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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES “REZONANCA
BSc BIOCHEMISTRY LABORATORY (180 ECTS)

REACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

*22nd April 2022
Zagreb/ Edinburgh*



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: March 24th, 2022

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Domagoj Vugić, PhD*
- *Rebecca Maxwell Stuart, Student Expert*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Flamur Abazaj, SO for Monitoring and Evaluation*
- *Arianit Krasniqi, SO for Accreditation and Evaluation*

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Virtual meeting with the Management of Faculty, Quality assurance representatives, students, graduates, teaching staff and employers of graduates and extensive discussion between the responsibility persons of program and the expert team, and representatives of KAA*
- *Self-evaluation report*
- *Received documents requested following virtual visit*

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA*



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Requested and received documents:

- Statute of the College
- Regulation of studies
- Regulation of Academic Units
- Code of Ethics
- Quality assurance policies
- Student rights and obligations
- Expert team evaluation report from before for this program (if possible) or a list of changes since last accreditation
- Development Strategy
- Student transfer regulation
- Learning outcomes for a study program
- "Manuals for information regarding the methodology"
- Financial plan + sustainability of the study program
- Example of questionnaires/surveys (students, academic staff and administration) + evaluation results
- Research Objectives + Research plan
- If possible, list of Research agreements and collaborations
- Number of publications in the last year for each of academic staff involved in the program + publication name or a link to publication
- CVs of the academic staff involved in the program
- Policies regarding intellectual property
- Example of Bachelor thesis
- Library description – number of books
- The number of seats in lecture halls, seminar rooms and laboratories
- Confirmation whether College has ALUMNI organisation
- list of employment rates from the programme from the last 3-5 years
- Dropout rates



1.2. Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (Joint Meeting)	Prof.asoc. Milazim Gjocaj Prof.asoc. Nita Kelmendi Prof.asoc. Zehadin Gashi Prof.ass. Lavdim Ymeri Prof.ass. Selvete Shuleta Prof.ass. Nderim Kryeziu
10:05 – 10:45	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff (Joint Meeting)	Prof.asoc. Nazim Dakaj Prof.ass. Murat Berisha Jahir Gashi Margareta Mustafa Edona Demiri
10:50 – 11:50	Meeting with the heads of the study programme	Prof.asoc. Zehadin Gashi Prof.asoc. Fahri Gavazaj Prof.ass. Arlinda Jakupi Prof.ass. Qenan Maxhuni Prof.ass. Dukagjin Zogaj Prof.ass. Imer Sadriu
11:50 – 12:30	Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)	
12:30 – 13:15	Meeting with teaching staff	Prof. Emrush Kryeziu Prof.ass. Labinot Shahini Lecturer Fatmir Cakaj Ass. Mentor Kurshumliu
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with students	Rinesa Elshani Agron Muja Vlera Shabani Mendim Shatri Arta Bytyçi Rinesa Dinaj
14:05 – 14:45	Meeting with graduates	Endrit Uka Aida Morina
14:50 – 15:35	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Shkëlqim Sereqi



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		Bujar Rexhaj
15:35 – 15:45	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:45 – 16:00	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	



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

Rezonanca College was established relatively recently in 2003. The institution is established in the accordance with the Law on Higher Education of Kosovo no.2003 / 14, initially as the University of Medical Sciences "Rezonanca" with a total of five Faculties: General Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Diagnostic Radiology and Physiotherapy. To our understanding it is one of the first private colleges in Kosovo specialized in biomedical sciences.

An important milestone for the college was agreement with Alma Mater Europaea, an institution by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. The College offers studies at the bachelor level (BSc), three-year programs (180 ECTS) in the following subjects: Laboratory Biochemistry; Community Pharmacy; Physiotherapy; Nursing; Midwifery; Diagnostic Radiology; integrated program 300 ECTS Dr.stom.), Dental Assistant and Dental Hygienist; and Public and Environmental Health. The College currently has two second cycle master programs (120 ECTS) in Pharmacy and Health Management.

The BSc Laboratory Biochemistry study programme was initially accredited in 2011 and successfully reaccredited on several occasions throughout the programme history. Briefly, the program is structured as a standardized Bachelor of Science programme of 180 ECTS and aims to provide fundamental education to students in the field of Laboratory Biochemistry in accordance with European standards.



2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

Following the virtual site visit (SV) and in reviewing the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the expert team (ET) concludes that the study program's mission is in compliance with the overall mission and goals of the College. The main areas present in this particular program mission are: advancement of knowledge, enrichment of the higher education in Kosovo, full integration in the European Higher Education and Research and achievement of the professional competencies of students for their future career. During the SV it was confirmed that this program is developed regularly in consultation with various stakeholders. The program is in line with the European Union directives regarding recognition and professional qualifications.

It was found that the didactic approach is student-oriented in a strong student-teacher relationship, this is supported with a good ratio between teaching staff and students. Various types of didactic methods are utilised on the program. Due to the College's sufficient use of information technology, teaching activities did not suffer too much during pandemic. However, it was unclear whether academic staff have opportunities for continuous development in their didactic approach.

This program is unique in that it has a direct correlation with research, at least in helping students to learn the research basics. There is a good balance between theory and practical courses with possibilities of taking several research internships. However, regarding the academic staff, research is one of the least developed areas of the College and a key area that requires most development in the future.

The ET noted that all the policies dealing with academic matters are established in a formal way where all academic staff including students comply with the internal regulations. Moreover, policies and regulations are reviewed each year.



Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
1.1. The study programme mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution	x	
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	
1.3. The study programme has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept		x
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	
1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.	x	
1.6. All policies, regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the programme are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	x	
Overall Compliance	Substantially Compliant	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Cooperation with all the stakeholders should be fully formalized including the non-academic sector*
- 2. While the research concept is probably enough for education at BSc level regarding students, the College is encouraged to further develop its research capacities.*
- 3. In the future, the College should aim to develop other areas in biomedicines and further develop its BSc only programmes towards MSc ones.*
- 4. Ensure that all the academic staff have a variety of training opportunities to enhance their teaching skills*



2.2. Quality Management

Rezonanca College has a comprehensive system of quality assurance, which is detailed in their Quality Assurance Framework that was approved in 2021. Within the Framework there are six Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) directly related to quality assurance management of the study program. These are as follows:

1. Overall assessment of students for the quality of their teaching experiences in the College.
2. Overall assessment of students for the quality of their courses.
3. Student performance on professional license and/or national exams
4. Employers' assessment of the skills of the programme graduates
5. Overall student satisfaction
6. Graduates' satisfaction with current work

In total there are 38 KPIs within ten different themes including Financial Planning and Management, Teaching and Learning, Teaching Resources, and Research. While these are extensive, no KPI is directly related to the self evaluations of academic staff. It is recommended that self evaluations of academic staff are included in the KPIs, since they are an integral part of quality management.

Within the Quality Assurance Framework, there is a Framework for the Evaluation of Academic Programs. However, this could be strengthened by including the purpose and process of the different evaluation activities. For example, the SER (p.30) includes a useful flow chart for evaluation and planning processes, which could be added to the Framework with further details included.



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The Office of Quality Assurance was created after the Directorate for Quality Assurance was eliminated based on recommendations from the College's institutional reaccreditation in 2019. The duties of the Office of Quality Assurance include: administer evaluation processes as planned, in accordance with the College Quality Assurance Framework; carrying out operational processes for the implementation of quality assessment activities; processing of information from the data collection phase; management of internal evaluation activities; managing the process of distributing and publishing reports of evaluation activities; establishing working groups according to the recommendations of the College Quality Assurance Committee to carry out evaluation activities as needed.

Despite the challenges faced in the pandemic, the College has enhanced its quality processes based on recommendations from previous institutional and programme accreditations. Particularly in relation to employing staff, the College has a total of 29 staff members that are directly responsible for quality, including 15 members in the College Committee for Quality Assurance and 14 staff members within the Office for Quality Assurance.

The quality assurance processes cover all important aspects – ongoing monitoring and evaluation of study programs, student assessment, staff selection and development, student services and infrastructure development.

Student engagement within the quality processes of the College is commendable, particularly as three students are employed within the Office for Quality Assurance, as well as three student representatives in the College Committee for Quality Assurance. There is also at least one student representative on other governance committees relating to student experience, including the College's Ethics Committee.

The College has robust ethical procedures, including the detailed Code of Ethics that defines all academic misconduct, student misconduct, the responsibilities of all academic and administrative staff depending on their position, as well as plagiarism and other forms of fraud.



However, it was noted that activities and regulations relating to plagiarism and academic integrity could be further strengthened (See Students Section).

Data relating to student progress, course completion rates and evaluations are held centrally and analyzed through the Office of Quality Assurance in cooperation with the Office of Academic Affairs. The College has established the ABACUS programme that enhances accessibility of relevant statistical data for quality monitoring processes.

During the SV it was stated that there is difficulty in engaging visiting academics in the evaluation process. Since all other staff at the College participation in self-evaluations and other quality processes, it is recommended that for visiting professors participation in evaluations are mandatory and part of the job specification.

The SER states as a weakness of Quality Management in their SWOT analysis “lack of involvement in the consultation process and support of the mission of the College of external stakeholders, such as: Ministry of Health, Commission for licensing of Biochemists at the Kosovo Chamber of Physicians, public and provide university officials, some organisations other health and public members, and the private health care system.” While the ET recognises the challenges of involving external stakeholders in the evaluation processes, during the SV at the meeting with Employers, there was a general consensus amongst participants that they wished to be involved more with the program.

The ET would like to commend the College’s dedication to quality and the extensiveness of their QM processes.

Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity		x



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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- All staff including visiting professors and external stakeholders should be involved in evaluation processes*
- The number of students and staff participating in the survey should be improved. Ideally all staff and students should participate. One way to do this is by making this process mandatory for the students or if not possible educating students on the importance of the QA processes and its impact.*
- Provide further information in the Framework for Evaluation of Academic Programs in the Quality Assurance Framework*



2.3. Academic Staff

Following the SV and according to the SER, the ET found that selection of academic staff is performed in a transparent manner and that all the candidates are provided with a complete position description and clear conditions of the employment. Most of the academic staff are employed on a full-time basis with a relatively small number of them working part-time. Historically there has been a positive trend in hiring full time staff. It was noted in the SER that none of the academic staff covers more than two teaching positions within an academic year. This is regulated in the Statute of the College stating that staff involved in the regular employment cannot have other full-time employment contracts inside or outside college. However, this statement requires further clarification as the ET found through research publications that in fact most of the staff are conducting their activities at several other institutions such as research centres and hospitals, probably in a contractual manner. It is also unclear whether this cooperation is jeopardizing academic staff involvement in the college activities.

Additionally, we found a positive trend of hiring at least one full time teacher with a PhD title for every 60 ECTS in the programme. During the SV it was difficult to get an overview of all professional development opportunities of the teaching staff, suggesting that those opportunities should be discussed in a clear formal way and available to everyone participating in the program. In terms of academic staff obligations and responsibilities they are well defined in the Statue of the College. Furthermore, academic staff are evaluated regularly at least once a year on different levels including self- assessment, assessment done by students and meetings with supervisors.



Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment.	x	
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	
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	
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	
3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study programme, the institution has employed at least one full staff with PhD title or equivalence.	x	
3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.		x
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	
3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	x	
3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials	x	
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	
Overall Compliance:	Substantially Compliant	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Level of academic staff with a PhD degree is increasing. However, the College should aim for a continuous professional development of all of its academic staff.*
2. *Work performed outside institution might jeopardize college teaching and research capacities.*



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3. *Research skills should be adequately assessed periodically.*
4. *The College should also aim for internationalization in its long-term vision and have means to attract more experts from abroad.*
5. *Mobility of staff should be increased and favoured.*
6. *We found gender disbalance among academic staff that needs to be addressed.*



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2.4. Educational Process Content

According to the SER and the SV confirmed that Biochemistry Laboratory program is indeed modelled on qualification objectives. The program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. It has a solid basis to provide academic competencies and there is significant employment opportunities for graduates. There is a great ratio between theoretical and practical courses offered to students. The components of the program are on their own combined in a good manner to achieve specified qualification objectives. More precisely one academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS credits and is aligned fully to the Bologna Process of higher education. Courses within the curriculum are presented in a logical flow for students to reach general competencies and overall basic knowledge of various areas of laboratory biochemistry. There are various type of courses such as basic courses, practical laboratory courses, communication skills courses and also elective courses. The program itself is standardized and lasts three academic years in bisemestrial manner with a combined total of 180 ECTS. The final semester is dedicated almost fully to students own research project that results in a Bachelor thesis. All the disciplines taught in this program have analytical syllabus that includes: course objectives; learning outcomes; intellectual, professional and transferable skills; class distribution in seminars and other activities; learning resources and evaluation ECTS credits.

It was highlighted in the SER and confirmed later during the SV that teaching is only conducted in Albanian. As the biochemistry field is highly dominated by English language in both research and literature sources and in order to improve internationalisation it would be beneficial to have opportunity to conduct teaching in English, particularly for international students who do not speak Albanian. So far to our knowledge, there are no such cases.

The SV meeting with the students corroborated that the student-teacher relationship is indeed a partnership. All the learning outcomes are explained beforehand and the College is



additionally providing a Student Handbook containing important information regarding studies. Regarding teaching, we found that different teaching methods are used that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving and creative and critical thinking. Moreover, the College has quickly adapted to virtual ways of teaching. Student groups are rather small which boosts effectiveness of teaching. Students are assessed fairly and objectively and mechanisms are explained to students at the course beginning. The ET found that many students are participating in practical work, one of the major strengths of this programme. All expected learning outcomes are clearly specified for this stage and adequate ECTS credits are allocated.

The College indeed has many signed cooperation agreements with various external partners. However, to our knowledge not all of collaboration is formalized. However, the ET is aware the College is increasing its effort to formalize and sign cooperation agreements with all external partners.

Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
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	
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	
4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and	x	



curricula delivered in the EHEA. To be listed at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.		
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	
4.5. If the language of instruction is other than Albanian, actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.		x
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
4.11. If the study program includes practice stages, the intended student learning outcomes are clearly specified and effective processes are followed to ensure that those learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students. The practice stages are allocated ETCS credits and the work of the students at the practical training organizations is monitored through activity reports; students during practice stages have assigned tutors among the academic staff in the study program.	x	



4.12. In order to facilitate the practice stages, the higher education institution signs cooperation agreements, contracts or other documents with institutions/organizations/practical training units.		x
Overall Compliance:	Substantially Compliant	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. College should be able to conduct parts of teaching activities in English language when student language is different than Albanian. This may boost attractiveness and internationalisation*
- 2. Protection in Laboratory course would fit better in first semester before practical courses start*
- 3. Program provides good basis for biochemistry area. In the future, it would be good to work on expanding this programme in Master level as well with more specific courses.*
- 4. Ensure there are formal agreements in place with all external partners, particularly in relation to research, teaching, and internship activities.*



2.5. Students

Admission of new students to the study program are managed by at institutional level of the College and deemed to be consistent and fairly applied to all students. The admission procedure is transparent and regulated by the Statute and the Regulation of studies of the College.

The size of study groups are determined according to the Regulation of Studies, in which lectures are held in groups of up to 100, with seminars and workshops held in small groups of up to 30, and clinical practice groups have no more than six students per group.

The curriculum is designed to support “Active Learning” in which students have one week of theory and the following week focusing on practical work. This is particularly commendable as it allows the students to regularly apply their theoretical knowledge in practical settings. During the SV the employers and external stakeholders made particular emphasis of the knowledge and skills of graduates for this program. One participant mentioned that new employees from the College often require less induction training that graduates from other institutions.

There is clear commitment and strength of the student-teacher relationship on the program. Flexible arrangements are provided for students facing difficulties or that require special needs. This was corroborated at the SV in which students provided examples where the College had been understanding of their challenges, and provided flexible arrangements to suit the needs of the student.

Formative feedback on students’ performance and assessments is provided through their virtual learning platform, Moodle. In addition, 48 hours after exam grades are released there is a consultation with teaching staff to go over the strengths and areas for improvement. This is an



excellent initiative to enhance students' assessment practices and show to them how they can improve for future submissions.

Since 2018, the College has a mandatory Tutoring System organized by the Student Support Office, in which each student is assigned a teaching tutor for the duration of their studies. These tutors are responsible for orientation, advising, protecting the student's interests and monitoring the performance and student progress. Meetings with tutors are held in small groups or individually. The College has procedures in place for transferring students to a different tutor if need be. Students during the SV made particularly emphasis that having these tutors was one of the aspects they most liked about studying on the programme.

The SER highlighted that exam pass rates are generally lower for first year students (overall 59.9%), with increasing passing rate as the number of study years increases (71.2%, 85.3%). This along with similar findings for average grade in exams highlights that there needs to be further support for first year students on study skills. At the SV, during the meeting with the students, several participants suggested that further study skills support would be welcomed. Therefore it is recommended it increase support on how to achieve success in assessments for first year students. This support should also include guidance on referencing, academic plagiarism.

The SER indicates that there are Manuals provided to students with information regarding methodology of compiling seminars, academic essays, diploma topics etc. However, the ET were concerned to find that the College currently has no software programme to detect plagiarism or similarity to other works. Procedures were found to be more informal and not sufficient in ensuring the originality of assessments submitted by students. This software is crucial to ensure academic integrity, particularly for final year diploma theses. The ET strongly recommends the installment of plagiarism software such as Turnitin as soon as possible.



Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
5.1. There is a clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organizing students' recruitment. Admission requirements are consistently and fairly applied for all students.	x	
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	
5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	x	
5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	x	
5.5. The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	x	
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	
5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the programme as a whole and included among quality indicators.	x	
5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.		x
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	
5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs are clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	x	
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	
Overall Compliance:	Substantially Compliant	

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *To implement a plagiarism software as soon as possible.*
2. *Provide further study skills support to first year students*



2.6. Research

Following the virtual SV and analysing the SER, the ET concludes that the College's research is the main area facing the most difficulties. To our knowledge this situation is not unique to Rezonanca College but is wide-spread challenge among most of Higher education institutions in Kosovo. Unfortunately there is an obvious lack of research funding and lack of talent due to the brain drain phenomenon. Therefore, the ET cannot say that the institution still has reached a high or sufficient level to perform its planned research objectives. However, research is taken into special consideration for academic staff performance and is indeed one of the criteria in self-evaluations and opportunities for promotion. In the requested documents it indicated not all staff meet institutional requirement/recommendation to publish at least one scientific paper per year in the last three years.

We found that the institution indeed has policies recognizing what is considered as research according to set standards. However, the College should aim for more high-quality research specifically publishing in reputable scientific journals. Only a small percentage of publications are published in specialized scientific journals and even less in an international ones. One of the ways to tackle this problem would be to increase mobility, cooperation and grant applications. However, when cooperating with other institutions academic staff performing the research should in principle stay affiliated with Rezonanca College. According to examples provided in publication records this is not the case. Only a few academic staff were in fact affiliated to the College and most were affiliated to other institutions. With that in mind, it is recommended that the College work on ensuring that all staff with research outputs use Rezonanca College as one of their affiliated institutions, particularly for full time staff.

Another area for improvement is the organizing of more scientific meetings and seminars held at the College but also abroad would be beneficial for both students and academic staff. The ET found that the College did not adapt fully during the pandemic to participate in academic



conferences and there has been a big decrease in participation since 2018. Academic staff are sometimes including the information about the research work they are performing but mostly it is in an informal way. It would be beneficial that academic staff are informing both students and external audience about their research on Faculty webpages. Additionally, according to the SER a high number, but not all, academic staff's publications come from the fields they teach.

Nevertheless, an area a good practice is student engagement in research activities, either through practical courses, internships and finally bachelor thesis. This is something that is unique and positive about this program and should be continued and even further developed.

Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research center or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.		x
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	
6.3. Clear Policies are established for defining what is recognised as research, consistent with international standards and established norms in the field of study of the program.	x	
6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.		x
6.5. The academic and research staff publish their work in specialty 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	
6.6. Research is validated through: scientific and applied research publications, artistic products, technological transfer through consultancy centers, scientific parks and other structures for validation.	x	
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



6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.		x
6.9. Academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.	x	
6.10. Policies are established for ownership of intellectual property and clear procedures set out for commercialization of ideas developed by staff and students.	x	
6.11. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	yes	
Overall Compliance:	Partially compliant	

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Agreements with external research institutions should be increased to overcome difficulties in research funding.*
2. *The College should aim for publications in specialised journals with a higher impact factor*
3. *Academic staff should be affiliated with the College when producing scientific publications, particularly when employed as a full-time staff at the college*
4. *The College and Faculty should organise more research focussed meetings, seminars and conferences for staff and students to attend and participate.*
5. *The College should adapt to current trends of virtual participation in international scientific conferences*
6. *The College should take into account that all academic staff publish their work in a topic that is close to their teaching activity.*
7. *The College should aim to ensure that all staff meet its publication number/year criteria or reconsider it*



2.7. Infrastructure and Resources

According to the SER and the submitted video, the ET concludes that the College provides adequate facilities including human resources, laboratory and other equipment. In requested documents received, the College's Financial Plan demonstrates sustainability for the following years. Furthermore, the ET were informed about the College's long term plans to finalize a new clinic on the campus and other areas such as laboratory spaces.

This particular study program possesses enough owned spaces, laboratories, library content and classroom equipment to meet KAA standards. Whether all infrastructure, including laboratories is adapted to students with special need was not fully clear. However, the additional requested documents indicated that the College is in the process of improving its infrastructure for people with disabilities.

We would like to point out once again that while collaboration with external partners, especially in the private sector is an example of a good practice, it is not always formalised. It seems that most of the research output, at least looking at publication records is performed outside of the institution. In the future, it is recommended that the College should focus mostly on generating an ideal environment to conduct high quality research within its own premises.

The meeting with the students, who are one of the main users of the College infrastructure, highlighted there seems to be overall satisfaction with the college facilities. However, there was several students who mentioned they would like to have more extra-curricular activities and spaces within campus. We believe and hope that in the future, the expansion of the campus will create a good basis for the College, and in particular the Biochemistry Laboratory program, to expand into Master and PhD level and help to attract international students and academic staff.



Standard	Complaint?	
	Yes	No
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	
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	
7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process; b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilization license; d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	x	
7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the specialty disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	x	
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 programme; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study programme; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign specialty literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or specialty courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years. d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	x	



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7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	x	
Overall Compliance:	Fully compliant	

ET recommendations:

- 1. Make sure that all the spaces including laboratories are adapted to students with special needs*
- 2. Create an environment that will attract foreign students and academic staff*
- 3. Most of the research is performed outside college, institution should invest more so more research work can be performed at its own premises*



3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Standard	Compliance Level
Mission, objectives and administration	Substantially compliant
Quality management	Substantially compliant
Academic Staff	Substantially compliant
Educational Process Content	Substantially compliant
Students	Substantially compliant
Research	Partially compliant
Infrastructure and resources	Fully compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially compliant

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program of the Biochemistry Laboratory BSc offered by College of Medical Sciences “Rezonanca” is **Substantially Compliant** according to the standards included in the KAA Accreditation Manual and, therefore, recommends to reaccredit the study program for a duration of 3 years with a number of 50 students to be enrolled in the program.

4. APPENDICES *(if available)*

none



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Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency

Expert Team

Chair

<i>Domagoj Vugić</i>	DOMAGOJ VUGIĆ	05/05/2022
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

<i>Rebecca Maxwell Stuart</i>	Rebecca Maxwell Stuart	05/05/2022
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

(Date)