1-10 with specific requirements and percentage score. (ECTS are mentioned but do not belong to this table and only refer to the overall accomplishment of a course, not to grades).

According to standard 4.10. policies and procedures include actions to be taken into dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed. UBT has developed policies in line with European standards and procedures, based on the Law on Higher Education in the function of quality assurance based on the objectives of higher education for the preparation, development, protection and transmission of knowledge and competences acquired during studies, preparation of students for further independent study. The details can be found in Handbook for students that contains various student relevant policies, including the policy on the process of assessment as related to student rights.

Standard 4.11. is about the practical work. 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 is understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program. The practice is realized through field work, in the relevant institutions (TV, Radio, Newspapers, Portals, etc.) conferences, round tables . It is regulated by the program and ECTS credits and is carried out in different institutions with which UBT has cooperation agreements .Tutors are engaged as the discussion has shown but no evidence is given about formalization of this process, at least in the form of regular reports with achievement, areas for improvement etc.

Standard 4.12. required that in order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/ organizations/practical training units. According to SER and the discussion with student, management and employers, Media and Communication students continue their education in practical work in Kosovo media. Based on good practice, UBT has established a Career Office, which deals with student interactions both within and outside the institution. Thus,





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UBT has agreements with IPKO, Tribina Channel, InfoKosova, RTK-Kosovo Radio and Television, InfoPress; EnterMediaTV, Telegraph, Klan Kosova, etc. In cooperation with the UBT Career Center students are provided with internships in these media. The internship, according to the agreement, lasts one month and is rotational. Successful students interested in the craft of journalism, after completing their internship, have the opportunity to become part of these media. After completing the internship and having engaged and shown good results, many have, according to SER, continued to work in these media as journalists, moderators, program executives, cameramen, technical directors, editors, liaison officers, public, information officers, etc.

SER also list requested performance indicators. Performance indicator 4.2 refers to the academic feasibility of the study program is ensured by taking into account the expected entry qualifications, a suitable design of the curriculum, a student workload that has been checked for plausibility as well as an adequate number of examinations. UBT provides qualified staff as well as a rich curriculum with exercises and research. The minimum syllabus content guidelines are set by the Faculty Council. The minimum requirements that course leaders adhere to include a brief description of course goals and objectives, learning objectives, teaching and learning methods, ECTS course load and distribution, course evaluation methods and literature. The indicator 4.2 refers to teachers using new IT resources (e-mail, personal web page, topics, bibliographies and other resources in electronic format and communication with students) and auxiliary materials, such as whiteboard, flipchart and video-projector. According to SER the main sources of lecture preparation are books from compulsory literature, supporting literature and other alternative sources, such as research, research, conferences, seminars, work experience, various visual aids, such as videos, tables, photographs, illustrations, etc. but also highly developed IT resources as the discussion has shown. Standard 4.3 refers to the effectiveness of planned teaching strategies in achieving different types of learning outcomes being regularly assessed and adjustments are made in response to evidence about their effectiveness. As students are evaluated by showing their learning performance through exams, teachers are also evaluated by students, including their performance in communication, teaching, knowledge of subject matter, and the results consulted in alterations and amendments of the content of particular course.

SWOT analysis in this section of SER, should it stay formulated as it is now, gives the impression of being in contradiction with the content of the report referring to standards so, it needs to be reexamined. There is an interesting item on social accountability if private sector organizations in Kosovo listed under threats that is definitely an opportunity for social engagement of UBT and considering inclusion of social accountability in private sector which translates into integrating corporate social responsibility into overall business strategy and operation and relating the program to



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PRME framework

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
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 of 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/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation.	X	
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 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 ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organizations is monitored	X	



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/organizations/practical training units.	X	

**Compliance level: Fully compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Including content on ethics and social sustainability (it also includes environmental sustainability) is an area to be considered in developing content in existing syllabi maybe even as a separate course within existing percentage of allowed changes after the reaccreditation process.*
2. *Related to that is thinking of employment of future students beyond media and public institutions in Kosovo taking into consideration future development of Kosovo and the role of private sector, domestic and international corporations, where communication function is a leadership management function with media relations being only one part of it. While this is more relevant for MA program, it is recommended to consider how to introduce more basic knowledge on communication management in corporations.*
3. *Consider listing relevant outcomes in European Qualifications Framework and relating program outcomes to those of a relevant level for clearer following the integration of these in the Program.*

**3.5. Students**

Standard 5.1. requires that there is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing student’s recruitment and that admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students. According to the MEST directive, there is a formal admission procedure at UBT which applies equally to all applicants regardless of program choices, age, gender or any other characteristic. Applications for BA, Media and Communication program included, are made online or directly at university administration offices. The Student Support Office and Student Career Center provide all aspiring students with all the necessary guidance and advice regarding their studies and possible services within the institution. Considering that the right to study is one of the fundamental principles of human rights, the College is open and welcomes all



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

---

candidates interested in studying and advancing their careers, providing them with opportunities to progress and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. UBT also holds regular public meetings with high school students throughout Kosovo and conducts various information campaigns to familiarize them with study opportunities, fees and university profiles. Each applicant undergoes an oral interview.

According to 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. To register at UBT, each candidate must meet the requirements of the "Law on Higher Education in Kosovo". For enrollment in the Media and Communication Program, students must apply with a high school diploma and must therefore have successfully passed the national high school graduation test. Students must also provide a formal birth extract (personal information). Knowledge of English is welcome, but students are further advised to improve their English language skills by using free online courses and related infrastructure or by attending English language courses provided at UBT Vocational School or similar institutions. Any official standard English test scores (such as TOEFL and IELTS) are encouraged to be submitted along with the high school diploma.

Standard 5.3. requires that the study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process. According to SER and the discussion, in the Media and Communication program, as in all UBT Programs, the academic year is organized in two semesters: the winter semester and the summer semester. The winter semester begins in October and lasts 15 weeks, of which 12 weeks students attend continuing education and 3 weeks are for individual preparations for passing the colloquia and final exams. The winter semester verification and summer semester registration take two weeks. The summer semester begins in March and lasts 15 weeks, of which 12 weeks students attend continuous teaching and 7 weeks are for individual preparations for passing the colloquia and final exams. During the lectures the students are divided into groups, so each group contains 40-45 students, while for the exercises the groups are smaller, (18-20 students), so they can all participate in the learning process and interact how the model of teaching develops.

Standard 5.4. requires that the feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments be given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed. In the Media and Communication program, the students' assessment method is applied through continuous knowledge checking through alternative answer tests or final exams which demonstrate the student's progress and achievements in the respective cycle. Assessment methods are clearly stated in the syllabus of each subject, and each lecturer is free to organize assessment at different



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

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percentages of these subjects. Assessment items are designated semifinals, quizzes, projects, semester projects, lab work, class participation, and final exam. Students are informed about the results of their performance evaluation. The academic staff constantly discusses the results of these assessments with students openly. SER particularly points out that the Career Office provides students with counseling and follow-up services and helps to address and resolve issues and problems related to the teaching process. The program encourages multi-method teaching approaches and techniques where in addition to traditional lectures focused on key messages and arguments, there is ongoing discussion on classroom study materials, regular homework, computer room based methodological work, tests, essays, presentations and homework, etc. Multiple methods - using technology helps students to recognize and explore aspects of courses from more than one dimension and express themselves through their best qualities. At the same time, multiple methods provide multiple indicators for the teaching staff to evaluate student performance.

According to standard 5.5. the results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles should be certified by the academic record. The final grade in a course is calculated based on some indicators used throughout the semester to assess performance dimensions, which include attending lectures, the quality of reading material discussions, homework assignments, tests, methodological work, essays, assignment presentation of home and essays, critical thinking. When students are not satisfied with the final grade, they have the option of re-examining. All information about the reviews is presented by the lecturers on the Moodle platform and in Student Handbook. Students who successfully complete all of the compulsory program requirements are provided with a degree and accordingly, the institution provides students with a bachelor's degree with in-depth, theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as training in research or vocational training.

Standard 5.6. refers to ensuring of flexible treatment of students in special situations with respect to deadlines and formal requirements in the program and to all exams. In general, academic staff and students arrange all course deadlines. Once planning is agreed, for all submissions after deadlines, flexibility about renegotiating deadlines is applied- there are usually more tasks assigned to students. In the event of illness or other reasonable delays, the academic staff is flexible to extend and adjust individualized deadlines based on the current situation and context.

By standard 5.7. records of student completion rates should be kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators. Verification of semester and academic year is mandatory for all students. Based on the semester and year data, it is determined how many ECTS study credits are received by the student, who may enroll in the next semester only if the previous semester has





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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

---

been verified. The semester and academic year verification and registration deadlines are set out in the student calendar, which is available on the UBT e-platform.

Standard 5.8. refers to effective procedures being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original. It is stated in SER that UBT has records of students' academic performance from admission to graduation. Online unit data management enhances the quality of services for students, as well as their transparency and staffing. The Program's Code of Ethics - shared with staff and students - clearly states that plagiarism is a serious violation of expected ethical conduct. Each member of the academic staff takes individual measures on a daily basis to ensure that the work presented by the students is original, using a variety of techniques, such as checking suspicious sentences and paragraphs, checking paperwork with students in the classroom, or similar free online plagiarism platforms, etc. There is no mention of a plagiarism detection software.

Standard 5.9. refers to students' rights and obligations being made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably including the right to academic appeals. As stated in SER and confirmed in the discussion, the purpose of UBT is to continuously improve the teaching and learning processes by preparing graduates ready to be employed in the labor market in Kosovo, the region and beyond. During their studies, students must abide by the law, the College Statute, the College Rules book on Preventing, Duplicating, and Selling a Work without the permission of the author or publisher, as well as other University and unit acts. UBT works continuously to create maximum opportunities and conditions for students in order to enable them to become part of the College's work, development and progress. Information on students' rights and obligations is shared first during the "orientation week", which takes place before each semester, where Program Management usually presents detailed information on ways and standards of work at the institution. Students' rights and obligations are made public, and they are entitled to academic complaints and appeals according to UBT policies and practice.

By standard 5.10. the students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs should be clearly regulated in formal internal documents. According to SER, during the studies, the students may transfer from one study program to another similar to the unit within the same college under the conditions specified by the study program. Transition from one study program to another is not permitted in the first year of study. Student transfer is made on the basis of a decision recognizing ECTS credits obtained, upon a previously filed application by the student. Students in the first cycle of studies complete the education by passing all the exams, the preparation of the diploma thesis / final exam, as well as the





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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

~~fulfillment of all other study duties specified in the study program in which the student was enrolled.~~

Standard 5.11. requires that 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. According to SER and the discussion. One of the key principles and policies applied at UBT is that students are not only treated as clients, but they are treated as peers and, more importantly, as a main stakeholder. All counseling schedules for all teaching staff are public. The staff provides lessons and support for students to understand the materials and methods in the courses. Here is also tutorial assistance and time for scheduled consultations is the obligation of all academic staff.

Performance indicator 5.1. requires that, if necessary, an adequate selection process as well as recognition rules for foreign qualifications pursuant to the Lisbon Recognition Convention as well as qualification obtained outside higher education institutions are defined. According to SER and the discussion, students from study programs from other higher education institutions in the country and abroad may be transferred to the study programs of UBT units, under the conditions specified by the study program to which they are transferred, that is, by the rules for the study of the unit, if there is a study program that matches the professional acquisition, that is, the academic degree specified in the study program from which it is transferred. Apparently, this is decided on the case-to-case basis within the framework described in SER.

Performance indicator 5.2. refers to systems established for monitoring and coordinating student workload across courses. Systems are in place for monitoring the progress of individual students with assistance and/or counselling is given to those facing difficulties. Year to year progression rates and program completion rates are monitored and analyzed to identify and provide assistance to any categories of students who may be having difficulties. According to SER, Student workload per semester is equal to 30 ECTS; the content and results of the courses are adjusted for the BA level. All teaching staff have formal consultation hours with them, where the Program Officer, the Quality Assurance Office and other services in the institution support them towards successful progress; In addition, there are professional and language services at the institution that can be used by students to develop extracurricular skills. Students who are: parents, blind, deaf, disabled in the first and second groups, mothers with children under the age of six and hospitalized have the right to take exams at additional exam periods at least twice. per year. There is no evidence described here of an ongoing systemic evaluation of workload and related efficiency, though.

Performance indicator 5.3. refers to grading of student's tests, assignments and projects being assisted by the use of matrices or other means to ensure that the planned range of domains of student learning outcomes are addressed. Arrangements are made within the institution for training of teaching staff in the theory and practice



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim  
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
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of student assessment. According to SER, UBT has for many years been working intensively not only to develop a program in Media and Communication, but to create all the necessary conditions in many aspects, such as infrastructure, staff, literature, necessary links and cooperation with other universities abroad and in the Country. In recent years UBT has organized several scientific conferences in the field of media and communication with the participation of scholars and professors from different countries. Compulsory presentations and training are provided to all newly recruited academic staff members at the start of their contracts, and continuous teaching and research training is organized annually by the institution. Course management is a fully autonomous responsibility of course leaders.

Performance indicator 5.4. refers to support services (e.g., regarding the study program, student counselling in case of emotional, financial or family-related problems, career guidance, international matters, legal advice etc.) as well as subject-related and interdisciplinary guidance are provided. UBT Student Counsel Center, the first and only of its kind in Kosovo as emphasized in SER, and the region, was established in February 2018 with the primary aim of caring for the general well-being of students, especially on issues related to the mind, emotion and health. It offers career guidance from qualified professionals to all students. Many of the Center's activities have been tailored to raise students' awareness of the importance of mental health and to help them overcome the social stigma associated with seeking help. KCS is oriented and created to provide students with a safe, warm, understanding and confidential environment in which they are able to express their concerns. Students have benefited from various psychological support services, especially individual counseling, which help them research and understand the source of the difficulties they face, in building effective skills to overcome stressful situations, in gaining emotional resistance, and in achieving their full personal and academic potential. The Student Counseling Center has organized Summer Academies, gathering UBT students from various fields of study, as well as from other Universities at home and abroad. Through lectures, workshops and visits, students were able to acquire intelligent, theoretical and practical knowledge and skills to become more resilient and emotionally intelligent in the face of many difficulties and obstacles in life.

Performance indicator 5.5. refers to textbooks and reference materials being up to date and incorporating the latest developments in the field of study. Textbooks and other required materials are available in sufficient quantities before classes commence. To facilitate the student's research, subscriptions to online electronic science databases have been conducted. The institution's library has placed a considerable number of basic textbooks and auxiliary teaching materials. The UBT Library has about 1300 media titles for Media and Communication only. This literature is contemporary and is much better reflected in the respective curricula of each subject. The chosen reading is sufficient to help the student successfully complete the study program. Books are available in different languages: Albanian, English, Italian, etc.



Performance indicator 5.6 refers to academic or professional fields for which students are being prepared being monitored on a continuing basis with necessary adjustments made in the program and in text and reference materials to ensure continuing relevance and quality. SER claims that UBT aims to continuously raise awareness on its staff and students attending study programs offered on the importance of quality and quality assurance. Students and staff have been provided with student guidance and staff leadership, which clearly demonstrates the importance of quality and assurance in teaching and research and has also organized several activities, conferences and training courses.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing 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 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	



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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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	

**Compliance level: Fully compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

1. Consider acquiring software for plagiarism tracking in Albanian language and/or cooperating to develop one with partner institutions in Kosovo and Albania.
2. Consider proper mentoring students during internships with an obligation to write a report and follow up with results in co-operation with the professor of particular subject.
3. Consider widening the potential list of employers with executives in private sector, both national and international, in order to raise employability rate of students and extend it to beyond media and public institutions market.



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### 3.6. Research

Standard 6.1. requires that the study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center 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. SER states that UBT's research strategy is the umbrella within which Media and Communication research is conducted. Research includes new developments in the field of media and communication, an area of dynamic development, in pursuit of new trends, influenced by technology development. The Media and Communication Program has established the Scientific Research Center in Media and Communication as a center that supports the research work of professors and students. Professors have the financial and logistical support for public interest research, institutions and students. A long list of main research topics is given in SER which cover various topics within media and communication research area. Again, what seems to be of less interest in the areas covered is topics related to organizational/corporate communication, corporate social responsibility/crisis management/leadership on one side and content creation, social media and marketing on the other. In this part of SER report there is no specific reference to sufficient resources allocated but in SWOT analysis lack of long-term research budgets is emphasized as an issue.

Standard 6.2. is about expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities being clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations being considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria. UBT clearly defines the obligation of teachers and they have a contractual obligation to conduct research / academic activities. When designating teachers in certain disciplines, program leaders consider as one of the main criteria the competence and results of the teacher in the field of research, the number of publications and their quality. In the SWOT it is stated that only positive reinforcement strategy is used in the employment contract and in the Regulation for the active staff but no negative reinforcement is used for the less active staff that does not achieve the minimum publications.

According to standard 6.3. clear policies should be established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program. UBT clearly defines in its accessible policies the research results, which include articles published in indexed professional journals, with a particular emphasis on international journals; conference papers; summaries and published books.

Standard 6.4. requires that the academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity. The list of the topics, names of the teachers, their professional experience and the list of publications was shared with this expert together with other documents and when cross-referenced with syllabi, it does show some compliance with the area of teaching, all within multidisciplinary wide area of communication sciences and social sciences.

By standard 6.5. the academic and research staff should publish their work in





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specialized magazines or publishing houses, and scientific/applied/artistic products should be presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad. The research of staff is published in professional books, published by publishing houses; books published by UBT; books of international conferences organized by UBT; summary of international conferences. The institution routinely provides staff research and professional development requirements and direct support for the specified research agenda. The faculty also considers special purpose support such as international conferences. So as to contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad they are cross-referenced in some partner contracts but no details are to be found.

Standard 6.6. requires that research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation. According to SER, publications are a product of research by competent professional commissions, vendors and Services.. In the context of our provision of research and more of a catalyst for health care, the Faculty fights to build alliances with more and more stakeholders. Stakeholders for centers require more, government agencies and funding, industry partnerships. In line with international development approaches, knowledge transfer is defined by UBT as a 'commitment' to a diverse range of public and private organizations in a mutually beneficial process". Clear structures and processes to manage knowledge transfer in an increasingly complex and changing environment to support this commitment, according to SER are: more strategic approach to knowledge transfer and external partnership management in order to maximize the full potential of activities; sStrengthening management information systems to track, support and monitor engagement with external organizations; an appropriate culture that supports accountability to external leaders and active engagement. The goal is to foster staff development programs to enable and stimulate staff to engage in knowledge creation and transfer. These issues have led the UBT to develop strategic themes for knowledge transfer. The key priorities for quality assurance in the field of research include: continuous review of procedures to ensure compliance with international and national best practices; creation of training programs on research methods and research supervision; establish a panel of external experts (from academia and industry) to review the functioning of the quality assurance process and make recommendations on how to better improve the system. The emphasis on an expanded set of key transferable skills in research training and other key policy documents highlights this instructional aspect. The Faculty study training program focuses on the following areas: research skills and techniques; research environment; research management; personal effectiveness; communication skills; teamwork and networking skills; career management skills.

Standard 6.7. requires that 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. According to SER and the documents attached, most of the academic staff have published their research, at least once a year, at the international conference organized by UBT and partners. Some of them have also published in other

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~~scientific journals outside the institution. The details are found in the appendix on research.~~

Standard 6.8. explicitly requires that academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff. The academic staff, in their research papers, are affiliated to UBT as their full-time institution.

By standard 6.9. 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. The research of staff, in most cases, is related to the field they teach at UBT. The institution encourages and supports them in research work and in the publication of books or research papers.

According to standard 6.10. policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedure set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. Policies and practices are, indeed, in compliance with all Intellectual Property Protection Regulations which are included in the UBT regulations and fully implemented.

Standard 6.10. requires that students be engaged in research projects and other activities. According to SER students are encouraged to participate in research activities through their engagement in individual and group research assignments and projects during their studies. This is mainly an applied research. At the end of their studies, they do extensive research while preparing their diploma thesis. UBT plans involving students in the implementation of research projects, together with staff, which is not the case now.

Performance indicator 6.1. monitors assistance and support given to teaching staff to develop collaborative research arrangements with colleagues in other institutions and in the international community. According to SER, for students of Bachelor studies, UBT has cooperation agreements with some of the most prominent companies in the Republic of Kosovo, as well as with such institutions in the countries of the region, such as Albania and Macedonia, which results in study visits to the media of the same countries. UBT has agreements with IPKO, Tribuna Channel, InfoKosova, RTK- Kosovo Radio Television, InfoPress; EnterMediaTV, Telegraph, Klan Kosova, etc. UBT has also signed memorandum of understandings with relevant ministries and mayors of several municipalities in the Republic of Kosovo, with the aim of cooperating in the development and implementation of projects in various areas of life that are of common interest to ministries, municipalities and UBT. In SWOT analysis UBT states that there is an insufficiently clear strategy of commercialization of research activities of the program for the private sector. Thanks to these agreements, UBT students benefit by joining different programs as well as benefiting from internships in these municipalities. In this way, jointly build institutional and development capacity and certain programs as an important part of cooperation agreements.

Performance indicator 6.2. requests that the study program periodically organizes scientific sessions, symposiums, conferences, round tables, with the involvement of teaching staff, researchers, students and graduates, while proceedings are published in ISBN, ISSN scientific reports or in magazines dedicated to that particular activity. Media and Communication Program organizes the International Scientific Conference, once a year, usually in the last week of October. A few months earlier the topics are identified and public calls for participation are made. The abstracts of the works are selected by the professional

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Kosovo Accreditation Agency

commission. They are published in the Abstract Book, which has ISBN number. Proceedings are publicly presented at the conference. After the presentation and debate about them, the papers are published in the Conference Book. In addition to students and professors from UBT, researchers and professionals from countries in the region and beyond participate in the conference. The Program also organizes conferences and debates with guests, media and communications professionals, foreign and local, on topics and phenomena of interest. Students are an active part of these events.

Performance indicator 6.3 requires support is being provided for junior teaching staff in the development of their research programs through mechanisms such as mentoring by senior colleagues, inclusion in project teams, assistance in developing research proposals, and seed funding. The Media and Communication program has, according to SER, continuously provided support to young colleagues and research students, by conducting joint research projects and presenting them at conferences and seminars. The works from these presentations have been published in conference books and summaries, featuring young teachers and students as authors and co-authors.

Performance indicator 6.4. requests strategies are introduced for identifying and capitalizing on the expertise of teaching staff and students in providing research and development services to the community. SER takes reference to UBT's research strategy, which also supports the work of the Scientific Research Center on Media and Communication, identifies and prioritizes topics of interest to the public and the community of media professionals. In collaboration with the Kosovo Media Institute, UBT has conducted a series of research of interest to public opinion and media professionals.

Performance indicator 6.5. requests the institution is monitoring and supporting staff's contribution to attracting financial resources through research/applied/artistic projects and products. Staff capacity to generate such financial returns is considered in the individual performance review system. According to SER, the research process and its presentation at conferences and debate forums, in addition to the support of UBT, is also carried out in the framework of international projects supported by UBT partner institutions but no reference is made to staff capacity to generate such financial returns being considered in the individual performance review system.

Performance indicator 6.6. speaks of cooperation with local industry and with other research agencies being encouraged. When appropriate, these forms of cooperation involve

45



joint research projects, shared use of equipment, and cooperative strategies for development. According to SER, UBT has collaborated, through formalized signed agreements, with a large number of media and research institutes in the country. These institutes carry out joint research, while collaborating with media houses serves to exchange experiences, but also to facilitate research, utilizing the equipment, opportunities and expertise of these media houses.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Standard 6.1.</i> The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	X	
<i>Standard 6.2.</i> Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.		X
<i>Standard 6.3.</i> Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
<i>Standard 6.4.</i> The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
<i>Standard 6.5.</i> The academic and research staff publish their work in specialized magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
<i>Standard 6.6.</i> Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	



<i>Standard 6.7.</i> Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.	X	
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	X	
<i>Standard 6.8.</i> 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	
<i>Standard 6.9.</i> Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	X	
<i>Standard 6.10.</i> Students are engaged in research projects and other activities		X

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Research load vs. teaching load is a constantly debating problem in HEI. Communication science has a lot of opportunities for applied research. Recommendation is to consider integrating this in the teaching process and introducing obligations for teachers to publicize together with students. This would be an attempt to solve the listed weakness of student inclusion in teaching.*
- 2. Positive reinforcement strategy versus negative reinforcement strategy for less active staff that does not achieve minimum results in publications, as emphasized in SWOT, is an issue to be considered when developing and changing current policies on promotion. Unless that is part of the overall strategy and evident in policies of UBT, the ambition students expressed in the discussion of the need for vertical studying on all levels, including doctoral studies, might not be realistic. It is recommended to consider this problem in the context of future academic needs of Kosovo.*

**3.7. Infrastructure and resources**



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Standard 7.1. requires 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. SER claims this is indeed the case and the environment, human resources and the equipment needed, both in quantity and quality are provided for long term development.

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 as requested in standard 7.2., that is , rough calculations of projected income and main expenses based for three years on assumed number of students are shared in a table form. The aspect of financial coverage that will guarantee sustainability for the next three years and beyond, as stated by SER is based on the financial plan developed by the relevant financial service.

Standard 7.3. required that 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: owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilization license; library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula. According to SER, the study program is implemented in appropriate learning spaces and locations, such as halls, libraries, inventory, equipment, laboratories, etc. and there is complete documentation of both ownership and tenancy through adequate long-term contracts; UBT has taken care to provide laboratories and to equip those laboratories with the appropriateteaching aids. Thus, the Media and Communication program is available and uses some of these labs. In the labs, computers with the right software are installed; Considering the curriculum of the Media and Communication program and the courses taught there, the very nature of the program has determined that computers are provided for students, and these computers have the necessary and practical software for the units involved in these studies. So, the required software is installed on the computers used by the students; The Library provides seats in accordance with the number of Media and Communication students. which means, 10% of the seats in the Library are reserved for this study program, but as stated in SWOT analysis, some rearrangements are needed.

According to 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 special disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment. SER claims that for the realization of the study

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~~program, workspaces have been provided such as lectures, seminars, laboratories, study groups, consultations etc.~~ The number of seats is adequate to the respective study groups and subgroups. The seats are suitable for students to have adequate space and opportunities for taking notes during lectures.

Standard 7.5. required that the education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; their own book stock from Albanian and foreign specialization literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized publishers, from the last 10 years; 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; a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission. SER claims that libraries with books, literature and different periodicals are in sufficient quantity and quality to carry out the study program to cover the various disciplines within the curricula, both in Albanian and foreign languages. CD with all book titles at UBT Library has been made available KAA.

Standard 7.6. requires that the infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs. The overall infrastructure enabling realization of the study program from the outset has taken into account adequate adaptations for people with special needs as provided by adequate guidelines such as: access to all necessary facilities and other specifications for this category of people, states SER. This probably refers to people with mobility difficulties, while no reference is taken to students with hearing and sight limitations.

Following the performance indicator 7.1. whereby formal plans should be developed for the provision and improvement of infrastructure and resources, and the implementation and effectiveness of those plans is monitored on a regular basis, SER states that the institution applies regular monitoring and reporting but gives no details. Performance indicator 7.2. requires that a senior staff member is assigned the responsibility for oversight and development of infrastructure and resources. SER claims that the institution has a





designated senior staff who monitors, informs and reports on the development of the infrastructure. Performance indicator

7.3 requests the effectiveness and relevance of infrastructure and resources to be regularly monitored through processes that include surveys of student usage and satisfaction and infrastructure and resources be modified in response to evaluation and feedback. SE claims that UBT periodically conducts various surveys and surveys mainly with students on the effectiveness of this standard but gives no details.

<i>Standard</i>	<b>Compliance</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
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;	X	

50



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 specialty 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 specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognized 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: Substantially compliant**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Considering special needs beyond mobility limitations is recommended for future plans of developing the program and facilities.*



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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo



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2. *SER did not give details requested in 7.5 to be able to assess the compliance and it is not clarified what are the electronic resources and availability of free access to literature of the program and in communication area in general in English language. It is recommended these sources be planned for future needs of students.*

#### **4. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET**

At the end of SER, reference is taken to the previous expert report on accreditation of Media and Communication program at the Bachelor and Master levels in 2016, when it was concluded that UBT had implemented all the findings for the BA program evaluated in 2013, while for the MA level, it was emphasized that it is the result of the labor market demand and also the student need to continue studies within the country. In 2016 there were no recommendations for improvement by the expert, but UBT continued to improve the quality and further develop study programs at both levels.

SER emphasizes that UBT has continuously and coherently increased the infrastructural, human and technological capacities for the realization of the programs, not excluding the increase of the number of partners. In this regard, in addition to the theoretical part of the program, UBT has managed to license in Radio Campus, UBT TV and UBT portal, and has increased mass communication capacities, maintaining the quality through continuous and periodic evaluations and incorporating stakeholders in decision-making in order to maintain and increase the quality of studies.

This expert would like to give credit to UBT management and faculty for the ongoing efforts in line with the principles of development of high education institutions to best serve the needs of the society, in this case of this vibrant dynamic of society in the Republic of Kosovo that requires special focus on young population that will be its future main strength. In that sense, high education institutions in Kosovo have a unique social responsibility that stretches beyond usual education objectives, standards, criteria and indicators. Therefore, this high responsibility of UBT is the context in which following recommendations by this expert, which are not primarily formal concerns with reference to the standards, but rather suggestions for consideration in future planning, both strategic and operational, should be considered.

Not recommendation for improvement but suggestions for consideration.

52



Consider deep editing of Self Evaluation Report. While it is extremely helpful that all the required standards and indicators were referenced in the text, it would have been very helpful if “the answer” to each the standards were a clear indication not only was the standard fulfilled or not, but also evidence given if there is a claim that it is. As it is now, many “answers” to standard items refer to another topic or even area, and the structure which should have been an advantage, could be taken as obsolete. Not to mention SWOT analysis which in many areas turned out to be “wrong translation” or any other “confusion” as explained in the discussion. As it is written now, SWOT in many areas contradicts everything else, positive assessment, written before it, and it can be confusing. This expert managed to deal with that problem mastering all the material and not incurring any losses on behalf of UBT in compliance determination, but dealing with the problems in the text in future might prove to be helpful. Even more so, because self-evaluation report and preparation is in itself a painful and time consuming process, but, nevertheless, very instrumental in creating the culture of collaboration and partnership within the organization. It is worth it.

This program has a title that signifies its ambition, in both BA and MA programs, to spread beyond journalism in all media. That is not an easy task, as, we know quite well, we are educating students for professions beyond journalism, professions that we do not even know what they will be. That is big responsibility. Considering stronger focus in management dimension is recommended.

The results of evaluation are as follows.

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



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju  
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In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program UBT College Bachelor in Media and Communication offered by UBRT College is *Substantially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study program for a duration of *3 years* with a number of 100 students to be enrolled in the program.

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#### **Expert Team**

Chair

**Majda Tafra-Vlahović**

**1 July 2021 2021**