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***AAB College  
Nursing BSc***

***RE-ACCTREDITATION***

## **REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM**

*24th July 2023, Pristina and online from Bucharest*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Context

**Date of site visit: 24th July, 2023**

**Expert Team (ET) members:**

- *Prof. Dr. Danica Železnik*
- *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Enkeleint Mechili*
- *Delia Lupescu*

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

- *Naim M. Gashi KAA Director*
- *Leona Kovaci KAA Officer*

**Sources of information for the Report:**

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (2021).*
- *KAA Manual for external evaluation of higher education institutions (2021).*
- *KAA Manual Annex 4.4. Template of the External Review Report.*
- *Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of BSc STUDY PROGRAM IN NURSING;*
- *Syllabuses.*
- *CVs of the academic staff.*
- *List of Scientific Publications of academic staff.*
- *Semester work plan of QAO 2023.*
- *Financial plan for the BSc Nursing program 2023-2028.*
- *Learning Outcomes Matrix BSc Nursing.*
- *Documents entered as links in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).*
- *College website.*



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- *Discussions during the site-visit with all stakeholders (management, administrative staff, students, graduates and employers).*

#### **Additional documents requested:**

- *List of articles reimbursed by the AAB the last two years.*
- *List of projects implemented or under implementation the last three years.*
- *A print screen of the E-Service platform in order to see the services available.*
- *One job contract sample (both for full-time and part-time staff).*
- *List of trainings conducted the last two years by the Center for Professional Training and Innovation for the staff to increase their teaching or research skills as well as those planned in the near future.*
- *List of on-line trainings conducted by the visiting professors.*
- *AAB Research Strategy.*
- *Report of the student's evaluation for professors.*
- *The questionnaire and the email that has been sent to the alumni.*
- *Information about the employment rate of those graduated.*
- *The newsletter that is prepared and disseminated.*
- *Members of the Industrial Board and their field.*
- *Example of self-assessment of a professor (without name).*
- *The "students' progress evaluation document during clinical practice".*
- *List of articles/conferences that students are participating in.*
- *Teaching hours for the winter and summer semester for academic year 2022-2023.*
- *Sample of timetable for the one semester of the academic year 2022- 2023.*
- *Resend the table on page 38 of SER – mentioning next to each professor in which discipline they will be involved. (the table has the title `Tabular presentation of the part-time staff members of the Faculty of Nursing`) Or a different table showing for each discipline who will be the teachers and laboratory assistants that will facilitate it.*

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

To evaluate the program, the expert team followed all the guidelines for the re-accreditation of a study program as are presented in the KAA manual. Additionally, we used all the



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information/documents provided by the College, the site visit as well as the additional documents requested after the visit.

## 1.2. Site visit schedule

<i>Programme Accreditation Procedure at AAB College</i>	
<i>Programme:</i>	<b><i>Nursing, BSc, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</i></b>
<i>Site visit on:</i>	<b><i>July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023</i></b>
<i>Expert Team:</i>	<i>Dr. Danica Železnik</i> <i>Dr. Enkeleint Mechili</i> <i>Delia Gologan, Student expert (Online)</i>
<i>Coordinators of the KAA:</i>	<i>Naim Gashi, KAA Director</i> <i>Leona Kovaçi, KAA Officer</i>

### *Site Visit Programme*

<i>Time</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Participants</i>
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<b>09:00 – 09:45</b>	<i>Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated</i>
<b>09:45 – 10:30</b>	<i>Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff</i>
<b>10:45 – 11:45</b>	<i>Meeting with the heads of the study programme</i>
<b>11:45 – 12:45</b>	<i>Lunch break (provided at the evaluation site)</i>
<b>12:45 – 13:35</b>	<i>Meeting with teaching staff</i>
<b>13:35 – 14:20</b>	<i>Meeting with students</i>
<b>14:30 – 15:15</b>	<i>Meeting with graduates</i>
<b>15:20 – 16:05</b>	<i>Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders</i>
<b>16:05 – 16:10</b>	<i>Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts</i>
<b>16:10 – 16:20</b>	<i>Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program</i>
<b>16:20 – 16:40</b>	<i>Visiting Facilities</i>

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

AAB College is a non-public institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo and it was established in 2002. AAB consists of 14 faculties with 51 study programs of BA and MA levels. The Faculty of Nursing is an academic unit of AAB responsible for the organisation and implementation of the teaching and learning process within the accredited study programs in the field of nursing and health sciences.

The mission of the Faculty of Nursing of AAB is to prepare health professionals in the narrow fields of nursing as well as competitive professionals for the management of health institutions in Kosovo and beyond, who, through the acquisition of skills and advanced knowledge of the fields of study, contribute to society by providing quality and accessible health services to the population (SER p.8). The dean of the Faculty of Nursing of AAB has a Ph.D. degree in the field of Nursing, four full-time employees are Ph.D. candidates while the rest are with a MSc. The Nursing program is among the most sought-after programs at AAB and, in general, in Kosovo. The BSc Nursing program enrolls students who, after completing their secondary education, focus on nursing studies, as well as licensed nurses who only have secondary nursing education and need to advance their knowledge and competencies at the level of university studies. (SER p.12). The nursing program is in Compliance with EU directives for the regulated nursing profession (European Union Directive 2005/36/EC and 2013/55/EC), so graduates of the program are employable throughout Europe. Currently, students from the Faculty of Nursing have signed contracts with various hospital centres in Germany, which means that there is a great possibility that the outflow of graduate nurses will be large. ET wonders how many will remain in Kosovo for nursing purposes, thus covering the need for nurses in the country. The ET is aware that the problem of unemployment in Kosovo is great, but it should be emphasised that this is a health profession, which must include people who are particularly sensitive to care and not just people who want a job.



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## 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

The mission of the AAB is clearly defined in the Statute of the College. The Faculty of Nursing mission is to prepare health professionals in the field of nursing that can provide the healthcare services not only in the Republic of Kosovo but also in other countries. The study program, Bachelor in Nursing, aims to prepare students with both theoretical and practical knowledge. The program is a professional study program in accordance with the European and Kosovar legislation. This mission is in the same direction with the overall mission of the College as it is clearly stated in the article 3 of the Statute. The learning outcomes of the program are clearly stated and are in line with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. According to the report and the discussions during the visit, the program has been revised with the inclusion of different groups (staff, students, external stakeholders). During the meetings the ET found out **that students have not been included in this process** while the stakeholders mentioned that they have received an email from the College in order to provide comments on the curricula. The syllabuses include the learning outcomes for each subject but no clear way of measurement is in place. The stakeholders reported that they have good communication with the College and regular meetings. Most of them said that the study program is ok and doesn't need improvements/changes. **However, they strongly recommended increasing the hours for palliative care subject. It is strongly recommended that these meetings be more formal with concrete agenda, minutes and key conclusions.**

The Nursing program consists of a theoretical and practical part. The teaching focuses on developing students' practical skills through the continuous interaction of academic staff and students with health institutions and health professionals. Teaching methods in this program generally include lectures, seminars, cooperative teaching and learning, hands-on and project-based learning, case studies and problem situations, experiential learning, critical reflection, and development of critical thinking, analysis, work in small groups, learning in the field, learning supported by the use of technology, practice in health institutions, etc. The theoretical part of teaching is carried out in the premises of the faculty (lectures, seminars and learning in the nursing cabinet, which means a simulated environment for the practical part of teaching in a clinical environment). Teaching in a clinical setting focuses on developing students' practical





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skills through constant interaction between academic staff and mentors in a clinical setting. The mission has a sufficiently obvious research concept of the program.

Procedural and academic issues in the Faculty of Nursing are regulated by formal policies, guidelines, and regulations. All regulations and guidelines relating to procedural or academic matters in the Faculty of Nursing are available for all staff and students on the internal platform the Faculty of Nursing is using. All the rules and regulations - including internal procedures to implement them - are reviewed periodically. Most of them are revised every two or three years (when preparing for a new external evaluation). All participants in the visit are familiar with this and according to their statements, they are all considered. The academic community follows the Code of Ethics and the academic attendance. The mission has a sufficiently obvious research concept of the program. **However, there are no QA procedures to check if the internal regulations are followed by everyone, nor enough evidence for the ET to assess whether this happens on a daily-basis or they are simply formally adopted documents. More efforts could be put in the direction of increasing the visibility and transparency of the activity of the Commission of Ethics.** For example, everyone should be encouraged to report any unethical behaviour of the teachers or administrative staff members like not coming to class to facilitate the lecture, consumption of alcohol before the lectures, corruption or any form of discrimination.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/partially)
Standard 1.1. <b>The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission</b> statement of the institution	Yes
Standard 1.2. <b>Relevant academic and professional advice</b> is considered when <b>defining the intended learning outcomes</b> which are consistent with the <b>National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</b>	Yes
Standard 1.3. The study program has a <b>well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.</b>	Yes
Standard 1.4. There are formal <b>policies, guidelines and regulations</b> dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made <b>publicly available</b> to all staff and students.	Yes



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Standard 1.5. <b>All staff and students comply with the internal regulations</b> relating to <b>ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment</b> in all academic and administrative activities.	Partially
Standard 1.6. <b>All policies, regulations</b> , terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program <b>are reviewed at least once every two years</b> and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	Yes

**Compliance level: Fully compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Inclusion of the students in the curricula revision.*
2. *Formalization of the meetings with the external stakeholders.*
3. *Increase of hours for the subject of Palliative Care.*
4. *Continue to develop the internal procedures to check if internal regulations like the Code of Ethics are followed by the academic community - administrative and teaching staff as well as students.*

## **2.2. Quality management**

The Faculty of Nursing is following the College regulations, including the Quality Assurance Regulation and Manual. The quality procedures of the AAB College are defined by these two documents as well as by the Statute of the College and its Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

According to the regulating framework of the college, there are several structures responsible for the quality assurance of the educational process: the Office of Quality Assurance (a central structure coordinating the entire QA activity) and the faculty level QA coordinators.

The quality assurance processes use several instruments of collecting information about the *status quo* of the teaching and learning process, but also for finding the best way to improve them while using the collected feedback. They are integrated into normal planning and delivery of the evaluated study program: regular meetings of different commissions and bodies, questionnaires (for example for students to evaluate their teachers), focus groups, sharing good practice, monitoring of work plans and student progression, conducting internal assessment for external accreditation etc. They offer an overview of the quality issues for the overall program and its different components: quality of teaching, availability of learning materials, adequacy

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of learning spaces, quality of administrative services etc. The QA instruments deal with many aspects of the teaching-learning process, but not the teaching strategies, the quality of the learning materials or the learning outcomes. **There are no questions/instruments to check if the learning outcomes of the program were reached by the students.** For example, a random check of the quality of the final thesis could show this.

**All academic and administrative staff are involved in the QA processes and thus in the improvement of the study program.** The ET recommends develop/create/implementing the opportunity for teachers to self-evaluate their work and/or to be given the opportunity to answer to the feedback they receive from students and their superiors. Moreover, the SER mentions that graduates are asked to answer questionnaires once every two years (p.29). The college should consider an annual basis questionnaire for graduates. In the future, **the college should also consider developing a peer-to-peer evaluation system.**

Students are involved in QA-related structures of the faculty and are consulted regarding the form / content of the questionnaires. The ET salutes the AAB initiative to organise a training for students on the topic of student involvement in quality assurance. **Efforts like this, if continued, will increase the trust of students in the QA processes and thus their involvement in them** (e.g. it will translate in higher response rates to questionnaires addressed to students). Transparency regarding the QA processes and following-up the results, will also contribute to this intended result.

Conclusions drawn from analysing the collected data are presented in periodical reports (some summative reports are written annually, while more complex ones are prepared every three years when the staff prepares for the external evaluation linked to re-accreditation). Some are even published online. And they are used for the constant improvement of the study programmes.

The QA instruments and regulations are reviewed, at college level, every two years.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/parti ally)
Standard 2.1. <b>All staff participate in self-evaluations</b> and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	Yes



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

**Compliance level: Fully compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Develop the peer-to-peer evaluation process and put in efforts to overcome the mentalities that limit the participation of teachers in collegial-evaluations.*
2. *Develop QA procedures for the research activity.*
3. *Develop mechanism in collaboration with the College authorities to assess the teaching material and the teaching strategies used by the academic staff; The next step in improving the QA process would be to develop instruments of assessing the quality of learning outputs/to check if students have reached their learning objectives by the time of graduation (e.g. by evaluating the final thesis of students);*
4. *Constantly improve the inclusion of students in quality assurance procedures.*



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5. *Constantly improve the monitoring of the employment rate of the graduates (see also correlated recommendations in the section 5 of this report);*

### 2.3. Academic staff

The employment procedures are in line with the Labour Law and the Administrative Instruction on accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo. Fulfilment with the legal requirements was also confirmed by the authorities of the College during the site visit. All academic staff involved in this study program are informed in advance with all their responsibilities and duties. AAB College has a document entitled “*Regulation on the description and systematisation of the workplace*” that aims to define the internal organisation and systematisation of the workplace at the College. This document contains all the information about duties and responsibilities for each job position. Moreover, information about the duties and responsibilities are presented in the open call when vacancies are published. Additionally, after employment, each person employed (academic or administrative staff) has to sign a contract. In the contract signed by the College authorities and the staff, there are clearly presented duties and responsibilities. Contract formats were requested by the external evaluators and it was observed that duties and responsibilities were mentioned. To some extent, during the visit, professors mentioned that except the above, they have regular meetings with the Dean and the Vice-Rector of the Institution who inform them about their duties and responsibilities. The staff said that they are informed timely about all the things that need to be done.

The College in this specific Faculty (Faculty of Nursing) has in total 79 members of academic staff. Among them, 35 are with a full-time contract, while the rest 44 are part-time. The Faculty of Nursing has one (1) person with a PhD, four (4) are PhD candidates and twelve (12) hold a Master of Science. The staff of the College do not cover within an academic year more than two teaching positions (one fulltime and one part-time) and depending on their contract they teach 2-8 hours per week. However, during the visit and meeting with the academic staff, it was mentioned that **some of them were working full-time in one healthcare institution and also full time in the College**. Despite the fact that this can be legal, there are many concerns about the quality of the services and of the work that persons in such a position can perform, and thus the College authorities need to take this into consideration. **Moreover, less than 50% of the academic staff are full-time** (35 out of 79 members of the faculty, 44,3%) but they

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cover more than 50% of the classes of the study program. The College has employed only one person with PhD in the field of nursing while four (4) others are in the process of their doctoral studies in Slovenia. **The College doesn't fulfil the obligation of having at least three (3) people with a PhD** specific to the standard 3.5 - as the program has 180 ECTS in total. However, there are other full-time personnel with a PhD in Health Sciences (such as Biomedicine, Dentistry, Medicine, etc.). Moreover, the Faculty has full-time personnel with a Master of Science in Nursing in order to provide the classes for this study program. Additionally, during the visit in the Institution, the authorities and the staff emphasised the issue that nurses are responsible for the nursing program and not people from the other study fields. The College has 101 clinical mentors that are responsible for the training of the students during clinical practice. Despite the huge number, **there is no evidence about concrete actions of the college for their training and capacity**, while the ratio presented doesn't fulfil that one student is allocated to one clinical mentor that is requested. Based on all the aforementioned, **the Institution needs to work more on its staff in order to be equipped with more PhD-holders, as well as to develop a concrete mechanism for training of the clinical mentors and thus ensure the quality of the clinical training**. Especially as the clinical training is essential for the nurses. And also, while considering the difficulties for guaranteeing a qualitative clinical training due to the high demand for clinical training. This high demand is determined by the 700+ students in nursing and many more others in the medical field, in Kosovo, that all require many clinical training hours, thus putting a lot of pressure on clinical trainers and health institutions.

The College has established the Center for Professional Training and Innovation. This Center organises training activities for the staff regularly. Several training activities have been presented by the Institution in the self-evaluation report. These training activities focus on three different levels (on the newcomers at the College, improvement of professional level and advanced level for higher positions). The activities focus on both didactic and research knowledge and skills. It is crucial to mention that the training list activities presented at the self evaluation report had a more general scope and were not focused specifically on nursing staff. The list of trainings provided after the request of the external evaluators shows that different training activities are held in the field of nursing. However, the ET insists with the **recommendation that the Institution organises even more training activities that focus on the field of nursing/health sector**. During the meeting, the Dean of the Faculty showed us also the future training activities planned from the Center. The list was provided also after the

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request of the additional documents. Moreover, during the visit, it was mentioned that the College also organises (except those activities organised by the Center) training activities on-line. These activities are organised usually on-line with visiting professors of different nationalities. Additionally, in the report it was mentioned that staff have participated in different training activities in Germany in some institutions that the College collaborates with. This was also mentioned during the meetings with the academic staff. However, when asked, no one of those present in the meetings could confirm participating in such a training abroad, but they mentioned that they know someone that has participated. The academic staff and the authorities reported that till now, **no staff from AAB has participated in training activities abroad through the Erasmus+ KA1 action**. This program could help a lot the staff to increase their knowledge and skills while on the other hand, the cost is covered by the Erasmus+. The ET is aware of the political and international context of Kosovo with the limitations it brings in travelling and visa-granting. However, we encourage the AAB management to continue its efforts of implementing exchange programs with higher education institutions and health institutions in countries where Kosovar students and staff members are allowed to travel. Accessing European or international funding opportunities to cover - at least partially - the costs of these exchange programs is encouraged. Another idea would be to focus on internship exchanges (exchange programmes offering practice opportunities for students, not only learning/teaching opportunities).

The professors, according to their duties and responsibilities, need to hold consultations with the students and to provide them feedback. According to the *“Regulation on the description and systematisation of the workplace”*, they need to hold consultations with the students 2 hours per week (1 hour physically and 1 hour on-line or via email). The consultation sessions were also confirmed by the academic staff and the students during the visit. It was emphasised that the consultation activities are held during the semester or before the exams when usually students have questions or are not clear about the content of the classes they had or need orientation for the exam. Some students said that they have had consultations after the classes sometimes. Students receive feedback from professors after the exams, during special consultation periods. The professors provide feedback based on the students' questions while a student reported that after one exam had an on-line meeting. As for the community services, the College organised usually different activities with different populations as targets. Moreover, it was reported that the College organises visits with students to relevant health institutions or holds other extracurricular activities. Additionally, a newsletter of the College

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is issued monthly and disseminated to the wider community. Last but not least, among the teachers duties, it was also mentioned the responsibility of mentoring students for preparing their final graduation thesis. Teachers should not mentor more than 8 students. To conclude, the college should continue its efforts of supporting the activity of the teachers in all the fields where they are required to perform: teaching, researching, mentoring, contributing to the society etc.

The College has a regulation entitled *“Regulation on Academic Staff Performance Appraisal”*. According to article 3, *“The purpose of this regulation is to set forth criteria, time period, calculation of appraisal results, and the undertaking measures following the completion of academic staff performance appraisal”*. Article 5 clarifies that there are 4 different methods of academic staff appraisal that includes student appraisal, superior appraisal, self-appraisal and peer appraisal. Students confirmed that they evaluate their professors regularly at the end of each academic semester with a specific on-line questionnaire. **However, as also emphasised in section 2 of this report, they don’t receive feedback on the results.** During the meeting with the members of the quality assurance unit, it was mentioned that besides the questionnaire, they are trying to have meetings and focus groups with the students in order to check the quality of the teaching activities. The Dean evaluates the staff regularly. Self-evaluation is done at the end of the academic year in order to see if each teacher has reached their own setted goals. The self-assessment format was provided by the College after the request of the external evaluators. The format contains evaluation based on the duties and responsibilities of the staff. Additionally, information about staff involvement in research, projects and teaching is requested. **About the fourth method, the peer-to-peer evaluation, it is still in its first steps and not implemented yet.** The Dean during the visit said that they are trying to implement this method but it’s difficult due to mentality/culture. The ET acknowledges the difficulties specific to evaluations among colleagues corresponding to the Balkan culture. However, continuous efforts to indicate how this could be an useful instrument for increasing overall performance, could help the community to overcome these prejudices. Based on the professor's evaluation results, different actions can be undertaken as are specified in article 11 of the Regulation. During the visit it was mentioned that when results are not very good, the Dean organises meetings with the respective staff to discuss the possible issues and to try to solve the problem.





The Quality Assurance Office reported that they organise regular meetings within the academic year in order to check the quality issues. However, they reported also that these meetings usually are not very formal and have no minutes. They reported that they try to include different actors in quality assurance processes including not just the internal staff but also external stakeholders and students. However, it was mentioned that the Quality Assurance Office **doesn't check the quality of the teaching strategies and quality of the learning material**. For teaching strategies, it was mentioned that they only focus on the questionnaires responded from the students to assess the quality of teaching. As about the learning material, the Office reported that they just control if the material prepared from the professors was uploaded in the electronic system, but they don't control the quality. Professors mentioned that the quality of learning material is controlled from the syllabuses annually, when they deposit them. However, most of the syllabuses provided to the external evaluators **included among references to old literature**. Professors that reach the age of 65 are not considered anymore full professors as the law requests.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/parti ally)
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with <b>full position descriptions and conditions of employment</b> . 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.	Yes
Standard 3.2. <b>The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.</b>	Yes
Standard 3.3. Academic staff <b>do not cover</b> , within an academic year, <b>more than two teaching positions</b> (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	Yes
Standard 3.4. <b>At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees</b> , and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	Partially
Standard 3.5. <b>For each student group</b> (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the	Partially



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institution has employed at <b>least one full time staff with PhD title</b> or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	
Standard 3.6. <b>Opportunities</b> are provided for <b>additional professional development of teaching staff</b> , with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	Yes
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the <b>engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service</b> .	Yes
Standard 3.8. <b>Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly</b> at least through selfevaluation, students, peer and superiors' evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The <b>results</b> of the evaluation are made <b>publicly available</b> .	Yes
Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include <b>improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials</b> .	Partially
Standard 3.10. <b>Teachers retired at age limit</b> or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and <b>are considered part-time teachers</b> .	Yes

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

- 1. The College needs to increase the number of full-time academic staff.*
- 2. The College needs to increase immediately the number of employed nurses with a PhD.*
- 3. Concrete measures are needed by the College to support its staff to obtain a PhD degree.*
- 4. It is important to ensure quality of the personnel and the number of those working in two different institutions (healthcare institution and college) full-time to be the minimum possible.*
- 5. Increase of the number of clinical mentors and development of a specific strategy by the College is needed to train them regularly + QA procedures linked to the clinical training (e.g., feedback forms for both students and clinical mentors, that should refer to the quality of training, but also to the accessibility of different materials);*
- 6. Organization of more training activities for the teaching staff that focus on nursing issues.*



7. *Development of a strategy for international collaboration within the Erasmus+ KA1 action in order to increase the number of staff mobility abroad for teaching and training activities. The college could start by focusing on those countries where Kosovarian people can travel easier. Later on, similar efforts should be done for the organization of exchange programs for the administrative staff.*
8. *The college should put up effort to provide feedback to the students based on the questionnaires that they complete to evaluate their professors. This will help, in time, with increasing the response rates from the part of students.*
9. *Implementation of peer-to-peer evaluation process.*
10. *Increase the number of visiting professors that hold classes/training activities especially in the field of nursing.*
11. *Improve the control methods /processes of the syllabus to include more up-to-date literature.*

#### 2.4. Educational process content

The main structure of the BSc Nursing study program consists of the theoretical part and the practical part, where the practical part (learning nursing skills) in addition to laboratories (which is not clinical training and direct patient work) in the regional hospitals and Family Medicine Centres. The theoretical part takes place in a group of 60 students, but the students did not know how many groups they had together in one generation. ET learnt during the study visit that the courses are taught by a team of several professors (each giving a lecture for one group of 60 students). **This might lead to small differences on how a course is taught and later-on to small differences in the student's assessment.** These are usually perceived as unfair and are frustrating for the students. **Thus, the team of a subject/discipline should ensure unity in teaching and evaluation between groups. Training of the professors in order to keep the same context in teaching activities is important.**

Before entering a professional clinical environment, in the first semester of the first-year, students perform practice exercises in the laboratories of AAB College. In laboratories, all facilities are provided for clinical nursing skills, where a group of 9-12 students works together under the supervision of an assistant. Students told ET that clinical exercises in medical institutions **take place under the guidance of a mentor in a group of 6-8, which is too much.**



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The college and the health care institutions should also consider the comfort of patients. **A maximum of 2 students under the guidance of one mentor is suggested.** The clinical component includes learning as part of a team and in direct contact with healthy or ill individuals or communities, organising, implementing, and evaluating patient care based on acquired skills and knowledge, etc.

The BSc Nursing study program is designed in such a way as to include the general nature and ethical principles of the profession, the basic principles of health and health care, as well as specialised care within specific medical branches such as surgery, psychiatric and mental health, health care of children and care of the elderly persons.

The study program consists of 6 semesters over 3 years of full-time studies (180 ECTS). One (1) ECTS is equivalent to thirty (30) hours of studies. All courses are graded by ECTS values. **However, the ET recommends the heads of the program to periodically revise the allocation of ECTS credits per discipline as to reflect the real overload of students.** They should be periodically consulted about this subject. Moreover, there were some problems with the program presented at the self-evaluation report. **In many subjects the number of self-study hours were much less than the classes held** (i.e., Fundamentals of Nursing has 100 hours of Lectures and seminars and only 60 hours self-study while the same module has 160 hours lab work and 250 Clinical practice hours). This was observed also in other subjects.

The program is designed in such a way that over a three-year study period, students accumulate 5,400 hours of theoretical and practical learning including self-directed learning. Student workload includes lectures, exercises, seminars, clinical practice, and independent learning. Clinical exercises contribute half the hours (2430 hours) according to EU guidelines (2005/36/EC; and 2013/55/EC) and take place in places where students have direct contact with patients. Mentors who are already working as nurses are certified as mentors to oversee the clinical practice of students. The program is structured to enable students to progress year to year; the emphasis on study areas changes each semester, beginning with more basic situations and moving towards more advanced situations as the student progresses. The study program is modelled on qualification objectives.

Detailed syllabuses have been prepared for each subject of this study program including learning outcomes, teaching units for each week, assessment forms as well as the proposed literature for each subject. For the future, the syllabuses can be improved by detailing the



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activities planned, week-by-week, for the practical part of each discipline. This will allow for a better correlation between the theoretical and practical part of the discipline and for an easy check of meeting the nursing standards. The BSc Nursing program is offered in Albanian language. Course syllabi are published on the E-Student learning platform to make students take responsibility for achieving learning outcomes. The syllabuses are discussed with the students in the first week of the beginning of the semester and students are allowed to suggest subjects that they are interested in to be included in the syllabus (up to 30% of the syllabus can be changed this way).

The main didactic approach is to implement the concept of student-centred teaching, learning to foster reflexive thinking, and research-based teaching. In theoretical lectures, interactive work is stimulated, and techniques are applied to promote active/participatory learning. Professors are encouraged to use several strategies to develop students' scientific research skills. Since practice is an integral part of the program, lecturers use teaching methods that promote the creation of students' competencies and show their actual achievements. Learning outcomes are assessed using written and practical skills assessment exams, project work, research work, assignments, and presentations. Specifically, the assessment strategy includes the following components: Written exam or in-class test; Seminar Work: Practical Work: Individual Work: Case Study: Reflective report.

The Formative Assessment Strategy is used in all subjects to facilitate students' preparation for summative assessments and to help them achieve course learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are explained and discussed with students from the perspective of their relevance to the students' development.

Students attend five courses within one semester, and take five exams, the number of course credits vary from 3 to 19 ECTS per course, and 1 ECTS equals 30 teaching hours. The program is comparable to five faculties in Europe. The Faculty of Nursing must organize, perform, and evaluate the clinical practice. For coordination of internships, the Faculty of Nursing has employed Coordinators for the Practical Work of Students who deal exclusively with the arrangement of practical work of students in health institutions. However, the study program to the ET view has some insufficiencies that need to be ameliorated. **Inclusion of courses such as Biostatistics (at least as an elective course) in the study program curricula is strongly recommended while the number of elective courses need to be increased.**



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Clinical practice is implemented continuously during the three years of study. In the first semester of the first year, students learn basic nursing in the laboratories of the AAB College, in the second semester students continue practice in Primary Health Care centres in all Kosovo municipalities, under clinical mentors' supervision. This practice is based on the module *"Nursing for the Elderly and Geriatrics"*. Clinical practice is mandatory. If the students miss it, they must repeat the practice until they reach the set number of hours - flexibility in this regard is appreciated. The college could consider developing transparent procedures of recognising the experience of working nurses that are also students in the process. As mentioned before in this report, the college must take the appropriate measures to ensure the quality of the clinical training by getting involved in preparing clinical trainers and asking for feedback at the end of the clinical training program.

In the third semester of the second year, students follow the practices in the hospital centres with which the AAB College has a cooperation agreement, starting from the University Clinical Center of Kosovo together with all regional hospitals, namely with the seven regional hospitals, as well as with the mental health centres which are part of the UCCK. In these institutions, students are supervised by clinical mentors contracted by AAB, who are also workers in these institutions. As mentioned before, each of the mentors has 9-12 students under their supervision, which is too much, since one mentor can have a maximum of 1 student. In the third semester, clinical practice is based on the modules: *"Nursing and Health in Children and Adolescents with Paediatrics"* and *"Nursing for Women's Health, Gynaecology and Obstetrics."* In the fourth semester of the second year, clinical practice is organised into the modules: *"Nursing Care for internist patients and Internal Medicine"* and *"Nursing care related to Mental Health and Psychiatry"*. In the fifth semester of the third year, clinical practice takes place at the tertiary level, namely at the University Clinical Centre. This semester's clinical practice is based on the modules *"Health Care in the Community"* and *"Nursing Care in surgical patients with Surgery."* In the sixth semester of the third year, the practical exercises are based on the *"Advanced Nursing Practice"* module.

At the end of the internship, students must have theoretical knowledge combined with practice and based on them, fulfil the competencies, showing performance in the practical work they will develop. Clinical exercises are carried out at three levels of the health system, primary,





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secondary, and tertiary levels, as a result of the agreements of the AAB with the Association of Municipalities of Kosovo (which lead with the Family Medicine Centers) and with the University Hospital and Clinical Service of Kosovo, including regional hospitals. At the end of the internship, students have theoretical knowledge in combination with practice and based on this, fulfil the competencies that prove successful in the practical work they develop. Clinical exercises are carried out at three levels of the health system, primary, secondary, and tertiary, because of AAB agreements with the Association of Municipalities of Kosovo (leading with Family Medicine Centers) and with the University Hospital and Clinical Service of Kosovo, including regional hospitals. Students have nursing documentation and a booklet of knowledge and skills.

At the end of each academic year, the *"Student's progress evaluation document during clinical practice"* is completed, in which the number of hours spent by the student during the practice, data on the student (resume), practice program, diary (cases), procedures (number and type) are recorded. In the same document, the evaluation of the student is done, which is signed by the mentor. Students are required to attend practice five days a week and are involved in the nursing team.

For the realisation of all the clinical work of the students, the Faculty of Nursing has signed cooperation agreements with the following institutions: Ministry of Health; The University Hospital and Clinical Service of Kosovo, which includes seven regional hospitals and Mental Health Centers; The Association of Municipalities of Kosovo; Private primary health care centres that provide daily nursing services and home care for patients (Caritas Kosova); "Fati Im" Hospital.

The Faculty of Nursing also has a Career and Employment program through which students can find employment in Germany. AAB College has provided all students with German language training and training within its campus through the LINGUA.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/partially)
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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.	Yes
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.	Yes
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.	Partially
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	Partially
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	Yes





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.	
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.	Yes
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.	Partially
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.	Yes
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.	Partially
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.	Yes



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.	Yes
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.	Yes

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Ensure unity in teaching and student assessment within a discipline and a correlation with other disciplines, in such a way that they contribute to reaching the intended learning outcomes of the study program.*
2. *Start of providing classes also in foreign language (i.e. English) in order to attract international students to conduct mobilities in the College;*
3. *Inclusion of courses such as Biostatistics (at least as an elective course) in the study program curricula is strongly recommended.*
4. *Increase of the elective courses for each academic semester;*
5. *Reduce the number of students in the clinical setting so that one mentor will have no more than 2 students.*
6. *In the table presenting the correlation between the contact hours, the practical activity, individual study and the number of ECTS: Subtract the hours completed in the laboratory from the hours in the clinical environment.*
7. *Include in the syllabuses more nursing literature in the Albanian language.*
8. *Increasing the hours for palliative care subject.*



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## 2.5. Students

The AAB College has a fully-fledged system of rules and regulations that also apply to the evaluated study program, including an admission procedure. The latter is designed in accordance with the AAB statute and the Regulation on Bachelor studies and includes an entrance exam, but also verifying that the candidate successfully completed primary and secondary education and successfully passed the Matura Exam. The admission procedure allows candidates to submit an appeal if they are discontent with their results. **However, a more clear and transparent formula on how to calculate the admission grade should be public - so that candidates will get a clear understanding on how and why the classification of the candidates was done.**

At the beginning of the new academic year, the faculty of Nursing organises the `Welcoming Days` to help new students meet the faculty members and get familiarised with the infrastructure and the rules and regulations of the institution.

Students are divided into 4 lecture groups, of maximum 60 students and then in smaller groups for the practice hours (no more than 9-12 students). This sets-up the premises for an interactive teaching and learning process, but in order to reach this desire **it should be complemented by adequate teaching methods**. As mentioned before, the College is recommended to rethink the clinical practice in such a way that they allocate a maximum of 2 students per clinical trainer to both ensure the quality of the clinical training (*see also the recommendations regarding the QA*) and the comfort of the studied patients.

The student assessment and feedback was also discussed in previous sections of the report. The results are always certified in the academic record - aspect confirmed both by students and teachers. **The ET recommends the college to also encourage the teachers to provide mechanisms for assistance to students, when needed, so that they can reach their intended learning outcomes.**

As mentioned before, there is some flexibility granted to students when they miss a class/a clinical training hour as they can recover their losses with other study groups. **This should be a transparent and opened-to-all option especially as attendance rates are considered during**



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the student assessment. Similar flexibility should be ensured for students that have to take a medical leave or that go through a personal difficult situation (e.g. a death in the family). Online instruments that were developed during the pandemic period could be put-to-value in such situations to ensure the students don't miss part of their training or to offer them the option of doing extra work to recover their losses.

The teachers are the main responsables for ensuring the originality of the student work. They can use the Turnitin platform to check the final thesis of the students (control of plagiarism). The ET salutes this acquisition of the college and encourages the institution to consider using this platform even more - e.g. for allowing students and teachers to use it to perform self-checks of their own work for any project/paper they prepare.

Students rights and responsibilities derive from the contract the students sign with the institution and they are also mentioned in the rules and regulations that are available to students on the e-platform. Students seemed to be aware of them. Even though the College has an appeal procedure, it seems that it is not very often used by students. **They could be encouraged to use this right always when they feel that any teacher was incorrect in checking/correcting their exams.** ET considers that sometimes students are "afraid" to complain about a grade and do not follow this procedure. Instead of using this procedure, students use the consultation hours provided by the teacher after the exam to discuss their papers and results. Thus confirming that teachers respect their duty of ensuring consultation hours. **However, given the high number of students in the Nursing program, the college and the teachers should evaluate if 2 hours/week of consultations are enough.** Better monitoring this process of consultation could help identify ways to improve it so that it best serves its own purposes.

Finally, graduates spoke highly about the program and indicated that the majority of them either found a good job, were in the process of obtaining the work licence from the Ministry of Health or were continuing their studies. It was mentioned that approximately 70% of the students graduate in due time (in three years). And the college keeps contact with them through the institutional email they all have since the first day as students (and which they used during their student life). The College should consider transferring the communication with students on their personal emails, that are more likely to be used on the long term than the institutional ones. The College sends to graduates, every two years a form to fill in about their experience as students and evaluation of the study program after graduation and also sends them job opportunities. **The ET considers the college could definitely benefit from starting an**

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**Alumni Club to join all graduates.** This could be used as a platform to keep the graduates in contact with each other but also with the novelties registered by the college. The institution could also invite graduates for periodical reunions (e.g. every 3 or 5 years) and to offer lectures as guest lectures or to ask them for donations for the institutions (either for different investments or to cover student scholarships).

The number of admissions annually is 150 students. According to the additional documents requested, the employment rate of graduates in the Nursing Faculty is 87%. **However, it's not clear how the monitoring and the whole procedure is done. Improvement of monitoring procedures of the graduates is important.**

In the end, the ET would like to mention that it is aware of the political and international context of Kosovo and of developing a demanded program like the one in the field of Nursing. But we think that, despite the competition among the faculties that offer such a program to attract more Kosovar students, a cooperation between them could definitely benefit them. If united, Nursing Faculties would increase their negotiating power in front of the Kosovar authorities and international funding bodies. Moreover, they could develop and offer students an internal exchange program, thus offering them the possibility to compare their own student experience with the one of other students in the country.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/partially)
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.	Yes
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.	Yes
Standard 5.3. The study groups are dimensioned so as to ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process.	Yes
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	Partially



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Standard 5.5 The results obtained by the students throughout the study cycles are certified by the academic record.	Yes
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.	Partially
Standard 5.7. Records of student completion rates are kept for all courses and for the program as a whole and included among quality indicators. [SEP]	Yes
Standard 5.8. Effective procedures are being used to ensure that work submitted by students is original.	Yes
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.	Yes
Standard 5.10 Standard 5.10. The students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs is clearly regulated in formal internal documents.	Yes
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.	Yes

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Start an Alumni Club;*
2. *Provide access to the anti plagiarism software for students and teachers so that they can check their own work;*
3. *Ensure flexibility for students to reach their intended attendance rate (benefiting from the opportunity that the lectures and the labs are repeated several times for all the student groups);*
4. *Feedback to students should also include a component referring to what a student can do to reach the learning outcomes (assisting mechanisms);*
5. *Better monitoring of the students after graduation with more regular meetings;*
6. *Information of the students about the possibility to publish their research activities in the College Journal.*
7. *Inclusion of students in research activities.*
8. *Consider the development of a national student exchange program among faculties of Nursing in Kosovo.*

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9. *Improvement of monitoring procedures of the graduates is important.*

## 2.6. Research

The College has developed and approved a strategic plan for the period 2022-2026. The second goal of this plan focuses on science. According to this plan, the “*Scientific research in AAB College aims to advance, create and disseminate knowledge in order to improve the well-being of the population as well as assist in cultural, social and economic development*”. Specific goals and expected results are clear in this strategy. **The College has not provided specific scientific/applied research objectives for this study program**, but they mention that the Faculty of Nursing strategic objectives are the same of the Institution. The research of the faculty focuses mainly on the development of evidence-based practice in the field of nursing not only in Kosovo but also abroad. Additionally, the Regulation for Scientific Research Activities is in place. AAB College is putting significant efforts in research and due to this they have increased the budget to support research activities. Article 9 of the Research Regulation clearly defined the research activity of regular academic staff that are financially supported. Moreover, the Grant Regulation of the College “*aim to support scientific / artistic research for the AAB College full-time academic staff through grants and financial support*”. The specific grants available for the staff are clearly presented on article 4 of this Regulation. Moreover, the infrastructure is at the disposal of the academic staff for research activities. The authorities of the institution confirmed that they support the staff to participate in scientific research activities and based on specific criteria’s they provide them grants. During the meeting with the academic staff, they said that the College supports them for research activities by providing them the possibility to use the infrastructure and grants. Moreover, they have access to on-line databases from which they can extract up-to-date literature. Based on the list provided by the institution as additional documents requested, at the Faculty of Nursing only two (2) academic staff have received financial support. **It is important for the College to encourage the staff to work and publish in indexed journals and more staff from this Faculty to gain grants for publishing.**

All full-time academic staff of AAB are obligated to be involved actively in research. Annually, they have to prepare and publish at least one article as well as to be involved in other research activities. In the list of publications provided by the Institution most of the staff had scientific



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work published. However, not all of them had for each academic year as well as, many of the articles published were in low ranked /not indexed journals. Additionally, the College provided a list of publications only for 23 members of the academic staff of the Faculty while the number of the staff is much higher. During the meeting with the heads of the study program they mentioned that this has happened due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. **The Institution needs to encourage all the staff to publish annually and specially those employed lately. The academic staff should work more in order to publish in indexed journals with impact factor.** Research activities are a key instrument for promotion, election or reelection of the staff. They need to be the first or corresponding author for the above. More details about the promotion of the staff are available in the articles 5-9 of the “*Regulation on appointment, re-appointment and promotion of academic staff*”. Moreover, the college publishes the Journal “Thesis”. However, according to the list of research articles published by the staff of the College, very few articles from the staff were published in this Journal. **More efforts are needed for indexing the Journal in international databases.** Additionally, research projects are minimal, and this is a weak point of the College. Inclusion in more international projects will give the chance to the staff to increase their knowledge and skills as well as to prepare scientific papers that could be published in good journals.

The article 5 of the “*Regulation for the Scientific Research Activities*” defines clearly what its research and scientific research in AAB College includes. The Grant Regulation specifies which research activities can be funded and up to which level (articles 4-6). In order to receive the grant, full time staff need to have the AAB College listed as affiliation as well as to be first or corresponding author. However, in the list of scientific articles provided by the College, some of the authors didn’t use the affiliation of AAB but other institutions. It is not clear if they have published these articles before joining the AAB or if they have double affiliation and didn’t use that of the College. **It is strongly recommended that academic staff use the institutional email and affiliation of the College when publishing scientific articles.**

The staff of the Faculty of Nursing is trying to publish articles that fit their teaching activities. This was also reported by them during the visit at the institution. **However, as the majority of the academic staff doesn’t have a PhD, their area of specialisation is not well defined.** This also has an impact on the classes they hold.





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As it was mentioned above, the academic staff publish articles in different activities which include journals, publish houses, conferences etc. However, most of them (among the total 154 as reported in the self-evaluation report) are not indexed in Scopus or Web of Science. **This clearly describes the need for improving the quality of the target journals.** Additionally, inclusion of external stakeholders in research activities is strongly recommended as during the meeting they mentioned that they are not included in such kinds of activities.

Both staff and students confirmed that they provide/receive the articles published. The articles are provided in the electronic system established by the College. Moreover, it is mentioned in the self-evaluation report that these articles are included in the syllabus of the course. However, the syllabuses don't contain in the literature this information and **academic staff need to include this for the next academic year.**

The “*Regulation on Intellectual Property and Commercialization of Idea*” has been drafted by the College while the contract of the academic staff has information about the intellectual property rights. Article 15 of the full-time academic staff and article 12 of part-time staff contains information about intellectual property.

Professors mentioned that they include their students in research while the students in the meeting said that they have not participated in such kind of activities till now. The external evaluators asked for a list of articles published that students were part of. The College provided a list with some students that participated in conferences. However, from this list it is not clear if the students participated in these conferences with their presentations or were part of the research team. Additionally, the document provided doesn't include the professors that were part of the team. To some extent, the College provided a list with future possible projects and that is shown the inclusion of the students. According to the evidence, till now the inclusion of the student in research activities is non-existent. **We strongly suggest that academic staff include students in their research activities.** Even in cases that based on the word done they don't fulfil the criteria to be listed as authors, it's strongly recommended students' contribution to be mentioned at acknowledgment.



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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.	Yes
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.	Yes
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.	Yes
Standard 6.4. The academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.	Partially
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.	Yes
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.	Yes
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.	Partially
Standard 6.8. Academic and research staff publish under the name of the institution in Kosovo they are affiliated to as full-time staff.	Yes

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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.	Yes
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.	Yes
Standard 6.10. Students are engaged in research projects and other activities.	No

**Compliance level: Substantially compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *Increase the efforts to involve students in research activities.*
2. *Development of a research strategy from the faculty is needed;*
3. *More active participation of the faculty and academic staff in national and international research projects.*
4. *Regular monitoring of the work published by the staff and support to publish in as many as possible indexed journals.*
5. *The College needs to encourage all the staff to publish annually and specially those employed lately.*
6. *Increase of efforts to index the Journal of the College "Thesis" in international databases.*
7. *It is strongly recommended that academic staff use the institutional email and affiliation of the College when publishing scientific articles.*
8. *Inclusion in the syllabus the scientific articles published by the academic staff that can serve as literature for the students.*
9. *Inclusion of external stakeholders in research activities.*
10. *Increase of international collaboration for research activities and publish more articles with academic staff affiliated in European Higher Education Institutions.*



## 2.7. Infrastructure and resources

All premises, classrooms, laboratories, software equipment, and libraries are the property of AAB and are not rented. There are 8 laboratories dedicated to nursing, with mannequins, models for taking blood and setting up infusions, appropriate beds and medical materials that enable the implementation of nursing interventions. The laboratories provide ample space to practise and learn various nursing skills in a convenient environment. AAB opened the AMD University Medical Polyclinic in 2022, where nursing students can also complete part of their clinical training according to the study plan elaborated.

The Faculty of Nursing offers students and all users good conditions for independent study in the library premises. The Reading Room is quite good and offers good conditions for the readers. **When visiting the library, ET missed more literature in the Albanian language and more recent and modern nursing literature.** Of course, the library offers a lot of other literature that is not intended for nursing. The Faculty of Nursing provides all the appropriate infrastructure for students with special needs according to modern standards.

Standards	Compliance level (yes/no/partially)
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.	Yes
Standard 7.2. There is a financial plan at the level of the study program that would demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years.	Yes
Standard 7.3. The higher education institution must demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices etc.) that, for the study program submitted for evaluation it possesses the following, for the next at least three years: a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process.	Yes



b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities. c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence. d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	
Standard 7.4. The number of seats in the lecture rooms, seminar rooms and laboratories must be related to the study groups' size (series, groups, subgroups); the applicative activities for the speciality disciplines included in the curricula are carried out in laboratories equipped with IT equipment.	Yes
Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs: a) a number of seats in the reading rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program. b) a number of seats in the group work rooms corresponding to at least 10% of the total number of students in the study program. c) their own book stock from Albanian and foreign speciality literature, enough to cover the disciplines within the curricula, out of which at least 50% should represent book titles or speciality courses of recognised publishers, from the last 10 years. d) a book stock within its own library with a sufficient number of books so as to cover the needs of all students in the cycle and year of study the respective discipline is provided for; e) a sufficient number of subscriptions to Albanian and foreign publications and periodicals, according to the stated mission.	Partially
Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.	Yes

**Compliance level: Fully compliant level**

**ET recommendations:**

1. *To provide more relevant literature in the Albanian language*
2. *Improve of the infrastructure dedicated to research activities;*



3. *Clarify the spread of the infrastructure among study programs to ensure that the Nursing Program has sufficient spaces dedicated exclusively to it;*
4. *Open up some of the spaces for students to use after classes for working in groups for projects or for different extracurricular activities.*

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

The BSc Nursing program is a Bachelor program (corresponding to level 6 of the EQF) organised over three years of study and corresponding to 180 ECTS credits. It is designed in compliance with the EU directives for the regulated nursing profession and it is addressed to potential candidates that have graduated secondary education and successfully passed the Matura Exam. Until now, it enrolled 150 students/year out of which approximately 70% graduated in due time (three years). According to the additional documents requested, the employment rate of graduates in the Nursing Faculty is 87%. **However, it's not clear how the monitoring and the whole procedure is done. Improvement of monitoring procedures of the graduates is important.**

Since the last evaluation, the college has put on recognizable efforts to improve the study program by hiring new staff members, contracting a large number of clinical trainers and enlarging the infrastructure dedicated to the program. However, as argued in the sections 2.1-2.7 of this report there are still many things to be done for the program:

- Attracting more teaching staff holding the PhD title in Nursing;
- Restructuring the clinical practice so that its quality is ensured mainly by increasing the number of clinical trainers (up to a ratio of 1 trainer for each 1 students);
- Continue the constant improvement of the program curricular by including subjects as Biostatistics, Nursing informatics or subjects related to the development and usage of AI in the field of Nursing;
- Updating the bibliography of the syllabuses so that they are more recent;
- Better monitoring procedures of the employment rates of the graduates;
- Improvement of the quality of the research published;
- Increase the research capacity and quality of the entire academic community.



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All these have been translated into recommendations detailed in sections 2.1 – 2.7 of this report and which are meant to help the college to be ready to enrol more students, in the future, and obtain an accreditation for a longer period of time.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Nursing BSc offered by AAB College is **Substantially compliant** with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends **to accredit** the study program for a duration of **3 years** with a number of **250 students** to be enrolled in the program.

#### 4. APPENDICES (if available): NA

##### Expert Team

###### Chair

**Prof. Dr. Danica Železnik**

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(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

###### Member

**Assoc. Prof. Enkeleint Mechilli**

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(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

###### Member

**Delia Lupescu (ex Gologan)**

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(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)