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Kosovo Accreditation Agency

AAB College

Faculty of Foreign Languages

Ferizaj Branch

PROGRAM: BA Program in English Language

TYPE OF EVALUATION: RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM



2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 20th of April, 2022 (Online site visit)

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. habil. dr. Anca Greere (Chair)
- Lali Giorgidze (Student Expert)

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Arianit M. Krasniqi KAA Officer

Sources of information for the Report:

- KAA Accreditation Manual (2021)
- KAA Manual for external evaluation of higher education institutions (2021)
- KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report
- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of “English Language BA” program submitted by Faculty of Foreign Languages of AAB College
- Study Program – English Language BA Program
- Course syllabi
- CVs of the staff
- List of Activities of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at AAB College for 2016/2021
- List of publications of English Language Department Staff
- Research plan of the faculty of Foreign Languages for 2021-2026
- Link with the video of the infrastructure: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pLlFqZ-zig>

Requested Documents

1. Strategic development plan of the branch campus
2. Sample of the placement test
3. A selection (3-4) of graduation theses (anonymized)
4. Number of students writing BA thesis in current semester
5. Information on supervision/support offered to students while working on BA thesis
6. A selection (3-4) of assessments with attached feedback (anonymized)



7. A selection of quizzes, mid-term exams and final exams – to have clarity on what is being asked of students
8. A selection (3-4) of student records (anonymized)
9. Number of applications for admissions to the program in the last 3 years
10. Course completion rates of the Program (please include number of students admitted annually to the Program from 2015 to 2018 and number of students who graduated from 2018 to 2021); Include number of current students on the Program according to study years; Please also indicate drop-out rate and any report on drop-out reasons, if analysis specifically conducted
11. Questionnaires and reports (from any feedback gathering activities) related to QA that are specific to only this branch of the AAB College
12. Minutes of faculty/staff meetings (if any) related to the study Program at the branch campus
13. List of organisations where current students undertake internships/practical component
14. Reports on evaluations of students' practical work/internships (if any)
15. Financial plan of the program and/or consideration of sustainability for future resources
16. Questionnaires and report on student usage and satisfaction on infrastructure
17. Policy on assessments/examinations and any related practices regarding re-sits and grade increases and grade rejections etc
18. Any documentation setting out the responsibilities of the 3 Heads of program
19. Any evidence/documentation setting out how learning outcomes are evaluated to be at NQF/EQF Level; who evaluates; when etc

Received Documents (with some observations from the ET)

1. Strategic development plan of the branch campus
2. Sample of the placement test
3. A selection (3-4) of graduation theses (anonymized)
4. Number of students writing BA thesis in current semester
5. Information on supervision/support offered to students while working on BA thesis
6. Screenshots evidencing students sending completed assignments to professors and email on a feedback to student in relation to the submission for the conference
(Note: the ET requested to look at the content of a selection (3-4) of assessments with attached feedback (anonymized) that has not been submitted)
7. A selection of quizzes, mid-term exams and final exams – to have clarity on what is being asked of students
8. A selection (3-4) of student records (anonymized)



9. Number of applications for admissions to the program in the last 3 years
(Note: It was not clear for the ET whether the provided numbers are number of applications or the number of current students on the programme)
10. Course completion rates of the Program
11. Information on number of students admitted annually to the Program from 2015 to 2018
12. Information on number of students who graduated from 2018 to 2021
(Note: Only the number of students graduating from 2015 to 2018 was provided)
13. Information on the number of current students on the Program according to study years
(Note: Number of applications for admissions to the program in the last 3 years has been provided. It is not clear for the ET whether this is the number of applications or the number of actual students admitted to the programme)
14. Information on drop-out rates and any report on analysis of drop-outs
(Note: Report on analysis of causes of drop-out rates has not been provided)
15. List of organisations where current students undertake internships/practical component
16. Financial plan of the program and/or consideration of sustainability for future resources
17. Policy on assessments/examinations and any related practices regarding re-sits and grade increases and grade rejections etc.
18. Description of the responsibilities of the 3 Heads of program;
19. Description of how learning outcomes are evaluated to be at NQF/EQF Level.

Criteria used for program evaluation:

The experts team followed the program re-accreditation assessment areas and respective performance indicators, developed by Kosovo Accreditation Agency that are presented in Accreditation Manual – 2021

1.2. Site visit schedule

| Program Re-accreditation Procedure at AAB College | |
|---|---|
| Program: | English Language, BA (Re Accreditation) – Ferizaj Branch |
| Online site visit on: | April 20, 2022 |
| Expert Team: | Prof. habil. dr. Anca Greere Lali Giorgidze, MA Student |
| Coordinators of the KAA: | Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer Arianit M. Krasniqi, KAA Officer |



Site Visit Program

| Time | Meeting |
|---------------|--|
| 09:30 – 10:15 | Meeting with the management of the faculty where the Program is integrated |
| 10:20 – 11:00 | Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff |
| 11:10 – 11:50 | Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site) |
| 11:50 – 12:50 | Meeting with the heads of the study Program : |
| 12:55 – 13:40 | Meeting with teaching staff |
| 13:50 – 14:55 | Meeting with students and graduates |
| 15:00 – 15:40 | Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders |
| 15:40 – 15:50 | Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts |
| 15:50 – 16:00 | Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program |

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

AAB College is the largest non-public institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo which consists of a total of 14 faculties with study programs at both BA and MA levels. AAB College offers teaching in its main campus in Prishtina, and in the two branches in Gjakova and Ferizaj, as accredited by decision of KAA and licensed by MEST.

The program under evaluation is a BA program, level 6 NQF/EQF, of total duration 3 years, with 60 ECTS credits per academic year. The study program was initially accredited in 2010 and was subsequently re-accredited two more times (i.e. in 2011 and 2014), this being its fourth re-accreditation evaluation. The program is offered across three campuses, in Prishtina, Gjakova and Ferizaj.

This report is exclusively for the Ferizaj branch campus delivery.



2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The SER notes that the Faculty of Foreign Languages at AAB aims to prepare language experts in the field of English, promote intercultural dialogue, increase opportunities for young people to study and work abroad, and facilitate employment opportunities in organizations and office environments where English is the primary means of communication. This is to be achieved through a number of strategic objectives which the Faculty promotes. The ones which are most visible in the BA program relate to: teaching pedagogies supported by digitalisation; orientation towards the labour market; capability development of staff; and, expansion of cooperations to create stronger links for students and staff. The developments observed on the Program level correlate well with these objectives and are in compliance with the strategic directions at the level of the Faculty and institution.

The management at the Ferizaj campus noted that an important mission-driven element for the branch is to serve the local region, both the community at large and the industry partners, and to offer education opportunities for students which would otherwise have been deprived of such possibilities. As such the regional context has a strong imprint on how the branch is run, and, specifically, the Program is delivered. The ET was told that whereas the town is fairly well developed, the surrounding regions are not and many students may be socially and economically challenged. This in turn is evident in the classroom and in the interactions which staff have with students, with students needing more guidance and encouragements than those on the main campus. The College outlined its responsibility towards the region shaped by the expectations of the region towards its capacity to form graduates who can take on leadership roles and develop the region further. This creates a number of challenges which the management is aware of and is trying to address, at all levels of the provision, i.e. teaching, learning and assessments, infrastructure, quality engagement and feedback etc, with students generally manifesting a restrained availability to voice concerns or to interact for change, a characteristic identified as stemming from more traditional education in the region.

An important aim outlined by the College is their desire to increase research outputs with a view to changing status to a University. This has meant that in recent years there has been a clear shift towards strategically promoting research and encouraging the participation of both staff and students in research activities. As such more research activities are demonstrated to have been embedded in the program structure. In spite of this, the Ferizaj branch has reported

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that that they are not sufficiently exposed to research events and would value such exposure which could benefit both the region and individual participants. It is also notable that whereas there is a strong focus on research advocated within the Program, the College does not offer the opportunity for continuation with the branch for postgraduate education and students have voiced their concerns at having to consider a move (which is not always possible for personal reasons) if they want to continue their education.

The Program as delivered in Ferizaj operates with exactly the same curriculum as in Prishtina and exhibits the same characteristics. In presenting the intended learning outcomes, the ET found that these are organised by knowledge, skills and competencies. As a level 6 program, its didactic approach involves developing problem-solving competencies and superior communication skills, transferrable to a broad range of career paths, including teacher, translators, editors, etc. Critical and analytical thinking, creative skills, research-based activities, social responsibility and cultural awareness feature amongst the elements in focus in the articulation of the program learning outcomes. Verbs like “define”, “recognise”, “differentiate”, “illustrate”, which highlight memorization/replication capacities, also feature in the composition of the learning outcomes. It is important for the program to ensure it privileges actions of “apply”, “evaluate”, “analyse” in the way the program is set out for teaching, learning and assessment purposes to ensure that the majority of actions are set to promote evaluation, analysis and creativity (and balance out memorization or replication) with a view to students achieving their graduation at the right level.

The program design acknowledges the spread of usage of English language competencies and the different areas of expertise where these may be required. It also takes account of the fact that the labour market in Kosovo is limited, hence more generic training, rather than deeply specialised, will benefit graduates more. As such, the program concept is to cater for multiple career aims thus offering theoretical knowledge and practical opportunities to develop competencies in different areas of interest. Linguistic, cultural, communicative, technical skills are all targeted through the curriculum set-up. When discussing the application of the Program in Ferizaj, the ET found that teaching staff are fully aware of the needs in the region and aim to orient, as far as permissible through the curriculum content, towards subjects of stronger relevance for the region, many industry partners being in close relationship with the Ferizaj branch and offering, frequently informal, suggestions for catered delivery.



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It is important to note that, by governmental arrangements, the College cannot organise teacher training. However, there are multiple graduates who have taken on this path and employers, from private training institutions, who have confirmed that graduates come well prepared to become teachers, both through their English level and also through the behavioral characteristics they display. Discussions at the Ferizaj campus also emphasized this direction for graduates.

The management of the Program is fully centralised, as such decision-making and quality assurance arrangements are driven from the main campus, with only limited elements of particularity applied at the Ferizaj campus. In processes of review and development of the Program, the ET found that multiple sources of information are accessed including extensively engaging representatives of the labour market via more informal interactions. However, the Teaching Council, located in the main campus, currently does not have appointed permanent members who are representatives of the labour market. Only the College Board has members of industry represented, not at Faculty level. The faculty could reflect on developing formal and consistent engagement with labour market representatives, rather than ad-hoc or on-demand engagement when external review processes call for consideration of potential changes. Such formalised engagement could include bringing industry representatives on faculty-level committees to constantly inform the College of and allow it to explore market trends for the purposes of program updates. It is possible to also consider that industry representative may wish to bring entrepreneurial market opportunities or contracted research to the College, more generally, and the Program, more specifically. This would foster impact of the program on society, along with enhancing the third mission of the AAB College which involves engagement in applied research and provision of transformational learning experiences with community and industry, and development of full potential of the students, staff, social and economic partners and of the society. The ET understands that entrepreneurial opportunities of the program can be limited by low “absorptive capacity” of business companies to benefit from the research or services that higher education institutions in Kosovo offer. But one way of boosting engagement with industry by the faculty could be professionalising AAB College service offerings underpinned by clear pricing principles and standard forms of contracts. For the Ferizaj campus, the ET heard that industry connections are very tight and there is a good deal of exchange and interaction of knowledge and information about the market which could contribute to further shaping of the Program, in general, and its delivery in Ferizaj, in particular. Central management could formally organise processes to take more advice



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regarding regional directions and offer some level of specificity to the Ferizaj curriculum, even if only through electives or internships. (see Recommendation below in 2.4)

Whereas benchmarking can be very relevant to setting development goals through comparison with other programs with similar objectives, it is unclear which elements of the Program have been specifically compared in the benchmarking exercises noted in the SER (such as with University of Zagreb and the University of Ghent, and the University of Prishtina and the University of Tirana), as there seems to be a disproportionate emphasis placed on very precise periods in literature as a result of this comparison. The College has noted that due to more specialised courses present in the programs chosen for benchmarking some may have been deemed less suitable for the “general English” program, consequently only limited elements could be made use of. Whereas, the ET acknowledges the value of culture in a program of this nature, it remains important that curriculum components balance objectives pertinently and allow for a broad overview of a multitude of competencies (see also Recommendation in 2.4).

As noted above, the program is offered at three campuses, i.e. in Prishtina, in Ferizaj and in Gjakova, with management and teaching staff confirming during the online visit that the teaching, learning and assessment arrangements are comparable for the main campus and the other two locations, with the same teachers moving between campuses to ensure the same teaching content and the same teaching methodologies are applied consistently. As such, it was noted from the online visit that students are unlikely to find any variations which would impact their potential to achieve the program outcomes. However, ET observed that in Ferizaj due to the regional characteristics described, the interaction with students did require a level of adjustment and staff confirmed that frequently they do need to take a more detailed, explanatory approach with students in Ferizaj than in the main campus, for example, as Ferizaj students frequently exhibited more gaps in knowledge which needed addressing. Staffa also confirmed that, whereas they found teaching more enjoyable as it was conducted with smaller groups and allowed for more quality individual interactions, they were spending more time in planning and delivering activities to meet a comparable level. Hence, tutor involvement is intensified and it is possible that more office hours may be needed to be quantified as part of the workload. (see Recommendation in 2.3)

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The administration of the Program is well aided by digital tools which are easily accessed and provide consistency in dealing with a multitude of administrative tasks which students and staff need to engage in.

There are formal policies and regulations which cover important procedural aspects. These are readily available via different e-platforms or directly through the website and students and staff have confirmed that they know how to refer to them to relevantly address matters arising.

Ethics is an area kept under review and students and staff have confirmed that academic integrity features as an important preoccupation in teaching, learning, assessments and research activities. The College has licenses for Turnitin, which are usable/accessible on campus, and staff and students are encouraged to use the system more regularly. The ET heard that there are challenges with plagiarism which the Program is working to address, by adopting a stronger preventive approach to the use of anti-plagiarism tools. Currently, staff confirmed that Turnitin is not used consistently and it is not compulsory for students. The Code of Ethics, which seems to be the policy usable most in teaching, learning, assessment or administrative circumstances, does not define plagiarism. This seems to be detailed only in the document referred to as Code of Ethics for Scientific Research, suggesting that staff conducting research are held accountable under more clear regulations. It has also been observed that there are no measures at the faculty to avoid cases of contract cheating i.e. the cases when students submit works that have been completed for them by a third party. So, the faculty could consider the measures for decreasing risks of this by enhancing effectiveness of procedures ensuring originality of work submitted by students.

The Program management have confirmed that the policies and regulations are updated as necessary to reflect circumstances, as they develop. The SER indicates a minimum review cycle of three years.



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

Compliance level: (67%) Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET encourages the Program to consider entering into negotiations with Government to gain permission to include teacher training as a potential career strand. This would then need relevant pedagogical modules to be added into the program for students wishing to pursue this direction.*
- 2. The ET encourages the Program to consider enhancing the Teaching Council with appointed representatives of the labour market to help guide faculty-wide developments.*
- 3. The ET recommends that the Program should more actively involving industry representatives of the Ferizaj region to give input for strategic decision-making at the level of the Program .*



4. *The ET recommends that the Program should balance any benchmarking activities conducted in view of reviewing program components against the objectives set for the program and ensure that there isn't a disproportionate focus on highly specific elements, without a clear justification correlating back to the objectives.*
5. *The ET recommends that the Program should amend policies on academic integrity and make anti-plagiarism tools compulsory to better assist with both prevention and detection, especially for high-stakes assignments like final graduation theses.*
6. *The ET recommends that the Program should make clear how the Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics for Scientific Research interact and if they are to be used separately and as stand-alone. It is important for both to contain relevant definitions, such as, for example, for plagiarism.*

2.2. Quality management

The overall quality management at AAB College is centralised and managed from the main campus in Prishtina. However, there are appointed QA coordinators at the faculty and branch levels in Ferizaj who collaborate with QA unit in Prishtina. The academic coordinators are at the campus for three days a week and when the ET discussed with the management team it seemed that the colleagues based in the main campus were more aware of the day-to-day arrangements in Ferizaj than the coordinators.

Regulation on Quality Assurance of AAB College considers involvement of all staff in the internal quality assurance procedures, which also involves reflection by all staff in the process of self-evaluations and cooperation for improving processes. This is supported by structural units which are responsible on internal quality assurance. And these units are central Quality Assurance Office, Quality assurance coordinator at the Faculty level and Quality assurance coordinator at the branch level. AAB College has made efforts to establish collaboration between the Rectorate, Deans Offices, the academic staff and students. It has been observed by the ET that efforts were more inclined towards top-down approach to quality assurance. While the efforts of top leadership in this regard have to be commended it would also be advisable to empower the Program staff and especially Program coordinators to take more ownership on the QA outcomes of the Program. Program Coordinator at Ferizaj branch currently serves as a liaison between the Dean of the faculty of Foreign languages at Prishtina Campus and the Director of the Branch. But according to the job description of the



Program coordinator, its functions are more administrative ones (e.g. functions include being responsible on administrative issues, web announcements, organizing forums and student clubs) and lack areas of responsibility relating to academic quality management of the study Program including delivering the Program using appropriate teaching and learning and assessment methods, effecting any necessary modifications, communicating with students and other stakeholders in relation to the Program content-wise, responding to external review input on the Program etc.

Ferizaj branch of AAB College tries to integrate evaluation processes and planning for improvement as part of planning processes. Existence of QA unit at Ferizaj branch is one of the demonstrations of this which administers number of surveys for students and academic staff. However, it would also be beneficial to encourage bottom-up initiatives and engagement of staff in QA at the Program level to address challenges that the Program faces – different background knowledge and skills of students admitted to the Program being one of them. This could be done through introducing tasks related to quality assurance in functions and responsibilities of academic staff, fostering formal opportunities of reporting and facilitated discussions, and introduction of formal mechanisms for cooperation on improvement of teaching and learning in the Program. Considering the number of questionnaires, it would also be advisable for the faculty to reflect on usefulness of these and on risks of evaluation fatigue as it may have impact on data quality.

Quality assurance processes at Ferizaj branch of AAB College cover all aspects of program planning and delivery, including college services and resources available to students at the college. Questionnaires administered by the QA unit of the Ferizaj branch include collection of data on satisfaction of students and staff on the services and resources provided by the institution. The faculty also administered questionnaire for study of students' satisfaction on online teaching and learning which showed that the majority of students in all campuses of the College are satisfied with teaching, services and resources offered by the College. Whereas it is important for the Ferizaj campus to gather its own information and adjust questionnaires or run specific questionnaires (as indicated by the QA unit), this can create a level of confusion for students and it would be important to not administer multiple layers of surveys to students but create composites where both generic Program information and specific Ferizaj branch evaluations could be embedded.



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Quality evaluations cover most of the quality issues for the overall program and for its components. Particular attention is given to inputs and the processes but there is area of development in evaluation of achievement of learning outcomes by students. Particular attention given to inputs and the processes in quality evaluations is reflected in a well-developed process of the approval of the study Program. This involves approval of the study Program by the faculty Teaching Council which sends the Program for the review to the Study Commission. Afterwards the Study Commission having reviewed the proposal for the study program and having received the Quality Office recommendations, the Study Commission recommends the Senate adoption of the Program. Article 75 of the Statue of AAB College defines the characteristics of the learning outcomes of courses in terms of ECTS workload of students, knowledge, skills and competencies that the Program should comply with in order to be adopted by the Senate. Academic staff is also given guidelines on writing syllabi which focus on the development of learning outcomes considering the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework. These illustrate particular attention given to inputs and processes in the evaluation of the Program. However, the quality evaluations do not consider evaluation of teaching and learning outputs with particular attention given to learning outcomes achieved by students. Current arrangements of quality assurance at Ferizaj branch do not cover evaluation of internship experiences and learning outcomes achieved by students through internships. Evaluation of implementation of internships could guide the faculty in understanding to what extent internships serve as the opportunity for students to employ their knowledge in a real-world setting, how intellectually stimulating and beneficial internship is for building the skills needed for future etc. This would also allow to continuously improving internship experiences of students.

According to the SER the QA Office collects data from students, graduates and employers. The ET has been provided with the students' satisfaction questionnaire on infrastructure and administrative services available at AAB College Ferizaj campus. It is noteworthy that 95% of students responded in the survey that they evaluate work of administrative staff as excellent or good, while during the face to face meeting with students and QA unit representative arranged in 2021, communication with administrative staff has been named as one of the areas of development by students. The ET had no access to data collected from graduates neither access on reports developed based on these data. The faculty has provided the evidence of a roundtable organized with employer's representatives in 2021 and of the main outcomes of the meeting. The Careers Office also maintains contacts with employers but there is no clear involvement of employers through Career Office in the process of quality

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assurance of the programme and engagement with employers has not yet been fully integrated in core decision-making of the program. It is important to consider that in order for student learning to be enhanced, the focus of quality teaching initiatives can also be made on employers and alumni of the Program. It would be beneficial for the faculty to have employer relations team, which will be striving to support academic areas of the programme along with enhancing internship content and organization, expanding partnerships and job opportunities for students of the programme. The ET noted that the current state of partnership with employers is still new or at the level of working relationship with some employers. Neither quality assurance unit nor the faculty are yet engaged in the assurance of quality of internships. Some of the students have to find internships on their own meaning that internship experience may not always be guaranteed for everyone. The aim for the programme should be building strategic partnership with employers which is mutually valuable, meets strategic development goals of the partner organization and of the faculty, is continuous and comprehensive.

The faculty of Foreign Languages at Ferizaj branch considers the results of the internal quality assurance outcomes for developing teaching and learning experiences for students. These mainly include feedback from students collected from annual surveys and feedback from staff during faculty meetings and some improvements have been evidenced in relation to infrastructure on the basis of students' feedback.

The faculty of Foreign Languages at Ferizaj branch has not yet introduced the practice of evaluating the overall quality of the Program and the corresponding report has not been available for the ET. The faculty relies on external evaluation of the Program through KAA. It would be beneficial for the study Program to carry out periodic Program reviews as a developmental process. The Periodic review like this can be implemented through nominating external experts, employers' representatives, graduates, students and staff members. The review could be aiming for the promotion of enhancement of quality of the Program while assisting the staff to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Program over the recent past, to reflect on how the Program can be improved for future and plan and implement relevant changes.

The Quality Assurance Unit and Steering Committee work on the quality assurance regulations arrangements for the program but their update based on review has not been evidenced. It could be beneficial for the Program to periodically have open, collegiate

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discussion on quality arrangements with the overarching aim of their enhancement and evaluating their fitness to purpose. These reviews can be opportunities for transparent and meaningful reflection for the development of QA arrangements for the Program to make sure that the students are equipped with best learning experiences. It is important to implement review of quality assurance arrangements by involving internal and external stakeholders. The subsidiary aim of reviewing QA arrangements could also be aiming the identification of good practice that could be relevant to other faculties and Programs of the college too. When it comes to involvement of internal stakeholders in review of quality assurance processes, the role of students' involvement should not be underestimated. From the discussions with the AAB College representatives the ET learnt that students at Ferizaj branch come from schools with teacher-centered academic environments and in which students' active engagement in school decision-making and related to their own learning is not encouraged. This obviously affects students' engagement patterns in QA when students pursue higher education studies. For this reason, AAB College Ferizaj branch could reflect on ways of encouraging and empowering students to engage themselves in enhancement of quality of their learning experiences. For this purpose, it would be needed to provide training opportunities for students so that they can develop relevant competencies to meaningfully engage in quality assurance work and participate in design and overall review of quality assurance arrangements.

It is also important to note that whereas the Program is the same across all campuses, the Ferizaj campus comes with specific challenges and opportunities, which may mean that centralised solution are not always appropriate and some level of flexibility and catered action should be allowed for the Ferizaj campus to reach its full potential. In this respect, the ET considers that the QA procedures should be better designed to reflect the necessary specificities and allow for targeted action.



| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity. | X | |
| Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes. | X | |
| Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery, including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution. | X | |
| Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students. | | X |
| Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance. | X | |
| Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available. | | X |
| Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates. | X | |
| Standard 2.8. 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. | | X |
| Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved. | | X |



Compliance level: Partially compliant (56 %)

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends that the Program should strengthen academic quality management functions and responsibilities of Program Coordinators to ensure more ownership on quality outcomes of the Program;*
2. *The ET recommends that the Program should appoint Program coordinators which could be permanently based in Ferizaj to avoid any gaps in presence which may impact on the student experience;*
3. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce formal mechanisms for Program academic staff to take more ownership on the QA outcomes of the Program , along with QA unit of the Ferizaj branch supporting this;*
4. *The ET encourages the Program to streamline Program-level surveys with branch-specific surveys to maximize administration and minimize the claim on students' time.*
5. *The ET encourages the Program to reflect on usefulness of questionnaires for evaluation and on risks of evaluation fatigue to avoid risks related to the data quality;*
6. *The ET recommends that the Program should evaluate teaching and learning outputs with particular attention to learning outcomes achieved by students;*
7. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce the evaluation of internship Program as part of quality assurance arrangement for the Program;*
8. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce formal mechanisms for gathering feedback from alumni for the purpose of quality enhancement of the Program;*
9. *The ET encourages the Program to develop strategic partnerships with employers which can be mutually valuable with a view to focussing on meeting strategic development goals of the partner organization and of the faculty, and to ensuring continuous and comprehensive collaborations for the programme development.*
10. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce the practice of periodic Program reviews as a developmental process, by the involvement of external experts, employers' representatives, graduates, students, staff members and other relevant stakeholder group representatives;*
11. *The ET encourages the Program to provide training opportunities for students, so that they can develop competencies to meaningfully engage in quality assurance work and participate in design and overall review of quality assurance arrangements;*
12. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce the practice of periodic review of quality assurance arrangement through the engagement with internal and*



external stakeholder group representatives, with the overarching aim of their enhancement.

13. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce elements in the QA system which can allow for some level of specificity to be highlighted in relation to the Ferizaj campus.*

2.3.Academic staff

The employment procedures are in compliance with the Labour Law and the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation of HEIs. The Program has 6 PhD holders across the 180 ECTS, which is double to the AIA requirement of 1 PhD to 60 ETCS.

The recruitment process is open, with details about the post, including detailed job description, being presented clearly. The job descriptions refer to academic work, scientific / research work as well as administrative work and outlines the responsibilities of the academic staff in relation to students (including consultations and engagement on e-platforms), the Faculty of Foreign Languages (English) and AAB College.

Promotion opportunities for existing staff also go through the open competition and staff know in advance what they are required to do to aim to address the requirements of a promotion post they are aiming for.

As a College, the post of full professor is not available by law, irrespective of the balance of workload between teaching and research. As such, academic staff can only aspire to be associate professors, at most. This will unlikely change until the College is successful in changing its status to University.

Staff are hired on the Programme, with responsibilities spanning the three delivery locations. Moving forward and to afford some level of individuality to the Ferizaj campus and also ensure continuity of academic coordination and guidance, the ET views it important that the Program proposes posts fully based in Ferizaj, or at least with main workload responsibilities in Ferizaj.



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Workload requirements for academic staff have changed more recently moving towards a stronger emphasis on research activities in combination with teaching and/or administrative tasks, depending on the roles of individuals. Teaching staff have confirmed to the ET that they have been supported well during this shift and that they consider they are managing their workload effectively and delivering well on their responsibilities. Staff also indicated that workload oversight is held by the program leadership team and that they do not feel overburdened, as workload can also be collegially negotiated, where necessary. The monitoring of workload has as its main objective to keep working hours within the limits stipulated by law, and staff are, thus, required to take on 8-10 nominal teaching hours per week. E-Accreditation in Kosovo is a platform which records all staff activity transparently to support the monitoring process across institutions. As such, AAB College can safely state that its staff do not work more than 4 extra hours in other institutions, ensuring that staff workload is compliant with the applicable law.

However, the ET attracts attention to the fact that this is a matter of calculation and staff who work across all three campuses often find themselves adding substantive travel time for institutional purposes. It was also noted that students in the Ferizaj campus require more assistance due to their backgrounds and former educational patterns and this has been noted to consume more time for staff in consultations, out-of-office hours or even while moving from one course to another. Students have also reported that while staff do always make time to listen and support them, this may sometimes have a rushed feeling and, anecdotally, they have had to join staff on their journey back to Prishtina or for their lunch breaks to secure a meaningful consultation on academic matters.

While the moving of academic staff members move between the three campuses can offer a similar teaching, learning and assessment experience to the students, it comes with some caveats as teaching methods do need some level of adaptation depending on the specificity of the student groups and availability for individual feedback may also be affected. Staff confirmed during the online visit that their schedule is reasonably arranged to allow them to accommodate responsibilities at all campuses, without majorly affecting the student experience. However, in consideration of all activities required to be completed on the Program additional to teaching and research, i.e. assessments and feedback, theses supervisory tasks, administrative or managerial responsibilities, community outreach activities, internship liaising, etc., the ET found the number of academic staff on the Program to be fairly restrictive in comparison to the number of students admitted on an yearly basis,

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across all campuses, with pressure and burden likely to add up over time and negatively influence the quality of teaching and feedback on assessments, research and supervision, community services and internship monitoring support.

At institutional level, AAB College notes in the SER that it benefits from over 97% of staff in full-time employment who demonstrate qualifications which align with the requirements of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). The SER identifies this as the highest stability rate in terms of the number of academic and permanent staff in higher education institutions in Kosovo. This situation is also visible at the level of the Faculty and the Program under review, with Faculty staff constituting a total number of 35 lecturers, of which 32 are full time and 3 are part-time (as per Table p.23 SER). The ER notes that this provides sufficient staff to conduct the program at a high level of expertise. Turn-over of staff is manageable and the program leadership have confirmed it does not impact negatively on the continuity of the program or the consistency of the student experience.

In response to a recommendation of the previous KAA evaluation report, a majority of staff members (close to 60%) is now noted to have completed PhDs by 2021. Some staff members have completed PhD studies at European institutions or beyond Europe, in fields of relevance for their allocated teaching, which allows for international experience to be brought back to Kosovo and, particularly, the College.

Staff have also indicated that they demonstrate professional expertise, having worked or currently working in roles such as translators or interpreters. This is an important feature of the staff body on the Program and it allows for the teaching experience to be enhanced considerably by sharing good practices and real-life experiences from the industry, highlighting the realities and challenges of the professional world and allowing students to form informed decisions about their career options. However, in this situation it can become more difficult to manage workload and identify any breaches of working hour conventions, as such professional engagements may be privately held and managed.

Staff performance is monitored continuously through e-Platform by the Dean's office. In every given year, there are also two performance evaluations by students and two performance evaluations by management staff, with the staff member being required to self-evaluate once every year. It is unclear to the ET how these multiple elements of appraisal come into one coherent system allowing the staff member to benefit, individually, from

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helpful input which can stimulate development. It is also unclear if individual development plans are drafted and how/if these may feed into the broader development directions of the Faculty, although the SER seems to suggest this is a plan for the future responsibilities under the Center for Professional Advancement and Innovation. From the documentation received, the approach to setting Faculty-wide developmental directions may appear more reactive than proactive, in response to the summary report of the evaluations.

There is a clear driver to develop teaching practices and learning materials, also by inclusion of research-based activities. This is connected with the opportunities for staff development organized at faculty level or in support of individual endeavors. As such, there are multiple trainings being offered to staff through the Center for Professional Advancement and Innovation. Staff have commented on the usefulness of the trainings and added value they bring to their academic profile. The trainings are non-compulsory, but are also not linked directly with staff performance. This has the risk to result in highly inconsistent staff development, especially where institutional drivers need to be accounted for. The College also offers internal grants for staff wishing to pursue individual development opportunities, e.g. participate in local and international scientific conferences and events.

Staff have clear responsibilities, as per their contractual agreements, for community engagement and consultations with students. The ET was presented with a number of interesting community engagement projects which have enrolled students as contributors. Both students and staff have spoken enthusiastically about these opportunities.

The Regulations of AAB are in accordance with Labour Law which sets the retirement age at 65 and stipulates that after this age staff can no longer retain the full-time employment status. No example of this nature was presented to the ET.



| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation. | X | |
| Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation. | X | |
| Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity. | X | |
| Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program. | X | |
| Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions. | X | |
| Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties. | X | |
| Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service. | X | |
| Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available | | X |
| Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials. | X | |
| Standard 3.10. Teachers retire at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers. | X | |



Compliance level: 90% Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends that the Program should recruit staff with main workload responsibilities based permanently in Ferizaj.*
- 2. The ET encourages the Program to consider streamline the components of it staff performance evaluation to promote a system which can allow for actions to be prioritised in alignment with Faculty objectives.*
- 3. The ET recommends that the Program should establish clear development directions at Faculty level and ensure that performance reviews and training opportunities are guided by strategic institutional aims.*
- 4. The ET encourages the Program to consider linking more clearly individual staff development with the appraisal process to ensure both individual and institutional development directions are relevantly accounted for.*
- 5. The ET recommends that the Program should employ more academic staff members to ensure that workload across all activity components, i.e. teaching, assessment, feedback, supervision, research, internships, community services, administrative/managerial etc, can be effectively delivered and is consistently of quality.*
- 6. The ET encourages the Program to consider, where appropriate, redistributing some of the responsibilities of academic staff towards administrative staff (e.g. on internships or community activities) to balance out the workload which will add up on academic staff members.*

2.4. Educational process content

With a view to undergoing the re-accreditation process, the curriculum has been revised by adding elective courses and merging and reorganizing the existing ones according to semesters and years of study. The SED confirms that changes are done at about 30% of the total program content, and include the addition of ECTS now allocated to the diploma thesis.

The Program does not require an entry exam in English or any demonstration of language competence on admission. This seems inconsistent with the expectation for students to



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complete their three year studies at B2-C1 (CEFR) which would suggest that there needs to be a level of good English on admission. During the review visit staff confirmed that this was not a problem and that students generally do join the program with a level of English acceptable for them to follow courses and progress towards graduation – no students have been known to want to start the Program with a view to learning English from zero. The College also indicated that generally students in Kosovo are receptive to English and learn it well in high-school, making an admission procedure less desirable, especially as AAB College is a private institution looking to cover its costs. For the Ferizaj campus, although it was recognised that the wider region is generally more socially and economically challenged, the Program management confirmed that the level of English on admission was still fairly high with no issues reported in relation to students being able to follow the courses successfully. The ET found that, whereas the program may have been fortunate to have students apply with good language knowledge, this does not exclude the risk posed to students by lack of a formal procedure to test the entry requirements set. As noted under Standard 5, the fact that students are not alerted to the language requirements and that following the placement test they may be required to put in extra effort to bring their language level higher up, suggests that on admission students may not know what is expected of them and that, when they do start engaging with the program, they may realise they cannot cope. The ET found that this could be an underlying cause for the high drop-out rates or the low progression rates. It also means that staff may be more inclined to make concessions on assessment arrangements, as highlighted in a separate section of this Standard.

The Program outlines learning outcomes which are directed towards developing knowledge, skills and competencies to be applied for a variety of future professions. As noted above at 2.1 there seems to be a relevant inclination towards problem-solving, critical analysis and practical application in the way learning outcomes are formulated, which would align with the Level 6 descriptors on the EQF. It is important that these outcomes are translated into assessment setting and marking practices. (see below for further details) Students have confirmed during the visit that learning outcomes are discussed with them at the beginning of the course and they understand how these are applied throughout the processes of teaching, learning and assessments.

The content proposed includes elements of interdisciplinarity and sees elective strands which could be followed by students depending on their desired career trajectory. There are, however, a few issues which the ET observed in relation to the logical sequencing and

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progression of courses proposed. It is also noted that some courses seem to suggest a very detailed approach, possibly not fully justified, in the context of more generic skills being the objective of the program. Benchmarking, as noted under 2.1, seems to not have been fully successful in guiding the Program towards fully viable changes which can support the market-oriented approach the Program is advocating. As such, the ET considers that the Program may wish to revisit the following items: semester 2 sees an elective of Victorian Literature (as an elective) while semester 4 sees Pre-victorian British literature as a compulsory course. It is unclear why the Program will have decided to focus on these two elements as representative for British literary education, when in contrast it tackles American literature much more broadly in a semester 5 compulsory course, rather than by literary era. It seems that a broader approach to British literature, also, could serve cultural objectives of the Program better. Semester 5 has Methodology and Techniques of Translation scheduled, with semester 4 showing Translation Practice. It may seem more relevant to first introduce the methods and techniques before these may be applied in practical settings, both courses being compulsory. Whereas the new elective courses are noted in the SED as focussing on culture and communication, literary and creative areas, as well as some more specialised options for those moving into professional translations, it must be observed that the German language elective strand, although very helpful in allowing students to add another foreign language, for those choosing German, limits the development of some very important skills which are offered in parallel to German, for example Public speaking, ICT or PR and communication, to name a few. The Program may be well advised to try and incorporate some of the fundamental skills which underpin language education in the main Program, as compulsory components, and arrange electives with a view to strands becoming more evident and students having relevant choices every semester. For example, semester 5 offers three options of which all are seemingly geared towards the more literary side of text production, with no option for specialized linkages as could be observed in such semesters where Hospitality, Law, ICT or PR are offered as options. Students should retain the liberty to choose, as some may want to test various options before they decide on a career direction, but the Program should create some clarity with electives demonstrating logical strands leading towards more evident career options (creative writer, specialized translator etc).

In regards electives, the ET considers that there could be some variation across the campuses which could highlight regional specificities and focus on industries which graduates may likely aim to enter. Thus, industry representatives from Ferizaj outlines some specific areas



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which are only present regionally, and these could form the basis of more specialized elective options, should the Program wish to give more prominence to campus-specific opportunities.

The ET appreciated the importance placed on maintaining a good level of standardised Albanian and the fact that the Program has it well embedded. This is particularly useful for such profession where interlinguistic and/or intercultural activities in focus.

A desirable development direction of the educational content relates to teacher training, should the government give permission in the future for the College to organise this. (see Recommendation in 2.1)

Teaching strategies are described in the Syllabi and are sufficiently varied to ensure a level of interaction commensurate with a Level 6 program. In the review visit, teachers have confirmed that they adjust their teaching depending on the group and that they use ICT integrated tools, as appropriate, to allow students to obtain digital skills and become familiarised with relevant technologies applicable to their careers.

The SED indicates that throughout their academic trajectories at AAB College, students are assessed in continuous form: this includes active participation, colloquia, projects, presentations and assignments in addition to the final evaluation. The syllabi indicate clearly the elements which compose the final mark. There are three important issues which need to be raised in relation to assessments. Firstly, some syllabi consider formative assessments as part of the grade. There is risk that this then loses a fully formative approach as students would still have the grade deducted if they perform poorly. Formative assessments should be completely no-stakes, just a learning opportunity for the student and, for the teacher, an opportunity to calibrate teaching and assessments for the summative evaluation. Secondly, there is a multitude of components which builds up the final assessment result. These may create a level of confusion for students, they may lead to over-assessment when all components of a student's course activities are marked and will not give opportunity for truly formative assessment options. Thirdly, unit exams (also referred to as summative) are identified in some of the Syllabi as determining/measuring how much a student has memorized, understood and can recall from the topics that have been treated in class. The Syllabi also indicate that a student can obtain a passing grade solely on completion of the unit exams/mid-terms and the formative elements, depending on the course, without the final exam. This is problematic for various reasons: 1. because this seems to suggest that a student

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can obtain a passing grade without needing to complete the sections of the course which follow the mid-term examination, and 2. because this means that a student can obtain a Level 6 qualification on assignments which are possibly set at a lower EQF level, meaning that they would have stopped at memorization, recall or replication actions and would not have progressed towards problem-based learning, critical analysis or autonomous learning. The ET was only presented with limited examples of quizzes, mid-term and final tests and observed that in the majority of the examples ‘describe’ or ‘explain’ tasks were presented. Without a full spectrum of assignments across all courses it is difficult to ascertain their full alignment with the learning outcomes and EQF level 6 descriptors. Students did, however, indicate that the in-course tests also offer the opportunity for analysis, critical thinking and/or problem-solving, rather than being multiple choice or memory quizzes alone and that teachers insist on developing these skills through their teaching approaches in class.

The ET was also presented with two examples of a graduation thesis; the ET found that one such example was from a master’s program (subsequently, the program indicated that this had been mistakenly submitted) and does not fully understand how the second could have been generated given that an evidence note describes that in the past 10 years there were no theses defended as a marker of level 6 graduation. There was only a course which highlighted research skills where students could have prepared an essay-based assignment. The ET heard that the course on research methodology gives students the option to either do a presentation or prepare the essay under the guidance of the course teacher. However, this does not constitute a summative evaluation at program level; it exclusively allows the course to be evaluated, and, of course, not all students will choose the option of the essay. Consequently, this evidence did not aid the ET in establishing how level 6 is achieved through a comprehensive summative piece which gives the student the opportunity to make a full demonstration of having achieved level 6 outcomes. As such, from the evidence submitted, the ET cannot ascertain how effective the graduation theses can be into the future for guaranteeing level 6 alignment. This situation, coupled with the issues highlighted in the course syllabi in relation to assessment, determines the ET to draw the conclusion that adjustments are necessary before it can be safely stated, from the documentation, that the program supports students in achieving level 6 outcomes. It is important for the Program to promote critical evaluation on given topics, across program activities of teaching, learning and assessment, by using relevant research methodologies and promoting research ethics, to ensure alignment with overall expectations for a Bachelor’s program. The ET considers that the introduction of the graduation theses planned for this cohort of students has the potential



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to contribute positively to demonstrate Bachelor's level objectives. The program may wish to establish explicit learning outcomes for the graduation thesis and to develop extensive guidelines for the supervision of the graduation theses to future BA supervisors, give that up to now only one staff member was involved with guiding research essays as part of the course mentioned above.

It is unclear to the ET who has oversight over assessment settings and who monitors for overall alignment with level descriptors. Assessment arrangements do not involve multiple assessors, i.e. second marking is not practiced, nor is any form of moderation. There is also no mechanism in place to recognise prior informal/non-formal learning and attribute curricular ECTS on the basis of such recognition. However, the Bachelor Studies Regulations do indicate the possibility of recognising formal learning for equivalency purposes.

Plagiarism features in the Syllabi in both reminders of policy requirements for students but also in aiming to stimulate preventive approaches. However, the ET notes one particular description: "Mid-term Test 20%: The mid-term exam presents students with three short pieces of text which students will have to paraphrase and summarize. The professor will evaluate how well have students managed to maintain the message of those texts while avoiding plagiarism." which seems to suggest that plagiarism is a matter of paraphrasing and summarising, rather than of responsible/ethical citation and referencing. This may not have been the intention of the statement, or it might be the result of translation, if syllabi have been translated for this KAA evaluation process; however, it is important to not create any level of confusion for students on what is and is not labelled as plagiarism and where similarity may create an allegation of plagiarism, condemnable by the academic regulations. (see also Recommendation under 2.1)

The SED notes five final exam evaluation periods during which students can sit for an exam. The communication of continuous and final assessment results is organized via the electronic platform of e-service (e-Professor). Students have indicated that, on the whole, they are satisfied with the feedback received and that they can understand from one exam to the next where they can improve and are provided with recommendation of how they can improve.

Grades can be appealed and will be formally looked into by the Dean's office. The procedure seems clearly defined and students have confirmed they are aware of it, but frequently they are satisfied with the justifications they get for their grades. However, students also indicated

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that there is the possibly to reject a grade (even a passing grade) to attempt to increase it. This combined with teachers accepting to re-run mid-terms exams or quizzes for the sake of allowing students to get better grades makes the robustness of the assessment system questionable. If there is a procedure for grade increase this should be applicable across all grade assessment components, which does not seem to be the case in practice. The ET could not gain full clarity on re-sit and grade increase mechanisms, beyond those possibly resulting from an appeal procedure. The practices of students being able to re-negotiate with staff to re-do exams if they were unsatisfied with the grades and that staff were very lenient on setting assessments and very generous in allocating the grades will contradict the usage of rubrics and other assessment consistency tools, and this is of concern to the ET. The ET also noted that there is discrepancy between this practice and the regulation on Bachelor Studies, which states that for grade improvement, students are evaluated only once and the grade with which the student is evaluated at the end remains in force (Article 38 of the Bachelor Studies Regulations).

There are agreements in place for students to undertake internships. Internships are described as incorporated as part of specific courses and are organised by sending the intern to a given company on a daily basis for a minimum of a one-month period. The SED indicates that the entire process is monitored by the faculty's coordinator for practical work as well as the professor. The ET was told that upon the completion of the internship, the intern is equipped with a document of successful completion, signed by both the company's supervising coordinator and the faculty's coordinator for student activities and practical work. However, the set-up of the program does not clearly distinguish internships as a separately credited (ECTS) activity and learning outcomes are not specifically formulated for this activity alone, nor does the assessment appear to be organised to incorporate internship experiences and their contribution to learning outcomes. Internships are quantified at 20% of the final grade for ESP and Translation Practice; however, it is not clear if the internship is assessed on its own and how it relates to the learning outcomes of these courses. For the Ferizaj campus specifically students seemed fairly confused about the internships and some reported that they could choose not to do the internship and lose the 20% if they decided to. Some of the industry representatives met by the ET were very strong on the market and expressed their full availability to engage for the purposes of internships. The Program should explore these opportunities to the maximum and ensure there is a consistent understanding of what the internships are meant to achieve and how they form part of the Program, as a compulsory or voluntary component.



| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and 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. | X | |
| Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development. | X | |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students. | X | |
| Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses. | X | |
| Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions. | | X |
| Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed. | | X |
| Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ECTS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organisations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program. | | X |
| Standard 4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organisations/practical training units. | X | |

Compliance level: (58%) Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- The ET encourages the Program to consider setting an admission requirement for English language competence or having a placement test, prior to admission, to identify students in need of additional training.*
- The ET recommends that the Program should apply further revisions to sequence, type and location of courses within the curriculum, including more evident elective strands geared towards the various careers the program aims to cater for.*



3. *The ET encourages the Program to consider some elements of curricular specificity which can relate to the regional opportunities of the Ferizaj campus.*
4. *The ET strongly recommends that the Program should revise the assessment approaches and the assignment tasks to align fully to Level 6 requirements, specifically, and, European practices, more generally.*
5. *The ET recommends that the Program should ensure the assessment policy is applied consistently and clarify the procedures for re-sits and increase of grades, outside of the appeal procedure, to maintain that the system remain robust and assessments are non-negotiable.*
6. *The ET recommends that the Program should make internship as a stand-alone curriculum component with ECTS, specific learning outcomes and clear assessment procedures.*
7. *The ET strongly recommends that the Program should ensure that in the future when graduation theses are introduced that they are set accordingly, with specific learning outcomes, and become a direct contributor to guaranteeing that the award of the qualification is at Level 6, Bachelor's.*
8. *The ET encourages the Program to develop guidelines for the supervision of BA theses and to train future supervisors to ensure consistency and comparability of the supervisory experience.*

2.5.Students

The Admission procedure to the Program at AAB College Ferizaj campus is regulated by the Regulation of Bachelor Studies. According to this regulation decision for admission and registration of new students for each academic Program is taken by the Senate of AAB College. Conditions for students' admissions to the Program are defined in the Regulation on BA Studies. All students enrolled in the study program should have completed secondary school and passed the Matura exam. The Bachelor Studies regulation of the AAB College also states that some Programs may determine specific entry requirements. However, the admissions page of AAB College does not include information on any specific entry requirements for the Program. During interviews it has also been mentioned that there are no placement tests employed by the Program for determining the level of English fluency of applicants. This raises concerns in relation to fairness of the admission process, and whether the admission process is not misleading in itself with students not being alerted before



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admission of the level they need to be at to be able to positively engage with their education and complete with the desired qualification. Therefore, students are admitted with different levels of competence of English and are only required to take a test after admission so that the program can determine their fluency in English. The ET heard that the results of this placement test inform how groups are set up and if Students are to be offered additional free language training, given that they scored low. This raises the risks of admission procedure lacking fairness since additional language training can affect students' workload and progression in the study Program. Students' workload will increase as they will need to put in extra effort to bring their language level higher up. And for the purpose of fairness of admission procedure the effort should be made to admit the applicants whose language competencies will allow them to finish the programme without substantive extra workload.

Difficulties related to progression in studies can also be contributing to the drop-out rates or extended time of studies for students at AAB College Ferizaj campus. The ET found the graduation rates of the Program to be alarming. According to the statistics provided by the faculty, majority of students (55 students out of 90) admitted to the Program in 2015-2016 academic year did not complete studies on time, that makes 56% of students admitted in cohort of 2015-2016. Program completion gap widened even more in cohort of admitted students in 2016-2017 where 62% of students (55 students out of 92) were not able to complete studies in time. The rates of progression in studies has become lowest in cohort of students admitted to Program in 2017-2018 academic year, in which only 34% of students (i.e. 31 out of 85) graduated in time. While the ET acknowledges that the reason for this can be social and financial background of students, the causes of low progression rates can also be inadequate background knowledge of applicants. Therefore, for the best interest of individual students and the Program, it is vital to have admission process that is fit-for-purpose. This could involve decreasing risks of admission of applicants to the Program whose background competencies would make it difficult for them to progress in studies in this Program. The faculty could also consider provision of free language training to school students before admissions that would enable them to reach the fluency in English that is sufficient for starting the studies in this Program. Another area of development in the admission procedure is ensuring transparency of selection criteria for admission. This is because currently it is not clear what are the selection criteria used by the faculty if the number of applicants exceeds the available number of places on the Program. Provision of information on this would make the process of admissions transparent. Further, according to the Bachelor Studies Regulation, candidates who are not admitted to the Program can file a

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written complaint to which the faculty should respond within a two days' period. To ensure clarity and transparency of admission procedure, it would be advisable that information on appeals policy and the process is made available online together with the general information on admissions.

BA studies regulation stipulates rules for recognising prior formal learning but this mainly relates to recognition of degree received in foreign country. The ET is aware that assessing and recognizing prior learning in formal, informal and non-formal settings is not yet formalised and recognised by the national authorities in Kosovo but on the other hand, 5.1 performance indicator of KAA Accreditation Manual states that - if necessary, an adequate selection process as well as recognition rules for foreign qualifications pursuant to the Lisbon Recognition Convention as well as qualifications obtained outside higher education institutions should be defined by higher education institutions in Kosovo. Currently, BA regulation of AAB College defines only the way of recognizing qualifications obtained in other countries and does not cover the cases of recognizing informal learning. For enhancing student-centeredness in the admission process the faculty could reflect on the ways of assessing what the candidate already knows (including knowledge acquired in informal/non-formal settings) that contributes to the qualification that he or she wishes to obtain. This could be particularly relevant to admission to Language Programs as languages can be learnt in informal settings too. This would enhance alignment of the admission procedures to the Program with the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, while complying with EHEA standards which put consideration of prior formal, non-formal and informal education of applicants on EU agenda for supporting social inclusion, LLL and upskilling.

According to the SER, the number of students in lecture groups does not exceed 80 and in seminar groups the maximum number of students is 30, which the ET noted as being in compliance with the Statute of AAB College; Article 56, paragraph 4 of the Statute defines that study groups should not exceed the maximum number of 80 students per lecture and 40 for practical seminars. The Statute also contains that for individual programs it is important that individual criteria are applied in respect of the specificity of the program. For the BA program under evaluation, the specificity dictates that the practical component prevails, and in this respect, students need to have the benefit of smaller groups, intensified assistance and opportunities for individual interactions (in class and outside of class) to be able to progress with the development of their practical skills, and, overall, to meet the learning outcomes. Additionally, the ET observed that the Statute does not directly consider the ratio between

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students and staff in calibrating groups and the involvement required of staff in class and on activities outside of class (like assessments, feedback, consultations, guidance etc) which can lead to increased workload of staff and thus raise risks of impeding the quality of teaching and learning experiences for students and their individual possibilities to develop. From the financial plan of the programme received, the ET noted that the faculty plans to have a total number of 300 students in this BA programme at the Ferizaj branch from the next academic year, while according to the Ferizaj branch financial plan, the faculty aims to employ only 4 full-time and 3 part-time academic staff members for 2022-2023 academic year meaning, that there will be one staff member for approximately 50 students. The ET takes into consideration that the same staff members are also involved in the delivery of the programme in two other branches of the college, including at MA level too and some of them deliver additional language classes to students whose knowledge of English is not sufficient. This according to the ET increases the workload of the staff and raises the risks in relation to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in the programme. Consequently, while evaluating dimensioning of groups, the ET considered implications of the planned student staff ratio and the fact of employment and contributions of staff across three branches of the college which results in increase of their workload and can directly affect the quality of teaching and learning experiences of students in the programme. The program has indicated that the group dimensioning should be evaluated also by consideration of drop-out and progression rates, as when these are factored into planning the group sizes diminish and maximum numbers are never reached. The ET does not consider this approach as being reasonable on the student experience, as it seems to suggest that the program is reliant on drop-outs and students not progressing to ensure smaller group sizes which the ET considers would go against ethical and sustainable planning and delivery. It could also be interpreted to suggest that mechanisms for supporting students would not be applied as efficiently as the program may have capacity to, because drop-outs are counted on to calibrate groups. Indeed, the ET observed that there is a high drop-out rate in the programme. In 2015-2016 academic year drop-out rate was 56%, in 2016-2017 - 62% and in 2017-2018 academic year - 66%. The faculty noted that the reason of drop-out rates was mainly inability of students to pay tuition fees. But there have been no reports produced or any other evidence provided to the ET on the processes in place for collecting reliable data on student progression and analysis of causes of drop-out rates. The faculty could also consider reflecting on links between the staff workload and students drop-out rates, since the cause of the drop-out rate besides financial difficulties can also be the inability of staff to appropriately address students' needs considering existing group dimensioning practices. Therefore, it could be useful for the

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faculty to analyse causes of drop-out rates and review the dimensioning of students groups by observing drop-out patterns, and to test if which may also be linked to high workload of staff.

The ET had access to several examples of feedback given to students that allow them to identify their gaps. The faculty offers students to re-take exams at most 5 times that is considered by the faculty as a form of academic support for students. But considering that students can also retake exams to improve the grade, it means that the exam retake does not necessarily mean it is functioning as an academic support mechanism. Academic support mechanisms have to be particularly relevant to students who experience problems and challenges in terms of academic achievement within the course. Academic tutoring, mentoring, creating small learning communities are just a few examples of academic support mechanisms that the faculty could consider to implement for the programme. Besides provision of academic support, students need to be provided counselling and guidance services in terms of other problems, too. This may for example involve psychological problems which affect academic achievements of students and even can be contributing to drop-out rates. So, the aim of counselling services should be supporting students in overcoming these problems in an appropriate manner. The ET did not have evidence of the program's efficient monitoring and analysis of the situations where support may be required, nor was there any evidence of how the links between non-academic issues and academic performance are being considered by the program management.

According to BA studies regulation of AAB College, Students are supposed to receive feedback on their performance in 7 days; this combined with the possibility of students to retake exams as many times as possible and considering the student-staff ratio, may be increasing the workload of staff thus challenging provision of prompt and meaningful feedback to students. Meaningful feedback is expected to contain encouragement and motivation of the student, pointing out areas of development, possibly re-explaining key concepts and/or providing further reading and resources for study. Thus, the faculty needs to consider the ways of providing meaningful feedback to students that among other factors may involve reconsidering student-staff ratio and exams retake policy (see Recommendation in 2.4). It has also been observed that assignments given in the syllabi do not explain for students which learning outcomes are assessed by specific assignments. Building the feedback for students on the links between assessment methods and learning outcomes would enhance the structure and increase meaningfulness of feedback for students.



The results obtained by the students throughout the study are included in the academic records. Students can receive academic records in English too that is done automatically through the system. The samples of academic records provided to the ET did not involve information on internships undertaken by students. It would be advisable to include information on internship and short information on internship organization in the academic records. The practice of certifying academic records could further be enhanced by introduction of digital portfolios system which involve formal academic and extracurricular accomplishments of students. This could be interesting for future employers and can assist students and graduates in branding themselves as freelancers in the field of translation.

The faculty has purchased Turnitin license that will allow to determine similarities between texts submitted by students with other texts. Compulsory course of Academic Writing is also going to introduce concepts of academic integrity to students that will be contributing to ensuring originality of work submitted by students. But by the time of the site visit full implementation of use of Turnitin that would guarantee looking into originality of students submitted work in all courses was not possible to be evidenced.

Bachelor Studies Regulation sets out that students have the right to appeal against the decision related to their admission, as well as grades that they receive during their studies. Information on this is distributed to students during orientation week and E-system. Bachelor Studies Regulation also describes rules of students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study Programs.

The syllabi of the Program involve contact information of professors for students which students can use for consultation and advice.

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Compliance</i> | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| 5.1 There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students. | | X |



| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Standard 5.2. All students enrolled in the study program possess a high school graduation diploma or other equivalent document of study, according to MEST requirements | X | |
| Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process | | X |
| Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments 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 |
| 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 are 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: Partially compliant (64 %)

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ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends that the Program should provide publicly available information on general and specific admission requirements (e.g. placement test requirements, or required levels of English fluency) for the Program ;*
2. *The ET recommends that the Program should ensure fitness-for-purpose of admission procedure to decrease risks of admission of applicants to the Program whose background may make it difficult for them to progress in studies in this Program;*
3. *The ET recommends that the Program should ensure provision of publicly available information on selection criteria for the Program along with information on appeals procedure;*
4. *The ET encourages the Program to consider introducing ways of assessing and recognizing prior learning acquired in formal, informal and non-formal settings;*
5. *The ET recommends that the Program should reflect on the workload of the staff considering student-staff ratio (particularly in language courses) and its implications for ensuring effectiveness and interaction in teaching and learning in the Program ;*
6. *The ET recommends that the Program should introduce support mechanisms particularly relevant to students who experience problems and challenges in terms of academic achievement within individual courses.*
7. *The ET recommends that the Program should implement consistent procedures for ensuring that works submitted by students are original.*
8. *The ET recommends that the Program should monitor drop-out rates and analyse reasons for drop-out to allow the Program to establish mechanisms to identify early on and prevent drop-out risks*

2.6. Research

The College has more recently shifted strategic objectives towards research ambitions. This is visible in actions being taken and support offered for various units and key academic staff. Sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.

Staff have confirmed that their workloads have needed to be re-balanced towards research aims, but there is support received and staff believe workloads are reasonable and expectations for involvement in research and scholarly activities are well clarified. Staff evaluation and promotion criteria take account of research output.



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There are research policies with set out requirements for research behavior, performance and outputs.

Academics have more recently intensified their research activities, with the support of the Faculty. The ET was presented with a list of publications and CVs of staff which demonstrate their preoccupations in the fields that they are responsible also for teaching. The lists show publications in speciality magazines or publishing houses, with presentations also being delivered at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars inside the country and abroad. Some members of staff actively work on policy initiatives where they offer their expertise to the government or other agencies based in Kosovo.

The Faculty monitors the research production of individual staff members and require that at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication per year in achieved in an interval of three years. The stated affiliation is also monitored, with staff asked to publish by noting their affiliation of institution where they hold a full-time contract.

The ET heard some examples of research being discussed in the classroom and/or incorporated from one year to the next in the syllabi. It was also noted that some research is actively organized with students, who have collaborated actively to ensure the success of a variety of research projects. However, such opportunities are mainly present in Prishtina and do not always extend to the Ferizaj campus, with students noting that they would like more exposure and opportunity for research-gearred activities including possible continuations at postgraduate level or the organization of research-intensive events at the Ferizaj campus.

The Code of Ethics for Scientific Research sets out at article 22 which stipulates that agreements should be drafted for all research projects indicating aspects of financial management, intellectual property protection, copyright, respect for creative originality (avoidance of plagiarism), ensuring the publication and dissemination of research results, prior ethical approval, and protection of personal data. The ET were not presented with such agreements.



| Standard | Compliance | |
|--|------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives. | X | |
| Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria. | X | |
| Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program. | X | |
| Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity. | X | |
| Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad. | X | |
| Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation. | X | |
| Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years. | X | |
| Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff. | X | |
| Standard 6.9. 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. | X | |



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| Standard 6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students. | | X |
| Standard 6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities. | | X |

Compliance level: (81%) Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends that the Program should involve students at the Ferizaj campus more in research-based activities and organise research events for better exposure of students to research activities to stimulate research preoccupations.*
- 2. The ET encourages the Program to consider developing master's level opportunities or strengthening the possibilities for graduates at Ferizaj to attend master's level education for continuation of studies.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

AAB College possesses modern infrastructure and equipment that guarantees long-term implementation of the study Program . The ET familiarized itself with the Ferizaj campus infrastructure trough the video [link](#). All premises, classrooms, laboratories, software equipment and libraries are owned by AAB that also guarantees long-term implementation of the Program.

The financial plan of the study program for the next three years does not ensure financial sustainability of the Program. According to the financial plan of the Program, the faculty considers to increase revenues through gradual increase of overall number of students admitted to the Program at Ferizaj campus from 100 students in 2022-2023 to 300 students during 2024-2027. While the number of students is planned to be tripled the number of academic and part-time staff is planned to change from 7 in 2022-2023 to 17 during 2024-2027. However, it should be noted that the financial plan envisages hiring only one administrative staff member to support the learning experience of overall number of 300 students in the programme for the next 3 years, at Ferizaj branch, which is clearly not plausible to be sufficient for completing administrative functions needed for serving 300



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students. The ET has been informed that AAB College received its institutional re-accreditation for five years in parallel with working on the current program review report, and that the institutional accreditation has been granted for all branches of AAB College including the one in Ferizaj, with no major issues highlighted in respect financial resourcing. While this may be applicable from an institutional level, the ET is of the opinion that the institutional perspective on financial resources cannot always give a detailed picture of financial sustainability of each study programme implemented by the specific branch. Considering that the programme review has to be evidence-based the ET considered the financial plan of the study programme provided by the faculty and found that this does not allow for it to be evaluated as financially sustainable for the next three years. The ET finds that the exponential increase planned for the branch campus is not commensurate with the actions proposed for academic and administrative development in support of such increase. This is particularly visible in the plans proposed for future administrative services.

AAB College has also informed the ET that AAB has had its financial statements audited, approved and legitimized by Kosovo's legal authorities and that the official institutions of Kosovo have confirmed the financial security of AAB College which ensures the financial stability of the separate study programs. But the ET has been only provided BDO Independent Auditors Report on financial standing of AAB College as of 2018, which aimed to obtain assurance about whether the financial statements of the institution as a whole were free from material misstatement. While performing this kind of external financial audit provides credibility of AAB College to the public, it is still not possible to evaluate financial sustainability of the programme for the next 3 years based on the outcomes of this audit performed in 2018.

AAB College offers sufficient number of rooms along with library resources for teaching and learning. Majority of core study literature indicated in the syllabi represent recently published resources that are available to students from AAB College library. Online study resources can only be accessed on-campus and the institution could consider enabling access to these resources off-campus too. However, it is noteworthy that the overall satisfaction of students with the learning environment at AAB College Ferizaj campus has been very high according to the data gathered from students' survey by the Quality Assurance Office of Ferizaj branch.

The premises of AAB College in Ferizaj is not fully adapted to students with special needs that has been named as one of the areas of improvement in Ferizaj by the leadership of AAB

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College. According to the SER there are flat entrances to the ground floor and to restrooms for people with special needs but it was not possible for the ET to evidence this in the video of AAB College Ferizaj branch provided by the institution.

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



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| <p>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <p>a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.</p> | X | |
| <p>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</p> | | X |

Compliance level: (66%) Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends that the Program should reconsider the number of administrative staff to be hired for the Program and consequently, costs related to it to ensure adequate administrative support of the delivery of the Program, should the expansion, as planned, be possible;*
2. *The ET recommends that the Program should ensure access to library resources for students and staff off-campus;*
3. *The ET recommends that the Program should ensure adaptation of the infrastructure so that students with special needs can have access across the facilities.*



3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Overall, the program caters for the specific situation in Kosovo, specifically the Ferizaj region, with an environment for study which is appreciated by staff, students and employers. The program is showing increasing focus on development and improvement, with efforts having been made for curricular redesign and engagement with a variety of stakeholders. Quality assurance processes seem to be gaining in robustness but still demonstrate some variability. Research has been given a strong strategic direction and staff and students are incrementally aligning with a relevant response in this area.

However, there are areas which require attention and would need to be addressed in the immediate future. Importantly, the staff cover three campuses and, given the high numbers of students admitted, this increases the risk of being unable to provide a positive student experience and one which allows for sufficient attention and assistance for students to be able to achieve their qualification. This was most evident at the Ferizaj campus, where few staff have permanent positions and the majority travel regularly for teaching engagements, with less time to support students out-of-class. Issues have also been raised in relation to the formulation of learning outcomes, the sequence and relevance of some disciplines on the program and their categorisation as obligatory or elective, and the organisation of assessments.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program **BA Program in English Language** offered by AAB College at the Ferizaj campus is *Partially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends that the Program **not be accredited** for future enrolments of students and that the issues raised are addressed promptly for the current cohorts.



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Expert Team

Chair

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
|  | Prof. habil. dr. Anca Luminita Greere | 06 June 2022 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|
|  | Lali Giorgidze | 06 June 2022 |
| (Signature) | (Print Name) | (Date) |

Member

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