



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency



AAB College

PROGRAMME
Bachelor of Arts in Architecture

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

5/3/2025, Prishtinë

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
Site visit schedule	3
A brief overview of the programme under evaluation	4
PROGRAMME EVALUATION	6
1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	6
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	9
3. ACADEMIC STAFF	12
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	20
5. STUDENTS	29
6. RESEARCH.....	32
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES.....	36
OVERALL EVALUATION AND JUDGMENTS OF THE ET	38

INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the 'Bachelor of Arts in Architecture' programme submitted by the AAB College*
- *Revised version of the SER (received on 20th February 2025)*
- *Module descriptors (course syllabi)*
- *CVs of the staff*
- *The AAB College website <https://aab-edu.net/> (accessed on 20th February 2025).*
- *Statute of AAB College (December 2021)*
- *Regulations for Bachelor's studies (December 2021)*
- *Regulation on Quality Assurance (December 2021)*
- *Code of Ethics (December 2021)*
- *Strategic Plan 2022-2026 (January 2022)*
- *Quality Assurance Office: Semester Work Plan 2024/2025*

Criteria used for programme evaluations

The expert team followed the programme accreditation evaluation areas and standards, developed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) that are presented in the 'Regulation (KAA) No. 04/2024 for the Manual of Accreditation/Reaccreditation and Validation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes at the Bachelor's and Master's Level' (February 2024).

Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at AAB College		
Programmes:	Architecture, BA	
Site visit on:	20 February 2025	
Expert Team:	Philippe Bouillard Tihomir Dokšanović Arnoldas Solovjovas	
Coordinators of the KAA:	Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Director of Department at KAA Fjolle Ajeti, Senior Officer at KAA	
Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Kaltrina Jashanica Armend Fazliu Fitim Aliu
09:55 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Furtuna Mehmeti Medina Ceko Engjellusha Osmani

10:35 – 11:30	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme	Kaltrina Jashanica Blerim Lutolli Ejup Dullinja Rilind Cocaj
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	
12:40 – 13:20	Visiting facilities	
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff	Arianit Loxha Bujar Demjaha Adelina Tahiri Flaka Krasniqi Hektor Vokshi Merkur Pajaziti Nora Ahmeti Alan
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with students	Dren Sadullahi Era Sylaj Rita Selaci Vlora Krasniqi Djellrina Kasami Eltonida Shala
14:40 – 15:20	Meeting with graduates	Ledina Kajtazi Florentin Zeneli Leonat Shabani Besjana Preniqi Ardian Zeqiri Anita Zeqiri
15:20 – 16:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Valdete Pacolli Abedin Beqiri Mentor Llugaliu Elira Beqaj Driton Kukalaj Behar Dyla
16:00 – 16:10	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:10 – 16:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Kaltrina Jashanica Armend Fazliu Fitim Aliu

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

AAB College is a private institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo and was established in 2002 with a unique programme of Journalism and Mass Communication, that continued with the accreditation of study programmes in the field of forensic science in cooperation with the Public University of Sarajevo. AAB expanded as an institution by continuously offering study programmes from other fields. Currently, AAB organises studies in 14 study fields delivered by the respective faculties and departments. In these study fields, a total of 22 Bachelor and 16 Master study programmes are delivered. AAB College delivers teaching in the main campus in Prishtina, and in the two branches in Gjakova and Ferizaj.

The programme of Architecture at the AAB College was established in the year 2005 and since then, has experienced steady growth, in the number of disciplines and also in the number of academic staff. The Bachelor of Arts in Architecture programme focuses on the artistic-creative

stimulation of students based initially on instruments and permanent knowledge of architecture in a proper relationship with technological trends, new construction techniques and methodologies, constructive possibilities, and transformative aspects of the discipline, always considering the local and global dimensions. The number of enrolled students has varied from 134 to 176 over the last three academic years.

The programme under evaluation for re-accreditation is the Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, NQF/EQF level 6, of a total duration of 3 years, with 60 ECTS credits per academic year.

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

The programme evaluation consists of 7 standard areas through which the programme is evaluated.

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard 1.1 The study programme is in line with the higher education institution's mission and strategic goals, and needs of society and it is publicly available. (ESG 1.1)

The content and structure of the study programme are publicly available and well aligned with the AAB vision and mission to provide quality educational programmes for the labour market in Kosovo, to advance knowledge through research and to provide an environment that results in personal development. The mission of the Architecture programme (SER p. 8) aims at providing *'a high-quality, student-centred education that equips future architects with strong theoretical foundations, practical design skills, and a deep sense of environmental and cultural responsibility.'* The SER articulates this mission with the mission of AAB and the Faculty of Architecture showing a very good alignment (SER pp. 9-10).

Although limited information has been provided in SER, the ET gathered evidence during the interviews that the study programme recognises the specificities of the HEI position in the regional area.

The programme learning outcomes (PLOs) as defined by the SER (pp. 11-12) are adequately grouped in knowledge (7), skills (5) and competences (6). They are clearly and adequately articulated with the strategic objectives of AAB College. There is, however, some useless overlapping between some of them (e.g. skill #2 and competence #5, skill #3 and competence #4). These overlaps could be resolved to offer a more compact vision of the PLOs and reduce the number of PLOs to 10-12, as suggested by the ECTS User's Guide.

AAB provides limited information about a needs analysis to support the study programme (employment prospects, demand for the programme by potential students) beyond mentioning (vague) employment opportunities in private and public sectors, as freelancers in Europe or beyond (SER p. 7).

The rationale behind the number of seats of 200 is not motivated in the report. The ET found evidence, as explained in this report in various sections, that this number might be too high and recommends decreasing it to improve the quality of the programme.

AAB facilities and equipment are capable of accommodating the number of students to be enrolled. Depending on the number of admitted students, the programme is organised in separate groups: 60-80 students for lectures, and 15-30 students for tutorials, which is positive.

Standard 1.2 The study programme is subject to policies and procedures on academic integrity and freedom that prevent all types of unethical behaviour. The documents are publicly available, and staff and students are informed thereof. (ESG 1.1)

The study programme is subjected to AAB policies and procedures for academic integrity and freedom, preventing any form of unethical behaviour. The programme is supported by clear rules for dealing with plagiarism, and academic misconduct, through the Code of Ethics, the Ethics Committee and the Study Regulations. All students and staff are informed of these rules, and the documents are publicly accessible. Across the discussions with the academic staff and students, the ET found evidence that the procedures are implemented and the students' work is checked with the anti-plagiarism software TurnItIn.

Standard 1.3 Relevant information is collected, analysed and used to ensure the effective management of the study programme and other relevant activities and such information is publicly available. (ESG 1.7)

The SER states that the College has an information management system that provides up-to-date and reliable data, with concrete action plans for monitoring study programmes. In addition, ethical norms and policies for data protection and student privacy are respected, and students and staff are engaged in providing and analysing information and planning support activities, although no information has been provided about these norms and policies. E-Student and E-Professor are two data management systems, which enable the entire progress of the academic process to be documented through a system which contributes to accurate communication between lecturers and students. However, limited information is also provided on how students and staff of the study programme are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities. The ET recommends better evidencing the indicators, e.g. by providing links to the policies or related data.

Standard 1.4 The delivery of the study programme is supported by appropriate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its goals in teaching, learning, research, and community service. (ESG 1.6)

In terms of organisation, the programme is managed by the Scientific Teaching Council, the Master's Study Council, the Dean, the Vice Dean and a coordinator for quality assurance. The administration of AAB College employs a number of administrative staff who facilitate and support the learning process of students and academic staff, although limited information is provided about the number of staff available for the programme and no clear information has been provided about their professional development plans. The ET recommends elucidating the professional development plans for both the management and administrative staff.

Standard 1.5 The recommendations for quality improvement of the study programme from previous internal and external quality assurance procedures are implemented. (ESG 1.10)

The SER shows that the recommendations of the previous accreditation have been properly analysed and addressed. Relevant actions have been implemented or are considered for future improvement. There is, however, limited evidence that the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) loops are perfectly integrated into the management system (internal quality assurance). In this regard, the ET consulted the Semestrial Quality Plan which is composed of a list of tasks or action without any analysis, indicator of progress, or plan for monitoring (see also Standard 2.1).

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends avoiding overlaps in the programme learning outcomes. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 2. The ET recommends better evidencing the indicators in subsequent quality reports, e.g. by providing links to the policies or related data.*
- 3. The ET recommends elucidating the professional development plans for both the management and administrative staff. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Standard 2.1 The study programme delivery is subject to an established and functional internal quality assurance system, in which all relevant stakeholders are included. (ESG 1.1)

AAB College has developed internal regulations which set out the quality assurance procedures of programmes within the College such as the Quality Assurance Regulation, the Quality Assurance Guide, and the Strategic Development Plan of AAB College. They are in line with national regulations and ESG. The Faculty of Architecture intends to create a positive environment all staff participate in their own evaluation processes and quality improvement processes by holding regular meetings with academic staff where syllabi, learning, assessment forms, assessment results and overall student performance results are discussed. The AAB regulations define the criteria for reviewing programmes, opportunities for linking programmes with the labour market, the aspect of description and content of courses within the programs, etc. However, as detailed in Standards 4-5, the procedures are not yet sufficiently robust and the ET is missing evidence of clear improvement.

In the organisational aspect, AAB College has a Quality Assurance Office and quality assurance coordinators at the Faculty level. The Faculty of Architecture has a quality assurance coordinator who actively cooperates with the Central Quality Office. The office is an independent structure which continuously carries out its own internal evaluation processes which aim to ensure a quality level of teaching, learning, review of existing programmes.

The Semestrial Quality Plan is a positive tool that should be developed at the programme's level for programme monitoring and complemented with clear objectives, analyses and monitoring the key performance indicators to focus on quality improvement.

Standard 2.2 The study programme is subject to a process of design and approval established by the HEI. (ESG 1.2)

The study programme is very well aligned with the Faculty of Architecture mission and strategic goals. According to the AAB Statute, study programmes undergo annual review processes involving internal and external stakeholders. Following consultative meetings with students, graduates, and industry representatives, several changes have been made to the curriculum. The changes mainly concern the shifting of subjects from different years and changing their status from mandatory to elective subjects. However, key performance indicators are not clearly defined or monitored, and the ET recommends defining and monitoring key performance indicators at the programme's level.

Standard 2.3 The study programme is periodically monitored and reviewed to ensure its objectives are achieved. The monitoring of the study programme involves stakeholder participation. (ESG 1.9)

The BA program in Architecture is regularly monitored to assess its relevance to society through biannual employer and industry surveys. Additionally, employers and industry representatives can recommend new content within the study program either through surveys or formal meetings. During the site visit, the ET could confirm that informal feedback was also occurring thanks to the close collaboration with employers.

Student workload and learning outcomes are supposed to be monitored through surveys and ad hoc formal meetings with students. These consultations aim to assess whether students' workload is manageable and whether the courses within the curriculum are adequate and meet their expectations. However, as described in Standards 4-5, these consultations do not produce the expected effect and needs further attention. The ET recommends enhancing the monitoring the student workload and learning outcomes by making the procedure most robust and the staff participation more active.

The Quality Assurance Office also plans and participates in focus group meetings with all relevant stakeholders, including academic staff, graduates, and employers, as a means of collecting qualitative data. Based on these discussions, the Quality Assurance Office formulates recommendations that are submitted to the Faculty Management for consideration in the design and review of the study program.

Regarding the surveys, the ET found much evidence that several surveys based on a semesterly and annual work plan: Student questionnaire to assess the lecturers and the subject, Questionnaire for evaluation of practical work; Students questionnaire to assess administrative services and infrastructure, Questionnaires for employers and industry, Questionnaires for graduates.

The way the surveys are analysed and the information collected is, however, less clearly developed in the SER. The results of the monitoring process and the action plan is rarely communicated and not available on the website. The ET recommends addressing this urgently.

Standard 2.4 All relevant information about the study programme is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and is publicly available. (ESG 1.8)

The SER is not very accurate in showing how the relevant information about the programme is clear and publicly available. The SER refers to the AAB website (<https://aab-edu.net/per-aab/aktet-universitare/>) and a specific section about the Faculty of Architecture (<https://aab-edu.net/fakultetet/arkitekture/>). After examining these weblinks, the ET can confirm that all policies, regulations and guidelines relevant to the programme are available to the public. The information on admission criteria is also available, but this is less clear regarding syllabi, learning outcomes (they are currently outdated), or assessment methods. The information

about pass rate, dropout rate and graduate employment rate is not available. The ET recommends enhancing urgently the information available on the website to cover all expected information.

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends developing the Semestrial Quality Plan at the programme's level and complementing it with clear objectives, analyses and monitoring the key-performance indicators to focus on quality improvement. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
2. *The ET recommends enhancing the monitoring the student workload and learning outcomes by making the procedure most robust and the staff participation more active. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
3. *The ET recommends communicating the results of the programme's monitoring process and the subsequent action plan, making them publicly available on the website. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
4. *The ET recommends enhancing the information publicly available on the website to cover information about the pass rate, dropout rate and graduate employment rate. Similarly, the learning outcomes must be updated and information about syllabi and assessment methods shared. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

Standard 3.1 The study programme delivery is supported by teaching staff who are recruited in line with national legislation, and internal regulations in effect, and it is based on objective and transparent procedure. (ESG 1.5)

The SER does not explicitly mention the extent to which vacancies are advertised internationally. While it confirms compliance with national labour laws and accreditation requirements, it does not provide evidence that job postings reach international platforms beyond internal and national publications. Expanding recruitment efforts to international academic networks, such as global job portals or international academic forums, would further strengthen the institution's ability to attract a diverse and highly qualified applicant pool.

AAB adheres to national labour laws, the AAB College Statute, and accreditation regulations, ensuring staff recruitment follows a structured framework. Academic staff are employed under formal contracts that outline duties and responsibilities, which enhances procedural transparency. However, the SER does not explicitly mention whether detailed reports of recruitment procedures, selection committee compositions, or decision-making processes are publicly available. Publishing anonymised recruitment reports or standardising selection criteria with precise scoring mechanisms could enhance transparency and ensure a meritocratic hiring process.

The selection process aligns with institutional and national regulations, ensuring candidates meet academic and professional expectations. The job descriptions comprehensively define academic, research, and administrative duties, which supports informed recruitment decisions. However, the SER does not indicate whether recruitment criteria are directly linked to institutional strategic goals or program-specific requirements. Introducing competency-based hiring criteria that explicitly connect candidate expertise with programmatic needs could further refine the selection process.

The SER confirms that academic staff receive a detailed work contract outlining duties and responsibilities in Article 4 of the contract and the Regulation for the Systematisation of Workplaces. The description covers teaching, research, and administrative roles, ensuring staff understand their obligations towards students, the Faculty of Architecture, and AAB College. However, the extent to which employment conditions, benefits, and career progression opportunities are communicated is unclear. Enhancing clarity on long-term career development and evaluation mechanisms would give academic staff greater job security and motivation.

Standard 3.2 The study programme is supported by sufficient permanent academic staff who are adequately qualified to deliver the study programmes. (ESG 1.5)

The Faculty of Architecture employs 20 academic staff members, of which 17 are full-time employees, and 7 hold a doctoral degree (41,17%), while the remaining are pursuing their

doctoral studies. This ensures that over 50% of the teaching faculty have a permanent, full-time employment contract, meeting accreditation requirements. While the qualification levels are adequate for delivering the study programme, the proportion of staff pursuing doctoral degrees suggests a need for structured academic career development support. Ensuring that these individuals complete their doctoral studies in a timely manner would further strengthen the Faculty's academic credentials.

The SER confirms that no regular academic staff members hold teaching contracts with more than one accredited institution. This compliance with the Administrative Instruction for Accreditation and verification by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) ensures that faculty members are not overextended across multiple institutions. This commitment to maintaining focused teaching engagement is a positive aspect, as it supports higher instructional quality and increased availability for student mentoring.

The institution ensures that academic staff are not overburdened, as their engagement aligns with European higher education norms. Each faculty member has a teaching load of 6 to 8 hours per week across the entire programme, which allows for a balanced distribution of responsibilities. This teaching load allocation facilitates quality interactions with students while allowing time for research, professional development, and administrative duties. However, it remains unclear how mentoring and research responsibilities are formally structured. Introducing a clearer framework for monitoring non-teaching academic obligations could further ensure equitable workload distribution.

The report states that over 50% of the academic staff are full-time employees, which is in line with accreditation requirements. This level of commitment from full-time staff contributes to the continuity and stability of the programme, ensuring that students receive consistent guidance throughout their studies. However, the fact that all academic staff members are on fixed-term contracts (ranging from 1 to 3 years) raises concerns about job security, staff retention, and long-term programme stability. While fixed-term contracts allow for performance evaluation and flexibility, they also pose risks such as high turnover rates and reduced institutional commitment from faculty members. Additionally, as a substantial number of part-time faculty members are involved, monitoring their availability and commitment to students should remain a priority to avoid potential gaps in student support and curriculum delivery.

For the BA in Architecture (180 ECTS, three years), the Faculty has assigned four full-time faculty members with a Doctor of Science degree to oversee three student groups. This allocation ensures that the programme meets the ECTS-based faculty distribution criteria defined in the Accreditation Manual. The presence of doctoral-level instructors in programme leadership roles is a significant strength, ensuring academic rigour and high-quality teaching standards.

The student-to-academic staff ratio in the BA in Architecture is 1:30, which fully aligns with both local legislation and international standards. While the SER states that the student-to-teacher ratio is 1:30, it does not provide the actual number of enrolled students, making it difficult to verify whether this ratio is accurate. Without this key supporting data, the claim remains unsubstantiated. Additionally, the SER does not indicate whether trends in student enrolment might require future adjustments, nor does the ratio include part-time faculty members. A proactive monitoring system that assesses changes in enrolment and faculty expansion needs would help maintain this balance over time.

All academic staff are assigned courses within the curriculum that match their field of study and scientific publications. The CVs and publication records provided as an appendix confirm that faculty members have subject-matter expertise, reinforcing the alignment between teaching responsibilities and research specialisation.

The faculty workload aligns with relevant legislation and accreditation standards, as faculty members balance teaching, mentoring, research, and administrative duties. While the workload appears reasonable, further insights into how mentorship obligations are assigned would be beneficial to ensure that students receive adequate academic supervision.

The workload distribution allows for appropriate engagement in teaching, mentoring, professional activities, and community service. Faculty members are involved in various academic initiatives, including planning and implementing projects in architecture, organising guest lectures, and leading student visits to relevant institutions. This engagement in extracurricular activities enhances the student learning experience. However, the institution could further improve workload transparency by introducing more structured workload tracking mechanisms.

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) does not provide details on the number of available mentors, making it impossible to evaluate whether students receive adequate academic supervision. Since mentoring is a crucial component of thesis supervision, research support, and individualised learning, the lack of data on mentoring capacity raises concerns. Are only the PhD holders mentors, and if so, how they are coping with such a large student base is unclear. Additionally, whether the Faculty has a standardised mentoring structure or whether student feedback is collected to assess mentorship effectiveness is unclear. Implementing formalised mentoring guidelines and periodic evaluations could strengthen the quality of student supervision.

Standard 3.3 The study programme is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence. The advancement of staff arises from the higher education institution's strategic goals and is in line with the legislation and internal regulations in effect. (ESG 1.5)

The Regulation on Election, Re-election, and Academic Advancement provides a structured framework for academic staff promotion, ensuring compliance with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST) and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). This alignment with national legal standards supports transparency and procedural objectivity. However, the SER does not explicitly mention the level of transparency in decision-making processes. While the regulation outlines advancement criteria, there is no reference to how selection committees operate, how candidates are evaluated comparatively, or whether unsuccessful applicants receive feedback. To further enhance procedural transparency, the institution could consider:

- Publishing selection committee reports and anonymised candidate evaluations.
- Ensuring that selection criteria are consistently applied across all faculties.
- Introducing an appeals mechanism for staff who wish to contest promotion decisions.

The advancement system is primarily research-driven, requiring candidates to publish in SCOPUS and Web of Science (WoS)-indexed journals. The SER clearly defines quantitative thresholds for each academic title (e.g., one paper for Assistant Professor, three for Associate Professor, and five for Full Professor), ensuring the process remains meritocratic and measurable. While this strong research focus aligns with international academic standards, the SER lacks discussion on broader academic contributions, such as:

- International collaborations beyond publications.
- Engagement in externally funded research projects.
- Involvement in student mentorship and curriculum development.
- Contributions to academic textbooks or conference proceedings.

Incorporating these additional qualitative indicators could provide a more holistic assessment of faculty contributions, ensuring that teaching excellence and institutional engagement are equally valued alongside research productivity.

The SER confirms that teaching evaluations and student feedback are considered in promotion decisions. This inclusion ensures that academic staff are not assessed solely based on research output but also on their pedagogical effectiveness. However, the extent to which student feedback influences promotions is unclear. The SER does not provide information on:

- Whether faculty members receive detailed performance reviews based on feedback.
- How negative student evaluations impact promotion outcomes.
- The role of peer and administrative evaluations in the decision-making process.

Standard 3.4 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study programme is entitled to institutional support for professional development. (ESG 1.5)

AAB has established a five-year strategic plan for the professional development of its academic staff, which ensures structured engagement in training and skill development activities. This demonstrates a long-term institutional commitment to faculty development. However, the SER does not provide specific details on how participation is monitored and whether there are mandatory training components. Introducing tracking mechanisms and regular performance assessments could enhance the plan's effectiveness.

The SER confirms that faculty members engage in professional development programmes, including testing and assessment methods training. Furthermore, AAB has established QAPI (Quality Assurance and Professional Improvement Center), which provides structured certified professional training across three levels (basic, professional, and advanced). The existence of a dedicated centre for faculty advancement is a strong institutional asset. However, there is no data on participation rates or the impact of training on teaching quality. Regular impact assessments could strengthen the credibility of the initiative.

Faculty members receive training in assessment methodologies as part of their professional development programmes, which indicates an institutional commitment to teaching quality improvement. However, the SER does not specify how frequently these training sessions occur or whether they are tailored to faculty needs. Introducing mandatory refresher courses and tracking assessment skill improvements over time could enhance this initiative.

AAB actively encourages international engagement through Erasmus+ programmes, study visits, international projects, and participation in international conferences. This commitment to global academic exchange is a significant strength. Faculty members also participate in open lectures abroad and collaborate in multinational research projects. However, the SER does not mention funding support mechanisms for international participation. Ensuring sustainable funding and clear guidelines on selection criteria for international programmes could further expand faculty mobility opportunities.

AAB provides structured training sessions introducing faculty to higher education regulations, ECTS credit allocation, learning outcomes, and teaching methodologies. The QAPI centre is pivotal in delivering these training programmes, ensuring progressive skill development across different levels. However, the SER does not provide specific data on evaluating these training sessions. Implementing faculty feedback surveys post-training could help refine programme content and delivery.

AAB ensures that new faculty members receive training before teaching, strengthening their pedagogical competencies. This onboarding process includes introductory programmes covering institutional standards and regulations. However, the SER does not specify whether mentoring by senior faculty members is part of this process. A structured mentorship programme for new hires could provide additional practical teaching support.

AAB ensures new staff undergo training in QA standards, institutional regulations, and ethical guidelines. This structured onboarding process enhances institutional alignment and compliance with academic quality standards. However, the SER does not clarify whether onboarding is standardised across all departments. Establishing uniform guidelines and an onboarding checklist could ensure consistent orientation experiences for all new hires.

AAB provides mentoring, project assistance, and training in research proposal development. The Vice Rector's Office for Scientific Research and the Scientific Commission actively support faculty research. Additionally, the Office for Projects provides continuous training on research project management, ensuring faculty members can access resources for securing external funding. However, the SER does not specify whether faculty members receive individualised research support or if participation in mentoring programmes is mandatory. Establishing personalised research development plans could further enhance faculty research productivity.

Standard 3.5 External associates who teach at the study programme have adequate qualifications and work experience for the delivery of the study programme and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (ESG1.5)

The Faculty of Architecture engages several external collaborators from the labour market to serve as lecturers in the BA programmes in Architecture. This ensures that students are exposed to industry-relevant knowledge, trends, and practical insights, enhancing the curriculum's applied dimension. However, the SER does not provide specific details on how these external associates contribute to research integration or whether their industry expertise is periodically updated. A structured evaluation mechanism or regular industry collaboration workshops could ensure that their input remains aligned with evolving market demands.

While the Faculty ensures that all external associates possess the necessary qualifications and expertise, there is no mention of formal training sessions on higher education methodologies, such as ECTS credit allocation, learning outcome development, or assessment strategies. External associates may lack alignment with academic best practices without structured pedagogical training. Implementing mandatory orientation sessions for external lecturers covering teaching standards, student assessment methods, and curriculum alignment would improve the overall quality and consistency of instruction.

The SER does not mention whether external associates actively participate in student mentorship or thesis supervision. If they are involved in guiding students through final projects, it would be beneficial to formalise this role by:

- Establishing clear guidelines on external associates' co-supervision responsibilities.
- Ensuring coordination between full-time faculty and external supervisors to maintain academic quality.
- Encouraging student feedback on the effectiveness of external mentor support.

It is unclear to what extent external lecturers contribute to student research development without explicitly mentioning co-supervision.

The SER does not provide any information on how the workload for external associates is structured or whether contractual agreements define clear teaching expectations. This lack of transparency could result in inconsistencies in external lecturers' involvement across courses. Without elements such as standardised workload agreements, minimum engagement requirements and a formal review process, it is difficult to determine whether external associates are consistently integrated into the academic structure.

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends increasing transparency in recruitment processes by ensuring the publication of anonymised selection reports, developing a competency-based hiring framework, and expanding job advertisements to international academic platforms. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 2. The ET recommends standardising the student-to-teacher ratio reporting by providing precise enrolment data, tracking student numbers over time, and ensuring appropriate faculty expansion based on projected enrolment trends. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 3. The ET recommends strengthening faculty workload monitoring by introducing structured workload tracking mechanisms that balance teaching, research, and mentorship responsibilities, ensuring equitable distribution. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 4. The ET recommends formalising long-term employment pathways by reducing reliance on fixed-term contracts and establishing structured career progression plans for full-time academic staff. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 5. The ET recommends improving mentorship structures by defining a precise faculty-to-student mentoring ratio, standardising supervision responsibilities, and implementing student feedback mechanisms to assess mentoring effectiveness. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 6. The ET recommends enhancing the promotion system by incorporating broader academic contributions such as teaching excellence, student mentorship, international research collaborations, and externally funded projects into advancement criteria. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 7. The ET recommends increasing transparency in academic promotions by developing a weighted scoring system for evaluations, publishing anonymised committee reports, and introducing a formal appeals process for promotion decisions.*
- 8. The ET recommends strengthening professional development follow-up by implementing quantifiable indicators to track faculty participation in training programmes and measuring the impact of professional development initiatives on teaching and research performance.*

9. *The ET recommends expanding faculty training in teaching methodologies by introducing mandatory refresher courses in pedagogical techniques, assessment strategies, and curriculum development.*
10. *The ET recommends ensuring sustainable funding for international faculty mobility by developing clear guidelines on financial support for study visits, research collaborations, and conference participation.*
11. *The ET recommends formalising external associate hiring by implementing mandatory training in higher education teaching methodologies, defining workload expectations, and establishing formal co-supervision agreements for thesis mentoring.*

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

Standard 4.1 The study programme's intended learning outcomes are formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices; they are aligned with the published institution's/academic unit's mission and strategic goals and are publicly available. (ESG 1.2)

The learning outcomes of the BA programme in Architecture have been developed following AAB College's internal regulations and Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) standards, aligning with institutional and national strategic goals. The SER does not explicitly state how each specific learning outcome corresponds to the institution's broader mission and objectives. A more detailed mapping of intended learning outcomes against AAB's strategic goals would enhance transparency and demonstrate the programme's direct contribution to institutional objectives.

The SER provides a structured breakdown of knowledge, skills, and competencies that graduates will acquire, demonstrating alignment with the broader goals of the study programmes. The logical progression of knowledge acquisition, from foundational theories to advanced architectural design concepts, indicates a well-structured curriculum. However, the SER does not explicitly compare each intended learning outcome against the specific objectives of the study programmes. A formalised alignment table or matrix mapping learning outcomes to programme objectives would improve clarity.

The learning outcomes clearly describe what a graduate will know and be able to do, following a competency-based framework categorised into knowledge, skills, and competencies. This structure ensures clarity and relevance from a student's perspective. However, the SER does not confirm whether these learning outcomes are published and easily accessible on the HEI's website. Providing direct references or links to published learning outcomes would strengthen transparency and accessibility for students and stakeholders. The ET reviewed the website and the English version of the site (<https://aab-edu.net/en/faculties/architecture/study-programs/architecture-en/>) contains different PLOs than those listed in SER, and the Albanian site (<https://aab-edu.net/fakultetet/arkitekture/programet-studimore/arkitekture/>) does not seem to contain PLOs.

The SER explicitly states that the programme follows international best practices, including the ECTS Users' Guide and publications on learning outcome formulation. This confirms that the HEI has adopted a structured and internationally recognised approach to defining learning outcomes. However, no specific benchmarking studies or external validation processes are mentioned. Including references to external curriculum reviews or consultations with academic experts would substantiate the claim of using good practices.

The programme's learning outcomes are categorised into three distinct domains:

- Knowledge (theoretical and applied understanding of architecture),
- Skills (practical design and professional abilities), and
- Competencies (critical thinking, sustainability, communication, and adaptability).

This structure ensures alignment with first-cycle (bachelor's level) expectations under the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The progression from fundamental to advanced learning also aligns with standard curriculum structuring.

The SER states that the BA Architecture programme is based on the experiences of international universities, including TU Wien, the University of Ljubljana, and the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna. While this suggests an effort to align with EHEA standards, the SER does not provide an explicit comparative mapping between the BA Architecture programme at AAB College and equivalent programmes in European institutions. Providing a formal benchmarking analysis would strengthen the claim of comparability.

Standard 4.2 The study programme's intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. (ESG1.2)

The SER confirms that the BA programme in Architecture's learning outcomes aligns with the NQF Level VI, ensuring compliance with national qualification standards. The structured mapping of learning outcomes to NQF descriptors provides evidence of alignment regarding knowledge, skills, and competencies. The curriculum emphasises critical understanding, problem-solving, and professional competencies, which are fundamental to EQF requirements for bachelor-level education. However, the SER does not explicitly mention an alignment process with the EQF descriptors. While the structure suggests compliance, a formal benchmarking analysis against European-level qualifications (EQF Level 6) would strengthen the validation.

The SER specifies that the BA programme in Architecture is an undergraduate programme at Level VI of the NQF, making a comparison with a graduate-level programme unnecessary. The SER does not indicate whether AAB College offers a graduate-level architecture programmes. However, since its website does offer it, there is a risk of content overlap between bachelor's and master's levels. It would be beneficial to outline distinctions between undergraduate and graduate-level learning outcomes.

The SER confirms that the BA programme in Architecture is the only programme of its kind at AAB College, ensuring no duplication of disciplines. The intended learning outcomes are mapped against the NQF, and the curriculum is structured to progressively build knowledge and competencies over the course of six semesters. This structured approach ensures coherence in qualification levels and avoids content redundancy across programmes.

Standard 4.3 The content and structure of the curriculum is coherent and enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and to progress smoothly through their studies. (ESG 1.2)

The SER indicates that the curriculum structure ensures a progressive deepening of knowledge in key architectural fields, such as architectural design, construction systems, urban context, and architectural history. This logical sequence supports student learning progression, covering architecture's creative and technological aspects. However, while the general structure appears well-planned, the SER does not explicitly confirm whether the programme has been mapped against similar EHEA programmes. A detailed curriculum mapping analysis would strengthen the claim of alignment with European higher education standards.

The SER states that core disciplines build upon one another, ensuring a gradual accumulation of knowledge and competencies. This suggests that prerequisite knowledge is systematically integrated into course sequencing. However, the SER does not provide details on how prerequisites are formally structured (e.g., whether certain courses must be completed before progressing to more advanced subjects). To enhance clarity, explicitly listing course prerequisites and progression pathways would ensure that learning builds in a structured manner.

The SER explicitly states that the programme covers essential architectural disciplines, including architectural design, construction systems, urban planning, and the history of architecture, ensuring a comprehensive foundation for achieving the intended learning outcomes. However, the SER does not confirm whether a competency mapping analysis has been performed at the course level, which raises concerns about the systematic alignment between individual course content and the overall programme objectives. Additionally, discrepancies in submitted course syllabi raise further issues regarding curriculum consistency and transparency. The initially submitted syllabi significantly differ from the later versions, indicating potential course structure and content standardisation uncertainty. Furthermore, not all revised syllabi correspond to the official course list published on the AAB College website. For example, Furniture Design is listed as a course in the IV semester in the submitted documents, yet it does not appear on the programme's webpage for the second year. Similarly, Mechanics and Resistance show inconsistencies between submitted documents and publicly available information. Moreover, the number of intended learning outcomes per course varies significantly, suggesting an inconsistent approach to course design. Some courses, such as Architectural Drawing (15 learning outcomes), Static (16), Internship S1 and S2 (15) and Eco-Architecture and Sustainable Design (16), include an excessive number of learning outcomes, which may dilute the focus of instruction and assessment. A more structured and uniform approach to defining learning outcomes per course is necessary to ensure clarity, manageability, and effective student progression.

The SER does not directly compare the BA in Architecture programme with similar EHEA-accredited programmes. While the curriculum covers fundamental architectural competencies, no evidence exists of benchmarking against international standards or programmes. A comparative study of course structures, credit allocations, and learning outcomes with leading architecture programmes in Europe would strengthen the programme's credibility in supporting graduate employability and mobility.

Standard 4.4 If the study programme leads to degrees in regulated professions, it is aligned with the EU Directives and national and international professional associations. (ESG 1.2)

The SER states that the programme complies with standards for regulated professions, ensuring that graduates meet the requirements outlined in EU Directives. The curriculum is reportedly adapted to align with these directives, which suggests that students are being prepared for professional practice in accordance with European regulations. However, while the SER claims compliance, it does not explicitly mention a formal mapping of programme content against specific EU Directives (such as Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications). Without clear evidence of documented benchmarking or an alignment report, it remains uncertain whether all key directive requirements (such as minimum study duration, practical training, and competency standards) are fully met. To strengthen the validation of this claim, the institution should provide a detailed mapping document demonstrating how the curriculum aligns with the specific articles of EU Directives governing the profession of architecture.

The SER confirms that the study programme incorporates recommendations from national and international professional associations, including those related to licensing examinations and professional chamber requirements. This is further substantiated by the fact that graduates of the BA Architecture programme can obtain licensing within the Chamber of Architects, regulated by the Ministry of Industry and Spatial Planning. This indicates that the programme aligns with national accreditation and professional registration requirements, strongly indicating its relevance and recognition in the labour market. However, the SER does not provide details on whether continuous consultation with professional associations is performed to update the programme in response to evolving industry trends or changes in professional standards. Establishing a structured mechanism for periodic review in collaboration with professional bodies would ensure that the curriculum remains current and aligned with market demands.

Standard 4.5 The intended learning outcomes of the student practice period are clearly specified, and effective processes are followed to ensure that learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students (if applicable). (ESG 1.2)

The SER mentions the existence of two internship courses, one focusing on studio-based professional work and the other on construction site execution, indicating that practical training is an integral part of the curriculum. However, the SER does not explicitly confirm the existence of a formal regulation that defines responsibilities or documentation requirements for practice. While learning outcomes are not mentioned in the SER, they are outlined in the submitted Internship S1 and S2 course syllabi. The syllabi include certain requirements regarding student evaluation, attendance, and submission of a Construction Diary. However, there is no clear regulatory framework governing the practice process at an institutional level, which would ensure that all involved parties—students, mentors, and employers—have structured guidance on expectations and assessment criteria. To enhance transparency and consistency, AAB College should formally document a regulation for practice, defining roles, responsibilities, assessment procedures, and templates for required documentation. This would ensure alignment with best practices in academic internships and improve monitoring of student progress.

The SER states that practical experience is embedded within two internship courses, implying an effort to provide students with real-world learning environments. However, it does not explicitly confirm the assignment of academic mentors or provide details on whether cooperation agreements with employers have been formalised. During the visit, the ET was informed that mentors outside the academic staff evaluate students without receiving training on assessing learning outcomes. This raises concerns about the consistency and reliability of student assessments, as external mentors may not be fully equipped to evaluate students based on academic learning objectives.

While the SER confirms the existence of two internship courses, it does not explicitly state how many ECTS credits are allocated to each or whether student progress is systematically tracked through activity reports. However, the submitted syllabi clarify that Internship S1 is allocated 6 ECTS and Internship S2 is allocated 3 ECTS (it should be noted that the Study plan listed in the SER assigns 3 ECTS to Internship S1). The syllabi include evaluation components such as a Construction Diary, photo documentation, and final presentations, which serve as a basic monitoring mechanism. However, how these evaluations are systematically recorded or reviewed for consistency is unclear.

The SER does not mention whether cooperation agreements, contracts, or structured feedback mechanisms exist with external institutions. While practical training is included in the curriculum, its formalisation through agreements with industry partners remains unclear. To meet this standard, AAB College should ensure that student internships are backed by formal agreements with companies, architecture studios, or public institutions and establish a feedback system from employers to continuously improve the practice experience.

Standard 4.6 The study programme is delivered through student-centred teaching and learning. (ESG 1.3)

The SER confirms that the BA programme in Architecture follows a student-centred approach, integrating theoretical teaching with practical application. Combining theoretical lectures, practical exercises, interactive engagement, and research projects helps students develop academic knowledge and professional competencies. However, the document does not explicitly outline a structured didactic framework or provide details on how the didactic concept is continuously improved based on student performance and feedback. To further strengthen this approach, AAB College could develop a formal didactic strategy that explicitly links teaching methodologies to learning outcomes and ensures continuous pedagogical refinement.

The SER describes various pedagogical methods, including theoretical lectures, practical exercises, interactive activities, and small-scale research projects. These align well with the intended learning outcomes, ensuring students develop theoretical understanding and practical problem-solving skills. However, the SER does not provide details on assessment methods used to measure the effectiveness of these teaching strategies. AAB College should consider introducing structured mechanisms to assess whether the chosen pedagogical methods adequately support student learning outcomes.

The SER confirms that the programme promotes problem-solving, critical thinking, and research-based learning. Using small-scale research projects, interactive engagement, and exposure to professional settings allows students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. However, the document lacks specific examples of structured research-based learning activities or clear evidence of how these methods are systematically incorporated into the curriculum. AAB College should formalise and document research-based learning strategies across all relevant courses to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

The SER does not explicitly mention whether teaching methods are regularly evaluated or adapted based on student feedback and performance. While various teaching methodologies are described, there is no clear evidence of a systematic approach to their continuous improvement. To enhance adaptability and responsiveness to student needs, AAB College should implement regular evaluations of teaching methods through student surveys and faculty feedback and develop a framework for continuous improvement, ensuring that teaching approaches evolve to meet changing educational and industry demands.

The SER does not provide any direct evidence that teaching methods are adapted explicitly for diverse student populations. While practical experiences and industry exposure may benefit all students, accommodations or tailored support are not mentioned for part-time, mature, international students or those with disabilities. To ensure inclusivity and accessibility, AAB

College should introduce specific strategies for supporting diverse students and establish clear policies for academic accommodations for students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

The SER does not explicitly mention the role of modern technology in delivering the study programmes. While practical applications and research activities suggest some level of technological integration, there is no clear evidence of digital learning tools, virtual simulations, or online learning platforms. To enhance technological integration, AAB College should document and expand its use of modern technology in teaching and introduce blended learning opportunities.

Standard 4.7 The evaluation and assessment used in the study programme are objective and consistent and ensure that intended learning outcomes are achieved. (ESG 1.3)

The SER states that each module has clearly defined learning outcomes and that assessment is planned based on these outcomes. Additionally, detailed syllabi outline weekly teaching units, assessment methods, and learning expectations. This structured approach ensures alignment between module content and overall programme learning outcomes.

While the SER confirms that assessment is planned and carried out based on learning outcomes, it does not explicitly state whether a structured mapping of assessment methods against specific programme learning outcomes has been conducted. It is unclear whether all learning outcomes are comprehensively evaluated without evidence of a systematic assessment mapping.

The SER confirms that assessment forms and grading criteria are included in course syllabi and made available to students through the E-student portal before the semester begins. At the start of each semester, students are informed about their academic obligations and evaluation criteria, ensuring transparency in the grading process.

The SER states that grading is based on multiple summative and formative assessment methods, including final exams, presentations, projects, and practical assignments. However, there is no mention of specific mechanisms to ensure grading consistency, such as rubric-based evaluations, moderation procedures, or multiple assessors. While various assessments support objectivity, further details on grading reliability are necessary.

The SER does not explicitly confirm whether students receive structured feedback beyond being informed about assessment criteria. There is no mention of a formal feedback mechanism that helps students understand their performance or areas for improvement.

The SER does not provide any information regarding the existence of a student appeals procedure for contesting grades or assessments. Without a documented appeals mechanism, students lack an official process for addressing grading disputes.

Standard 4.8 Learning outcomes are evaluated in terms of student workload and expressed in ECTS. (ECTS 1.2)

The SER provides information about assessment forms included in course syllabi, ensuring that students are evaluated based on their engagement in various learning activities such as lectures, exercises, homework, seminar work, presentations, and exams. However, it does not explicitly confirm whether assessment criteria are directly mapped to specific learning outcomes or whether they clearly define the competencies students must demonstrate. The institution should explicitly link assessment criteria with learning outcomes in all syllabi to ensure alignment.

The SER provides detailed information on how ECTS is assigned to various learning activities, ensuring that student workload is evenly distributed throughout the study programmes. The workload breakdown for different courses demonstrates that ECTS calculation follows the standard model, with 1 ECTS equalling 25 hours. Including diverse learning components, such as lectures, independent work, consultations, and exam preparation, suggests a comprehensive and structured approach to workload calculation aligned with ECTS principles. However, the workload breakdown provided in the SER is not reflected in the submitted course syllabi, making it difficult to verify whether the same methodology is systematically applied across all courses. To ensure transparency and consistency, AAB College should integrate workload distribution details directly into course syllabi and establish a standardised process for workload calculation across all programme components.

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends improving the transparency and accessibility of learning outcomes. AAB College should ensure that intended learning outcomes are consistently published across all institutional platforms (SER, website, course syllabi). A detailed mapping of learning outcomes to institutional strategic goals should also be developed. (Follow-up to be performed within one year.)*
- 2. The ET recommends explicitly mapping learning outcomes to EQF Level 6. A formal benchmarking process against European standards would provide additional validation of compliance with the EQF.*
- 3. The ET recommends standardising curriculum content and course syllabi. Discrepancies between the SER, syllabi, and programme website should be addressed. Courses should have up to 8 learning outcomes, and all listed courses should be accurately reflected across documentation. (Follow-up to be performed within one year.)*
- 4. The ET recommends providing clear evidence of compliance with EU Directives. A formal mapping of programme content against relevant EU Directives should be developed to substantiate alignment claims.*
- 5. The ET recommends formalising regulations for student internships. A regulatory document should define learning outcomes, roles, responsibilities, and required*

- documentation for students, mentors, and industry partners. (Follow-up to be performed within one year.)*
- 6. The ET recommends ensuring that academic mentors oversee student internships. Every student should have an assigned academic mentor, and agreements with industry partners should be formalised to enhance internship quality.*
 - 7. The ET recommends introducing a structured framework for student-centred teaching and learning. This should include clear documentation of didactic strategies, pedagogical improvements based on feedback, and measures to support diverse student populations.*
 - 8. The ET recommends implementing a structured assessment mapping process. Assessment methods should be explicitly linked to learning outcomes across all courses to ensure alignment with programme objectives.*
 - 9. The ET recommends formalising a student appeals procedure for grading disputes. A documented appeals mechanism should be introduced to enhance transparency in academic evaluations.*
 - 10. The ET recommends integrating workload distribution details into course syllabi. To ensure consistency in ECTS allocation, workload calculations should be standardised and documented within all syllabi. (Follow-up to be performed within one year.)*
 - 11. The ET recommends establishing a system for continuous review of professional alignment. Regular consultations with professional associations should be introduced to ensure the programme remains aligned with evolving industry standards.*

5. STUDENTS

Standard 5.1 Clear admission policies, including requirements, criteria and processes for the study programme are clearly defined and are publicly available. (ESG 1.4)

In the SER, the ET could find all the requirements regarding the admission process to this bachelor's study programmes. AAB invests its resources in attracting new candidates to the programme by organising meetings with high school students in the Republic of Kosovo.

Regarding the admission procedure as it is stated, a candidate must complete secondary school, pass National Matura exams, successfully complete the selection procedure and complete the file with formal documentation (SER p. 44). The SER explains the earlier mentioned selection procedures: there are two exams: Perception of space and Freehand drawing. During the site visit, it was explained that if the candidate fails one of the exams, he can retake it afterwards, and many candidates manage to pass and result in the same position as all. It seems to the ET that the examination process itself was not very hard to pass. Whether this entrance exam test provides any tangible result for the college remains uncertain for the ET. Although it formally tests the skills needed, a huge drop-out rate afterwards could be prevented with a stricter examination of the potential candidates.

Standard 5.2 Student progression data for the study programme are regularly collected and analysed. Appropriate actions are taken to ensure the student's completion of the study programmes. (ESG 1.4)

According to the SER, AAB has established a functional system for monitoring student progress during their academic years. At the site visit, the ET received information that the monitoring process is more of an informal student-teacher discussion about the progress during the semester. It could be defined as a tutoring system to help answer all the unclear questions of each syllabus. During the site visit, students mentioned that tutoring works well. It allows them to ask questions that were not during the classwork, and of course, it helps to prepare for the exams. The ET believes that AAB has not yet established such a functioning system, or it was not presented in the SER or mentioned during the site visit. Another success rate of the study programme is the drop-out statistic, and the ET was wondering whether AAB has developed a system of collecting data for the reasons for the drop-out. The ET received information that AAB has never conducted such research. The ET fully understands that student migration, unavailability to keep up with work and studies at the same time, or any other personal reasons will be among the top reasons, yet this kind of data should be collected.

As mentioned in the SER, AAB has established policies for the transfer and recognition of qualifications obtained in other institutions. Transfer in this programme framework is allowed between the second and fifth semesters (SER p. 45).

Standard 5.3 The study programme ensures appropriate conditions and support for outgoing and incoming students (national and international students). (ESG 1.4)

During the site visit, the experts confirmed that students are aware of all possible mobility programmes from AAB. It was mentioned that the International Office is responsible for sharing all the deadlines and technical information for those interested and helps fill in the needed documents. The institution has also established its regulations for the recognition of the ECTS credits, and all of the needed information is publicly available on the official website (SER p. 45).

It was mentioned during the site visit that no international student has been enrolled in the Bachelor's Studies of Architecture, so no data has been analysed, nor have any additional services been provided for the international students.

Standard 5.4 The study programme delivery is ensured through adequate resources for student support. The needs of a diverse student population (part-time students, mature students, students from abroad, students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.) are taken into account. (ESG 1.6)

AAB provides a number of services for students: academic consultation, career planning, and IT services. It also has well-established and distributed offices: Central administration, Software development office, IT support Office, Transfer Office and Career Office. In the SER, it is stated that the AAB is prepared for students with special needs (SER p. 45). The tutoring system plays a major role in the better achievement of the defined study aims. Most important for the higher education institution is having a well-established student support system and letting students be aware of its existence. AAB provides all of the needed information on the first days at the college through the manuals for the students and digital information tools. During the site visit, students also confirmed being well-informed of all possibilities for receiving a quick answer. Extracurricular activities are well established in AAB and are performed in scientific conferences, workshops, meetings with industrial partners, festivals, etc.

AAB has established regulations for the appeal procedures. According to the SER, the students have the possibility to submit a complaint regarding the lecture process or grading. During the site visit, the ET was wondering how the academic ethics code is being followed or implemented in the practice. Students explain that they are aware of their obligations regarding plagiarism and follow the regulations. As mentioned, some students learn the "lessons" during the study process but, with the help of their teachers, improve over time.

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends reconsidering the entrance exam to admit highly motivated and engaged students, fully aware of the architectural degree requirements. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*

2. *The ET recommends conducting research analysing the reasons for the high dropout rate and proposing consequent solutions. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
3. *The ET recommends monitoring the student success rate, and providing follow-up steps (with specific scenarios). (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*

6. RESEARCH

Standard 6.1. The study programme aligns with the institution's/academic unit's mission and the research strategic goals.

The SER outlines multiple research objectives, including promoting high-quality research, strengthening research capacity, increasing international collaboration, and expanding intersectoral partnerships. These objectives are supported through research groups, faculty-organised seminars, and financial support for research activities. Additionally, research activities align with the broader strategic development plan of AAB College. However, the SER does not explicitly state how the study programme's research objectives are mapped to the overall institutional research strategy. A structured alignment between the Faculty of Architecture's research goals and the AAB College overall research development plan would enhance transparency and integration.

The SER describes an established research infrastructure, including the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science, the Scientific Committee, and the Grant Regulation, which provides financial incentives for academic publishing in indexed journals. Additionally, faculty members have access to international research databases such as SCOPUS and WoS, ensuring access to high-quality academic resources. However, the SER does not specify the extent of financial support available for individual faculty members or research projects. Clarifying whether research grants are available and expanding research funding opportunities for faculty would further strengthen research implementation.

The SER states that the BA programme in Architecture follows the Regulation on Research and Scientific Activities, which defines research at AAB College and aligns it with broader institutional goals. Additionally, the programme promotes international collaboration through Horizon and Erasmus projects, ensuring adherence to international research standards. However, while research policies are in place, the SER does not specify whether faculty research is benchmarked against international best practices or whether formal evaluation mechanisms exist to assess research impact. Establishing more transparent policies on how faculty research aligns with global standards and ensuring periodic assessments of research contributions would enhance compliance with this indicator.

Standard 6.2. The academic staff engaged in the study programme is committed and supported to achieve high-quality research work and/or professional activity.

The SER confirms that academic staff publish research in internationally recognised journals indexed in Web of Science, SCOPUS, EBSCO, WorldCat, and DOAJ. These publications are validated based on MEST Administrative Instruction No. 01/2018 and the KAA Accreditation Manual, which establish criteria for recognised scientific contributions. However, while the

SER confirms research validation through academic publishing, it does not mention other forms of professional activity, such as technological transfers, consultancy centres, or artistic products. Expanding research validation beyond academic publications would further strengthen this indicator.

The SER provides clear evidence that faculty members meet publication standards, as only staff with at least one peer-reviewed publication in indexed journals (SCOPUS, WoS, etc.) are recognised as responsible individuals for accreditation purposes. Moreover, research activity is explicitly considered in academic promotions and performance evaluations, confirming its relevance in professional development. However, the SER does not explicitly mention participation in conferences, research projects, or consultancy activities. While publications in high-quality journals are important, further details on academic staff involvement in conferences and professional projects would provide more substantial evidence of compliance.

Standard 6.3 The academic staff engaged in the delivery of the study programme is encouraged to participate in different aspects of cooperation with national and international partners.

The SER confirms that the academic staff participates in various research and innovation projects within the institution and in collaboration with external organisations. The USAID Kosovo Compete Activity is cited as an example of a project supporting product and design innovation, which suggests a connection to community engagement and development services. However, the SER does not explicitly state whether these activities are systematically structured as long-term research and development services to the community.

The SER provides evidence of collaborative research engagement through the HOMODIGITALIS project, which involves staff development on innovative educational methodologies and integrates interdisciplinary collaboration between humanities and ICT. This suggests active international research cooperation. However, while this example highlights project-based cooperation, the SER does not specify whether there are formalised institutional research agreements with other HEIs. Strengthening long-term research partnerships would enhance compliance with this indicator.

The USAID-funded educational programme for product and design innovation suggests that the institution actively engages with external partners on research and development initiatives. However, the SER does not explicitly mention structured cooperation agreements with local businesses or provide details on the shared use of research equipment or facilities. Expanding industry collaboration and formalising cooperative agreements would strengthen compliance with this indicator.

The HOMODIGITALIS project, which focuses on digital transformation and innovative educational methodologies, suggests some level of engagement in technology-related research. However, the SER does not explicitly confirm active technology transfer activities such as patents, licensing, or structured knowledge-sharing initiatives with the industry or public sector. Expanding direct involvement in applied research and technology commercialisation would enhance alignment with this indicator.

Standard 6.4 The teaching staff engaged in the study programme has a proven record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

The SER confirms that academic staff in the Faculty of Architecture incorporate their research publications into course syllabi. Additionally, scientific research and papers developed through various projects are applied within the syllabus to contribute to realising specific topics. This demonstrates that faculty research is actively integrated into teaching materials and content, ensuring students are exposed to current research developments and scholarly activities relevant to their courses.

The SER states that collaborations have occurred between professors and students in research and joint scientific work. The Diploma Thesis course, conducted in the final year, allows students to engage in independent research projects under faculty guidance. Furthermore, international cooperation agreements with institutions such as the University of Pecs, the Academy of Design in Ljubljana, and Mimar Sinan University in Istanbul provide potential research collaboration opportunities. However, the extent of student involvement in faculty-led research projects is not explicitly detailed, making it unclear whether students actively participate in ongoing faculty research beyond their thesis work.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends explicitly mapping the study programme's research objectives to the overall institutional research strategy. A structured framework aligning faculty research priorities with AAB College's broader research goals would improve transparency and ensure strategic integration. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 2. The ET recommends expanding research validation beyond academic publications. Recognising consultancy work, applied research, artistic outputs, and technology transfer as valid research contributions would provide a more comprehensive assessment of faculty research activity.*
- 3. The ET recommends strengthening faculty participation in national and international research collaborations. Formalising structured, long-term research agreements with*

universities and industry partners would enhance research capacity and academic impact.

- 4. The ET recommends increasing faculty participation in professional projects, conferences, and consultancy activities. While publication requirements are met, more visibility on faculty engagement in knowledge dissemination, public presentations, and consultancy would enhance compliance.*
- 5. The ET recommends improving student involvement in faculty-led research projects. Expanding student research participation beyond the diploma thesis—such as through assistant roles, funded research initiatives, and international research exchanges—would provide students with more substantial research experience. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 6. The ET recommends formalising cooperation with local businesses and industry stakeholders. Establishing structured agreements for research collaborations, joint projects, and shared resources would enhance practical engagement and knowledge transfer.*
- 7. The ET recommends increasing engagement in technology transfer and applied research. Implementing clear policies on patents, licensing, and industry partnerships for research commercialisation would further strengthen research impact.*

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Standard 7.1. The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research. ESG (1.6)

The Architecture faculty is on the Pristina campus. The premises devoted to the Architecture students have all the needed equipment: computers, software, projectors, conference rooms, etc. AAB College has an area of about 50,000 m² with many more lecture halls, seminar rooms, technological laboratories and offices for the supporting staff (SER p. 51). There is also an established e-learning system that students find pretty convenient to use as all the grades are put there, and learning material can also be reached. There are well-established IT classrooms with Autodesk, AutoCAD and Revit software. Still, the experts miss laboratories that would allow students to get familiar with state-of-the-art 3D printing or Virtual Reality.

It is important to mention that the AAB infrastructure is suitable for students with special needs. On the campus, there are designed parking spaces, elevators in the buildings, flat entrances, etc. In the SER, it was mentioned that the AAB library has encouraged cooperation with the governmental organisation, and now there is an availability of books in Braille or even audio formats tailored (SER p. 52). Without a doubt, the expert finds that the premises and the whole infrastructure are well-prepared for students with special needs.

Standard 7.2 The HEI ensures adequate library resources for the study programme. (ESG 1.6)

As stated in the SER, the AAB currently has a library that is available almost the entire week (six days per week) from the mornings to the evenings. During the site, the library seemed, to the experts, relatively small, but students were satisfied with it for having study rooms.

The students did not mention any issues of being unable to find a needed book. Yet the experts find it an issue that there were only a few architectural and design book references in the library. Students mentioned that they are keen to using electronic databases, and the AAB college provides many access to international platforms: J-STORE, EBSCO, Duke University Press Journals, Directory of Open Access Books, Directory of Open Access Journals, Cambridge Journals, etc.

Standard 7.3 The study programme is appropriately funded to deliver its intended educational activities and research. (ESG 1.6)

In the SER and during the site visit, it was stated that there is a financial plan. Yet, the financial plan was not presented in the first or second SER report. In the SER, it is mentioned that the financial plan is put in the annexes. Still, the experts have never seen it (they believe it exists but have never seen it in any form). The experts are aware that the AAB has a central budget. Then, the central budget is allocated among faculties, and each faculty can have its own

additional budget, which is formed mainly from the projects and cooperations with industry partners.

As mentioned in the report part, AAB is a partner in several national and international projects that provide training for its teaching staff and also provide student mobility possibilities. The ET believes that collaboration with partners in projects aims to increase the efficiency of teaching and research skills and to improve the percentage of student mobility.

In the SER and during the site visit, the experts could not identify whether the college has a future strategy for infrastructure improvement, which would be very efficient and help allocate more effectively.

ET recommendations:

- 1. The ET recommends establishing a strategic document for the infrastructure improvement. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 2. The ET recommends increasing the number of architectural and design book references available in the library. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*
- 3. The ET recommends elaborating a budget to demonstrate the programme's sustainability. (Follow-up to be performed within one year)*

OVERALL EVALUATION AND JUDGMENTS OF THE ET

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for institutional accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a substantial compliance level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure to meet at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation.

AAB College, BA in Architecture study programme demonstrated substantial overall compliance.

According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends accredit the study programme Bachelor of Arts in Architecture at the institution UBT for a period of 3 years with a student quota recommended of 150 seats.

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	<i>Fully Compliant</i>
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
3. ACADEMIC STAFF *Mandatory	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	<i>Partially compliant</i>
5. STUDENTS	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
6. RESEARCH	<i>Partially compliant</i>
7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES *Mandatory	<i>Fully Compliant</i>
Overall Compliance	<i>Substantially Compliant</i>

Expert Team

Chair



Philippe Bouillard

5/3/25

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Tihomir Dokšanović

5/3/25

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Arnoldas Solovjovas

5/3/25

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)