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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



AAB College
Faculty of Arts

Re/accreditation of MA program in Graphic Design

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

28th April 2025, Zagreb

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INTRODUCTION

Date of site visit: 12 March 2025

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. dr. Diana Milčič,*
- *Prof. Dr. Fedja Vukić,*
- *Mr. Shadiyar Tauyemel,*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Fjolle Ajeti, KAA Officer*
- *Shkelzen Gerxhaliiu, KAA Department Director*

Sources of information for the Report:

a) Received documents

- *Self-evaluation report Faculty of Arts re/accreditation of Graphic Design /MA*
- *Syllabi*
- *Staff CVs (Full time, part time)*
- *Financial Plan for the MA Graphic Design*

b) Documents (some) available on the website in English <https://aab-edu.net/en/>

- *Statute*
- *Regulation for Master Studies*
- *The Quality Assurance Regulation*
- *Code of Ethics*
- *Rules of Procedure of the Study Commission*
- *Rules of procedure of the committee for quality assurance*
- *Regulations for scientific-research activities*
- *Regulation on the promotion of academic staff*
- *Regulation on the report of the examination results*

Received documents:

All required documents have been submitted

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *Kosovo Accreditation Agency, Regulation (KAA) No. 04/2024 for the Manual of Accreditation/Reaccreditation and Validation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programs at the Bachelor's and Master's Level / Accreditation manual, February 2024*
- *Kosovo Accreditation Agency, Programme Compliance calculation*

Site visit schedule

Programmes:	Graphic Design , MA
Site visit on:	12 March 2025
Expert Team:	Prof. Dr. Diana Milcic Prof. Dr. Fedja Vukić MR. Shadiyar Tauyekel
Coordinators of the KAA:	Fjolle Ajeti, KAA Officer Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, KAA Department Director

Time	Meeting	Participants
9:00 - 9:45	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programs are integrated	Fitim Aliu Elisa Nikolla Bujar Demjaha
09:50 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Furtuna Mehmeti Flaka Krasniqi Margarita Haruni
10:35 – 11:35	Meeting with the program holders of the study program Graphic Design and Visual Arts, BA Graphic Design, MA	Clirim Vokshi, Agon Nimani, Liridona Abdullahu, Luan Tashi, Leonita Fazliu, Gureta Breznica Bajrami
11:35 – 12:40	Lunch break	
12:50 – 13:30	Meeting with teaching staff	Lorik Sylejmani Adriana Kutllovci Burim Myftiu Fisnik Ismaili Halil Xhafa Fidan Qerimi Miran Kozmaqi
13:35– 14:15	Meeting with students	Asija Hajrizaj BA Ledion Kukaj Mert Spahiu Diellza Elezaj Mevlide Salovic MA Harisa Arifi MA Fjona Grajcevc Erleba Gashi Fatlum Zeka
14:20 – 15:00	Meeting with graduates	Visar Spanca Art Hyskaj Noli Mati

		Art Aliu Drilon Sylejmani Agron Sejdiu
15:05 – 15:45	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Mates LLC / Anita Selmani Nacew / Valon Bucolli Karrota / Meriton Salihu Zonda Creative L.L.C / Selim Maloku Digitool / Rolanda Kerqeli Xbrending LLC/ Leart Salihu
15:45 – 15:55	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:55 – 16:05	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Fitim Aliu Elisa Nikolla Bujar Demjaha

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

AAB Collage was established in 2002 and it is the largest non-public institution of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo and in the region. AAB Collage organizes studies in 14 faculties and one of them is The Faculty of Arts.

The study programs offered at the Faculty of arts as well as at AAB Collage are BA and MA levels.

The Faculty of Arts is responsible for managing and carrying out the teaching and research activities within its accredited study programs. It operates independently to some extent, as certain responsibilities have been delegated from the central AAB College level, granting the Faculty autonomy in organizing events, conducting research, and handling academic matters. This autonomy is guaranteed by the Statute and other relevant policies of the college. However, despite this independence, the Faculty of Arts is not a separate budgetary unit, and budget-related decisions are made at the central level of AAB College.

The Faculty of Arts aims to achieve several goals, as outlined in the SER. These include adopting modern teaching methodologies and ensuring that practical training in the arts aligns with current trends in art and technology. The faculty also seeks to establish partnerships with European universities to offer more internship and hands-on learning opportunities for students. Additionally, they are focused on investing in the professional development of academic staff to improve both teaching quality and research capabilities. Lastly, the faculty strives to enhance its societal role by organizing artistic events, exhibitions, and cultural initiatives in Kosovo and the surrounding region, contributing to the broader artistic community.

The study program under evaluation is MA program in Graphic Design.

Name of the Institution:	AAB College
Faculty/Department:	Faculty of Arts
Main and/or Branch Campus:	Main Campus
Specify the Branch you are applying for:	Prishtinë
Name of the Study Programme:	Graphic Design
Person in charge of the study programme:	Fitim Aliu
Accreditation/Reaccreditation:	Reaccreditation
Level of qualification according to NQF:	ISCED 7
Academic degree or the name of the Diploma:	Master of Arts in Graphic Design
ECTS:	120
Specialization/Concentration:	N/A
Erasmus Subject Area Code (ESAC):	03; 03.5
Form of studies:	Full Time
Minimum duration of studies:	2 years; 4 semesters
Number of study places / Quote:	60
Permanent scientific/artistic personnel for the study programme (at least 3 PhDs):	Luan Tashi; Leonita Fazliu; Gureta Breznica Bajrami

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

According to the SER: the mission of the Faculty of Arts is to provide high-quality student-centered education in various arts disciplines, through contemporary teaching methodologies and practical experiences, ensuring students develop the skills, knowledge, and professionalism necessary for success in their artistic careers. The mission of the MA program in Graphic Design is to: "To provide advanced, student-centered education that equips graduates with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to excel in contemporary design practices. The program fosters creativity, critical thinking, and research-driven innovation, enabling students to develop multidisciplinary design solutions that respond to industry demands and cultural trends."

The MA program in Graphic Design is fully in line with AAB College's mission, as it aims to develop skilled professionals ready for the labour market.

The structure of the study program is publicly available on the website, but there is no content related to the study program.

The program has been updated to align with both local and international trends in graphic design and digital media. As part of the reaccreditation process, the Faculty of Arts carried out a needs analysis, which primarily relied on survey results collected by AAB College, including feedback from employers and professionals regarding the skills and qualifications required for graphic designers, and a comparative analysis of Graphic Design programs within the region and internationally.

The intended learning outcomes of the study program align with the mission and strategic goals of the institution, but they are not made publicly available on website.

The Faculty of Arts, based on the analysis, confirmed that there is a demand in the graphic design market, particularly in Kosovo and the region, for highly skilled professionals capable of leading creative projects in fields like technology, marketing, and media. The analysis results highlighted those employers and professionals in graphic design stress the importance of key competencies for success in the job market, including technical skills, proficiency in graphic software, communication and project management abilities, as well as creativity and flexibility in thinking.

The faculty believes it has determined the optimal number of students to enroll, as national accreditation standards stipulate that for every group of 60-80 students and each 60 ECTS, a

qualified full-time academic staff member with a doctoral degree must be assigned. To meet these standards, the Faculty of Arts has appointed four program coordinators, ensuring high-quality teaching and mentoring.

This target number of students that the Faculty intends to enroll in aligns with the academic and infrastructural capacities of AAB College, as well as with local accreditation standards and requirements. The Faculty employs 15 full-time academic staff members and provides learning spaces and resources that fully support the academic and professional needs of students.

Standard 1.2 The study program 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)

According to the SER and additional documents from the website, as well as during meetings with the management, faculty, and students, significant information was provided regarding formal policies, guidelines, and regulations related to plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and discrimination.

All rights and obligations are publicly available through documents such as the AAB College Statute, Study Regulation – AAB, and the AAB College Code of Ethics. An Ethics Committee has also been established. The College uses specialized plagiarism detection software and has procedures in place for managing the results from this software.

Procedures and mechanisms for addressing academic plagiarism and dishonesty, including the use of Turnitin, are introduced to students during their first year of studies. All these documents are accessible on the main website of AAB College.

As mentioned earlier, submitted works and final papers are thoroughly checked for plagiarism using software, and faculty members also monitor plagiarism based on the nature of individual student works. The Ethics Committee takes appropriate actions in cases of plagiarism, following the AAB College Code of Ethics, and evaluates each case individually.

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

According to the SER, the college has an information management system in place that ensures the accuracy and currency of data, along with clear action plans for monitoring study programs. Ethical standards and data protection policies are adhered to, and the institution complies with national data protection laws.

Both students and staff play a role in providing and analyzing information, as well as planning support activities. They participate in surveys and focus group discussions to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and workload distribution. Faculty and administration use this feedback to adjust teaching methods and enhance the overall learning experience for students.

Both students and staff have confirmed in meetings that their input has had a direct impact on decision-making and has contributed to improvements in the program.

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

The SER does not provide information about administrative staff monitoring the activities and operations of the study program. However, during the panel discussion and based on the website data, it was noted that three individuals are assigned as administrative staff who also handle quality assurance tasks. According to Article 11 of the Statute, the organizational structure indicates that administrative staff are managed at the central level of AAB College. It can be concluded that the study program has adequate administrative support to fulfill the needs of students and academic staff in terms of teaching and learning.

A professional development plan for administrative staff could not be found in the available documentation. However, during the panel discussion with administrative staff, it was mentioned that they participate in conferences, which can be seen as a form of professional development.

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

Although mentioned in the SER, the list of recommendations for quality improvement of the study program from previous internal and external quality assurance procedures is not provided, it is not attached to SER.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Define personal professional development plan for administrative staff engaged in the delivery of the study program within six months.*
- 2. After each internal and external quality assurance procedure, an analysis of the recommendations should be conducted, and an action plan for improvement should be developed.*

The action plan should be developed within six months and checked upon one year and in each six months within the accreditation period.

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

The SER provides an overview of how quality management is implemented at AAB College and the Faculty, outlining the instruments used in the process.

AAB College has established a comprehensive internal quality assurance system that aligns with national regulations, such as the Law on Higher Education and the Accreditation Manual, as well as international standards (ESG). This system includes well-defined procedures for assessing program effectiveness and fostering continuous improvement (PDCA). The Quality Assurance Office functions at the central level, while the Faculty of Arts has its own Quality Assurance Committee. The committee's chair, who also serves as the quality coordinator, operates at the faculty level. The study program is monitored by a quality assurance coordinator, whose role is dedicated solely to overseeing the program, without any teaching responsibilities.

As can be seen from the SER and from the discussion on site the visit, quality assurance is very important to the AAB College and Faculty. This is evident from the regulations such as The Regulation for Quality Assurance, the Guide for Quality Assurance and the Strategic Development Plan.

Every semester, the AAB Head Office provides the Faculty of Arts with a Quality Assurance Activity Plan, outlining all the necessary tasks related to monitoring and improving quality. These tasks include standardizing syllabi, monitoring the implementation of syllabi, evaluating the availability of required and additional literature, overseeing the online platform (including monitoring academic staff's posting of electronic materials), conducting student evaluations of academic staff, assessing administration and student services at the end of the semester, monitoring student success, etc.

Discussions with the faculty's management and the Quality Assurance Coordinator at the faculty level revealed that all quality assurance processes receive full support from the institution's management, both financially and materially. The outcomes of internal evaluations and reports prepared by the Quality Assurance Office play a key role in guiding decision-making and strategic planning at the institution.

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

The development of the study program is in line with the mission and strategic goals of the faculty.

According to the Statute, study programs are reviewed annually, gathering input from both internal academic members, including students, academic staff, graduates, and employers, and external stakeholders. Since the last re/accreditation in 2022, the MA program in Graphic Design has been reviewed in accordance with the Statute, Quality Regulation, and Quality Guidelines for re/accreditation purposes. The program received approval from the Faculty's Teaching Council and the Senate. The review process for the development and approval of the program appears to be well-structured and clearly defined.

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

The MA program in Graphic Design is regularly assessed to ensure its alignment with societal needs. Every two years, surveys are conducted with employers and industry professionals to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and competencies graduates gain and how well they are applied in the workplace. Additionally, employers and industry representatives could suggest new content for the program through surveys or formal meetings, helping the program stay relevant to labor market demands.

Student workload and learning outcomes are evaluated through surveys and occasional formal meetings with students. These consultations take place to ensure that the workload is manageable and that the courses in the curriculum are suitable and align with students' expectations. Students believe that the ECTS credits, in relation to the workload, are properly assessed.

Students, staff, and employers have all confirmed in meetings that their feedback is considered when adjusting the program, supporting continuous improvement. However, there is no evidence of dedicated meetings with alumni representatives, which restricts the ability to gather feedback from graduates on the program's effectiveness and its influence on their careers.

Students also pointed out the absence of an alumni network, which limits the university's ability to engage former students in ongoing program evaluation.

The faculty has established procedures for regularly conducting surveys with all stakeholders, and their feedback is used to improve study programs.

After each evaluation by the Quality Assurance Office, reports and action plans are created based on data collected through questionnaires. These reports, along with proposed improvements, are sent to the Faculty and College management, serving as a foundation for enhancing study programs, student services, and teaching methods. The results of the monitoring process and the corresponding action plans are not shared with all stakeholders.

Information is selectively distributed among stakeholders and is also selectively published on the website. Some data gathered through surveys is only accessible to students through the e-student platform.

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

All essential information related to the study program is made available on the official AAB website. This includes regulations and institutional policies such as Statute, Regulations on Master's Studies, and the Regulation on Quality Assurance.

Admission criteria, qualification recognition, and enrollment quotas are based on a public competition, with the selection procedure and evaluation criteria clearly defined by the Senate.

In the SER, it is stated that “information regarding admission criteria, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and other relevant information for the study program are published” on website.

Details of the study program, including syllabi, learning outcomes, credits, and assessment methods, are not publicly available on the web site. They are available to students via an internal e-service that is accessible only to students and authorized individuals.

On the website, the following is listed as learning outcomes: “Knowledge and Understanding, Subject-specific skills, Thinking Skills and Other skills relevant to employability and personal development” what represents very general outcomes. It is necessary to clearly define the learning outcomes of the study program and publicly publish them.

Information on pass rates, dropout rates, and graduate employment is not presented or publicly available.

No issues were identified regarding the accuracy, reliability, or objectivity of the information, as confirmed during the panel discussions. The website information is regularly reviewed to maintain its accuracy, reliability, and timeliness. The College has a Public Relations Office, which is staffed by at least five professionals responsible for updating the website and social media with new information.

ET recommendations:

1. *Clearly define the learning outcomes of the study program and publicly publish them starting immediately and checked upon each survey.*
2. *The results determined by surveys should be regularly posted on the website to make them publicly available.*

Upgraded reports should be published by the beginning of next academic year.

3. *Publicly available reports should include information on pass rates, dropout rates, and the employability of graduates.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

4. *Involve all external stakeholders in the work of Quality Assurance Office.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

5. *Clearly communicate the changes made because of evaluation findings. Ensure that students are provided with feedback regarding the actions taken based on their input.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

6. Establish an alumni network and actively involve graduates in program evaluations.

This network should be established for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

Standard 3.1 The study program 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 employment of academic staff is governed by national laws, internal university policies, and accreditation standards.

AAB College has established a clear and well-defined staff recruitment and management policy, including formal regulations outlining the terms of employment for teaching staff.

Pursuant to Article 26 of Law No. 04/L-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, and the provisions of the Statute, the Senate, in its meeting held on 17/12/2021, approved the Regulation on appointment, re-appointment, and promotion of academic staff. According to the mentioned regulation, calls for open positions are publicly posted on the website.

During the meeting, it was emphasized that all potential candidates are given comprehensive information about the advertised positions, as well as the terms and conditions of employment, ensuring transparency. The selection of teaching staff is based on various criteria, such as their educational and research activities and contributions to society.

Additionally, according to the Regulation on the Systematization of Workplaces, each employee receives a description of work duties and employment conditions. Every academic staff member receives a contract and a job description, detailing their responsibilities related to students, research, and administrative duties. Documents such as the Statute, Code of Ethics, Regulation for Master's Studies, etc., are also publicly available on the AAB College website.

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

The SER states that the MA Graphic Design study program employs a total of 15 regular academic staff members with full-time contracts. The faculty consists of full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, teaching assistants, and lecturers. Additionally, two foreign professors have been hired on special one-semester contracts, with the possibility of renewal.

The academic staff engaged in the study program does not cover more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time) within one academic year.

The teaching workload teaching staff is an average of 8-10 teaching hours throughout the program. In the MA Graphic Design study program, full-time staff members teach more than 50% of the subjects in the curriculum

According to the Administrative Instruction on Accreditation, the Faculty of Arts employs three (2+1) program holders with a doctorate for every 60 ECTS of the MA program in Graphic Design.

The student-to-teacher ratio in the program under evaluation is considered sufficient for achieving the learning outcomes.

The academic staff involved in the implementation of the study program hold qualifications that align with the field of the Bachelor's degree. It is evident from the panel discussion, as well as the formal staff profiles (CVs submitted prior to the review), that the academic staff can provide a high-quality learning experience for students through inclusive and relevant programs and curricula, while maintaining professionalism and collaboration.

The faculty members are not overwhelmed, which helps maintain their teaching quality and job satisfaction. The workload of the academic staff is properly allocated to ensure they can effectively carry out their teaching, mentoring, and advising duties, while also balancing their research/artistic activities and administrative responsibilities. In accordance with AAB College's internal regulations, to maintain fairness in the mentoring process, no faculty member is permitted to supervise more than 10 candidates at the same time.

According to the available data and from the panel discussion with students, the study program has enough qualified mentors who support students in their learning and progress, as well as in supervising their final theses.

It appears that all employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Their duties, which are agreed upon collectively, include regular teaching, preparing materials, and offering student consultations.

Standard 3.3 The study program 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 academic staff in the study program can be promoted and reappointed through a structured and transparent process. Teacher promotion follows clear procedures outlined in the Regulation on Election, Reelection, and Academic Advancement, in compliance with the legal requirements set by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST) and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).

To be eligible for promotion, academic staff members must meet specific criteria related to their scientific publications and artistic activity. Academic staff must publish a required number of papers: one for assistant professor, three for associate professor, and five for full professor, all in WoS or Scopus journals. Artistic activities and public performances (such as exhibitions and events) are also considered.

Teacher evaluations based on student feedback are also factored into the promotion process.

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

AAB College has established the Center for Professional Training and Innovation (QAPI), which provides certified professional training and support services for academic staff, including didactics, scientific research projects and methodology, and the management of higher education organizations.

The faculty has not an annual plan for the professional development of academic staff involved in the study program and provides evidence of their participation in these development activities.

The faculty supports all academic staff of the study program in developing skills related to testing and assessment methods. As mentioned in the SER, they organized, for example, a session on 'Assessment of students based on competence and grade construction. According to the panel discussion with the teachers, it was determined that they are not required to attend the offered professional development programs.

There is no clear evidence regarding whether newly hired teachers receive proper training to enhance their teaching skills before starting their teaching roles at the institution. The faculty supports interdisciplinary collaboration and fosters international mobility through programs such as Erasmus+.

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

According to the SER, the Faculty of Arts involves several external collaborators as lecturers in the MA and BA programs in Graphic Design, and these individuals are sourced from the labor market. However, the SER does not provide evidence of any specific training offered to external associates regarding higher education regulations and practices, such as ECTS credits, learning outcomes, and teaching methods.

There is no evidence in the available documents to confirm whether external collaborators are involved in supervising final theses, ensuring that student research meets both academic and industry standards.

Additionally, in the tabular presentation of academic staff and visiting professors, two visiting professors are listed, but their workload, duties, and responsibilities are not specified.

ET recommendations:

1. *Create an annual professional development plan for academic staff.*

To ensure this an action plan is needed within three months and in operation mode within six months and with reported checks to management each year.

2. *Keep records of attendance/completion of professional development activities for academic staff.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

3. *Improve the strategy of staff mobility and follow up on yearly basis.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

4. *Include external collaborators involved in the study program to participate in mentoring graduation theses, including co-mentoring.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

5. *Clearly define and outline the obligations of visiting professors.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported to management regularly.

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

Standard 4.1 The study program 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)

As declared in SER and checked throughout the meetings with the management, program holders and teaching staff, there is a strong notion of the need to profoundly maintain and develop the program. Learning outcomes are well structured, clearly aligned with the HEI's unit strategy and filtered with the stakeholder's perspective. Learning outcomes are published on HEI/s web pages. However, there is a slight inconsistency between Program objective 3 (SER p.29) - "Prepare students to take on leadership roles in the creative industries by cultivating ethical standards" and its description as "collaborate effectively within the team". This inconsistency appears also between Learning Outcomes competences (SER p.14) defined as "collaborate effectively within the team" and NQF descriptors alignment of learning outcomes (SER p.31) "managing professional teams, contributing to the development of knowledge and practice, and reviewing their performance". This discrepancy is important to resolve as most MA studies prepare students to assume project leader's positions.

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

The learning outcomes of the study program overall comply with the National Qualifications Framework and the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) belong to this level of study. The program and curriculum are adequately structured with the classification of learning outcomes to three components: knowledge, skills, and competencies, and these outcomes are in line with the level and profile of qualification gained by the students.

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 structure of the curriculum is developed along the consideration of fundamental "pillars" which stand as key elements of profession. These fundamentals are represented through syllabuses of courses which gradually develop intended skills and competencies, from simple to more complex ones. Overall, it is sufficiently justified that the core disciplines of the field are incorporated into the curriculum, and the expected learning outcomes can be obtained by this curriculum. However, there is a significant difference in description of the learning outcomes within the subjects' and courses syllabuses, both on linguistic presentation and on number of learning outcomes chosen.

ET recommendations:

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

SER claims that the MA program in Graphic Design is academic and not regulated by local laws. Therefore, standard 4.4 does not apply. But from the meeting with the program holders and the stakeholders it is evident that the study program has been designed along recommendations of the industrial sector through the Entrepreneurship Advisory Board.

Standard 4.5 The intended learning outcomes of the student practise 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)

Throughout the SER and the meetings with the QAO, program holders and stakeholders from industry it is evident that the students practice is happening throughout the various forms of internships within the industry actors. But there is a impression that it is happening ad hoc, and that there is not evident proof that the intended learning outcomes of student practice are clearly specified. It is obvious that the HEI's unit has developed strong ties with the industry but there is not evidence that effective processes are followed to ensure that learning outcomes and the strategies to develop that learning are understood by students, other than QAO questionnaires for evaluation of practical work by students and with employers and industry.

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

Following mostly the meeting with students, it shows that the study program has a concept that focuses on the simultaneous development of students' theoretical, practical design and technical competencies, which proves as good practice. The achievement of outcomes in the learning process is well planned. The concept of the study program overall adequately integrates teaching methods and techniques, lectures, practice and labs, that include active, collaborative, and student-oriented learning, ensuring full student involvement in the learning process. Due to the very nature of the study program, the delivery of the courses is ensured through the use of modern technology.

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

The assessment criteria of the courses and the program are adequately presented. Students are informed about the assessment method and achievement criteria at the beginning of each course by the professor of the relevant course. Evaluation methods and criteria are also specified in the course syllabi. The nature of the assessment criteria and methods is well defined, as well as

the grading criteria for the study program, and these are publicly available for all students in advance. This is in line with the regulations.

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

The learning activities are all credited, and the table of ECTS is provided and following the meetings with the teaching staff and the students it proves that both parties understand the ECTS system, use it in planning of the teaching activities and assess it throughout the QAO in every academic year.

ET recommendations:

1. *Learning outcomes within singular syllabuses need to be standardized in linguistic expression and in number to help students understand the results of the teaching process.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year and checked and reported regularly.

1. *Students' practice needs more focus from the HEI's unit bodies and offices. The learning outcomes for student practice/learning outcomes should be formulated and followed with the assessment.*

The learning outcomes should be established before the beginning of next academic year.

2. *The practice period needs to be monitored and evaluated by dual authorities: from HEI's unit and from institution that conducts practice.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly.

3. *Final evaluation of the practice is combined by reports from both parties plus student's questionnaire.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly.

4. *Some key competences in program need to be more in line with the skills of MA level*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management.

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management.

5. *The literature in a number of syllabuses is outdated and needs to be updated to include state-of-the-art, evidence-based content and contemporary issues.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management.

6. *The syllabuses of some of the courses bear no significant differences (Product Design 1: Advertising 1)*

This curriculum adjustment activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management.

5. STUDENTS

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

The admission policies for the MA program in Graphic Design at AAB College are clearly defined and align with the institution's Statute, the Regulations for Master Studies, and the legal frameworks established by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST) and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), admission is determined by a public competition announced by the Senate in June or July each year. The criteria include completion of a Bachelor's degree with at least 180 ECTS (or 240 ECTS depending on the program), successful completion of a selection procedure, and submission of required documentation as stipulated by MEST. These policies are publicly available on the institutional website and through outreach activities.

The selection procedure for the MA program accommodates candidates from diverse academic backgrounds, requiring them to demonstrate their motivation and readiness for advanced study in graphic design through interviews, CVs, and portfolios. This ensures that only candidates with appropriate skills and interests are admitted. The process is transparent, and unsuccessful applicants can appeal decisions.

AAB College enhances accessibility by organizing pre-admission meetings with prospective students to explain the curriculum, career opportunities, and program details. Orientation days at the start of the academic year further support new students by facilitating interactions with faculty and staff. A student handbook is also provided via the E-Service platform. These efforts demonstrate transparency and accessibility.

During the site visit, students expressed satisfaction with the transparency of the admission process and the availability of information. They appreciated the clear guidelines and published criteria, which helped them navigate the application process smoothly.

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

The Faculty of Arts has a structured mechanism for tracking student progress, ensuring the regular collection and analysis of success data. According to the Regulations for Master Studies, success reports are generated after each examination period.

The Dean of the Faculty initially reviews student performance reports before presenting them for discussion during Faculty Council meetings. The Teaching Council (TC) meetings analyse student progress data to identify challenges and implement necessary interventions, including but not limited to additional lecture hours and exercises, individual or group consultations, and academic counselling sessions.

The program's progression rules require students to earn at least 30 ECTS from the first semester to advance to the second, ensuring a structured and sequential achievement of learning outcomes. This aligns with the program's 120 ECTS structure over four semesters, culminating in a Master's thesis. The Transfer Office facilitates student mobility between semesters two and three, adhering to Articles 9, 10, and 11 of the Regulations for Master Studies, which supports flexibility while maintaining academic rigor.

However, the SER does not provide specific examples of progression data (e.g., pass rates, dropout rates) or detailed outcomes of interventions, limiting the ability to fully assess their effectiveness. The absence of quantitative data in the SER suggests a gap in transparency that could be addressed by publishing aggregated progression statistics.

During the site visit, students highlighted the supportive learning environment at AAB College, noting the accessibility of professors and the availability of additional academic support services. They appreciated the continuous feedback provided through semester-long assignments, which helped them stay on track and achieve their learning outcomes.

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

AAB College prioritizes internationalization, as reflected in its Development Plan and the SER, aiming to enhance student mobility through inter-institutional agreements and Erasmus+ programs. The Office of the Vice-Rector for International Cooperation manages mobility opportunities, providing information via email, the website, and social media. The Regulation for Academic Mobility outlines conditions and procedures for exchanges, supporting both outgoing and incoming students. The MA program benefits from partnerships with institutions like NABA (Milan) and the Academy of Design (Ljubljana), fostering opportunities for internships and exchanges.

Despite these efforts, the program faces challenges. The primary language of instruction is Albanian, and no foreign language courses are offered, which limits accessibility for international students. The SER notes that no or few international students are currently enrolled in the Faculty of Arts, and no specific administrative structures exist to support them.

Outgoing mobility is encouraged, but the SER lacks data on participation rates or specific examples of MA student involvement in Erasmus+ or the Global Leaders Program, suggesting that implementation may not yet meet strategic goals.

Standard 5.4 The study program 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)

The MA program is supported by robust resources, including a well-equipped library, digital platforms (E-Service), and dedicated administrative staff within the Faculty of Arts. Additional support comes from offices like Central Administration, IT Support, Transfer Office, and Career Office, ensuring comprehensive assistance. The E-Service platform integrates student accounts, schedules, and materials, enhancing accessibility, while campus TVs display updates. Physical infrastructure, such as graphic design studios and computer labs, meets program needs, and accessibility features like ramps and elevators accommodate students with disabilities.

The SER emphasizes a student-centered approach, with feedback mechanisms (e.g., questionnaires, appeals via the Statute) allowing students to voice concerns anonymously if desired. Extracurricular activities, such as the Prishtina Arts and Architecture Festival (PAAF), provide practical experience and cultural engagement.

Feedback from the site visit indicates high student satisfaction with the facilities, including the library, canteen, and other campus amenities, which they found conducive to their academic and social experience.

ET recommendations:

1. Actively promote and track student participation in Erasmus+ and other mobility programs, offering financial aid, language preparation courses, and clear application guidance.

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly.

2. Publish comprehensive student progression data, including dropout and completion rates, to enhance transparency.

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly.

6. RESEARCH

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

Throughout the SER and in the meetings with the management, program holders and teaching staff there is a strong sense of realization that the research activities are of utmost importance for maintaining the quality level of teaching and achieving the learning outcomes. This sense is projected towards the future and described well in SER as strategic objectives for the future. But in the present reality of HEI's unit there is not sufficient documented organized research activity over the last accredited period visible. It would be important to establish structured strategy and execution plan for the development of the research component. To obtain the full meaning of the research for the benefit of education process and the learning outcomes, the strategy must be created and established by teaching staff from both respective fields, art and science.

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

There are no documented policies and financial incentives to enhance research competitiveness, international visibility, and scientific/artistic advancement, other than statements in SER, regarding the recognized difference between the scientific and artistic research and paths within both areas. There is a need to develop particular content on web pages or other databases to establish, present and evaluate structured research activity. As it shows in CVs of teaching staff, there are significant differences in their previous experiences with the research activities. So it seems important to develop clear policies and procedures to follow regarding both science and artistic research activities.

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

In SER the Project Office is mentioned, but there is no documentation to demonstrate the activities of it. Considering the last accredited period of the existing MA comparable program two projects are mentioned, but with no further documentation to consider its scope and importance for HEI's unit.

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

The teaching staff of the study program does not have a clear enough documented track record of research in their respective fields.

ET recommendations:

1. *Following the good practice examples from standards within HEI around the region and EU, the Project Office needs to be transformed to Office for Research and Projects as to not only encourage but also to facilitate research activities of teaching staff, based on formulated strategy.*

This transformation should be conceived over the six months and checked upon in the next six months and regularly over every academic year.

2. *A research policy of HEI's unit needs to be updated with the clear definition of scientific and artistic research. This will support better understanding of both fields by teaching staff.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly, with the updates as needed.

3. *A database is to be set up to present research activities over the accredited period.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management regularly, with the updates as needed.

4. *A strategy for research activities needs to be developed and disseminated internally and externally, with milestones and measurable goals defined.*

This activity should be prepared for the next academic year, checked and reported to management.

5. *A clear difference between science and artistic research needs to be defined and developed within the teaching staff, with more structured activities by management and Projects Office to foster research components. The research policies, activities and results of specific projects need to be visible Not only within the teaching process but also within the teaching staff life-long learning activities to improve skills and competencies, beyond public events. Of course, public events play an important role in HEI's unit public mission, but are not enough to replace structured research activities*

Within six months prior to the beginning of next academic year a strategic document should be conceived as to clarify orientation and guidelines regarding both scientific and artistic research as well as policy towards the public roles of the program, with included industrial and social roles.

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

HEI spans a total area of 50,000 sq meters and the division of space for the program is clearly displayed within the tables on page 42 of SER, along with the equipment list. Following the meetings with the students and teaching staff it shows that both are satisfied with the space and the equipment, the only remark being that some of the equipment perhaps needs an update or to be replaced with newer models.

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

Both libraries are available to students six days a week, from morning till evening. Both are adequately equipped with reading rooms for individual work, spaces for group work and its own book stock according to the courses included in the study program. The variety of books in the field of teaching methodology of various disciplines as well as pedagogical aspects of primary education is sufficient. In addition to physical books, the AAB College library has access to various platforms such as J-STORE, EBSCO, Edward Elgar, Duke Journals Scholarly Collection -Duke University press Journals, Directory of Open Access Books, DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals, Cambridge Journals, IMF eLibrary, Science Commons, IOP Electronic Journals, ASTM Compass abstracts, BioOne Research evolved.

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

As the faculty of Arts is part of HEI which is a privately funded institution a financial plan is provided in documentation. The plan is sound, effective and in line with the strategy and infrastructure. The income is based on the scholarship fees mostly.

ET recommendations:

1. *The only remark here could be to stimulate the management to pursue more ambitious income from the projects, in line with the need to develop more structured research activities.*
2. Establishing the Project office is a long-term goal and it should take a six months to have it running and six more to establish the activities which would help the HEI to improve financials with the income from the projects.

OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT

FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT TEAM

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	<i>Substantially Compliant</i>
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	<i>Substantially Compliant</i>
3. ACADEMIC STAFF *Mandatory	<i>Substantially Compliant</i>
4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT	<i>Substantially 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>

The expert team (ET) would like to commend management, the quality assurance team, teachers, students and other external stakeholders for their proactive engagement during the validation event. The ET is very pleased with the strong teamwork and the positive atmosphere among all the groups interviewed, as well as the high level of optimism displayed.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program **MA program in Graphic Design** offered by **AAB College Faculty of Arts** is **Substantially compliant** with the standards outlined in the KAA Accreditation manual. Therefore, the ET recommends to **accredit** the study program for a duration of three (3) years, with an enrollment of up to **60** students per year.

Expert Team

Member	Prof. Diana Milčić		28.04.2025.
Member	Prof. Fedja Vukić		28.04.2025.
Member	Shadiyar Tauyemel		28.04.2025.
	(Print name)	(Signature)	(Date)