

AAB COLLEGE
FACULTY OF ECONOMY

**MA PROGRAM IN MARKETING AND BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT**

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

28th Apr 2022, Rijeka, Croatia

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 08th April 2022

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saša Aksentijević (Chair)*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Accreditation and Evaluation*
- *Ilijane Ademaj Ahmeti, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *[1] Self-Evaluation Report, AAB College, MA Program in Marketing and Business Management, Prishtina, January 2022,*
- *[2] Syllabi of the study programme, Year 1*
 - *[2a] Personal selling and negotiation course*
 - *[2b] Quality Management Systems course*
 - *[2c] Scientific research methodology course*
 - *[2d] Value chain management (VCM) and supply chain management (SCM) course*
 - *[2e] Applied market research models course*
 - *[2f] B2B Marketing course*
 - *[2g] Brand management and public relations course*
 - *[2h] Business environment and legal aspects course*
 - *[2i] Green marketing and social responsibility course*
 - *[2j] International Marketing and Globalization course*
 - *[2k] Leadership and business management course*
 - *[2l] Managerial Economics course*
- *[3] Syllabi of the study programme, Year 2*
 - *[3a] Strategic Management course*
 - *[3b] Business Data Analysis and Artificial Intelligence course*
 - *[3c] Digital Marketing and Social Media course*
 - *[3d] Management of Strategic Marketing course*
 - *[3e] Marketing Innovation course*

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- [3f] Seminar for the Master topics.doc
- [4] Documentation of the study programme academic staff
 - [4a] Appendix 1 - Scientific papers of academic staff
 - [4b] Appendix 2 - List of conferences of the Faculty of Economics academic staff
 - [4c] Appendix 3 - List of activities organised by the Faculty of Economics 2015-2020
 - [4d] Appendix 5 - CVs for the academic staff - Faculty of Economics
- [5] Web page “AAB College”, <https://aab-edu.net/en/>, accessed on the 30th March 2022.
- [6] Web Page “AAB College – Dean”, <https://aab-edu.net/en/faculties/economics/dean/>, accessed on the 30th March 2022.
- [7] Youtube video titled “AAB Campus Tour - Premises of the Faculty of Economics”, uploaded on 21th March 2022.

After preliminary inquiry into the delivered documentation, a need arose to request additional documentation on the 3rd April 2022. The AAB College has delivered additional documentation on the 7th April 2022., forwarded to the expert by the KAA, that was used to gain additional insight into the programme’s operations, as follows:

- [8] Form for the assessment of the teaching staff by the Dean
- [9] Student performance report
- [10] Skills Mismatch in the labour market study
- [11] Regulations for Master Studies
- [12] AAB College Strategic Plan 2022 2026
- [13] QAO Action Plan
- [14] QAO Working Plan 2022
- [15] Regulation on sistematization AAB College
- [16] Evaluation results with the stakeholders
 - [16a] Questionnaire with academic staff 2019
 - [16b] Questionnaire with academic staff 2022
 - [16c] Questionnaire with students about the MA MBM program 2022
 - [16d] Survey data from the employers 2019
 - [16e] Survey data from the graduates 2021
 - [16f] Survey data from the relevant industry 2019
- [17] Other assessments by QAO
 - [17a] QAO Report for administration and student support services 2019 FE
 - [17b] Report about the graduates skills Faculty of Economy
 - [17c] Revision process of the student questionnaires with the involvement of students
- [18] Marketing and Business Management program description
 - [18a] Minutes 15 October 2021

- [18b] Minutes 29.06.2021
- [18c] Report about the rationale of changes for the MBM program
- [18d] Report based on data from the student satisfaction survey with academic staff
- [18e] Report from QAO about the academic staff survey
- [19] Reports for the evaluation of academic staff
 - [19a] Report based on data from the student satisfaction survey with academic staff
 - [19b] Report from QAO about the academic staff survey

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *Standards and performance indicators outlined in the Kosovo Accreditation Agency's Accreditation Manual, 2021.*
- *The European Qualifications Framework*
- *The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *National Qualifications Framework, Kosovo National Qualification Authority, Prishtina, 2020.*

1.2. Site visit schedule

Programme Re-accreditation Procedure at AAB College	
Programme:	Marketing and Business Management, MA
Online site visit on:	April 8, 2022
Expert Team:	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sasa Aksentijevic
Coordinators of the KAA:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arianit Krsniqi, KAA Officer 2. Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:45	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programmes are integrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shemsedin Vehapi, Vice Rector for Teaching - Medain Hashani, Dean of the Faculty - Kosovare Ukshini, Vice Dean of the Faculty
10:50 – 11:40	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Furtuna Mehmeti, Head of QA - Roberta Bajrami, QA Coordinator at the Faculty level - Nusret Bilallaj, Head of IT Office - Albulena Ramadani, Head of Administration
11:40 – 12:20	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
12:20 – 13:20	Meeting with the heads of the study programme: <i>Marketing and Business Management, MA</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ali Ismajli 2. Agron Mustafa 3. Ilir Rexhepi
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shaip Bytyci - Besime Ziberi - Donat Rexha - Pranvera Dalloshi - Albulena Kastrati - Florije Miftari
14:15 – 14:55	Meeting with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Krenar Geci - Ardit Krasniqi - Mevlyde Peci-Shala - Leonita Dobrunaj - Labinot Krasniqi - Driton Rrahmani
15:00 – 15:40	Meeting with graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arton Lushaku - Shqipdon Neziraj - Afrim Kuleta - Krenare Shahini - Ardiana Mehmeti - Rendita Hashani
15:45 – 16:25	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agron Dida - Besarb Blakaj - Melita Ymeraga - Arian Zeka - Arbnor Gashi - Yll Çollaku
16:25 – 16:30	Internal meeting of KAA staff and the expert	
16:30 – 16:40	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The information in this subchapter of the evaluation report was gathered during preparatory work for the reaccreditation on the 30th March 2022. using AAB College's Web pages on Internet address <https://aab-edu.net/en/faculties/economics/>, and the Dean's word on address <https://aab-edu.net/en/faculties/economics/dean/>.

This is the third reaccreditation process that is taking place. Initial accreditation was valid for school years between 2012. and 2015. while the next one was for the period between 2015. and 2020.

According to [5], AAB College is the first non-public institution of higher education in Kosovo established in early 2000s when new socio-economic and cultural circumstances appeared for Kosovo citizen. In its beginnings, our institution has offered different study programs in the field of Art and Mass Communication continuously expanded with study programs in other areas and thus becoming an academic centre in the country and the region.

AAB College is also the largest investment in Kosovo in the field of education. At Pristina campus, 6 objects are located with purpose to practice educational activities, equipped with modern facilities for creative teaching and contemporary technology. Campus is also equipped with sports and recreation center enabling the development of social and sports life of college students. AAB College has built two buildings in Ferizaj and Gjakova enabling that its branches have the same academic standards and similar infrastructure as the central campus in Pristina has.

Since 2010. AAB College has been a regular member of the Magna Charta Universitatum thereby ensuring recognition of university values and expanding opportunities for building strong cooperation relations when more than 750 universities that have signed this document.

AAB College is comprised of the following faculties:

Public Administration	Economics	Physical Culture and Sports	Social Sciences	Radiology
Architecture	English Language	Mass Communication	Psychology	Dentistry
Arts	Law	Computer Sciences	Nursing	

Derived from [6], AAB Faculty of Economics, has a primary purpose to develop students' competencies linking economics, business, management and information technology. The priority is quality teaching and research that can be made possible only through implementation of an effective teacher-student relation, access to the new technology, on-line

resources, and support for the student. The programs aim not only to repair the deficiencies inherited from the primary and secondary education, but also to prepare students for a competitive global market.

The Faculty of Economy operates since 2005/06 with the first generation at the Bachelor level, while with the Master level it started from 2009/10, initially only on the campus in Prishtina, while later all bachelor programs were offered on two other campuses in Gjakova and Ferizaj.

Study programs of the AAB Faculty of Economics are:

Bachelor	Master
Banking, Finance and Accounting	Banking and Finance
Marketing and Business Administration	<i>Marketing and Business Management</i>
Management and Informatics	Management
	Accounting and Auditing

In the focus of this reaccreditation report is Master study program in *Marketing and Business Management* in duration of four (4) semesters.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Program evaluation consists of separate subchapters dedicated to evaluation of various elements.

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission of the Faculty of Economy is to provide students with a favourable environment to achieve their career and employment goals, with special emphasis on personality development through quality education in all areas of Economics and specializations in Banking, Finance, Accounting, Auditing, Management, Marketing and Business Management. The Faculty of Economy is fully focused on providing teaching methods in modern and practical forms, and in accordance with developments and processes at the national and international markets, so that our students can be competitive in the labour market in Kosovo, the region and beyond.

Overall institutional mission statement of AAB College is as follows:

“AAB organizes student catered and diversified studies, engages in quality basic and applied research, and partners with community and industry to provide transformational learning experiences enabling development of the full potential of the students, staff, social and economic partners and the society”.

The mission of the Marketing and Business Management (MA) study program is *“to bring students closer to the demands of the labour market and the nature of business through the process of teaching and research and thus enabling them to transform their professional competence in the context of development of entrepreneurial, analytical, strategic, research and creative skills in the field of Marketing and Business Management”.*

The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement.

The design of this study program was preceded by a comprehensive process of consultation and review with staff, students and professional organizations in the field. This process was carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Quality Assurance Guideline and other internal regulations.

The program was approved by the Teaching Council of the Faculty of Economy and the Senate, after taking into account the suggestions of the Quality Assurance Office and after evaluating the program and syllabi, holding meetings with students, suggestions of external experts, etc. Data were also analysed that address the structure of employees and the need for skills that are lacking in current employees, surveys through questionnaires done with SMEs and data from interviews with private companies, public companies and banks.

For the design of this study program, an analysis of the labour market is taken into account, the research project entitled "Skills Mismatch in the labour market: the future of work from the perspective of enterprises in the case of Kosovo" funded by AAB College and published as a scientific paper¹ [10] which presents the needs and requirements for skills in the prism of entrepreneurship in the case of Kosovo. For the realization of this research, 3 municipalities of Kosovo were taken as a sample, which are: the Capital of Kosovo-Municipality of Prishtina, Municipality of Ferizaj and Municipality of Gjakova. According to the findings of the study², the profiles needed are as follows: **economist-manager is needed by 18.6%, 13.5% — marketers**, 10.1% — technical engineers, **9.3% — commercialists**, 7.2% — certificate accountants, 5.08% — financiers, 4.6% — promoters, 4.2% — certified auditors, and 27.1% choose others³. The findings from this study show that SME's in the case of the Republic of Kosovo face difficulties in providing employees with the right skills for a particular job.

Within the didactic concept, the teaching methods in this study program include theoretical lectures, seminars and tutorials, individual scientific work, extracurricular lectures by guest lecturers, active participation in debates and scientific conferences, etc. The program provides students with a favourable and diverse quality study environment to achieve specific knowledge and competencies in order to have a successful career in the labour market or even further academic advancement.

The organization of the teaching process at the Master level is done in accordance with the Regulation on Master Studies [11], revised and supplemented in year 2021., which supports the AAB's Statute . The Regulation on Master Studies is a publicly available document of AAB which is equally applicable to all academic units of AAB College and obliges students, academic and administrative staff in its application.

The Regulation on Master Studies aims to:

- determine the method of teaching, research and artistic work at AAB College
- determine the teaching and learning methodology
- determine the student's assessment forms
- determine the examination forms and arrangements
- determine the conditions for registering the academic year
- determine re-examination issues, and
- determine other rules which are related to the student body.

¹ Ziberi, B., Rexha, D., & Ukshini, K. (2021). Skills mismatch in the labor market: The future of work from the viewpoint of enterprises in case of Kosovo. *Journal of Governance & Regulation*, 10(3), 104–116.

² Ibidem, p.8.

³ Bold letters denote positions that could be covered by the graduates of the evaluated programme.

Ethical conduct in research, teaching and assessment, and ethical conduct in all academic and administrative activities is defined and sanctioned under the Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics in Scientific Research which have also been revised in 2021. During the meeting with the students and graduates, it was confirmed that they are aware of the fact that their work is checked for ethical conduct and anti-plagiarism measures are in place, including automatic analysis using a dedicated software. These regulations stipulate that the academic staff, students and administrative staff of the Faculty of Economy must behave in accordance with contemporary standards of higher education. According to these regulations, all parties must act in accordance with academic freedom by respecting the diversity of opinions, ideas and methods, as well as to stimulate the development of critical, free and creative thinking. Moreover, all academic and administrative employees should be characterized by honesty when carrying out their activity, as well as be guided by the principles of scientific and artistic truth.

Policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibilities regarding program management and distribution are reviewed at least once every three years. Changes are made when necessary, in certain circumstances.

AAB policies and regulations change by the decision of the Senate in the following cases:

- based on the reviews of the Strategic Plan, Statute or other governing / strategic documents;
- based on the review of the national legislation (Law on Higher Education and / or Administrative Instructions (AI) on Accreditation);
- based on various evaluations which are carried out by the Quality Assurance Office or the management structures of the college;
- in accordance with the new circumstances emerged in situations of force majeure, such as the case of the COVID 19 pandemic.

In 2021, AAB has undergone a process of evaluating and reviewing the Statute and other regulations in order to update and supplement them according to the needs and requirements of the entire academic community. The review process has ensured the full involvement of all members of the AAB academic community and has been subject to approvals at various levels, ranging from the core working group, broad working groups, faculty teaching councils, the Studies Committee, and finally of the AAB Senate. During preliminary review and the audit meeting, a number of documents were collected that support these statements, like QAO Action Plan [13], QAO Working Plan 2022 and QAO Report for administration and student support services [14].

Administration of the Faculty and the programme have demonstrated competence in the management of the program and have expressed continuous requirements from the external supporters to continue providing this programme to students, that is allegedly and subjectively among top such programs in Kosovo. There seems to be a high regard of the administration expressed also by the external stakeholders present at the meeting (Industrial

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Board President and representatives of employers). Administration has expressed its subjective opinion that this program is financially sustainable and viable mid-term.

Judging from the enclosed course syllabi, there seems to exist a particularly strong emphasis on analytic research, statistics and econometrics (as main marketing tools), which is in line with the stated mission of the study program. However, the program is offered in its entirety in Albanian language and there is little experience exchange with other faculties and students of similar programs.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Undertake actions to internationalize this course by introducing ability to take some courses, or courses of a certain semester (especially third semester) in English language. At the moment and in the recent past, maybe there was no sufficient interest from international students, but such situation might be caused by the fact that the course is held in entirety in Albanian language. It is advised that internationalisation efforts become a part of the next revision of the strategic plan, to yield results during the next accreditation validity period.*
- 2. In line with the previous recommendation, seriously engage in preparations to enhance student exchange program that is at the moment modest, and involvement in programs like Erasmus+. Despite current problems with issuing visas, they could be somewhat alleviated by timely planning and incoming attraction of foreign students.*
- 3. Establish and foster twinning relation with one or two faculties in the region having similar programme to facilitate student and researche(r) exchange.*
- 4. The Faculty was forced due to pandemic situation, and especially in 2020., to transform its operations to hybrid on premise-remote (virtual) teaching process. Seize the opportunity and already adopted modern IT technologies to evaluate possibility to offer MA Program in Marketing and Business Management as a fully virtual course respecting national legislation and rules in that regard, thus aiming to increase foreign students' admission from surrounding Albanian language speaking areas (south of Serbia – Preshevo Valley, North Macedonia, Greece, Albania, and similar).*

2.2. Quality management

The Faculty of Economy has managed to create a comprehensive collaborative environment with the above parties and thus ensures that all staff members participate in their own evaluation and quality improvement processes, by holding regular meetings with academic staff where syllabi, learning outcomes, assessment forms, assessment results as well as overall student performance are discussed. The academic staff is also involved in the self-assessment processes through questionnaires conducted by the Quality Assurance Office through which they report how much they have met their goals and objectives for the respective semester in relation to the teaching process, how much they have done research - scientific work during the academic year, and how satisfied they are with the opportunities offered by the College for their overall professional development. FE has also conducted a double evaluation and self-evaluation, which is done by the head of the department and the staff member; the academic staff member is able to see at the same time the evaluation done by the head of the department.

During the review meeting that included also the presence of the Head of QA and the QA Coordinator at the Faculty Level, quality procedures at the university were checked including information flow and office organization and there is sufficient evidence to believe that the Faculty has recognized importance of the quality function for its functioning and continuous improvement. Establishment of the quality-centric system is “*work in progress*”, and the administration is aware of its importance for successful outcomes.

In addition to the periodic quality assessment process that occurs on the occasion of accreditation, the management of AAB College has introduced a number of other internal mechanisms which are integrated in the regular planning processes aimed at evaluating and improving the quality of the study programs. The central Quality Assurance Office and the quality coordinators at the Faculty level work on the basis of semester work plans. These include:

1. conducting questionnaires with students about the teaching process and administrative services after the end of each semester;
2. conducting questionnaires with the academic staff once a year;
3. conducting questionnaires with industry and employers once every two years;
4. conducting questionnaires with graduates once every two years;
5. conducting evaluations of students' practical work once a year;
6. organizing ad hoc meetings with students (focus groups) to address their requests and needs;
7. drafting reports on the basis of the data generated from the above questionnaires;
8. standardization and harmonization of curricula / syllabi;
9. monitoring the implementation of syllabi;

10. monitoring the online platform - respectively monitoring the work of the academic staff regarding the publication of electronic materials on the online platforms;
11. drafting semester reports after the end of the semester;
12. trainings for colleagues in the field of curriculum, teaching methodology, etc;
13. monitoring student success reports;
14. conducting internal evaluation for accreditation purposes (if applicable);
15. participation in weekly meetings with academic staff organized by the Dean;
16. other works which arise from the created circumstances or from the requirements of the management of the college.

The Quality Assurance Office also plans and participates in focus group meetings with all of the above relevant stakeholders such as students, academic staff, graduates, and employers as qualitative data collection tool. Based on the inputs discussed during these meetings, the office drafts recommendations which are sent to the Faculty management to be taken into account when drafting and reviewing the study curricula.

At FE, quality assurance processes are carried out through questionnaires and / or focus groups. As a part of reaccreditation review, a number of sample documents were requested and provided as insight into these claims, like Questionnaire with academic staff 2019 [16a],

Questionnaire with academic staff 2022 [16b], Questionnaire with students about the MA MBM program [2022], Revision process of the student questionnaires with the involvement of students [17c] and similar.

The evaluation processes carried out by the Quality Assurance Office are ensured to be regular, periodic, and with a special and clear focus. Depending on the type of evaluation, the Office formulates questionnaires and provides information of the evaluation process. For example, an assessment may include measuring student satisfaction with the College in general, including counselling, courses offered, quality of teaching, and workload. Alternatively, an assessment may include measuring the achievement of a number of competencies envisaged by the program. In addition, the number of students and their transition from one year to the next, gender ratio, grades, etc. are analysed. In this way, the data obtained from the evaluation questionnaires can be compared with the data from the student files and the trends can be followed on a yearly basis. The evaluation may also include the overall functioning of the College in terms of the functioning of management, administration and other services. Some taken samples of such processes are Report about the graduates' skills Faculty of Economy [17b], Minutes 15 October 2021 [18a], Minutes 29.06.2021 [18b].

All of the above evaluation processes aim to ensure that the minimum quality criteria are met and that continuous improvement of the quality of study programs is achieved. The minimum criteria are defined under the Quality Assurance Regulation of AAB College and the national

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legislation on Quality Assurance and Accreditation, while continuous improvement is achieved based on the objectives set out under the Strategic Plan of the AAB which aims to enhance the quality system based on the best European practices that correspond with AAB College's quality assurance system as well. These are defined through QAO Action Plan [13] and QAO Working Plan 2022 [14].

In recent years, AAB College has expanded the scope of quality assurance, where in addition to questionnaires with students, now it conducts questionnaires with academic staff, administrative staff, employers / industry and graduates. Both the evaluation of the academic staff and that of the administrative staff are conducted once a year, while student evaluation is conducted every semester, respectively twice within the academic year. Last year the Quality Assurance Office conducted a questionnaire with graduates as well as a questionnaire with employers / industry. In addition to such evaluation tools through questionnaires, the above actors are also involved in other forms of quality assurance such as through participation in working groups, participation in ad hoc councils and commissions of AAB College, participation in decision-making structures and levels of academic units and the College on the whole.

During the review, AAB College has acquainted the expert with the fact that for all of the above, they use an IT system on the Intranet used to gather and process the data. Also, the students are compelled to provide the feedback, as they cannot proceed with the process (for example, admission to the next year), before they enter required feedback data.

Efforts to ensure minimum criteria and continuous improvement are fully supported by the management of AAB College in financial and material terms in order to achieve the strategic objectives set out under the strategic plan. The results of internal evaluations and reports prepared by the Quality Assurance Office serve as a guide for decision-making and strategic planning of AAB College and the improvement of study programs. The data in these reports are compiled in the form of a summary and sent to the management of the Faculty and College along with recommendations, which serve as a basis for improving the study programs, student services, teaching and learning, etc. Providing additional hours of lectures and exercises, reducing or increasing the number of students in groups, offering foreign language courses, reviewing syllabuses and adapting them, are just some of the most common examples that the Faculty of Economy has changed / improved as a result of ongoing evaluations. This is evidenced by the support documentation that was used for the reaccreditation review.

More substantial evaluations are carried out when drafting the self-evaluation report for the accreditation process which occur at least once within five years. These evaluations are carried out in the light of preliminary evaluation recommendations by international accreditation experts, depending on the timeframes when these recommendations are intended to be achieved.

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Regarding the review and improvement of its own quality assurance processes, the Quality Assurance Office ensures that all quality assurance and evaluation processes are reviewed based on the circumstances created within the faculty and based on the changing needs and requirements of the academic community. It is clear from the Quality function organization that there is a Quality office of the College above the Faculty level that coordinates all functions of the lower hierarchical quality function.

At the moment, the quality knowledge transfer is done as an intra-team effort, where higher instances transfer knowledge to lower instances and quality department employees, but there is no in place continuous external education for the quality team.

Some changes that have been implemented until 2021 are:

- the Regulation on Quality Assurance has been revised;
- the Quality Assurance Manual has been revised;
- an action plan for quality assurance has been drafted;
- the composition of the Central Commission for Quality Assurance has been updated;
- the online learning questionnaire was revised and administered at a time when learning was adapted to pandemic conditions;
- a training was organized with international experts on the basics of internal quality assurance;
- the student questionnaire for the evaluation of the professors, courses and administrative services based on the inputs collected by the students has been revised.

These changes were mostly requested by the previous reaccreditation team's suggestions.

IT Office lead by its Head provide IT support to all Faculty's and program's activities and have their own development team, that manages the majority of IT changes and implementations. Head of IT has expressed subjective opinion that he is sufficiently supported by the management for the majority of initiatives. Major decision the IT Office faces is whether to undertake internal development or outsource projects or their parts to external companies.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Even if not mandatory at the moment, it is suggested to consider adoption of a set of KPIs from the KAA Accreditation Manual for internal use, to enhance internal processes and ensure compliance. These should be measured at half-year intervals.*
- 2. Continuous learning on the methods of quality assurance should be introduced for all employees involved in the quality and the head of IT. Methods of delivery might include internal knowledge transfer, self-learning and external education. At least heads of quality functions and their deputies/senior offices should be able to select a professional external quality course to attend on bi-annual basis (for example, ISO 9001 or ISO 27001 Lead Auditor and similar).*
- 3. Suggested increase of participation of quality staff in professional events: conferences, workshops and speeches to keep up to date with the latest development in the area of quality in education.*
- 4. The IT Office is advised to further foster relations to the management of the Faculty and the College as a partner in overall development and transformation by adopting a portfolio concept in solutions provided to the Faculty and the programme (evaluation on an annual basis of solutions that will be abandoned mid-term and securing funding for the new solutions to be adopted in the same period).*
- 5. In order to increase adoption and approval by the Faculty and the College for the new solutions, the IT Office should use lease-or-buy analysis (in IT sense, propose several solutions that allow to chose between on-premises, cloud or SaaS solutions, leveraging ownership and cost). Increase the number of open-source solutions used in IT portfolio, in case there is sufficient knowledge to exploit such solutions internally.*
- 6. Undertake initial quality effort to enhance information privacy and security (confidentiality, integrity and availability) of the most sensitive data by identifying the scope of the information to protect (usually students' private information), IT assets, their vulnerabilities, measures and processes to protect them. Introduce basic information protection rules, communicate them clearly to all stakeholders and use in daily work with sensitive data. Acquire additional knowledge on data privacy and share it with all internal and external stakeholders (circular e-mails, workshop, posts on Intranet).*
- 7. For particularly difficult topics to obtain quality related feedback from different stakeholders, identify them exactly and establish a modest annual gamification budget item that would attract gathering feedback. For example, a "lottery" can be made where a USB external disk, USB pen drives, SIM card recharge or AAB College promotional material (caps, T-Shirts, key fobs) or meal vouchers may be assigned to "winners" drafted from a pool of those that provided feedback. Organize "lottery" and inform stakeholders timely to engage them.*

2.3. Academic staff

The employment procedures for the academic staff at the Faculty of Economy are in compliance with the Law on Labour, the Statute as well as the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation of HEIs and other internal regulations. Employed academic staff – full – time or part time – is provided with an employment contract as well as a detailed job description. The job description is provided under the employment contract, respectively under Article 4 “Duties and Responsibilities” as well as under the Regulation for Systematization of Jobs [15]. The job description refers to academic work, scientific / research work as well as administrative work and accurately defines the duties of the academic staff in relation to students, the Faculty of Economy and AAB College.

The employment of academic staff is done in full compliance with the Law on Labour, the Statute of AAB College and the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation of HEIs. The Administrative Instruction on Accreditation stipulates that an HEI for each group of students and for every 60 ECTS must employ at least one full time professor who holds a PhD degree, as well as the nostrification in case he/she has completed his/her studies abroad.

The teaching load for one member of the academic staff in the MA Program in Marketing and Business Administration is on average 8-10 teaching hours throughout the program. Of the regular staff members, none of them is engaged more than in another institution, and thus meet the criteria of the AI for Accreditation as well as the Accreditation Manual regarding the regular employment relationship.

This requirement of the Accreditation Manual is confirmed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) through the e-Accreditation system, in which all members of the staff in Kosovo are declared and upon a verification process, are formally approved by KAA. In accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation and the KAA Manual, the Faculty of Economy for the MA program in Marketing and Business Management employs a total of 3 fulltime professors who hold a PhD degree from the field of marketing and business management, who are assigned as responsible persons of the study program. However, the Faculty of Economy exceeds the requirements of the AI on Accreditation as the total number of professors employed is 62 academic staff, of which 39 of them are full time and 23 are part time professors.

For each group of students and for each 60 ECTS credits in the study program, respectively for 120 ECTS of the MA in Marketing and Business Management, the program has employed more than one full-time professor with the academic degree of Doctor of Science in the field of marketing and business management, as follows:

1. Responsible person 1: prof. ass. dr. Ali Ismajli
2. Responsible person 2: dr. sc. Agron Mustafa

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3. Responsible person 3: prof. ass. dr. Ilir Rexhepi

Regarding the professional and academic development of FE staff, AAB College provides trainings which are mostly related to teaching methods, scientific research, trainings regarding quality assurance and curriculum development, other professional and academic trainings through cooperation agreements with European universities, etc. Young researchers and lecturers are equally encouraged to pursue their doctoral studies as they can preserve their teaching responsibilities at AAB College. The Faculty has enclosed a list of training organized in recent years for the academic staff, as evidenced by the Self Evaluation Report [1]¹. However, considering the time period covered, the organized training for the staff was relatively modest.

Regarding the responsibilities of the academic staff, as stated above, the academic staff receives a description of their duties and responsibilities after signing the contract which is drafted in accordance with the Regulation on Systematization of Jobs [15]. According to the tasks, the staff is obliged to work related to the teaching process, research, engagement with students and engagement in the community.

Regarding student consultations, each professor is obliged to hold consultations with students 2 hours a week, respectively 1 hour per week in physical form and at least 1 hour per week consultations with students through the blog option (discussion) of the e-professor platform or give answers by email. Also, for each study program at FE, including the master, a professor is appointed for a group as Academic Advisor, who in tutorial form holds additional classes at a set time once a week with students. During discussion with current and graduated students of the program, they have expressed high levels of satisfaction on how the professors and assistants are available to them for consultations and inquiries, including phone consultations, Intranet system and email. Furthermore, assigned mentors for the final thesis are seemingly always available to students of the final semester during individual final research, which is a very positive trait.

In accordance with the internal quality assurance system, as described above, after the end of each semester the academic staff is subject to evaluation by the students. The evaluation is done electronically each semester anonymously and the results are generated through a database from the Central Quality Assurance Office, which are then submitted to each staff member individually. The Quality Assurance Office prepares reports for the evaluations of the academic staff which contain the shortcomings identified by the students during the academic process and include the recommendations which are related to the improvement of teaching, evaluation, etc. [18d] Another assessment is made by the dean's office. The Dean completes the evaluation questionnaire for staff based on 6 performance factors. The staff member then completes the same questionnaire and makes a self-assessment of the same

¹ p. 36

performance factors by looking at the dean's assessment of it, as evidenced by collected documents [18e], [19], [19a] and [19b].

On the basis of such recommendations, activities are organized to advance the teaching process and, in some cases, include the organization of additional training for academic staff who have not had a very positive evaluation from students or management. These trainings consist of separate modules and the topics that are discussed are: critical thinking in higher education, blended learning, student assessment context, feedback and assessment, learning outcomes and relationship with methodology. During review audit, a question was raised by the expert is there an example of a professor or assistant whose work has not been highly graded, but seemingly, there was no such an example.

In accordance with the Law on Labour, the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation and the AAB Statute, regular staff is considered any member who has not reached the retirement age of 65 Each member of the academic staff who reaches the retirement age, respectively the age of 65, changes the status of engagement, from full time professor to part time professor. No persons over the retirement age that would not adhere to this standard were identified during preparation of the audit review or during the meetings.

The load of 8 to 10 hours of teaching activities on the average is quite high, especially on assistants and younger professors who typically engage in other administrative activities of the program and the Faculty and it can somewhat hinder research activities, even though interviewed teaching staff of the program expresses that they can manage these activities, especially in recent time where remote working became more of a norm. The involvement of the teaching staff in ongoing research project with other universities and especially those abroad is also very limited. One reason for this might be ongoing visa regime where professors explained their experience that sometimes they get visa appointment (for example, to attend research of conference activities in Greece) in year 2023. which is a major obstacle for international cooperation despite modern remote presence tools available.

One professor has expressed ongoing interest and his personal activity aimed towards applying for an international project.

There is an evidence of outreach and workshops conducted to attract wider audience but consulting to local companies, associations and public administration seem to be marginal to non existent revenue stream for the Faculty. This fact is explained by the existence of international consulting companies and lack of culture of addressing academic institutions for such services. There is an involvement of the Faculty in creation of the strategy for the Municipality of Ferizaj.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Short to mid-term develop and introduce a simple, small but measurable and meaningful set of KPIs related to academic staff performance (number of publications, number of mentorships, number of research project applications, number of grants attracted, number of partnership/memberships attracted, number of outreach activities initiated/executed etc.) and include them as an additional sheet to annual evaluation of the academic staff employee.*
2. *Increase the Faculty's revenue stream from establishing precedent and attracting consulting services to the public sector, companies and investors, even if pro bono in its initial stages. This is considered to be crucial for the widening of the networking between the Faculty and the external stakeholders.*
3. *Establish a rewarding scheme for external consulting revenue sharing that includes the College, the Faculty, the party who attracted the consulting assignment, the team members, and investment in program improvements.*
4. *Prior to the next academic year of the program, re-evaluate workload of the academic staff attempting to lower teaching workload for 10-15 % for the most affected identified teaching staff by re-assigning the workload or introducing additional resources and therefore freeing up the time for additional research activities, work on projects, and outreach activities.*

2.4. Educational process content

The study program in Marketing and Business Management (MA) is a program which through the process of teaching and research aims to bring students closer to the demands of the labour market and the nature of business (relevant industry) by enabling them to transform professional competence in the context of developing entrepreneurial, analytical, strategic, research and creative skills in the field of Marketing and Business Management. In this regard, the way of organizing the study program is such that it offers students lectures and exercises within the college as well as at the same time professional practice in industry. Generally, the program is designed in such a way that it contains some main subjects that are of the profession, general subjects that include the field of economics, subjects of the scientific research field and specific subjects that include the field of marketing and business management, then some elective subjects, which help the student to choose courses according to his interest in the field of marketing and business management

The learning outcomes for this study program are formulated based on the approach adopted by the NQF which includes knowledge, skills as well as broader competencies. Learning outcomes reflect the indicators of Level 7 NQF / KEK, as they provide the provision of practical and theoretical knowledge, the development of student skills for independent research work within the field of business management and marketing, collection and interpretation of relevant data to come up with judgments as well as apply their knowledge to problem solving within the field of marketing and business management. In accordance with the requirements of the NQF, the MA Marketing and Business Management program, in addition to providing students with the basis for progress in further studies, provides them also with employment after graduation

Upon successful completion of the MA Marketing and Business Management program, students will acquire the following knowledge, skills and competencies:

Knowledge

- Identify the right strategies at an advanced level of marketing by taking information from the external and internal environment of an organization;
- Explain the important terminology, facts, concepts, principles, analytical techniques and theories used in the field of marketing and business management;
- Introduce theories of innovation as a source and tool for implementing strategic change within an organization;
- Describe in an advanced way the roles of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing;
- Draw conclusions on problematic and complex issues within international business, innovation and entrepreneurship and disseminate findings to academia and businesses;

- Illustrate how the international trade system, economic, political-legal and cultural environments in a foreign country influence a company's international marketing decisions.

Skills

- Demonstrate skills in using the critical thinking approach and develops problem-solving strategies for important and complex issues related to marketing operation and business management;
- Communicate effectively with specialized audiences through the drafting of concise well researched (reasoned), formatted and professionally structured reports and presents reports clearly and effectively from the field of marketing and business management;
- Use information technology to apply market research methods through various statistical software and make strategic decisions based on empirical results;
- Draft the idea of the Master thesis by applying the standards of scientific research and respecting the internal ethical and professional regulations for master studies of the College;
- Demonstrates a critical awareness of marketing innovations and green marketing and the possibilities of their application in local and international businesses.

Competences

- Address complex ethical and professional issues and make decisions on issues that are not addressed by current professional codes or practices due to rapid global change;
- Organize teamwork with professional responsibility, creative initiative and originality by effectively contributing to team-based activities;
- Apply advanced knowledge in marketing and business management in the practical work environment by developing creative strategies for selling products in the national and international market;
- Apply marketing methods and procedures in market research, branding and marketing communication;
- Continuously improve learning skills that allow them to be autonomous in updating and developing their knowledge and competencies related to the fields of marketing and business management in various professional contexts.

Detailed syllabi have been delivered and studied for each subject of the MA program in Marketing and Business Management which include learning outcomes, teaching units for each week, assessment forms, teaching methodology, academic rules, as well as the proposed literature for each subject.

The study program MA Marketing and Business Management is offered in Albanian language; therefore, students are not required to undergo any entry exam in English language.

Students are acquainted with the learning outcomes of each course on the first day of the semester. The syllabi are distributed to students through the E-service platform a week before the beginning of the semester so that students manage to read in advance the content of the module. The purpose of discussing the syllabus and the learning outcomes with students in advance is to familiarize them with the topics that will be discussed during the semester, provide an opportunity for student feedback regarding any possible changes to the syllabus as well as prepare students to work on what awaits them at the end of the module, namely the evaluation forms.

The main didactic approach is the implementation of the student-centered teaching concept, learning to foster reflective thinking, and research-based teaching. Theoretical lectures stimulate interactive work and apply techniques to promote active / participatory learning. At the Master level, much attention is paid to the tasks of developing skills for independent university work in order to develop logical thinking, creativity and the development of a research approach in the process of acquiring teaching materials. It uses active learning,

Learning outcomes are assessed using written exams and practical skills assessment exams, project work, research work, assignments and presentations. Assessment is designed in such a way that it creates preconditions to help students make connections between the knowledge, skills and competencies that they develop throughout the program.

The various methods used to assess student performance were formulated to assess the following: literature search and review, data processing, application of research methods, computer knowledge, ability to contextualize and evaluate, presentation skills and professionalism, and collaboration and teamwork: written exams, written reports, case study, oral representation, reflective report, other.

As concerning the analysis of student achievements, after the period of exams ends, students' success rate for each course is presented in form of a report [9]. The report is filled in accordance with the data gathered via the E-service platform. These data showcase: the number of students who have applied to enter the exam, the number of students who have taken the exam, the number of students who have passed the exam, as well as the number of those who failed. Afterwards, these reports are sent to the Vice-Rector for Teaching's Office, who in cooperation with the Dean of Faculty, analyses and evaluates them. In case the achievements of students are not satisfactory or adequate, the Regulation on Master Studies provides for actions such as: organizing additional hours of lectures and exercises, reducing the number of students in groups, providing additional preparatory hours before the exam, additional individual consultations with assistants

Regarding practical work in the MA program. Marketing and Business Management, the internship is held within the course Digital Marketing and Social Media. Details of the form

of organization are presented in the syllabus of this course. The internship for all study programs at AAB College is managed by the Career Office, which in accordance with the internal regulations of the college, in cooperation with the Dean, as well as in cooperation with the institutions with which the college cooperates, organizes, supervises and assists various student activities, such as internships. The Faculty of Economy has so far reached a large number of cooperation agreements with various companies [1]¹. Ongoing and graduated students have acknowledged that there is (was) up to two-week internship as a part of the course.

While it is very positive that there is a pronounced insistence on quantitative methodology, statistics and econometrics as a main tool of the marketing research, there is a lack of the latest digital and online marketing content including social networks. Both students and graduates have expressed the wish to hear more about these topics and have marked them as crucial for their further education and work. Methodology used for the final work thesis (case report) includes statistics but there is little content on the general research methodology, despite assurances that these topics are covered during bachelor studies (even if so, some students might have come from other universities and have inadequate knowledge on the topic).

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Include the “refresher” of the general research methodology as at least three lectures in some of the existing courses (research writing, general scientific methodology – induction, deduction, abstraction, concretization, compilation, empirical method, history of science etc.)*
2. *Innovate the marketing related courses by inclusion of the contemporary digital technologies including but not limited to new and upcoming social networks like Tik Tok, platforms like Metaverse and marketing of fintech products. Dedicate increased number of course hours to these technologies and their commercial exploitation.*
3. *Evaluate formally the possibility to extract internship from content of one course and formulate internship as a separate course with assigned structure and mentorship of the teaching staff, including a brief report at the end of the internship by the external company, public sector or association providing internship, and ending with ECTS point assignment. In case of regulatory feasibility, adopt such approach.*

¹ p. 36

2.5. Students

The Statute stipulates that the decision for admission and registration of new students for each academic year must be taken by the Senate, as the highest academic body. In June or July of the respective year (depending on the decision for accreditation by KAA), AAB announces the competition for the admission of new students of Master level. In the published competition, the criteria for admission of new students are set, which are determined based on the Statute of AAB College, but also based on the legal regulations established by MEST and KAA. The admission criteria and procedures for new students are consistent and apply fairly to all students regardless of their background.

Students enrolled in level VII of the NQF, respectively at the Master level, must have completed a bachelor's degree with 180 ECTS, possess the diploma, while those who have obtained a degree outside Kosovo, must have an equivalent nostrification decision in Kosovo (by NARIC) and possess personal documentation, such as school certificates, identity cards, etc.

Lectures do not exceed more than 80 students per group, whereas exercises are organized with no more than 40 students. According to the insight provided by [7], the College and a Faculty as its constituent, operates a very modern campus with a number of teaching venues and laboratories, so it is reasonable to expect that overcrowding of the lectures and exercises is not to be expected.

Formative assessment is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures conducted by teaching staff during the learning process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment. Formative evaluation is done throughout the implementation of the program and takes the form of evaluation by active participation in lectures and active work, presentations, projects, seminars and others. Summative assessment is used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period—typically at the end of a semester or year. Each professor ensures that students are constantly informed about their performance in class and in mid-term/final exams.

The scheduling of exams is set by the Central Administration of the College. However, in cases where students have requests for extension of deadlines or change of exam date, within the provisions of the regulation, these requests are always approved. In discussion with the students and graduates, it has come up that the administration has always been accommodating towards such requests and personal issues that might impede the study process. The communication with the Faculty/College has been described as excellent by all the participants of the program and those who have completed it.

At the end of each exam period, an evaluation report for students' performance is generated in the form of a summary through the E-service platform. This type of report contains statistical information about the number of students present in the exam, the percentage of those who passed the exam as well as of those who failed.

AAB has put in place policies to ensure that students supply original work and avoid plagiarism. A cooperation agreement with "Turnitin" has been agreed and the software to detect plagiarism and duplicate content in students' work has been purchased. The students present in the audit review meeting are aware of this fact. The academic staff has so far held two trainings for use of the Turnitin system in which case they have been trained in the use of the software. Faculty of Economy applies the Code of Ethics which stipulate that the student can be reported to the Ethics Committee for cases of plagiarism/copying.

The rights and obligations of students are set out under the Regulation on Studies as well as under the Statute of AAB College [11], and both documents are public and transparent to the student and other parties. According to the Regulation on Studies, students are obliged to know in detail the rules of the College and be aware of their observance otherwise any action which runs counter to them will be considered a violation on their part.

Regarding the transfer of studies, according to the Statute and the Administrative Instruction at the level of MEST, there are two deadlines for the transfer of students either from other HEIs or within AAB College. The transfer of students to the program Marketing and Business Management is done through the Transfer Office which in cooperation with the quality coordinator within the Faculty verifies the files of each candidate. Each candidate who undergoes the transfer process is firstly issued a transfer decision. This decision notifies them on how many of the courses (ECTS) that they have already taken at the other institution have been accepted and the number of additional courses they need to take in order to transfer at the Faculty. According to the Statute of AAB College, transfer candidates must spend at least one academic year at AAB College prior to their graduation.

The academic staff at AAB in addition to the lecture schedule is accessible to students during counselling hours. Each member of the academic staff has two hours per week, specified for individual meetings / counselling with the student. In cases where the requests for meetings are high, the academic staff is obliged to hold even more consultations per week with students, either physically or through electronic platforms.

Roughly half of the students of the program is already employed, as evidenced by the present student panel. Drop out rate is assessed during conversation at 18-22% while year-to-year progress rate is assessed at around 80%. Main reasons given for the drop out are moving out of the country and therefore cancelling the studies or attained promotion inside the company that results in increased workload and "achieved goal" for the students, so they do not think that they will gain more from completing already started education.

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There is in existence AAB College Alumni association that gathers together all bachelor and master studies graduates and promotes networking.

Study field is properly defined, according to 04 Erasmus Subject Area Codes (ESAC)¹.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. While there is ALUMNI association in existence, it seems that there is more networking achieved by personal connections than ALUMNI efforts. Strengthen the ALUMNI role by annual and regular conferences, workshops and meetings aimed towards public sector, private sector and associations (non profit sector). Envisage mid term and long-term engagement plans including lectures by recognized experts.*
- 2. Facilitate assistance to the best students who are struggling financially to complete education if already started, by means of grants given by perspective employers covering part of the tuition fee, or loans acquired at interest rates more favourable than commercial ones, that can be negotiated by the College. Establish this type of cooperation using existing Industrial Board.*
- 3. Evaluate the possibility of starting a financial endowment that would support the identified brightest students in need in several categories (e.g., new students of the program, students progressing to the final year).*
- 4. Increase the level of conversational English language of the students by using informal teaching means also at the MA level (for example, vouchers for quick-online courses or summer school English course topic).*

¹ AEN Online, <http://www.aen-online.com/aen/file/complutense%20area%20codes.pdf> (accessed on the 10th of April 2022.)

2.6. Research

AAB has established a scientific development plan as well as various policies and regulations that have resulted in an increase of research activities at an institutional scale. Recently, a new Regulation for Scientific Research has been formulated, and a new research grant adopted. In accordance with the state Administrative Regulation of 2018, the international grant structures at AAB College promote the publication of scientific research in journals indexed through the recognized databases of Web of Science (Clarivate) and Scopus. An institutional fund for science and research has been put in place. This fund awards yearly grants for the ten best multidisciplinary scientific research projects that include the participation of at least two MA level students and diploma theses.

At an individual level, scientific research is contractually obligated for the regular staff members at AAB College as well as linked to the academic advancement of the personnel. The employment contracts stipulate that each member of the academic staff is obliged to produce at least one scientific paper within a year and to engage in other scientific projects which aim to increase the quality of research at AAB College. The participation of the staff in activities and projects of research-scientific character is taken into account in the process of staff advancement regulated by the Regulation on the election, re-election and advancement of the academic staff.

Research at AAB includes the following categories:

- Thematic research work of the faculty that is concluded with the annual scientific conferences with international partners;
- Research work developed by Research Centres and Faculties, and / or in collaboration with other partners;
- Individual research work of the academic staff.

The members of the academic staff engaged in the study program MA Marketing and Business Management in the academic part, have published at least one scientific publication in the relevant field of study.

Regarding the scientific journals where the academic staff makes scientific publications, AAB College respects the Principles of Recognition of International Research Journals¹. The platforms and journals recognized under this AI that are equivalent to a coefficient of 1 are Web of Science, SCOPUS, EBSCO, WorldCat, DOAJ. Therefore, the publications of the academic staff are mainly made on these platforms due to the process of academic promotion. Only academic staff who meet the criteria of scientific publications according to this AI of MEST is promoted in the process of advancement of academic staff organized by AAB College. The regular academic staff within the Faculty of Economy is obliged to publish

¹ Administrative Instruction of MEST No. 01/2018

works on behalf of AAB College. In addition, according to the contract, the academic staff is obliged to promote AAB College in all its accounts on social media identifying AAB College as their primary employer

The research and scientific publication that has been developed by the academic staff through a project, is applied in the syllabus and serves for the realization of a topic within the courses. Issues related to intellectual property among others are provided under the contract of academic staff, Article 14, which stipulates that intellectual property rights in any work related to or created by the employee during the employment relationship (during working hours) and in the workplace, is counted as the work of the employer and is given the full

Regarding the involvement of students in research work, there have been cases where there have been collaborations between professors and students of the Faculty of Economics for research and joint scientific work. One such example was the International Student Conference organised on 25, 26 and 27 April 2018. Furthermore, it seems that students are also sometimes involved in collecting information for the scientific research purposes.

In open discussion during review audit with the expert, it has been confirmed that there have been cases that students have published scientific papers together with the assistants and professors.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Establish the possibility that the best final thesis (final project) papers of the students are expanded, and published, at least in the AAB College's "Thesis" journal as joint scientific research between the student (first author) and the professor, enticing the student for even further education and tentative PhD level.*
- 2. Ensure and oversee that students, if involved in the research and data collection, are properly attributed in adequate section of the final report paper and thus recognized as a part of the research effort.*
- 3. There is a large emphasis on research activities perceived mostly through publishing of scientific articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science indices, to fulfil regulatory requirements. However, there is very little to no involvement in international and regional research projects and delivering research on-demand, either as participant in such projects or being a lead partner – namely, cross-border and regional projects like Interreg, Horizon and similar projects. The researchers should engage more in such activities, initially as project partners, and then as active participants in acquisition of available project funding. Publishing scientific work is just an addition to these ground-level research activities.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

A significant part of the services and communication between students - academic staff - Dean's Office is developed through the electronic platform e-Student. Students and academic staff receive most of the services through this platform such as:

- Students have access to AAB internal regulations, syllabi, teaching materials, grades and continuous assessments; generate transcripts of records, have access to the financial balance sheet, submit exams in electronic form, upload assignments required by staff; engage in online debates with academic staff and student colleagues, as well as conduct online consultations with the professor;
- The academic staff has access to the internal regulations of AAB, uploads syllabi for students, uploads teaching materials for students, uploads their CV, uploads grades and points of continuous assessment of students, etc.

During the review audit meetings, and directly accessing Web Page of the AAB College and the Faculty of Economy, it has been checked that these systems are really in place and in use by named stakeholders.

AAB College as the largest non-public higher education institution in the country generates sufficient revenue through the above sources and ensures financial sustainability of the study program. AAB has offices and human resources dedicated to financial planning and management.

The premises of AAB College are an investment and property of the founders of the College, therefore as an institution there is no obligation towards third parties. All premises, classrooms, laboratories, software equipment and libraries are owned by AAB and not rented. The premises are, as evidenced also by the enclosed video, world-class level equipped with adequate furniture, different spaces, venues and IT services. [7]

AAB College facilities have lecture halls, laboratories, student corners, quiet reading rooms, cafeteria, sports halls, etc. Regarding the accommodation of groups of students, the AAB premises are sufficient for the number of students of the MA program in Marketing and Business Management. The campus in Prishtina has large has classrooms, small classrooms, amphitheatres, laboratories, special spaces for students, offices for deans and management, sanitary units and recreational spaces for students, etc. In AAB has added about 10,000 m² additional spaces which is available to the teaching process of the Faculty of Economy.

The Faculty of Economy provides students and all users with conditions for independent study on the Library premises. On the campus of Prishtina, there are 2 libraries, which offer

excellent conditions for study and sufficient materials and spaces to meet the needs of students, academic staff and other library users. Like all academic libraries, the AAB College library has support services for all users, including Referral Desks. The Reading Room has enough reading space, separated from each other so as not to disturb other readers in the library and is open every working day from morning to evening. The number of seats in reading rooms and the number of seats in group work rooms corresponds to 10% of the total number of students for the marketing and business management programs. Also, the teaching materials cover at least 50% of the subjects and / or disciplines which are foreseen within the study curriculum. Students have expressed the need for more titles on the topics covered by the programme in the Albanian language.

The facility has flat entrances, elevators, special toilets, emergency exits and all relevant infrastructure for students with special needs. All these enable the accommodation of a number of students who need special assistance and care in order to have inclusion of all students.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Perform internal audit of information security of the IT system, identify weak points, and implement solutions to address them.*
- 2. Inform the students and external stakeholders of increased awareness of the management and the IT Office about need for information security by creation of the Information Security Policy as a part of the internal quality management system and inform all internal and external stakeholders about the need to respect its requirements.*
- 3. Perform a check if newly issued literature from the program syllabi exists in Albanian language and if so, acquire it.*

3. FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The expert would like to comment that both AAB College and the Faculty of Economy seem to be well recognized institutions within the local community and the program MA in Marketing and Business Management seems to be well differentiated against other similar programs of the economic disciplines and the bachelor programs. There seems to be a pronounced demand for the graduates of this program, as evidenced by the Industrial Board, and the representatives of the employers who hold in high regard graduates from this institution and program and AAB College on the whole. Taking insight into the results of the previous accreditation, it comes to immediate attention that previous findings have been addressed in entirety. Considering content of the SER [1], additionally delivered documents upon request and findings gathered during the discussion with various stakeholders during review audit, the expert would like to note the following level of compliance with KAA reaccreditation requirements:

Standard	Compliance Level
1. Mission, objectives and administration	Fully compliant
2. Quality management	Substantially compliant
3. Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
4. Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
5. Students	Fully compliant
6. Research	Substantially compliant
7. Infrastructure and resources	Fully compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

In conclusion, the Expert considers that the MA in Marketing and Business Management Bachelor of study programme offered by AAB College is **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation Manual and, therefore, recommends accrediting the above study programme for a duration of **three years with 200 students** to be enrolled to the programme.

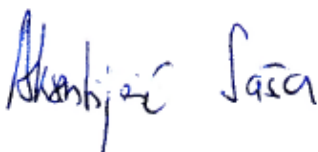
However, the following recommendations need to be considered in relation to programmes re-accreditation:

1. Establish timely contacts and formalize procedures for research(er) and student exchange with similar programs in the region and outside.
2. Enable continuous learning for the quality department staff including external certification and courses in order to acquire additional knowledge in the field that will be applicable to the programme's needs.
3. Establish KPI-based measuring and not only goal-oriented measurement as a part of ongoing quality assurance activities.

4. Empower IT Office to be a productive programme's and Faculty's digital transformation facilitator, by using modern IT Governance methodology, financial analysis during investment, cost decision-making and adoption of IT portfolio approach.
5. Evaluation of work and professional growth of the teaching staff should be also based on a newly developed set of KPIs that also involve attraction of new project cooperation, prepared applications, attracted grants and outreach initiatives, and not only teaching and administrative workload and scientific paper drafting.
6. It is critical for the development of the researchers to attract commercial revenue stream from the enterprises, public sector and associations, despite lack of internal culture to contact faculties to provide such services. Part of such revenue can be diverted towards programme's enhancements.
7. Lower the workload of the teaching staff in order to make space for more time for scientific research and project drafting/envisaging/management.
8. Innovate the syllabus by including modern social media marketing, social networks and marketing of fintech products.
9. Evaluate the regulatory possibility of structuring and requiring an internship as one separate course.
10. Increase the influence of the College's Alumni and use it to set up scheme and possibly, endowment for financially disadvantaged excellent students of the programme, especially for the final year.
11. Professors and assistants should be focused on innovations and research projects in the region and wider area and try to enter them either as leading partners or project partners.

Expert Team

Member



28.04.2022.

(Signature)

Saša Aksentijević

(Date)