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AAB College
Physical Education and Sports, BA
(Re Accreditation)

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

18th March 2022, online



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit:

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Dr. Chris Richter*
- *Delia Lupescu (ex-Gologan), Student*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer*
- *Flamur Abazaj, KAA Officer*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Academic staf CV Faculty of Physycal Culture and Sport.pdf*
- *Activites of the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports for the last 5 years.pdf*
- *List of scientific publucations of the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports.pdf*
- *SER BA Physical Culture and Sports 2022.pdf*
- *SyllabusesEnglish Bachelor - Phycial Culture and Sport.docx*

Additionally requested information for the Report:

- *0 Cover letter.pdf*
- *1 Action Plan of Quality Assurance Office/QAO Working Plan 2022*
- *2 Minimum quality criteria for enrolling.pdf*
- *3 Annual plan of the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports.pdf*
- *4 Strategic-Plan-2022-2026.pdf*
- *5 The-Quality-Assurance-Regulation.pdf*
- *6 Continuous Development of staff.pdf*



- *7 List of participating staff in activities.pdf*
- *8 Minutes of meeting for topic on staff evaluation.pdf*
- *9 Example of the the assessments form.pdf*
- *10 Report of the Student Success in the November 2021 and January 2022 exam term.xlsx*
- *11 Example of admission list for this academic year.xlsx*
- *12 Transferring Policy/12 Regulations-for-Bachelors-Studies*
- *12 Transferring Policy/12 Transferring Policy/12 Regulations-for-Bachelors-Studies*
- *13 Proceedings of International conference in sports sciences, organized between 10.12.2021 - 11.12.2021.pdf*
- *13.1 Conference Agenda 10-11 December 2021.pdf*
- *14 List of publications in MLA style.pdf*
- *15 Info about the library.pdf*
- *16 The number of enrolled students in the last 3 years.xlsx*
- *17 Dimensions of classrooms at AAB.xlsx*
- *18 CPDI Action Plan 2021 - 2022.pdf*
- *18 Sample of individual staff development plan.pdf*
- *20 Financial Plan for the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports.xlsx*
- *21 Student drop out report.xlsx*
- *22 Details of practical test.xlsx*
- *23 Grant-Regulation.pdf*
- *24 Latest staff surveys*
- *25 Survey conducted with staff*
- *27 Info about the Industrial Board meetings*
- *28 List Names of people who attend the employees meeting during the site visit on the 18th March.pdf*
- *29 Report from QAO about academic staff survey 2020.pdf*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *The KAA Manual (with general areas and standards addressing the external evaluation of study programs);*



1.2. Site visit schedule

<i>Time</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Participants</i>
09:00 09:45	– Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Fatmir Pireva, Dean of the Faculty Zenel Meta, Vice Dean
09:50 10:50	– Meeting with the heads of the study programme:	Fatmir Pireva Mimozë Shkodra-Bislimi Shemsedin Vehapi Arben Maliqi Zenel Metaj
10:50 11:45	– Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Furtuna Mehmeti, Head of QA Besim Gashi, QA Coordinator Zija Rexhepi, VR Comm. & Innov. Nusret Bilallaj, Head of IT
11:45 12:25	– Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
12:25 13:10	– Meeting with teaching staff	- Fadil Rexhepi - Blerim Sylejmani - Nazim Myrtaj - Fatbardh Ajvazi - Blerta Abazi - Vildane Jashari - Mane Ibrahim
13:15 14:00	– Meeting with students	- Agnesa Rrahmani - Ilir Nallbani - Bleona Kasami - Krenar Kurteshi - Ensar Gjurgjiali - Erëdona Bytyçi



14:10 14:55	– Meeting with graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elida Kaligani - Alfred Marniku - Shaban Gashi - Nadir Sulejmani - Antigona Mellova - Granit Makolli
15:00 15:45	– Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Besim Aliti - Trim Zeqiri - Haxhi Metaj - Doruntina Arifi - Granit Rugova - Sara Kalwachova - Adnan Ahmeti
15:45 15:55	– Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:55 16:05	– Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

The SER stated that AAB College is the largest non-public institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo and was founded in 2002 with a unique program in Journalism and Mass Communication.

AAB has expanded its services continually by offering study programs from other fields, seeking to become an impactful academic centre in the country and region. The college currently has 14 faculties that offer study programs at BA and MA levels on its campus in Prishtina, which is spread over two branches.

The vision of AAB is to become “a leading university institution in the region in applying innovative approaches in the field of higher education, science and technology. AAB sets new



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trends in the field of higher education in Kosovo and the region and is part of the most relevant networks of higher education institutions in Europe and beyond. AAB is a leader in the European integration processes of the country and promoter of social and economic development”.

The Faculty of Physical Education and Sports is one of the oldest faculties of AAB College. The faculty was initially accredited with the Bachelor program in Physical Culture and Sports in the academic year 2007/08, while at the Master level Physical Culture and Sports in the academic year 2009/10. Finally in 2021, a third master’s program is accredited, the Fitness and Nutrition program.

Mission of the Study Programme

The four-year Bachelor program Physical Culture and Sports is designed to prepare students in respect to physical culture and sports from a multidisciplinary aspect, who will be able to cover more than a single dimension of Physical Culture in general. The program is a full-time programme and is spread over eight semesters (240 ECTS). Each semester has 30 ECTS and consists of mandatory (obligatory) and elective courses. The students complete the degree after finishing all the examinations and having successfully defended a Bachelor thesis.

The developed program includes courses spanning over five fields: biological (natural sciences subjects), socio-psychological sciences, pedagogical and humanities subjects, professional sports subjects and didactic - specific training courses for training competencies. Based on the SER, teaching is done in lectures and exercises depending on the number of students admitted. For theoretical lectures, groups hold between 30 to 40 students, while group sizes are between 12 and 20 for practical subjects.

Structure of the Programme



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As outlined in the Self Evaluation Report (SER), the courses of the study programme include credits, which correspond to 25 hours learning per 1 ECTS. In a year, 60 ECTS will be earned, which is approximately 1500-1800 hours / year. The ECTS workload is calculated based on a 40-hour week spend within: weekly classes (lectures + exercises), individual work (assignments, presentations, research/internship, continuous studies, and exam preparation), tests and exams (participation in tests, participation in the final exam), consultations (with professors and assistants). During an academic year, one student should accumulate 60 ECTS to complete his study year.

The 1st semester has 5 compulsory classes (Theory and History of Physical Education and Sports, Functional Anatomy, English Language 1, Human Movements and Motor Control Sports Psychology). The 2nd semester has 4 compulsory classes (Research Methodology with Statistics English Language 2, Volleyball, Human Movements and Motor Control) and 1 elective class (Fitness or Tennis). The 3rd semester has 4 compulsory classes (Aerobic, Rhythmic Gymnastics Dance, Physiology of Sports and Physical Fitness, Martial Arts) and 1 elective class (Applied Informatics with SPSS or Ping Pong). The 4th semester has 4 compulsory classes (Biology and Biochemistry of Sports Swimming, Handball, Martial Arts 2) and 1 elective class (Physical Education and Health or Nutrition in Sports). The 5th semester has 5 compulsory classes (Sports Biomechanics, Pedagogy of Physical Education and Sports, Athletics 1, Basketball, Skiing) and 1 elective class (Acrobatic or Basic Games). The 6th semester has 4 compulsory classes (Theory and Methodology of Sports Training, Sports Medicine, Football, Athletics 2) and 1 elective class (Special Physical Education or Recreation). The 7th semester has 4 compulsory classes (Sports Biomechanics, Pedagogy of Physical Education and Sports, Athletics 1, Basketball, Skiing) and 1 elective class (Conditioning Exercise or Incentives in Sports). The 8th semester has 3 compulsory classes (Methodology of Physical Education and Sports, Sports Gymnastics, Traumatology and Rehabilitation in Sports) and a bachelor thesis.



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PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. Mission, objectives and administration

Stated in the self-evaluation report (SER) is that the “mission of the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports is to prepare sufficient and competent staff to address the aspects of Physical Culture and Sports from a multidisciplinary aspect, which will prepare staff that in terms of character will be able to cover more than a single dimension of Physical Culture in general”. The mission of the Bachelor Program in Physical Culture and Sports is: “to develop qualified staff who will lead the transformation processes in the service of meeting the needs of the population for physical education, professional sports development, preservation and improvement of health through regular physical activity” (SER p10). As such, given the similarities and complementarity of the two missions, the Standard 1.1 can be considered met.

In respect to the program design, the SER claims that the study program was designed / is impacted by a variety of parties (staff, students, graduates, and professional sports organisations) and is in accordance with the procedures set out under the Quality Assurance Guideline and other internal regulations (Standard 1.2). This could be confirmed by the evaluation team (ET), as the interviewees were able to describe their involvement / impact in the program, as well as by clearly stated examples of improvements made in the SER.

The SER describes the main didactic concept used within the program as research-based learning (*Standard 1.3*). Other concepts used in the SER, in connection with the program, are theoretical lectures, practical exercises, research projects, work in smaller groups, case studies, practical work outside the institution. It is questionable why the (main) focus lies on research-based learning and not theoretical lectures and practical exercises within the BA.

Based on the SER and the conducted interviews, the faculty seems to be well organised in respect to available formal policies, guidelines and regulations that deal with procedural and academic issues (SER page 11; Standard 1.4; 1.5). The behaviour principles are defined in the Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics for Scientific Research, and both are publicly available (Standard 1.5). All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibilities regarding program management and distribution are regularly reviewed and changes are made if necessary (Standard 1.6).



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	Yes	No
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, and assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	x	
Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.		x

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Change your policy review cycle from at least every 3 years to at least every 2 years to meet standard 1.6
2. Review the (main) focus of the program periodically to check whether the declared focus (e.g., research-orientation) is aligned with the reality/real needs of the program.



2. Quality management

During the meeting with the quality assurance team, the ET felt that the team is a very honest and competent element of the program. The quality assurance team was not shy to state limitations or problems and presented solution pathways to address the stated problems, while moving within a realistic space and context.

From the conducted interviews and the SER, there is evidence that there is a well-done evaluation process in place. Questionnaires are conducted regularly (self-assessment of academic staff in respect of their goals, teaching process, research and satisfaction with opportunities offered by the College; Standard 2.1). Results of these questionnaires seem to be internal documents and the ET could not find them to be publicly available (Standard 2.6).

Multiple evaluation processes are conducted based on a semester work plan (questionnaires of staff, students, partners, evaluation of internships etc; SER p. 14-15) seeking to provide a continuous quality control of the program in respect to limitations as well as planning and delivery of services (Standard 2.2, 2.3, 2.5). Reports are generated utilising the data collected to capture the overall program as well as of different components within it (Standard 2.4). The quality of these reports, which were requested as additional documents, could not be evaluated by the ET as they are in Albanian, and no student survey was sent. Improvements within the process could be made by including a conclusion of each report, which seems not to be within the received reports, as well as focusing more on checking if the learning outcomes of courses/the program are met (QA instruments linked to the academic process should also verify if the intended learning outcomes of a discipline/programme were met until the graduation moment).

Based on the SER and the conducted interviews, the ET believes that the results of the quality assessments are considered for further development of the study program, including evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success, and employment of graduates. In the interviews specific examples could be given about improvements made in the evaluation process (e.g., in respect to student lifestyle wishes, English language content was increased; Standard 2.7).

A comprehensive assessment of a program takes place regularly in accordance with the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). Policies and procedures for carrying out this assessment are published and as such, the institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically for consideration within the institution indicating its



strengths and weaknesses and that the quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved (Standard 2.8 and 2.9).

	Yes	No
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 (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	



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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Consider making assessment reports public / publicly available, along with a plan on how to address the identified issues.
2. Consider including conclusions in your reports. Within the conclusion, do focus on learning outcomes (QA instruments linked to the academic process should also verify if the intended learning outcomes of a discipline/programme were met until the graduation moment).
3. To increase the response rate of questionnaires of industrial partners, consider having the dean / the direct contact to send the questionnaires.
4. Consider focusing some of the QA instruments on checking whether the learning outcomes of a course or the program are reached as well as the fitness for purpose of the assessment methods used.



3. Academic staff

From the conducted interviews and the SER it is evident that academic staff at the faculty are able to deliver learning experience that is on an academic level through inclusive, relevant programmes and curricula while being professional and collaborative. This in turn fosters students' ability to advance their competences to develop individual careers in the field of sport, physical activity, and education. The SER outlines that the faculty has 20 full time and 4 part time members, employment conditions and clearly reports all full and part time staff (SER p25; Standard 3.1; 3.4; 3.5; 3.7). Based on the SER, the employment is done in full compliance with the Labour Law, the Statute of AAB College as well as the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation of HEIs (Standard 3.2; 3.10; SER p19 & p24), while no staff member is reported to work for another institution or more than two teaching positions (Standard 3.3; SER p20).

Staff are provided development plans, publication fees are supported, workshops for plagiarism software, scientific writing are scheduled as well as trainer licences are supported (Standard 3.6).

In respect to staff evaluations (Standard 3.8), surveys are conducted at the end of each semester and the work of the academic staff is evaluated from a self and students' perspective. The evaluation team cannot recall any evidence for peer or superiors' evaluations nor is there any in the SER. This is also the case for public results of the evaluation.

	Yes	No
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	x	



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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 occurs on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.		x



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Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	x	
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	x	

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Start including peer and superiors' evaluations to your assessments to measure the quality of a seminar.
2. Start making reports publicly available.



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4. Educational process content

The study program is modelled on clear objectives and the developed schedule incorporates subject-related as well as interdisciplinary aspects that include / foster an interactive student-teacher relationship (Standard 4.1; 4.2; 4.8). This should lead to a wide range of skills for employment opportunities in the areas described in the SER (p26). Based on the experiences of the ET, the ET believes the developed curriculum is comparable to other study programs in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and has a logical flow that will give the students general and specific competencies to be a skilled employee (Standard 4.3).

The material provided in respect to the syllabuses demonstrates a detailed description of each seminar (e.g., Student Hours, contact, purpose, theme by week, learning outcomes, literature, evaluation forms, policies; Standard 4.4, 4.11).

While policies and procedures are in place that describe mechanisms in case of inadequate or inconsistent grading (Standard 4.10), no mechanisms are in place to ensure fair grading (e.g., random peer review; Standard 4.9).

While the submitted documents in the SER were in English, most classes are taught in Albanian (Standard 4.5), which presents a “hurdle” for exchange programmes. The faculty should consider developing the program in English, in the future, to encourage foreign students to apply. Of the interviewed students, half were not comfortable speaking English and most of the interviewed staff members could speak English sufficiently, while some could not communicate without a translator. However, the evaluation team did only meet a small selection of staff members and consequently cannot comment on the English level of the staff members. The college should continue its efforts to improve the English proficiency of both its academic and administrative staff and offer support for students to learn English. All these could complement the efforts already done by the institution to initiate and foster international partnerships in both teaching and research.

Based on the conducted interviews, the relationship between students and teachers is good and the students reported to be supplied with help whenever they needed it and information about career development (Standard 4.6).



The SER mentioned some flexibility in terms of changing due dates or exam dates at the request of students. The conducted interviews indicated that there are many students that are either professional athletes or work next to their degree, which indicates that there is a flexibility within the program that meets the needs of students with extracurricular activities/fixed schedules outside the university. However, no evidence was provided about the treatment of students in special situations like medical leave (e.g., during the COVID19 pandemic) or who had a death in the family (Standard 4.7). Moreover, learning resources could be adapted to answer the needs of other groups of students - e.g., students with different impairments.

In respect to Standard 4.12, the SER and the conducted interviews provided sufficient evidence that there are cooperation agreements, contracts with institutions, organisations, and practical training units.

	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological, and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	x	
Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	x	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific	x	



competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To list at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.		
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation	x	
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is <u>other than Albanian</u> , actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	n.a	n.a
Standard 4.6. The student-teacher relationship is a partnership in which each assumes the responsibility of reaching the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.	x	
Standard 4.7. Teaching strategies are fit for the different types of learning outcomes programs are intended to develop. Strategies of teaching and assessment set out in program and course specifications are followed with flexibility to meet the needs of different groups of students.	x	
Standard 4.8. Student assessment mechanisms are conducted fairly and objectively, are appropriate for the different forms of learning sought and are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of courses.	x	



Standard 4.9. Appropriate, valid and reliable mechanisms are used for verifying standards of student achievement. The standard of work required for different grades is consistent over time, comparable in courses offered within a program, and in comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions.		x
Standard 4.10. Policies and procedures include actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed.	x	
Standard 4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training 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: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Please start to define guidelines that clarify how students in special situations like medical leave (e.g., during the COVID19 pandemic) or who had a death in the family are to be treated.
2. A way to ensure that grading is done in an appropriate, valid, and reliable way is to introduce a random peer grading - e.g., 5% of all exams are also graded by another staff member or external expert.



5. Students

The SER [p.36] mentions that the Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports applies 'consistent and fair to all students' 'the student admission procedure which is approved by the institutional level'. However, the SER does not mention the admission procedure or criteria considered. The only criteria mentioned in the SER, there are: high school graduation, successful pass of the Matura test. Moreover, the SER implies that no discrimination is done during the admission 'The admission criteria and procedures for new students are consistent and apply fairly to all students regardless of their background' [SER, p.36]. The online discussion brought some clearer image to this issue as it was mentioned during the discussions that both the GPA from high school and the results to the Matura Exam count for admission, as well as the results to a physical test and a medical examination. The ET recommends the college to clarify the exact admission procedure (including the formula for calculating the admission average that considers those 4 components) and publish it online a few months prior to the admission, so that future potential candidates are aware of it. Admission results can be published online as a proof of transparency, but in order to guard personal data, the college could anonymize the database by using the admission ID instead of names.

The ET commends the practice of organising activities like *Open days* and meetings with potential students, during which, the faculty members explain 'the curriculum, career, and employment opportunities after the completion of this program and all other relevant information' [SER, p.36]. The College should continue its efforts to ensure transparency regarding the admission criteria and process to give fair chances to any potential student to prepare for the admission and be successful in becoming a student of AAB study programs.

According to the SER [p.36] all potential students, to be able to enrol in the program, must be high school graduates. This was confirmed during the online interviews.

According to the SER 'Lectures do not exceed more than 60 students per group, whereas exercises are organised with no more than 15-20 students' [SER, p.36] – these group dimensions create the premises for ensuring effective and interactive teaching and learning processes, however, they are not enough. Teachers need the competencies for using appropriate teaching and assessment methods in accordance with the expected learning outcomes. The ET commends the efforts already done by the college in this regard, and encourages the institution to continue investing financial, time and human resources towards constantly improving the



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teaching skills of the academic staff (*obs. more about the personal development and training opportunities of the academic staff members is discussed in section 2.3 of this report*).

The SER mentions the feedback given to students under the form of exam results: *'the communication of results to students must be done no later than 7 days from the date of the exam, according to the official schedule'* [SER, p.36]. However, the college should consider introducing on-going feedback offered to students regarding their progress in relation with the learning objectives of each course/of the program. Observation: the online discussions with the stakeholders indicated that this is a desire of the academic community, however, at the time, it seems more like an individual endeavour of the teacher rather than an institutional policy.

The feedback should include pieces of advice on how to move forward to reach the learning objectives (e.g., competences) by the end of the study program. This would be in line with the desire of the faculty management *'Faculty of Sports utilises and favours ongoing staff-student communication'* [SER, p.36].

Both the teachers and the students confirmed, during the online interviews, what was mentioned in the SER: Throughout the study program, the results of the students are recorded electronically, and the system can generate at any time a transcript of records [SER, p.37].

The SER mentioned that there is a slight flexibility in terms of changing due dates or exam dates at the request of students. However, the college should consider ensuring a flexible treatment for students in special situations like medical leave (e.g., during the COVID19 pandemic) or who had a death in the family. Students in such situations should be able to recover the lessons missed or be able to sit the exam on another date if they missed it. No evidence pointed towards such a flexibility already existing.

Moreover, the online interviews indicated that there is a rather high percentage of students who are professional athletes or sportsmen, thus working full-time to reach their sport-linked objectives. For these students, more flexibility could be shown to recognise their prior learning/experience - even if developed in informal/non-formal learning contexts.

Records of student success rates are kept for all courses of the program, and they are the base for generating periodic reports for the Office of the Vice-Rector for Teaching and for the QA Office.

If any issue is reported in relation to the student completion rates, they are discussed by the Vice-Rector with the Dean of Faculty. The ET encourages the college/faculty to also involve in this process the academic staff and the students and try to search potential solutions for improving students' success rates along with them. A plan could be developed following each



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report that indicates any potential issue in terms of student success rates - e.g., developing a plan on how to deal with students that fail several exams and are on the point of dropping out of the study program [SER, p.37].

Procedures against plagiarism are developed by the AAB College in the framework created by the Code of Ethics and Code of Ethics in Scientific Research. These procedures include the use of 'Turnitin' - an anti-plagiarism software recently acquired by the college. Students are encouraged to get familiarised with these documents which are public [SER, p.37]. The online discussions with the stakeholders indicated that all paperwork of the students will go through this software check, however the real feeling was that mostly the BA and MA thesis are tested for similarities. Different stakeholders mentioned that a percentage of 20% similarities are accepted. The ET recommends that the college/faculty develops a clear policy to fundament all these procedures and make the entire process clear and transparent for all involved parties.

Both rights and obligations of the students are recorded by the AAB Regulation of Master studies, in accordance with the AAB Statute, as well as in the contract they signed with the college. The main responsibility of students is to know the regulations of the college and follow them. This also means to avoid violating the *'personality of the professor and any other employee of the College, ethical-moral norms, such as: copying in exams, falsification of various documents, immoral acts, theft etc.'* [SER, p.37]. The ET recommends the faculty to promote the rights of students, not only their responsibilities - as the ET was informed (through the information sent after the online visit) the student handbook is available online. However, it is very hard to find on the website.

Student transfers are allowed both between institutions and study programs and there is a procedure described by the SER [p.38], but more could be done to transparentize the process of recognising previous learning, especially based on ECTS systems. However, since Kosovo does not have an official policy regarding these transfers and the recognition of prior formal learning, there is no formally adopted document (policy paper) at the level of AAB college for this, but rather a case-by-case analysis is undergone by the Transfer Office, the Dean and the faculty-level commission. In the spirit of the ECTS system, a policy document could facilitate an easier recognition of prior learning if it is quantified in ECTS-like credits, and the college could consider promoting this idea at the level of the Ministry of education / HEIs.

According to the SER, teachers are obliged to set up two consultation hours per week for students. There is no mention about tutorial assistance, however, the online discussions indicated that some of these consultations were held online since the COVID19 pandemic



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break-out, thus making them more accessible to all students (including those from outside of town who are commuting for their studies).

	Yes	No
Standard 5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.		x
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. [SEP]	x	
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	x	
Standard 5.9. Students' rights and obligations are made publicly available, promoted to all those concerned and enforced equitably; these will include the right to academic appeals.	x	
Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	-	-
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	x	



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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Consider developing QA procedures that can ensure that admission procedures are consistently and fairly applied to all potential students and that they are in alignment with the formally adopted policies.
2. Consider investing in developing the teachers' teaching competences to ensure an interactive teaching and learning process.
3. Consider offering flexible treatment to students in special situations – e.g. students missing their exams because they are on medical leave.
4. Continue the efforts of informing students about their rights and responsibilities.
5. Consider revising the appeal policy and procedure so that they are clear regarding the grounds on which academic appeals might be based on, criteria for decision and available remedies. They should also guarantee impartial consideration by persons or committees independent of the parties involved.
6. Continue efforts of developing policies and procedures for recognition of prior learning.
7. Consider developing tutorial programs as a mechanism for assistance of the students in meeting their learning objectives (based on the feedback they receive from their teachers).



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6. Research

Based on the SER, the AAB College, has formulated a (new) Regulation for Scientific Research recently (not date given in SER). Further, 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. While the faculty has defined a research plan that is much richer in detail than comparable academic institutions, the research plan lacks the definition for clear success measures, data to be collected and pathways (Standard 6.1).

Based on the SER, scientific research at AAB is contractually regulated for staff members and is linked to the academic advancement of the personnel. The employment contracts stipulate that 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 (Standard 6.2; 6.7), which is unrealistic high expectations in the opinion of the ET - even if this means not fulfilling Standard 6.7. The Regulation on Scientific Research acts as a policy that defines what is recognized as research and the ET believes this is consistent with international standards (Standard 6.3; 6.6)

As stated in the academic staff section, staff members are well educated within their field of expertise (based on SER and conducted interviews) and hence we believe, the staff can be considered to have a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity (Standard 6.4). However, in the conducted interviews we noticed that not all staff members are not up to date with current research or available technologies. The ET understands that the focus on research is new, however, the faculty should invest in training staff members to upskill their knowledge about latest technology trends to ensure the best research and teaching experiences for the students.

The SER reported a number of scientific projects being completed. Additionally submitted documents that should have stated all publication in MPL format was submitted but not analysed in detail as it carried some publication more than once (see figure below), while publications being reported for the main and co-authors.



Prof. Ass. Dr. Abedin Ibrahim

1. Ibrahim, Nazmie; Abedin Ibrahim, et al. "THE FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES AND THEIR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE VOLLEYBALL TEAMS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO IN PRE-COMPETITION PERIOD." *Sport Scientific & Practical Aspects* 17.2 (2020).
2. Ibrahim, Nazmie; Abedin Ibrahim, et al. "THE FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES AND THEIR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE VOLLEYBALL TEAMS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO IN PRE-COMPETITION PERIOD." *Sport Scientific & Practical Aspects* 17.2 (2020).

Figure: Illustrating double entries of the document: *14 List of publications in MLA style.pdf*

However, after quickly screening the document subjectively for duplicates (based on title) of the given list, the ET concluded that there are less than 1 publication per person and year. Research was published under AAB affiliation and staff members are encouraged to include their research in their lectures. Students have been participating in conference paper proceedings (Standard 6.5, 6.8, 6.10).

Further, policies established for ownership of intellectual property are defined under the faculty research regulations article 14 (SER), while no clear procedures are defined for commercialization of ideas developed by students – staff work / IP is considered as created by the employee during the employment (Standard 6.9).

	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	



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Standard 6.3. Clear policies are established for defining what is recognized as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	X	
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	X	
Standard 6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in speciality magazines or publishing houses, scientific/applied/artistic products are presented at conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars etc. and contracts, expertise, consultancy, conventions, etc. are provided to partners inside the country and/or abroad.	X	
Standard 6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centres, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	X	
Standard 6.7. Each academic staff member and researcher has produced at least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year for the past three years.		X
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full time staff.	X	
Standard 6.8. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	X	
Standard 6.9. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.		X
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	X	



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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Reduce the number of scientific papers in contracts and make sure you increase the research quality
2. Define clear regulations, of ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas that originated from ideas coming from students with staff members - e.g., Bachelor and Master thesis.
3. Provide better publication materials for future evaluations. List papers only ones and order them by date.



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7. Infrastructure and resources

The long-term implementation of the evaluated study program is guaranteed by the premises of the faculty that are allocated for this program. They consist of a campus of more than 40.000 m² and are adequate for the teaching and learning purposes of the program.

The campus includes spaces for the administration of the faculty as well as for the support services (e.g., the office for IT support).

The physical resources are complemented by online resources that ensure the smooth implementation of the program – e.g., the E-platform provides access to regulations, teaching materials and academic records.

The online interviews indicated that there is a general feeling, among the academic community, that there is an institutional commitment to financially support this program in the future, from the level of the college management.

The SER did not mention a three-year financial plan but enumerated the sources for the financial resources needed for the long-term implementation of this program. Among them, one could read: the tuition fees, payments for commercial services /other services offered by the faculty, funds from the public budget of Kosovo, donations etc.

Even though the faculty does not have an individual budget - as this is a service centralised at college level, there seems to be a general feeling of confidence that the college will ensure financial sustainability. This feeling is based mainly on the provisional collected student fees.

Nevertheless, upon asking the different stakeholders why some necessary investments - e.g. in equipment needed for teaching - were not already made, the ET was left with the impression that the optimism of the heads of the program regarding the financial sustainability of the program is not founded on real grounds. Many of the needed investments, though requested by the teaching staff, were not yet implemented, and there was no future projection on when they could be foreseen in the institutional budget.

The faculty should consider developing a financial plan that includes provisions of the incomes and expenses associated with the program. A decentralisation of the budgeting of the college could help each program know if they are financially sustainable or not.

The ET recommends the college to decentralise the budget, but even if the institution decides against this idea - given it is a rather small institution and maybe a centralised budget is easier to keep, than more transparent and clear procedures should be outlined and explained to the academic community so that different faculties know when and why some investments



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for some programs are prioritised in the detriment of others and when will their turn come to receive funds for investments in equipment.

Moreover, the ET recommends the college to look for cheaper more accessible options of the needed equipment. During the interview it became evident that there was a desire for new devices and a lack of knowledge about the latest development in the space. We recommend that the faculty should build a wish-list of materials / devices and that an alternate solution could be identified. As an example, the utilisation of force plates would increase the quality of research and teaching. During the interviews it became evident that interviewees knew only about gold standard products from AMTI, Kistler or Bertec (~40TE [without software]). Today there are much cheaper solutions (pasco plates [without software] < 1TE, FDLite [+software] < 10TE) that are as insightful (the device is lacking medial-lateral and posterior-anterior axes) as the expensive gold standard products.

The SER mentions [p.44] ` 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 BA program in Physical Culture and Sports` The faculty has at its disposal a sports hall of 540m² equipped with a BSL System with MP36 for dynamic lessons and experiments, a gym of 300m² and a swimming pool [SER, p.44]. This was confirmed both by the video sent by the institution, presenting the premises, and by the online interviews.

However, these facilities are also shared with other programs of the college and there is no evidence to help a real assessment of whether the available space resources are enough for a future growth of the program or the development of new/other programs of the college. The ET recommends the college to continue its efforts in monitoring the space loads (space and equipment utilisation) and investing in both premises and equipment (as shown above, there are plenty of very relevant - for teaching - equipment still missing). These measures could help decision makers reallocate resources in response to potential changing requirements of the study program(s).

In the SER, p.45 and 46 present a complete inventory of the equipment of the sports hall and fitness room.

The faculty offers the students the possibility of using the two libraries of the college which are on the Pristina campus. Each of them ` *offer excellent conditions for study and sufficient materials and spaces to meet the needs of students, academic staff and other library users* ` [SER, p.46]. The library offers technical support for its users, a reading room with seats for `



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10% of the total number of students for the sports programs. Also, the teaching materials cover at least 50% of the subjects and / or disciplines which are foreseen within the study curriculum`[SER, p.44]

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 BA program in Physical Culture and Sports` [SER, .44]. Though no exact numbers were provided, this was confirmed during the online interviews, thus the Expert team considers this standard as met.

The AAB College has two libraries: the Central Library has 100 seats, while the New York Library has 80 reading places. The SER mentions that the library ensures enough seats in the library to cover 10% of the students of the program, enough books for at least half of the students and a book stock sufficient to cover the needs of all students. However, it is impossible for the Expert team to evaluate whether the number of available seats is enough for this study program and its` sustainability as it is not evident what is the total number of students that use these facilities, from all AAB study programs.

The college has paid subscriptions for foreign publications/databases/journals – like J-STORE, EBSCO etc. – and the students and teachers confirmed they access it for their work. The college should continue its efforts in ensuring access to relevant resources to its academic community by monitoring their usage and adapting the list of subscriptions to the potentially changing requirements/needs.

To conclude, if the current facilities meet the needs of the program, the college should carefully monitor the load of these facilities and the correlation with the needs of the study programs offered by the college. Monitoring procedures should be developed to ensure the fitness-for-purpose of these facilities. Unfortunately, there was little evidence of subject specific books in the library as well as the capacity of class and seminar rooms.

As seen in the presented video, the faculty has an accessible facility that ensures access for potential students or teachers with physical disabilities thanks to `flat entrances, elevators, special toilets, emergency exits and all relevant infrastructure for students with special needs` [SER, p.46]. The ET encourages the college to continue its efforts of adapting the infrastructure, facilities and learning resources to make them accessible to other potential users with other types of disabilities – e.g., visual impairment.



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	Yes	No
Standard 7.1. The adequate long-term implementation of the study program is ensured in quantitative terms as regards premises, human resources and equipment. At the same time, it is guaranteed that qualitative aspects are also taken into account.	x	
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.		x
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own 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 speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	x	
Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program;		x



c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years; d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission		
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	x	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Develop a budget of the program which includes the provisions in terms of incomes and expenses.
2. Discuss/take into consideration the possibility of having a separate budget per faculty or even study program (decentralise the college budget) to see whether a program is financially sustainable or not and to reduce the degree of bureaucracy for buying the needed resources/covering the needed expenses.
3. Continue efforts of making the spaces and learning resources available to potential students and teachers with different disabilities, not just physical impairments.
4. Collect an infrastructure wish-list to get an idea of what devices / services / faculties staff members would like to use within the lecture / practice. Use this list and research to subsequently identify “false” assumptions about the price of products - e.g., force plates cost > 40.000Euro, marker-based motion capture costs > 100.000Euro. Identified alternative products like (<https://vald.com/applied-research/> or a vicon bonita system) should then be shown to staff members to evaluate if identify devices would fulfil the desired product.



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OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

As seen from the previous sections, the compliance situation per general areas is:

<i>General Area</i>	<i>Compliance level</i>
<i>Mission, objectives and administration</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Quality Management</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Academic staff</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
<i>Educational process content</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Students</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Research</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
<i>Infrastructure and resources</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Physical Education and Sport BA offered by AAB College is **substantially compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation manual and, therefore, recommends accrediting the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **150** students to be enrolled in the program. We decided against an increase of the number of students due to the shortcomings in the infrastructure and learning resources, as well as we are unsure about the financial sustainability.



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APPENDICES *(if available)* - Not the case



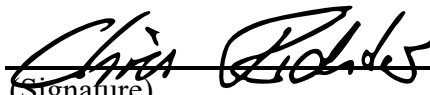
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Expert Team

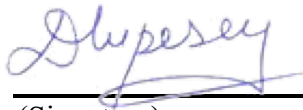
Chair


(Signature)

Dr. Chris Richter
(Print Name)

Sat 16 Apr 2022
(Date)

Student Member


(Signature)

Delia Lupescu (ex Gologan)
(Print Name)

Sun, 17 Apr 2022
(Date)