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*UBT College*

*Bachelor (BSc) in Computer Science and Engineering*

*RE/ACCREDITATION*

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*April 2022*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 7th April 2022**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Sc. Josip Balen - – Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, Osijek, Croatia*
- *Delia Lupescu (Gologan)*

**Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):**

- *Flamur Abazaj, SO for Monitoring and Evaluation*
- *Ilijane Ademaj Ahmeti, SO for Monitoring and Evaluation*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *The Self-Evaluation Report (including four Annexes), Batshelot (BSc) in Computer Science and Engineering (SER) with its annexes A - D.*
- *Online interviews with stakeholders (sitevisit)*
- *Quality Assurance Regulation*
- *UBT College website*
- *Videos of the faculty and the equipment.*
- *Academic Titles Draft Regulation - English version*
- *Achievement stories - CSE UBT*
- *Code of Ethics*
- *Complaint procedures (Students appeals)*
- *Faculty decision-making bodies (Faculty Academic Council composition: CSE Commissions)*
- *Career office report and contracts with ICT companies for work and internship;*
- *contract agreement with industry internship and job;*
- *CVs of the academic staff.*



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- *Development Plan of the Faculty CSE 2021-2025;*
- *List of staff training VR and AR*
- *List of student Training AI*
- *Survey of staff training 2021-2022*
- *Training and Certificates UBT*
- *Erasmus Project 2019-2023*
- *Expert recommendations during the accreditation process of the Bachelor program in Computer Science and Engineering 2016*
- *Handbook of Student*
- *Industrial Board - report of industry analysis*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Key performance indicators*
- *List of equipment - computer science lab*
- *List of staff*
- *Mobilities of last three years*
- *Organigram of Faculty*
- *Research plan 2021-2025*
- *Regulation for Student Registration*
- *Staff and Student Mobility lists*
- *Student incident report*
- *Subcommittee on complaints*
- *Subcommittee on Ethics*
- *Technology and Educational Investments*
- *Templates of the questionnaires for different stakeholder groups*
- *Syllabi of the subjects*
- *Statute of UBT College HEIPP (Statute)*
- *Other documents (Notes of an Industrial Board meeting, investments of UBT, Description of labs' equipment etc)*



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### **Additional documents**

- *The admission list for the last 2 years;*
- *Number of students per group for lectures and laboratory or practical work;*
- *Percentage of students abandoning their studies;*
- *Number of students with disabilities enrolled with examples of flexible treatment offered to these students;*
- *The quality assurance procedure;*
- *Statistics regarding the transfer requests in the last three years;*
- *Details about the campus of the Faculty and library (2 documents);*
- *Detailed agenda of the re-accreditation meeting with the list of persons attending;*
- *List of community services conducted by teaching staff;*
- *Examples of a complaint procedure made by students;*
- *Examples of an Individual Professional Development plan;*
- *Regulation for staff Appraisal;*
- *Regulation on Award of Academic Titles and Promotion (2);*
- *Regulation on Assessment and Administration of Exams;*
- *Regulation on Research work and Publications;*
- *Annual Quality Assurance Sub-Committee Report;*
- *Screenshots of several Course plans available online for student on the online learning platform;*
- *List of companies with the signed cooperation agreement;*
- *Cooperation agreements;*
- *Intellectual property policy document;*
- *Law on copyright and related rights;*
- *Law on Scientific-Research Activities;*
- *Teaching staff self evaluation template;*
- *Template of the Individual Professional Development Plan of the staff;*
- *Evaluation of Candidates;*
- *Regulation and procedure for staff recruitment;*
- *Regulation on labor relations and responsibilities for working duties UBT;*
- *Staff employment procedure (template document);*
- *Number of graduates from the generation enrolled in 2016\_2017;*



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- *Examples for procedure, policy, formula student admission;*
- *Regulation for student registration;*
- *List all major improvements in curriculum and syllabuses (BSc – CSE) from the last re-accreditation process.*

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

- *Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of Kosovo Accreditation Agency, 2021*

#### **1.2. Site visit schedule**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Participants</i>
<i>09:00 – 10:00</i>	<i>Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated (Joint Meeting)</i>	Rector: Edmond Hajrizi Dean: Bertan Karahoda Vice-Dean (for academic affairs): Besnik Qehaja Coordinator (master level): Ramiz Hoxha Coordinator (bachelor level): Diellza Berisha Head for research and development: Yll Haxhimusa Coordinator for research and development: Edmon Jajaga
<i>10.05 – 10.55</i>	<i>Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff (Joint Meeting)</i>	Ermal Lubishtani Besnik Skenderi Halil Bashota Betim Gashi Blerim Zylfiu



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<b>11:00 – 11:50</b>	<i>Meeting with the heads of the study programme</i>	Besnik Qehaja Edmond Jajaga Ermira Daka Vehbi Sofiu Astrit Hulaj
<b>12:20 – 13:05</b>	<i>Meeting with teaching staff</i>	Zhilbert Tafa Xhelal Jashari Blerton Abazi Edrina Gashi Shkelqim Berisha Vesa Morina Mirlinda Reqica
<b>13:10 – 13:55</b>	<i>Meeting with students</i>	Jehona Konushefci Genc Abazi Valdon Vitija Dionis Shabani Egzon Avdyli Enes Shala
<b>14:05 – 14:50</b>	<i>Meeting with graduates</i>	Liza Berisha Elinda Krasniqi Erza Baftiu
<b>14:55 – 15:40</b>	<i>Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders</i>	Shpend Sadiku Avni Ternava Ilirjan Biblekaj Vullnet Morina
<b>15:40 – 15:50</b>	<i>Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts</i>	
<b>15:50 – 16:00</b>	<i>Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program</i>	



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

UBT was established in Prishtina, Kosovo in 2001 as IEME – Institute for Enterprise Management and Engineering and in October 2004 became UBT – University for Business and Technology. UBT holds the license of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) No.808/02-1 dated 18.10.2004 in Kosovo and it is Accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. UBT developed over time and it operates in six different campuses: UBT Prishtina, UBT Innovation Campus (Science and Technology Park) – Lipjan, UBT Prizren, UBT Ferizaj, UBT Gjilan and UBT Peja. UBT consists of 19 Faculties with 25 Accredited Study Programs and one quarter of all courses are given in English or other foreign languages. In total, it has more than 500 employees and 300 visiting staff and over 17.000 registered students (80% bachelor, 20% master) with more than one hundred foreign visiting students per year.

The UBT College is governed by the UBT Governing Body, Academic Council, President and Executive Council and the Faculty of Information Systems works under the College management. Every statutory body has standing and ad-hoc structures, sub-committees and working groups. The Governing Board is collectively responsible for the management of the College and for ensuring that an effective system of internal control and representation is implemented within the institution. The Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering offers two programs: the Bachelor of Science (BSc) and the Master of Science (MSc) in the field of Computer Science and Engineering. Both of them are offered at the main campus of the College in Pristina, though the Faculty also operates in Ferizaj, Prizren and Peje. The Faculty follows the UBT regulations policies and adapts and reviews them by sending the proposal to the Academic Council of the College. The Faculty has an approach to improvement defined as a continuous responsive process that seeks to improve the outcomes, “A central concern of the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering is to secure and promote the quality of study and teaching” [SER, p.30].

The Bachelor (BSc) in Computer Science and Engineering is a three-year study program, with 180 ECTS allocated to it, that corresponds to Level 6 of the National Qualifications Framework and was last reaccredited in 2016. The main goal of the BSc in Computer Science and Engineering study program is to provide an academic education in the areas of core computer





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science, engineering and its applications, consisting of sound theoretical foundation, specialized knowledge and practical application. In order to achieve the main mission, the study program strives for excellence in creating and applying knowledge in computer science and engineering through modern educational programs, active research, collaboration with industry, government and society, as well as dissemination of knowledge through publications and service to professional societies and the community. The study program opens opportunities for several job profiles in the ICT sector and for continuing education at the Master level.

## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to the SER the UBT's Mission is to "prepare professionals with a global outlook and the skills needed for educational, scientific, social, economic, political, environmental and cultural advancement" [SER, p.2]. While the evaluated program "strives for excellence in creating and applying knowledge in computer science and engineering through comprehensive educational programs, excellent research, collaboration with industry, government and society, as well as dissemination of knowledge through publications and service to professional societies, the state and humanity" [SER, p.3]. In order to reach this mission, the program sets an intention that "students will learn about the foundations of informatics, mathematics for computer sciences, algorithms and data structures, operating systems, databases, programming, internet and software technologies, multimedia, artificial intelligence and much more. Apart from gaining knowledge and skills on professional subjects, students will gain skills on communication, presentation and exchange of ideas on issues related to their profession" [SER, p.3]. For this, "A variety of teaching methods are employed, mainly to foster active learning" [SER, p.16]. The study program was designed and is guided by the same strategic objectives as the college: (i) achieving academic excellence; (ii) developing research, innovation and social responsibility; (iii) creating a positive working and learning environment; (iv) maintaining and increasing internationalisation and regional partnerships; (v) partnering with the community. These objectives are part of the development plan of the programme.



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Though there are common points between them, the two missions - the institutional and the program mission do not seem to be fully synchronised. The mission statement of the program lacks a clear expression of its intention regarding teaching, research and involvement in society. However, these are, as shown above, intrinsically part of the program backbone. This is also reflected in an insufficiently developed research concept - which is explicable in the context of the recent focus on research in Higher Education in Kosovo.

The Expert Team (ET) praises the fact that the program was developed in relation with the needs of the industry, on the basis of Kosovo Qualification Framework and the good practice suggested by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and The International Association for Computer Information Systems (IACIS), thus ensuring the best chances for graduates to find employment [SER, p.14].

Both the SER and the annexed documents proved that the College and the Faculty have formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural and academic issues. Examples include: the Regulation on Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and the Statute of UBT. Moreover, there is a Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct at UBT that all members of the academic community are “obliged to execute” [SER, p.20]. The interviews indicated that all members of the academic community were aware of these regulations - a good premise for them to follow the provisions of these documents.

All the internal regulations are revised periodically, mainly prompted by the external evaluation by KAA, though the online interviews with the college representatives indicated their commitment for QA procedures that also include periodical revisions of the used instruments.

Standard	Compliance	
	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	



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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. Consider reflecting better the didactic concept of the program in the study program mission.
2. Evaluate the possibility of including references to the research concept of the program and the involvement in the community in the study program mission.
3. Develop appropriate mechanisms to ensure that all staff and students comply with internal regulations related to ethical conduct in research, teaching and assessment.
4. Consider periodical evaluation of all internal policies and regulations, not only in direct relation with the external evaluation.

**2.2. Quality management**

The Faculty staff participate in self-evaluations and in the quality improvement processes. The main quality management tool is a survey/questionnaire that is conducted once per semester for students and once per year for all other important stakeholders (teaching and administrative staff, graduates, employers). Staff members compose an annual template-based self-assessment report, which consists of an analysis of personal achievements over the last year and individual development plan, including the recommendations for improvement. Based on the information the year-end report creates a record of staff productivity in the areas of research, teaching,



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service, and administration.. Deans are responsible for performing the initial staff performance evaluation using a point-based numerical assessment of the distribution of efforts in line with the performance criteria set in the Regulation for Staff Appraisal [SER, p.55]. The ET observed that the performance appraisal is defined as a cyclical annual process that begins in January and ends in December - which is odd given the structure of the academic year. The ET commends the practice of having informal meetings at the middle of the period to review performance of work to date, and make necessary adjustments (clarify expectations, provide assistance etc.) before the formal meeting at the end of the year.

The quality assurance processes and the quality management structure is very well organized at the both levels, the College and the Faculty level and it covers all important quality aspects, such as ongoing monitoring and evaluation of study programs, student assessment, staff selection and development, student services and infrastructure development. The Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering has a designated Quality Assurance Officer and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee that work in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Committee and Quality Manager at the College level. UBT has adopted the Quality Manual as the main document which defines all the necessary policies, processes and procedures for ensuring the quality assurance processes. It is pertinent to note here that concerning the College level quality management, there is certain confusion in the regulations: the Statute states that the college has one Vice Rector called Deputy Rector, while the Quality Assurance Regulation states that the Rector authorizes a Vice-Rector for quality assurance. Moreover, the quality assurance representatives were not able at the meeting with the ET to name the immediate superior of the Quality Assurance Director. It was explained that the UBT has two Vice Rectors, one for Academic Affairs and one for Quality Assurance so the Statute of UBT College has to be reviewed and updated according to the actual organizational structure and in line with other Regulations.

Quality evaluation conducted through surveys/questionnaires for all groups of stakeholders (staff, students, graduates and employers) focuses on general issues and is not addressing the quality of the specific study programme, its inputs, processes and outputs, as well as the learning outcomes. Although, it was explained that the quality and content of the study program and learning outcomes are mainly and regularly discussed in live meetings with students and



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other stakeholders, the surveys/questionnaires must be revised and improved with questions regarding the quality and content of the study program and learning outcomes. The results are not publicly available in order to protect the privacy of the teaching staff (which is fine) but the feedback of the improvements based on the surveys/questionnaires input are publicly promoted, even as posters in lecture halls. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program (specially results from the industry stakeholders) and for the specific course improvement (specially results from the students).

The document Quality Manual sets out the requirement for periodicity (every three years) of study program quality analysis. Enforcing this requirement is a task of the Quality Assurance Committee at College level and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee at Faculty level. The fact that a big part of the latest versions of the documents came into force in the last three years shows that quality assurance arrangements for the study program are regularly evaluated and improved.

Standard	Compliance	
	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



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Standard 2.5. Quality assurance processes ensure both that required standards are met and that there is continuing improvement in performance.	X	
Standard 2.6. Survey data is being collected from students, graduates and employers; the results of these evaluations are made publicly available.	X	
Standard 2.7. Results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account for further development of the study program. This includes evaluation results, investigation of the student workload, academic success and employment of graduates.	X	
Standard 2.8. The institution ensures that reports on the overall quality of the program are prepared periodically (eg. every three years) for consideration within the institution indicating its strengths and weaknesses.	X	
Standard 2.9. The quality assurance arrangements for the program are themselves regularly evaluated and improved.	X	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. Quality evaluation conducted through surveys/questionnaires for all groups of stakeholders should put the focus on the quality of the specific study programme, its inputs, processes and outputs, as well as the learning outcomes.*
- 2. Develop and implement a system for receiving systematic feedback on the study program from alumni and employers.*
- 3. Close the feedback loop by publishing reports on the plans of improvement developed by the Faculty/College based on the feedback collected annually from students, staff and other stakeholder groups.*
- 4. Review and update the Statute of UBT College according to the actual organizational structure and in line with other Regulations.*

**2.3. Academic staff**



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The Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering in total counts 154 full time academic staff and approximately 80% of the study program is covered by full time employees that have only one teaching position at the UBT College. Furthermore, 108 full time academic staff hold a PhD degree, 29 hold an MSc degree and 17 BSc degree [SER, p.45-50]. Therefore, the condition that 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 degree, is satisfied. The Teaching staff list was verified with the e-Accreditation System operated by the KAA and also their employment status and qualifications have been approved by the National Quality Council. Consequently, it can be concluded that the teaching staff comply with the legal requirements in the Administrative Instruction.

During the meeting with the teaching staff it was confirmed that the employment procedures comply with the legal requirements and that it was conducted in accordance with the Law on Labour and Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Kosovo. The quality assurance procedures in the staff selection process, appraisal, and staff development are outlined in the Quality Manual which ensures that the internal procedures are fair and transparent. Furthermore, the Human Resource Manager is responsible for developing, managing, evaluating and implementing appropriate selection, appointment and recruitment procedures [SER, p.34].

Nearly 80% of the total teaching workload has been covered by full time employees. The current workload for a full time academic staff is divided on teaching (40%), administration (20%), research (30%) and academic community and community service (10%). The institution takes care that the teaching staff are also engaged in the academic community and community service. Although no examples for the community service and the activity of the institution in this field were provided in the SER, during the meetings with the Academic staff and Heads of the study programme several examples were provided such as organizing summer schools, involvement in projects for the municipalities of Kosovo (e.g. conducting feasibility studies), donating their computers to highschools in rural areas, etc. Additional documents enumerated among these community services: awareness campaigns (e.g. for traffic safety, women empowerment etc.), humanitarian actions, televised debates with students etc.



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The teaching workload is within the defined limits (maximum 10 hours per week), and the teaching staff confirmed that it is often lower than the maximum with which they are very satisfied since it allows them to conduct research activities and administrative work (e.g. coordination of master thesis). Furthermore, the Faculty management and the heads of the study programme confirmed that with the increasing number of student groups and total teaching hours, teaching staff workload will not go above the limit, rather they will recruit new teaching staff.

There is a comprehensive and detailed Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering 2020 – 2025 Development Plan, which was revised in 2021. The Development Plan covers all the important aspects and fields of the possible HEI development including teaching process, research, innovation, social responsibility, working environment, internationalisation, industry, academic and community partnership, etc. However, the impression of the ET is that its organisation and structure should be improved, with clearly defined milestones, key performance indicators, strategic goals, and activities. Furthermore, it should be applied and put into real practice and usage, while constantly monitoring the progress towards reaching the preset goals.

Academic staff have various opportunities for additional development of professional and teaching skills. Some of these opportunities are offered by the College and are prompted by the individual development plans of the teachers (instruments filled in by each teaching staff, annually). During the previous year, the staff development strategy was focused on providing effective pedagogical skills to teaching staff, such as student-centered learning, curriculum design, writing learning outcomes, lesson planning, design and delivery, group learning, problem-based and project-based learning, E-learning, Assessment, and integrating key skills into the curriculum [SER, p. 53]. An example of a good practice is that UBT has founded the IDEAA Institute for Development of Education and Academic Affairs which is responsible for providing effective pedagogical skills and training to the teaching staff.

Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly on a yearly basis through student surveys, annual quality assurance sub-committee report, research productivity reports, individual staff development plan, staff self-evaluation and point-based numerical assessment. It is recorded





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with the year-end Staff Evaluation Review Report which creates a record of staff productivity in the areas of research, teaching, service, and administration. The Dean is responsible for performing the initial staff performance evaluation in line with the performance criteria set in the Regulation for Staff Appraisal, but the report is sent to the Faculty Council and UBT Academic Council Committee for Staff Selection, Promotion, and Assessment [SER, p.55]. The results of all these evaluations are then discussed with each academic staff member in order to identify ways to overcome eventual shortcomings (especially in teaching). Nevertheless, the ET recommends the College to consider publishing these reports (or a short version of the reports) in a manner that could /should protect the personal data/identity of the academic members, but ensure closing of the feedback loop by informing the students about the results and develop a follow-up plan for the evaluations that they were involved in.

Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies but the quality of learning materials is superficially mentioned and it is needed to improve and give more importance within the Development plan and Quality Assurance Regulation documents.

Academic staff retire at age 65, but with the possibility of part-time employment even after retirement up to age 70. It is mentioned that the Law allows the recruitment of academic staff even after part-time retirement and which will enable the HEI to have dedicated visiting staff to share hands-on experience with students [SER, p.58]. The online interviews indicated that the Faculty currently employs only one teaching staff member over 65 years old that is allocated only 30% of a teaching workload. Although the internal regulations allow for teachers over 70 years-old to continue teaching for 2 hours/week, there is no-one in this situation currently.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No



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Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment. To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	X	
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	X	
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees, and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	X	
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	X	
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	X	



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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	
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. *Improve the importance of the quality of learning materials in the Faculty policies and official documentations*
2. *Improve and apply the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering 2020 – 2025 Development plan*

**2.4. Educational Process Content**

The BSc Computer Science and Engineering study program is designed to include some of the core areas of knowledge from the field of computer science and engineering and connected disciplines such as mathematics, electrical engineering, statistics, fine arts, linguistics and physical and life sciences. The main aim is to prepare graduates to work in several professions



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connected to the field. However, the goal of the BSc study should also be to prepare students for the Master program and this is not mentioned in the SER or included in the study program strategy. The study program complies with Level 6 of the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The program in general is very well organised, with a logical flow of subjects. The program is designed to offer the students six different streams of professional development. The study program consists of four semesters with an identical program for all students and then during the fifth and sixth semesters students can pick two elective courses per semester according to their stream of choice. However, since the elective courses should enable students to direct their education and skill towards one of the available streams (Software System Engineering, Communication Engineering, Web & Mobile Programming, Data Engineering and Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Graphics And Multimedia), the ET was concerned regarding the number of elective courses since having only two elective courses in two semesters is marginal enough to provide the specific knowledge from the selected stream/field of study. However, during the meetings with the Heads of the study program it was explained that they created the streams as recommendations, and not as requirements for students, such as an add-on to their main study program. Furthermore, it was explained that three more courses (Laboratory Course 1 (Group Project), Laboratory Course 2 (Group Project) and Computer Science 2) are also connected to the specific stream and during the courses they are using the specific technology connected with their stream selection. In general, it is needed to provide more support to students during the stream selection procedure. The ET has to mention that the study program website (<https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/bachelor-programs/computer-science-and-engineering/specializations/>) lists nine specialisations: Software Systems Engineering, Database and Information Systems, Computer Graphics and Multimedia, Web Programming, Networks and Telecommunication, Robotics and Intelligent Systems, Biomedical Informatics, Information Security and Assurance, Biomedical Informatics. Since there must be a mistake, the ET recommends the Faculty to update the information on the website to correspond to the most current reality.

The ET also observed that the division of enrolled students in groups for lectures (max 100 students/group) and laboratory/practical work groups (maximum 25-50 students/group) is still fuzzy. The described procedures during the online interviews and the additional documents



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provided indicated some discrepancies at the level of the third year groups. For example different number of groups from a year to another could be explained by a fluctuation in the number of students enrolled - as the percentage of those abandoning their studies varied between 9.5 and 11.35% of the cohort, in the last three years, but this was not specifically indicated by the provider.

The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and learning outcomes on the study program level meet the determination of the general and specific competencies. The courses within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which are available online in the Moodle platform and explained and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester. Course syllabuses contain student assessment mechanisms which are also clearly communicated to students at the beginning of every course. However, the syllabuses should be revised and improved. Learning outcomes must be improved in a such way that they are coherently followed across the whole study program and adequate for the Bachelor level (e.g. several example of the courses that should be updated are Introduction to Computer Animation, Computer Science 1, Introduction to Information Security, Algorithms, and data structures, etc.). Furthermore, the literature of the courses with older literature or literature not closely connected with the course's major field must be reviewed and updated (e.g. several example of the courses that should be updated are Fundamentals of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Academic Writing and Seminar, English for Engineers, Introduction to Information Security, Human Computer Interaction, Algorithms, and data structures, Systems and Signals, etc.).

The study program is oriented towards the student-centred learning and the UBT College has adopted a Competency Based Approach in curriculum development and the language in which the study program is offered is Albanian. The study program learning outcomes guide the teaching, learning and assessment methods [SER, p. 75]. Various teaching methods and a supervising system such as lectures, laboratory exercises, discussions, practical works, projects and seminars are used in the study program. However, the biggest emphasis is put on independent work and during the meetings with the students, teaching staff and the heads of the study programme it was confirmed that the recommendation from the last reaccreditation committee regarding the improvement of the supervision and assessment of independent work has been adopted. However, this is not described in the SER and it should be regulated through



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study program policies and rules. As the ET is still concerned that the independent work represents too big of a share of the workload associated with the discipline, while being difficult to monitor. The students mentioned that teachers review their homework and that this independent work helps them keep the pace with the learning and teaching and revise the concepts learned during the theoretical teaching. However, this seems to the ET to be a rather individual approach of some teachers instead of an institutional approach.

Furthermore, the content of several courses was improved in order to prevent overlapping and gaps between the different courses, as well as the introduction of new courses in collaboration with the industry (such as AI, 5G, Cloud Computing) in order to stay up to date with the technology advances and industry trends. The students and graduates that ET met were very positive about the student-teacher relationship.

Student assessment mechanisms are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of each course and student's knowledge is being assessed continually during the semester and at the end of each course, as stipulated in the Student Rulebook [SER, p.75] and this was confirmed by students. Teachers and students are obliged to behave during the examination process in accordance with academic principles and Code of Ethics of UBT College. The grading system represents a numerical or descriptive expression specifying the level to which the student has mastered the knowledge and skills and includes grades from 5 to 10. The passing level is 50% as widely used in Europe.

As part of the quality assurance process, the Faculty implements regular surveys with students, staff, and stakeholders and one of the goals is to verify standards of student achievement. The staff survey is intended to surface and ensure that teaching and learning methodology respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enables flexible learning paths, considers and uses different modes of delivery, uses a variety of pedagogical methods, regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and teaching methods, encourages a sense of autonomy among students, promotes mutual respect between teachers and students and that the institution implements an appropriate procedure for dealing with student complaints [SER, p.36]. The Faculty has established several procedures to be taken when dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate or inconsistently assessed such as syllabuses review by Compatibility Committee, providing effective pedagogical skills and training at IDEAA Institute of UBT – Institute for Development of Education and Academic



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Affairs and quality assurance procedures at the Faculty level conducted by a designated Quality Assurance Sub-Committee and Quality Assurance Officer.

UBT College has so far established cooperation agreements with many companies and institutions which include practical work for students, joint scientific research and projects, professional training opportunities, and sharing of the space and equipment. The Career and Internship Services program is administered and coordinated by the UBT College Career Office. However, the internship at the Bachelor study program is not mandatory, rather it is individualized and pursued only by some of the best students (who are recommended by Faculty staff and many declared they got a job offer at the end of the internship). More than a job seeking opportunity, the internship could be part of the learning process - a step for developing the practical skills described among the learning outcomes. The management and the heads of the study program stated that mandatory internship is not necessary due to the fact that the majority of students at the third years of the study are already working which was confirmed during the meetings with the students and the graduates. Furthermore, several students confirmed that although the internship is not mandatory they conducted practical work either at UBT College laboratories and IT department, or at companies.

Last but not least, the ET were concerned by the low rate of graduates reported by the College - around 25% per cohort were reported in the additional documents sent by UBT. Thus, the ET recommends the Faculty to investigate the reasons for this low rate of graduation and the possible approaches for improving this rate.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 4.1. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives. These include subject-related and interdisciplinary aspects as well as the acquisition of disciplinary, methodological and generic skills and competencies. The aspects refer especially to academic or artistic competencies, to the capability of taking up adequate employment, contributing to the civil society and of developing the students' personality.	X	



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Standard 4.2. The study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The individual components of the program are combined in a way to best achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning.	X	
Standard 4.3. The disciplines within the curriculum are provided in a logical flow and meet the definition and precise determination of the general and specific competencies, as well as the compatibility with the study programs and curricula delivered in the EHEA. To list at least 7 learning outcomes for the study program under evaluation.	X	
Standard 4.4. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise at least the following: the discipline's objectives, the basic thematic content, learning outcomes, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, the minimal bibliography, etc. The full course description/ syllabuses of each subject/ module should be attached only in electronic form to the self-assessment report for the study program under evaluation		X
Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is <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.	
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	





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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.	n.a.	
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	



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**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. The mission, goal and the strategy of the BSc study programme should also include the preparation of students for the Master study.*
- 2. Revise and improve the syllabuses: 1) Improve the learning outcomes of specific courses stated above and make them more uniform across all courses in the proposed study program; 2) Improve the literature list in syllabuses (where it is old, change it with the new one).*
- 3. Provide more support to students during the stream selection procedure.*
- 4. Regulate assessment and supervision of the students' independent work.*
- 5. Investigate the causes for low rates of graduation and develop a plan to tackle these causes in order to improve the overall graduation rate of the study program.*

## **2.5. Students**

According to the SER “student admission is regulated by the Faculty Council Admission Regulation” [SER, p.82] (standard 5.1). The student admission is organised in accordance with the provisions of Articles 22, 25 (paragraph 4, point F), 54 of the Statute of UBT College, as well as Articles 7 and 8 of the Administrative instruction of the Ministry of Education (MEST) no. 13/2018 on the Information Management System in Higher Education. Last but not least, the admission procedures are in accordance with the Article 13, paragraph 2, point 3, article 29, paragraph 7, article 30, paragraph 5 of Law no. 04 / L-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, based on the Decisions for accreditation of study programs and their licensing, for student registration realises the admission of students in the Computer Science and Engineering Program. All these, along with the enrollment sessions that inform students about the admission conditions and help them become familiar with UBT College, are meant to ensure an objective and transparent process of student enrollment. The Student Admissions Office and the Information and Promotion Office are responsible for fully informing potential candidates about the rules of admission (additional document). All potential students have to have completed lower and upper secondary education and successfully passed the Matura exam



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(standard 5.2). However, not all those interested in the study program can apply, as 'The University Studies Regulation determines which high school is eligible for enrolment in this study program' [SER, p.82].

In the SER, the admission written exam is not mentioned, rather the admission procedure is described as being based on the submission of specific documents that allows the College to create the admission list, the interviews indicated that during the last two years, the selection between the candidates was done based on two criteria: The high-school GPA and the result of a Mathematics exam. Among others, potential students have to "show that they are medically and legally fit for continuing their university studies" [SER, p.83]. Nevertheless, the program website included only very general references to the admission process (<https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/bachelor-programs/computer-science-and-engineering/admission/>).

Moreover, the additional documents provided after the site-visit indicated another admission procedure: a requirement of a minimum 3.5 grade point average during secondary education is required, but exceptions can be made for candidates with smaller GPAs, if they prove their skills during the interviews. This is a totally different approach than those described during the online site visit. Thus, the ET recommends the College to clarify the admission procedure, exactly what are the criteria considered for selection and how does one calculate the admission average, and publish it on the website. In addition, there is a dire need for instruments to ensure that the admission procedure is applied correctly, objectively and fairly to all candidates. For example, the persons involved in admissions should receive special training for this and the QA structures could monitor the process.

UBT highlighted its dedication for offering a qualitative study process that is focused on the "needs of the contemporary learner" [SER, p.83]. Besides the student-centred approach, the UBT college adopted a 'Competency Based Approach in curriculum development' [SER, p.83], thus both teaching and assessment are guided by the learning outcomes of the program. In order to ensure interactive teaching, a mix of teaching methods are used: "case-studies, project work, problem-based learning and simulated learning" [SER, p.83]. The SER mentions that courses are practice-oriented and that students are encouraged to interact with other students and to get involved in the teaching-learning process - all elements specific to student-centred learning that involves the learner in the process.



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During the online interviews, the ET found out that lecture groups consist of 100 students while groups for laboratory work gather around 25 or 50 students. These group dimensions are good premises for interactive learning, if backed up by teaching methods that are aligned with this teaching philosophy. As discussed in previous sections of this report, the academic staff have opportunities for personal and professional development including training for improving their teaching skills.

There are several instruments developed by the College to offer feedback to students and help them reach the intended learning outcomes: midterm evaluation (continuous assessment), student learning styles inventory, a mentorship programme, tutorials, workshops, etc. All these mechanisms of assistance are offered to students if the midterms/the evaluations indicate that the student needs extra help. All these are part of the efforts of the College to identify the students at risk of non-completion [SER, p.84].

The SER mentions that the Disability Assistance is the College unit responsible for providing support to students with disabilities in achieving their educational goals. The Faculty provided the institutional decision (as an additional document) according to which the College will ensure that for people with special needs, the College provides: access to spaces specially created/adapted for them, special test designs, special test duration (twice as long as the regular time). The College should consider ensuring flexible treatment to all students in challenging and mitigating circumstances that impact their studies, not only those with a certain disability/impairment. For example, a student who has suffered from COVID19 should be able to recover the missed lectures or exams. The same goes for a student who is experiencing bereavement from the death of a family member or loved one. Until now, the college provided these students with access to pre-recorded lectures and exercises throughout the online platform MOODLE. The tutoring system and the Counselling Centre are also designed to help students in such situations of difficulty to achieve their required skills, passing over their temporary loss of lectures/laboratories.

According to the SER “The Faculty maintains a list of student records: examination register, application, list of students taking the examination in the given examination period, examination report, students’ logbook, student files containing information on students’ re-



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examination activities and final grades earned during these activities. The Examination Log and applications are administered using the Student Management Information System (SMIS)” [SER, p.85-86] (standard 5.5 and 5.7). Student progress statistics are subject to the QA processes at Faculty level. The QA representatives explained to the ET how all these data are used to inform reports and decisions about the quality and improvement of the study program.

The College has an adopted policy for ensuring that the work of students is original. The Faculty Code of Ethics and the Student Conduct are the two documents that regulate this, defining the “expected standards of behaviour during education, working with patients, examination and written assignments” [SER, p.86]. They are promoted in the Student Handbook and students take notice of them by signing a written declaration attesting to the originality of their written work. Moreover, the Faculty operates plagiarism detection software. There is a Sub-committee of the faculty responsible for dealing with suspicions of violations of the Code. However, it is not clear whether all student work goes through these procedures (e.g. do all student papers go through Turnitin or just the BA and MA final thesis?). The document “Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications” covers only marginally the work produced by students (such as a seminar papers or diploma thesis). Therefore, the ET recommends that the College/Faculty develops regulations to put these policies into practice in a manner that ensures consistency, fairness and transparency of the processes.

Students’ rights and obligations are made publicly available, on the Faculty website and Student Portal (Standard 5.9.). They are also promoted through the Student Handbook and during the induction session offered to new students, at the beginning of each academic year. The Code of Ethics and other internal regulations determine the responsibilities/obligations of the students. The students have the right to academic appeals (to make an objection regarding the grades they received and they can resit the exam), this is regulated by the “Appeals and Complaints Policy” (provided as an additional document). However, it seems that students apply rather rarely to this procedure. In return, they prefer to reject their grade when they are not satisfied with their result. The rejection of the grade can be done by “the push of one button” (as one academic staff member mentioned during the online interviews) and then students have to take the exam again, during the next exam session. The regulations are clearly stated and well structured in the Complaints Regulation and in Article 31 of the Regulation for the Second Cycle of Studies. However, the ET recommend that the appeal procedure should be promoted



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more, so that students understand that it is their right to ask for a re-examination of their paper, in the same exam session, by another teacher/an objective third-party commission if they feel they were disconsidered by the teacher who initially evaluated their work.

Students' transfers are allowed and follow the provisions of the Ministry of Education. For transfers to be accepted, students have to prove that they graduated from secondary school, and that they have gathered the required ECTS number (similar workload). The request is analysed by the Transfers' Commission and the decision is taken by the dean [SER, p.88]. The statistics provided as additional documents indicated that there were between 160 and 278 students whose transfers' requests were approved in the last three years - this represents around 20-25% of the total number of students. Given the dimension of the transfers, the college should continue to work on the coherence, development and constant improvement of the transfer policies, as well as instruments to ensure its consistent and fair implementation.

Academic staff is available for two hours of consultations per week. These are part of a wider Student Support Program developed by UBT, which offers individual and group announcements, tutorials and consultation. Students mentioned several times that they appreciated their partnership-like relationship they have with their teachers and their availability for consultations and tutoring (which helps students prepare for exams).

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



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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. <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>	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.	X	
Standard 5.11. Academic staff is available at sufficient scheduled times for consultation and advice to students. Adequate tutorial assistance is provided to ensure understanding and ability to apply learning.	X	

**Compliance level: Fullycompliant**

**ET recommendations:**

1. The College should be more clear and transparent regarding the criteria of admission, the way the admission average is calculated and thus how are the potential candidates classified/hierarchised for selection.
2. Continue the efforts of fighting against plagiarism.
3. Promote the appeal procedure in order to ensure the right of a second opinion at the same examination session.



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4. Feedback for each course should also include suggestions on how the students can progress towards reaching the learning outcomes of the respective course.

## 2.6. Research

The goals of the study program include research objectives such as “the program strives for excellent research” and “contribute to research on current and future challenges” [SER, p.11]. Although the program is at Bachelor level, feedback from students and teachers showed that students were included in research work and paper publication, mainly at the UBT Annual International Conference. The document “Computer Science and Engineering Research Strategy” for the period 2021-2025 defines research mission, objectives and priorities. Furthermore, the “Development Plan of Computer Science and Engineering Faculty” defines contributions to UBT research goals, as well as activities towards the development of research. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities and performance in relation to these expectations are specified in the work contract, in the UBT Statute and in the Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications. The minimum standards are set in the employment contract and scientific performance is considered during staff evaluation and promotion processes. The College has the Research Centre for Computer Science and Engineering, which offers various research projects based on the innovative technology.

The research of academic staff is internationally visible since the majority have Google Scholar or Researchgate profiles and the papers are published under the name of the UBT. Several academic staff members have a proven track record with a high quality and quantity of publications in international journals and conferences while several are only producing the minimum of one scientific publication per year which is mandatory by their contract, mainly publishing at the local conference. In general, it is necessary to increase the publications in high quality international journals and conferences. Furthermore, the research of the academic staff does not necessarily harmonise with the topics they teach and there is a place for improvement. An example of good practice is the Annual International Conference organized by UBT College in various research fields for the past ten consecutive years, with a special track devoted to the Computer Science field. Furthermore, UBT College publishes an





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interdisciplinary peer reviewed International Journal of Business and Technology with papers in the field of technology and business.

Research is validated through scientific publications as well by the research boards of the College (according to the “Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications” submitted as additional document). Although the UBT established the Institute for Legal Support and Intellectual Property Rights there was no evidence that the technological transfer and intellectual property are regulated or supported by the Faculty. Furthermore, no evidence was provided that academic staff are encouraged to include in their teaching information about their research and scholarly activities that are relevant to courses they teach, together with other significant research developments in the field.

The Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications identifies different types of publications where staff can publish their research results, but the ET considers it is too generalised to serve as an instrument to hierarchize the publications. For example, with the purpose of using this in the process of academic professional progress. Since the research activity at UBT College is slowly progressing, the next steps of the College in this field would be to continuously, gradually, increase their standards of research and publication for their academic staff.

Standard	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Standard 6.1. The study program has defined scientific/applied research objectives (on its own or as part of a research centre or interdisciplinary program), which are also reflected in the research development plan of the institution; sufficient financial, logistic and human resources are allocated for achieving the proposed research objectives.	X	
Standard 6.2. Expectations for teaching staff involvement in research and scholarly activities are clearly specified, and performance in relation to these expectations is considered in staff evaluation and promotion criteria.	X	



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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.(1) 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	

**Compliance level:** Substantially compliant

**ET recommendations:**



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1. Develop and implement a regulation/policy on technology transfer and on intellectual property ownership.
2. Identify academic staff with low scientific activity and develop a model or regulation to improve it.
- 3.
4. Continue efforts to encourage academic staff to regularly improve the content of courses by including state of the art scientific findings and results.

## **2.7. Infrastructure and resources**

The UBT College has modern resources and infrastructure. However, the SER included little evidence regarding the premises and resources available specifically for the evaluated program. The additional documents received did not shed light on this matter. The College has allocated 30% of the spaces of the new building to the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering and they have been in use since 2021. According to the available documents, UBT allocated to the Faculty “one of the facilities at UBT Pristina and one of the facilities at the UBT Campus”. According to the SER, the Faculty is the primary user of five laboratories equipped with 60 computers each (electricity and internet). The Faculty plans to ensure access for students to virtual tools and some information environments that will help them with their learning [SER, p.111]. Moreover, several laboratories are shared with the Faculty of Information Systems such as Telecommunications Laboratory, Software Development Laboratory, Computer Network Laboratory, Robotics Lab, Modeling and Simulation Lab, etc. The laboratories are also equipped with softwares like Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, JAVA dk, Adobe Photoshop, 3D MAX, etc.

According to Faculty Management, the available information in the SER and within the additional documents, there are enough facilities and resources for supporting more students than the 500 currently allowed for enrollment. The ET observed that during the last two years the College enrolled 943 and respectively 971 students - but it was in special conditions of program functioning online during the COVID19 pandemic, thus this also proves the logistical capacity of the College to enrol higher number of students. However, the structure of the premises does not meet the requirements of modern university education, as there are



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practically no small seminar and group work rooms. This was partially solved by the new spaces in the new building, however there are still very little working spaces for students outside of classrooms or the library. An example of a good practice is that 5G-enabled connectivity is established in the campus.

According to the SER and the additionally submitted documents, the College library resources have all the necessary requirements (100 study places in the reading hall, more than 250,000 physical books and over 52,000 titles). UBT has an impressive library, however it is difficult to analyse how many students use it and if it is enough to answer the current and future needs of this program. Annex D to the SER presented a list of relevant book titles that are in the possession of the library and are useful for this study program, but without mentioning the number of copies available for students to loan. The College provides access to international scientific databases for its academic staff and students, that they all confirmed they use. However, the ET recommends the College to encourage them more to use these resources and monitor their usage.

The financial sustainability of the program is based on a plan that projects an increase both in student payments over the next three years and increases in other potential financial sources: research projects, services and donations. However, the Faculty does not benefit from financial independence (and does not operate an individual budget), but rather is confined to the engagement of the College to financially support the program in the future. According to the Dean, this program benefits from great popularity within UBT and the commitment of the UBT management is based on the past success of the program.

“UBT College infrastructure has been certified to meet the minimum standards for special needs students.” and as "far as is possible, College staff endeavour to assist students with disabilities in meeting their full academic potential” [SER, p.117]. This information was confirmed during the online meetings. To conclude, though the infrastructure of UBT College is impressive, the ET recommends a more strict allocation of resources per study program and a more thorough monitoring of the usage of both the facilities and other learning resources. A high number of students, such as 550 per study year - requires a lot of physical spaces, learning resources (e.g. domain specific text books) and equipment (e.g. computers) and a very efficient



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management of all these. For example, students mentioned that they benefit from flexibility regarding the attendance to lectures - if they miss the lecture of their group, they can attend the lecture of another group - but this means that there is a high risk of having more students in the lectures' hall than available places (if no planning is done to prevent this).

Students also confirmed they enjoyed the online teaching and that made it easier for them to participate in both lectures and (virtual) laboratory exercises, while the re-adaptation to going to physical classes, after two years of pandemic, is difficult especially for those commuting from outside of Pristina. The UBT College should use the lessons learnt during the COVID19 pandemic - e.g. about the online/distance teaching and learning - and use them to improve the current program, in the future.

Standard	Compliance	
	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 <b>financial plan</b> at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the <b>sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years</b> .	X	
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must <b>demonstrate</b> with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, <b>for the next at least three years</b> : a) <b>owned or rented spaces</b> adequate for the educational process; b) <b>owned or rented laboratories</b> , with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities; c) <b>adequate software</b> for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, <b>with utilisation licence</b> ; d) <b>library</b> equipped with <b>reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock</b> according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	X	



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Standard 7.4. <b>The number of seats</b> in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be <b>related to the study groups' size</b> (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 <b>at least 10% of the total number of students</b> in the study program; b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program; c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, <b>out of which at least 50% should represent book titles</b> 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.	X	
Standard 7.6. <b>The infrastructure and facilities</b> dedicated to the implementation of the program is <b>adapted to students with special needs.</b>	X	

**Compliance level:** Fully compliant

**ET recommendations:**

1. Develop a monitoring system to evaluate periodically the load of each facility and the usage of the equipment. Based on the collected data, analyse if the current facilities and equipment answer the needs of the higher number of students and determine future investment needs.
2. Consider lessons learnt and the acquired goods and skills during the COVID19 and how they could be put to value to improve the program in the future.



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### 3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

Based on the research of the extensive documentation submitted and an online visit to the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering that was very professionally organized, the Expert Team for the re-accreditation process prepared this report based on the defined Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA (updated 2021) and gave an overview of the current situation. UBT College is a large non-public institution that has an important role for the local but also regional higher education landscape. The growth of the College and the Faculty in the number of the employees and the high number of students is proof that there is a healthy relationship between the quality and content of the study program offered, the students interest and the needs of the labour market. This growth is also accompanied with achieving a high degree of institutional maturity in terms of organization, management and leadership.

The teaching and administrative processes of the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering are adjusted to the needs of students and the general goals of the proposed study program, Bachelor in Computer Science and Engineering, which are also in line with the mission and strategic goals of the Faculty and the College. However, there are several improvements that are necessary in order to further improve the quality of the evaluated study program:

- Improve the way the didactic and research concept, as well as the involvement in the community, is reflected in the mission;
- Consider including the idea of preparing students for the Master study in the strategy of the program/department;
- Revise and improve the syllabuses by: improving the learning outcomes, constantly updating the literature list in the syllabuses with including the state of the art scientific findings and results, as well as regulating the assessment and supervision of the students' independent work;
- Develop the QA system and instruments for collecting feedback from alumni and employers;
- Publish reports generated by the QA system and plans to improve the program based on the feedback collected through the QA instruments from different stakeholder groups;



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- Develop the mechanisms to permanently improve the quality and accessibility of learning materials;
- Improve, apply and monitor the implementation of the Development Plan of the Faculty;
- Provide more support to students in choosing the streams (as well as making them more differentiated from one another);
- Develop and implement a regulation/policy on technology transfer and on intellectual property ownership;
- Develop a monitoring system of the load/usage of the Faculty premises and equipment in order to be able to adapt them to the needs of the study programme.

Considering the documentation provided and discussions with the program development team, the ET gave the following compliance levels:

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

The Expert Team wants to point out that, in general, the self evaluation report is well written which has greatly facilitated the re-accreditation process. However, for several standards important information and more details were missing and those were obtained through the request for the additional documentation. We believe that the evaluated study program has a





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bright future, and we encourage the UBT College and the Faculty to improve it further and to continue with good practices.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Bachelor on in Computer Science and Engineering offered by the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering is Fully Compliant with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation Manual, and therefore, recommends to accredit the study program for a duration of 5 years with a total number of 550 students to be enrolled in the program.

#### Expert Team

##### Chair

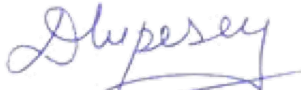
  
(Signature)

**Prof. Dr. Sc. Josip Balen**  
(Print Name)

**12th May 2022**  
(Date)

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##### Student Member

  
(Signature)

**Delia Lupescu (Gologan)**  
(Print Name)

**12th May 2022**  
(Date)

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