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***UBT College
Nursing BSc***

RE-ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

25th July 2023, Pristina and Bucharest



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 25th July, 2023

Expert Team (ET) members:

- *Prof. Dr. Danica Železnik*
- *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Enkeleint Mechili*
- *Delia Lupescu (ex Gologan)*

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- *Naim M. Gashi KAA Director*
- *Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer*
- *Arianit Krasniqi, 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;*
- *College website;*
- *Interviews during the site-visit.*

Additional documents requested:

- *KAA Accreditation Manual (2021);*



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- *List of academic staff (more clearly presenting which have a PhD diploma and in what field); Ideally it would be accompanied by a list/table presenting in what discipline is each staff member involved (as teacher in the lecture or assistant in the practical lab or clinical mentor);*
- *Example of Record card or standardised guidelines for the clinical practice;*
- *Resend the list of lecture hours vs practical hours per discipline;*
- *List of partners (mentioning with which of them you have a joint degree program and/or a research project or student/staff exchange program), (related only for this study program);*
- *List of students and staff incoming and outgoing (related only for this study program);*
- *List of articles published by the UBT staff in the last two years; (related only for this study program);*
- *List of projects implemented or under implementation the last three years;*
- *A print screen of the SMIS platform in order to see the services available;*
- *One job contract sample (both for full-time and part-time staff);*
- *List of trainings that the Center for Professional Training and Innovation has hold the last two years;*
- *List of on-line trainings/lectures conducted by the visiting professors;*
- *UBT research strategy (if there is any);*
- *Summative report of the student's evaluation for professors;*
- *The questionnaire and the email that has been sent to the graduates;*
- *Information about the employment rate of those graduated;*
- *Members of the Industrial Board and their field;*
- *Example of self-assessment of a professor (without name);*
- *Peer to peer review of a professor;*
- *List of articles/conferences that students are participating in;*
- *Sample of timetable for the 1st semester of the academic year 2023-2024 should the requested quota be approved. It should show both the theoretical lectures and the practical laboratory work for all sub-groups of students; - Not provided*
- *Annual Quality Report;*
- *Print screen of the Alumni Facebook page;*
- *Ethical code of the College (if available);*
- *Example of the Individual Professional Development Plan.*



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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.

1.2. Site visit schedule

<i>Programme Accreditation Procedure at UBT College</i>	
<i>Programme:</i>	<i>Nursing, BSc, 180 ECTS (Re-accreditation)</i>
<i>Site visit on:</i>	<i>July 25th, 2023</i>
<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>Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Officer</i> <i>Arianit Krasniqi, KAA Officer</i>

Site Visit Programme

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<i>Time</i>	<i>Meeting</i>
<i>08:30 – 09:20</i>	<i>Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated</i>
<i>09:25 – 10:25</i>	<i>Meeting with the heads of the study programme</i>
<i>10:30 – 11:15</i>	<i>Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff</i>
<i>11:15 – 12:25</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>
<i>12:25 – 13:15</i>	<i>Meeting with teaching staff</i>
<i>13:20 – 14:05</i>	<i>Meeting with students</i>
<i>14:10 – 14:55</i>	<i>Meeting with graduates</i>
<i>15:00 – 15:45</i>	<i>Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders</i>
<i>15:45 – 15:55</i>	<i>Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts</i>
<i>15:55 – 16:05</i>	<i>Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program</i>
<i>16:05 – 16:30</i>	<i>Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure</i>



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

UBT was established in 2004. The College holds the licence of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) dated 18.10.2004. UBT aims to implement an integrated strategy to establish itself as an internationally competitive, research-intensive university, committed to the transfer of knowledge and the provision of a world-class education and service. The governance of UBT is regulated by the Statute of the institution. Deans of Faculties are responsible for academic management of studies. The faculty is responsible to the Rector of UBT on managerial affairs whilst the responsibility for academic affairs is delivered to the Academic Council. UBT is based in Pristina, Kosovo at its campus in the capital. The philosophy of the institution has been to offer competitive programs in applied education that would base teaching on labour market demands and international practices. The program called Bachelor Nursing is submitted for reaccreditation, for the NQF level 6, with an academic degree to be conferred Bachelor of Nursing.

The program currently enrolls 150 students annually and accepts transfers from similar programs offered by accredited institutions in Kosovo and/or abroad (based on an internal evaluation of the college).

Since the last external evaluation, the college invested both in the human and material resources, with a focus on research related actions. For example, the college signed an agreement with the University of Tirana to apply together for funding for research projects both at the Kosovar and Albanian governments. In the future, the college intends to develop the program by enrolling more students, ensure more exchange programs for students and teachers, invest more in teachers to improve their skills and, in time, offer courses in a language of international circulation.



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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

UBT mission focuses on provision of a dynamic and innovative environment in the 21st century. The College tries to be supportive with the academic staff and the students while on the other hand building joint actions between them in teaching and research activities. Moreover, the College focuses also on improving the quality of life through cultural and intellectual activities in Kosovo. The study program Bachelor in Nursing that is offered by **UBT College aims to prepare skilled nurses through contemporary teaching activities.** The mission is to prepare these nurses to provide promotional, diagnostic and rehabilitation services. **The study program provides evidence-based knowledge, skills and competences (both theoretical and practical) to the forthcoming nurses in order to improve health status and the quality of life of the population.** Moreover, the program offers communication and organisational skills. According to the information provided through the self-assessment report, the meetings with the authorities and the key documents of the College, it is clear that the mission of this study program is in line with the overall mission of the Institution. **However, the mission of the program reflects very little the research concept of the program which is defined as a Bachelor of Science.**

When developing the program, the heads of the program compared it with similar programs in the region and broader (i.e. Italy, Turkey, Austria, U.S.A, Albania, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and North Macedonia). However, given that most of the graduates succeed in following a career abroad - in Germany, **the College could consider consulting health care institutions and experts also from Germany for future revisions of the curriculum.** When the ET asked the College authorities why they haven't consulted with the German nursing curricula, they said that: a) we teach more things our students in comparison what the Germans teach their in nursing; b) because Germany has different lands and they follow different programs; and c) because Germany don't accept the Bologna accord.

The College has followed the Directives 2005/36 / EC and 2013/55 / EC on Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Guidelines for the Tuning Project, Assessments and Opinions of Health Care Institutions, Higher Education Teachers and List of occupations in health care. The knowledge, skills, competences that graduates can earn from this study program are in line with the European Directives and guidelines. **However, there are differences in the ratio**

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theory/practice mentioned in the report. Initially it is said that the ratio is 46% - 54% while in another place it is said 50% - 50%. When the ET asked the heads of the study program about this, they mentioned that the ratio is 46/54 and most probably the two different ratios presented in the self evaluation report is a technical mistake during drafting the self-evaluation report. During the meeting with the external stakeholders, they reported that they are contacted once per year via email from the Institution in order to ask their opinion about the curricula. However, in the report and during the meetings, the College authorities mentioned that they contact the external stakeholders twice per year. **The ET considers it important that the College keeps notes about these meetings and regularly register them.** Moreover, during the meeting with the ET, the external stakeholders had some suggestions for curricula improvement that the College should take into account. **They reported that the hours for palliative care should increase significantly.** Moreover, they said that the internship that students conduct at the Ministry of Health is only 5 days in palliative care and **it's crucial to at least double the number of days.** Additionally, they reported that **it is important to increase the number of hours for clinical practice** of the students for better preparation of them.

The study program has a well-defined didactic concept, being very clearly practical oriented, but a less well-defined research concept despite being a BSc type of program. All the stakeholders confirmed the applied to industry feature of the program, the institutional capacity to contribute to the businesses development in the region. However, given that this program is intended to be a Bachelor in Science, the ET recommends the heads of the programme to increase their focus in developing the research component of the program. Especially by involving students in research-related activities: encourage them to attend research conferences, publish the results of their research alongside their teachers or develop research/science clubs within the college.

At institutional level, there are many policies and procedures, that deal with the every-day-life within the college, but **there is not clear evidence that all the regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required** in the light of changing circumstances. This was particularly mentioned only for the QA related regulations and procedures.



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Approximately, half of the regulations are also available in EN on the college website, while the interviews indicated that they are all accessible on the electronic platform the college uses for internal communication. **However, it is important to mention that some of the regulations / documents were not accessible at the College website. According to the SER, all staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities.** From the discussions with the faculty and students, the usefulness was generally appreciated. At institutional level, there are many policies and procedures, but there is not clear evidence that all the regulations, terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are respected by all the members of the academic community. More could be done by the colleges' support structures to monitor this and report periodically. For example the website does not present any annual report of the Ethics committee for the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/partially)
Standard 1.1. The study program mission is in compliance with the overall mission statement of the institution	Yes
Standard 1.2. Relevant academic and professional advice is considered when defining the intended learning outcomes which are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	Yes
Standard 1.3. The study program has a well-defined overarching didactic and research concept.	Partially
Standard 1.4. There are formal policies, guidelines and regulations dealing with recurring procedural or academic issues. These are made publicly available to all staff and students.	Yes
Standard 1.5. All staff and students comply with the internal regulations relating to ethical conduct in research, teaching, assessment in all academic and administrative activities	Yes



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Standard 1.6. All policies, regulations , terms of reference and statements of responsibility relating to the management and delivery of the program are reviewed at least once every two years and amended as required in the light of changing circumstances.	Partially
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Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

ET recommendations for the college management/heads of the programme:

1. *Rediscover and maybe revise the mission of the program so that it better reflects its research mission;*
2. *Review all regulations, rules and procedures (including QA instruments) periodically - e.g. every two or three years. Involve the entire academic community - including the administrative staff - in the process, while also consulting the external partners when relevant. Check the correlation between them so that they don't contradict each other;*
3. *Make on-line available and accessible all the documents and key regulations of the institution;*
4. *Develop instruments to monitor and proactively encourage the members of the academic community to follow all rules and regulations of the college, including the Code of Ethics. For example any member of the community should be aware about the ways in which they could report any type of misbehaviour, case of corruption, discrimination or abuse;*
5. *Publish all relevant rules and regulations in Albanian, on the college website (so that, for example, future students can get informed about their rights and responsibilities in advance).*

2.2. Quality management

There is strong institutional commitment for QA in UBT College due to the involvement of the President and the Governing Body in the QA processes. Though the entire academic community and external stakeholders are involved, the main responsible bodies for QA are the QA committee, the Quality Manager and the QA officer and sub-committee from Faculty level.

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The QA processes are regulated by the College Statute, **the UBT Quality Assurance Regulation and the QA Manual**. Reading the last two documents, the ET observed that they **are very much alike. A more clear distinction of their roles and content should be considered for the next revision**. Ideally the QA regulations would set the general framework for quality assurance in the college, defining the vision and stating the values that the college intends to respect, while the QA manual could be a more hands-on document, with clear references on when and how the principles defined by the QA regulations are to be implemented. The QA manual should then be completed by QA procedures for detailing the way the manual is implemented in small particular aspects of the academic life, and QA instruments (e.g. like questionnaires or guidelines for the focus groups) that help doing that. In this way, all the elements of the QA culture in UBT could define from general to very specific what is to be done and when - including clear procedures on reviewing the QA procedures and instruments periodically. **The correlation between all internal documents should be checked when revising them.**

The current QA practices and processes are well integrated in the calendar of the study program. They address most aspects of the study program and student life: quality of teaching, accessibility of learning materials, infrastructure, equipment, student services etc. This way they refer to both inputs, processes **but they are yet to address learning strategies, learning materials and learning outcomes** (e.g. to check if the students have reached the intended learning outcomes, by checking the quality of the final thesis or introducing a final exam). Their scope is to contribute to the constant improvement of the study program.

The QA instruments used include questionnaires for students, for teachers (to self - assess), for Deans (to assess the activity of teachers), for graduates and discussions for consulting the external partners. **The next step, as indicated by the QA responsables, would be to implement a peer-to-peer evaluation among teachers.** Inclusion also of qualitative approaches is recommended.

The QA processes target to meet the KAA standards and continuously improve the program. The latter is a frequently expressed idea within the SER and during the site-visit, thus proving the commitment of the entire community. The ET salutes the college for reflecting in the SER the manner in which it also complies with the performance indicators from the KAA manual, not just the minimum standards. The next step, for the College, would be to develop

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their own set of quality criteria, tailored to their needs, but using the KAA manual as a starting point. They should also consider Data about the student progress rates (e.g. the success rates at different exams).

In conclusion, UBT collects quite a lot of data (e.g. survey data) and it is said that the results of the internal quality assurance system are taken into account to continuously improve the study program. But there is no follow-up report (implementation report) or a working plan based on these results. One such document should include clear objective and realistic targets on what the college intends to improve based on the results of the internal quality assurance system. Moreover, some summative reports should be published online. Though the ET was provided with an annual report of the QA office, this is not to be found online on the college website. Even if it is online, the ET searches did not end successfully with finding it so there is room for improvement in regards with placing the document in an easily accessible spot on the website.

The QA regulations and procedures are said to be reviewed every two years. However, the next review should tackle the inconsistencies between documents to make them more useful and efficient.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/parti ally)
Standard 2.1. All staff participate in self-evaluations and cooperate with reporting and improvement processes in their sphere of activity.	Yes
Standard 2.2. Evaluation processes and planning for improvement are integrated into normal planning processes.	Yes
Standard 2.3. Quality assurance processes deal with all aspects of program planning and delivery , including services and resources provided by other parts of the institution.	Partially
Standard 2.4. Quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program as well as of different components within it; the evaluations consider inputs, processes and outputs, with particular attention given to learning outcomes for students.	Partially



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

Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

ET recommendations for the college management/heads of the programme:

1. *Develop QA instruments for collecting data about the quality of the research activity, the availability of research infrastructure, equipment and materials etc.;*
2. *Consider developing QA instruments for checking if the intended learning outcomes of the study program are reached;*
3. *Develop QA instruments to address the admission procedure– thus checking if they are fairly and consistently applied for all candidates (similar to the procedures developed for the student assessment);*
4. *Develop QA instruments to check the teaching strategies and the quality of learning materials;*
5. *Develop QA procedures and instruments to monitor the quality of the clinical training;*
6. *Develop of qualitative approaches for evaluation of academic staff;*
7. *Develop QA procedures to check if all the members of the academic community follow the rules and regulations including the Code of Ethics.*
8. *Publish summative reports of the internal quality assurance system, in an easily accessible spot on the website.*



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2.3. Academic staff

The College provided a list of 84 academic staff and 114 clinical mentors. Among them several are with a PhD while some others are medical doctors or have a MSc. About the nursing staff with a PhD, according to the list provided, there are only four (4) while four (4) others are in the process. However, the list provided by the College shows a huge number of medical doctors working in this study program while during the meeting with the authorities, it was mentioned that nurses are around 70% of the staff. **The ET considers that the College should decrease the number of MDs for this study program and increase that of nurses. Moreover, the College should support the staff to obtain a PhD and be more qualified for offering this study program.** It is strongly recommended that the College during the next accreditation has decreased the number of MDs and increased that of nurses with a PhD. In the self-evaluation report the College doesn't provide any information about the descriptions and conditions of employment of the staff. During the meetings with the authorities and the academic staff they mentioned that they are employed through a public call. After publication of the call, candidates can apply for the position. In the call are presented the duties and responsibilities of the staff. The ET also requested a contract for a full-time and a part time-employee. Article 19 and 18 of the full-time and part-time contracts respectively, present clearly the obligations of the staff. Moreover, article 5 of full-time personnel presents the weekly workload as well as the duties that they have which includes classes (10 hours), research activities (10 hours), personnel preparation (10 hours), administrative work (5 hours) and personnel development (5 hours). In the website of the College, at the section of recruitment it is stated that *"The College is committed to building a cohesive organisation where all staff feel valued and will contribute as part of the family"*. Moreover, the College encourages the personal development of the staff for improvement and promotion. The College has a uniform human resources policy by providing equal opportunities as well as by fulfilling all the legal requirements. Additionally, according to the College, the staff has been certified by the Accreditation Agency of Kosovo. According to the self-evaluation report and the discussions with the authorities, the majority of the staff is employed full-time. During the meeting with the academic staff, all participants were full-time. Moreover, more than 50% of the classes are conducted by the full-time personnel.



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In the list provided by the Institution there were 44 in total with a PhD. However, only 4 are nurses while the rest are MDs. Additionally, 7 nurses have a Master of Science in Nursing. Based on this, the College has the appropriate number of staff with PhD that for every 60 ECTS to have at least one full time staff with PhD title. **Despite the fact that this standard is fulfilled, the College should put more effort into involving more nurses in the provision of this study program as well as to support their efforts in obtaining a PhD.** They should work much more in what was mentioned in the meeting that “...we don’t want doctors to teach nursing students but nurses to teach nurses...”.

UBT has in place the “UBT Staff Development Policy” which is achieved with the assistance of the Faculty of Information Systems. This Faculty “... has developed strategies and policies for maintaining the current staff, academic and professional development of staff, and policies to attract better qualified staff in the context of permanent staff of the institution”. The Faculty has several expectations while the staff needs to maintain a personal development plan, undertake development opportunities etc. Some of the main priorities are “...supporting staff in the professional development of lecturers and researchers, supporting e-learning activity, supporting the staff in technology and learning activities etc.”. Additionally, the College has established the Institute for Development of Education and Academic Affairs - IDEAA. This institute organises regular training activities for the staff of the College. The authorities of the Institution mentioned that they support the staff for professional development through different channels. They said that they support them financially (paying the fees of conferences or articles or paying the transportation), keeping their salaries untouched when conducting PhD studies, through the training activities organised by the Institute or through the Erasmus+ agreement that the Institution has. It is worth mentioning here that when we asked the Heads of the study program about this issue, they just mentioned the Institute. **However, when they were asked about the support of the College to the staff to publish in good journals, they didn’t say anything.** During the meeting with the academic staff, they confirmed that the Institution supports them financially, by giving them days off or through the training activities organised by the Institute. Moreover, they reported that the College supports them to participate in the conference that the College organises annually. Despite the fact that the Institution presented few Erasmus+ agreements, no-one from the staff at the meeting had participated in teaching/training activities abroad. **This is a very important issue that the College needs to focus on. It is of paramount significance to increase the number of mobilities abroad for**

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the academic staff in order to participate in teaching and training activities. The IDEAA institute was strongly supported by all that organises activities for professional development of the staff. When the ET team requested a list of training activities by this Institute, it was provided a list with just some topics (some of them on the Microsoft Office) but without a concrete date of the training activity, concrete agenda, trainers and participants. Additionally, none of these training activities focused on health issues, didactic or research skills and knowledge. In contrast, the on-line training presented was more concrete. Despite the fact that the College tries to organise training activities, the ET considers that these are very minimal and most of the times not appropriate for the staff of the nursing program. **We urge the authorities of the College to develop a concrete annual plan for training activities for the staff that have classes at the nursing program.** Based on the discussions with the heads of the study program and the academic staff, the ET considers that **all of them need to increase their knowledge and skills in both teaching and research activities.** The training activities have as a target group all the staff of the College. However, it was mentioned that when the evaluation report of a professor is not at the appropriate level, they are recommended to follow these training activities. **Monitoring of academic staff professional development is strongly recommended.**

As mentioned above, teaching staff have the responsibilities for teaching, research activities, personnel preparation, administrative work and personnel development. The engagement in the academic community is clear and constant. The workload is allocated by the Dean which supervises all the activities of the academic staff. During the meeting with the academic staff they confirmed that they do these activities, including consultations with students. Students also confirmed this. The staff reported that they have consultations with the students in person except the COVID-19 period. They also mentioned that they have consultation with the students for their thesis preparation. In total, each of them supervises 6-8 students for their thesis, **which according to the ET view is a huge number and should be decreased to a maximum of 5 students.** Additionally, the staff reported that they have consultations with the students also before/after the exams period or when something is not clear to them. **Increase of the services to the community is also something that the ET considers important and that the College is not putting much attention on.** The establishment of the Clinic at the Institution can increase the services to the community in the future.



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The staff is regularly evaluated by different actors. There are four (4) different forms that the College uses to evaluate the staff. Initially the Dean evaluates the staff by using a point-based numerical assessment. Students also assess the professors through a questionnaire that is sent to them by the Quality Assurance Office. At the end the office prepares a report “Annual Quality Report”. When the report is not good for the professors (below 60%), discussions with the professor take place and also is recommended he/she to follow some training activities. Self-evaluation report is also available for the staff. This document is completed by the personnel themselves and contains five (5) different sections. At the end, it is signed by the staff and the Dean of the Faculty. The peer-to-peer evaluation form is also available at the College. Academic staff have the possibility to evaluate the performance of their colleagues. It is important to mention that all the approaches used are quantitative and qualitative information is missing. **The College is recommended to develop qualitative approaches in order to have a better overview of the staff performance.**

The Individual Professional Development plan is something that all academic staff are required to prepare. In teaching activities, according to academic staff, they try to use a combination of PowerPoint presentations, new published research and the existing literature. Moreover, they use the Moodle platform as an alternative method. In general, the College reported that it tries to use a student-centred approach. The use of the student’s questionnaire is a method for assessment of the teaching strategies of the professors. The heads of the study program reported that **the learning material is not assessed**, but the Dean evaluates and accepts the literature presented in the syllabus. However, **some of the syllabuses presented had very old literature and need to be revised. Additionally, in the syllabuses there are not mentioned scientific articles as the academic staff said that uses for the classes.** In some cases, it is mentioned that students receive some scripts in Albanian. The academic staff mentioned that they update the literature and use that of the 5-7 last years (maximum 10 years). **However, this is not presented in the syllabuses as the literature there is much older in several subjects.** Additionally, it is important to make a distinction between obligatory and elective literature in each subject.

UBT academic staff retires at the age of 65. However, they have the possibility to work as part-time academic staff till the age of 70 years old.



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The authorities mentioned that it is important to **improve the staff teaching skills** while the heads of the study program mentioned that no improvements are needed but the program is “perfect”.

Standard	Compliance (yes/no/parti ally)
Standard 3.1. Candidates for employment are provided with full position descriptions and conditions of employment . To be presented in tabular form data about full time (FT) and part time (PT) academic/ artistic staff, such as: name, qualification, academic title, duration of official (valid) contract, workload for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the study program under evaluation.	Yes
Standard 3.2. The teaching staff must comply with the legal requirements concerning the occupation of teaching positions included in the Administrative instruction on Accreditation.	Yes
Standard 3.3. Academic staff do not cover , within an academic year, more than two teaching positions (one full-time, one part-time), regardless of the educational institution where they carry out their activity.	Yes
Standard 3.4. At least 50% of the academic staff in the study program are full time employees , and account for at least 50% of the classes of the study program.	Yes
Standard 3.5. For each student group (defined by the statute of the institution) and for every 60 ECTS credits in the study program, the institution has employed at least one full time staff with PhD title or equivalent title in the case of artistic/applied science institutions.	Yes
Standard 3.6. Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff , with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties.	Partially
Standard 3.7. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service.	Partially
Standard 3.8. Academic staff evaluation is conducted regularly at least through selfevaluation, students, peer and superiors’ evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available.	Yes



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Standard 3.9. Strategies for quality enhancement include improving the teaching strategies and quality of learning materials.	Partially
Standard 3.10. Teachers retired at age limit or for other reasons lose the status of full-time teachers and are considered part-time teachers.	Yes

Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

ET recommendations for the college management/heads of the programme:

- 1. Increase the number of nurses involved in this study program;*
- 2. Increase the number of nurses with PhD that are having classes in this study program;*
- 3. Support and encourage the staff to conduct mobilities in other countries - EU and non-EU - in order to increase their knowledge and skills in teaching and research activities;*
- 4. Replace and to put as Heads of the study program people with more knowledge and experience in teaching and research due to the fact that those that participated in the meeting were not appropriate.*
- 5. Develop a concrete annual plan for training activities for the staff with a special focus on nursing/healthcare issues.*
- 6. Monitor professional development of the academic staff and report on it;*
- 7. Improve the supervision and monitoring of the consultations that the academic staff has with the students.*
- 8. Decrease the number of students that professors supervise for their thesis.*
- 9. Provide more services to the Community as its presence is minimal.*
- 10. Update of the literature that is in the syllabus is important.*
- 11. Develop a procedure to evaluate the teaching strategies and the learning material of the staff is urgent.*
- 12. Include in the syllabus the scientific articles that academic staff provides to the students.*



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2.4. Educational process content

There is an admission procedure for admission to nursing studies that follow the regulations and criteria at the level of UBT. The SER mentions that for the admission, the interested candidates have to sit an exam in chemistry, biology, and physics, and to prove they have finished secondary school and to provide the certificate of promoting the Matura exam. For interested candidates an advantage is to have finished medical high school. From the SER it is suggested that candidates do not need a medical certificate for enrolment, but this aspect is not clear enough. When the faculty has more candidates than places, admission is decided by success in the matriculation exam and in the entrance exam. However, the Quality Manual mentions that `For enrolment to a study program at UBT students have possibility during all year but they will start following lectures when the study program begins, at the beginning of academic year October`. This statement contradicts the previously described procedure and thus the ET recommends the heads of the program to **clarify these aspects: when and how interested candidates can apply for a place in the program, when and what type of exam do they have to pass, and, if several exam sessions for admission are organised, please clarify how is the classification of candidates done in order to determine who is accepted and who is not.** In any case, students should always start classes at the beginning of the academic year. **The heads of the study program have not participated in the revision of the program** and that it is as they found it. This increase questions for two things:

1. the study program is not regularly revised.
2. the head of the study program are not appropriate and suitable for this program.

The Nursing BSc 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 study program complies with the National Qualifications Framework and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The study program comprises 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.



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The content of this program is established and drafted within the subject curricula of the faculty and the respective management. Each subject, according to the syllabus, is planned to be developed in relevance with the modules in the respective semesters and has a certain number of classes divided per week. The first semester usually begins on October 1 of the academic year and lasts 15 weeks of regular work.

The BSc Nursing program consists of several mandatory (30) and elective courses (10), which are combined in a way to achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide for adequate forms of teaching and learning. The program also includes practical education and diploma work. ET suggested that the curriculum/program description table should contain the exact division of teaching forms and the exact number of hours in the curriculum, which the faculty provided as extra documents. This recommendation should become a practice for the heads of the programs. Seeing the distribution of lectures, seminar and laboratory practice for the disciplines of this study program, **the ET has to signal a potential difficulty in organising the timetable of students.** Let's take an example: the discipline 'Fundamentals of Nursing I' has an allocated number of 175 hours of laboratory practice in the first semester which comprises 15 weeks. That is 11.6 h of practice/week just for this particular subject. If the practice hours are grouped in slots of 4 sessions of 45 minutes, each student would have to have in the timetable at least 3 times each session of lab practice just for this discipline (each of at least 3h). Given that the 150 students of the first year of study are split into 13 groups of 9-12 students for the laboratory practice, the staff of this discipline should facilitate 13 x 3 times/group x 3h long laboratory practice (= 117h of practice per week). To be realistic, three assistants would have to work 5 days, 8 hours/day, just to cover the practical activity for this discipline. **It is the ET concern that this is not sustainable for the college, at this moment, if the number of students and student-groups would increase.**

As it is a common practice in the European space, the graduates of this programme must undergo an internship and then pass the exam of the professional body before receiving the right to practise. The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise the following: the discipline's objectives; the basic thematic content, learning outcomes; the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system, bibliography. In the future, they should also include a week-by-week description of the practical work/tasks of students during the practical hours of each discipline. A similar 'syllabus' should be drafted for the clinical training - as it is an important part of the training

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of the nurse, the clinical training should have learning objectives defined, an examination/assessment method assigned and a week-by-week planning of the work of students. The latter should be followed by the students and their mentors in the student workbook (that the college provided to the ET as an extra-document).

The program is offered in Albanian language.

The Nursing program and its specifics are modelled based on the standards, specifics and recommendations of the European Framework of Skills, Competences and Professions giving special importance to the connection of education and training with the labour market. In the Nursing program, the disciplines within the curriculum are organised in such a way as to enable students to understand and learn the logical flow of professional preparation for the chosen profession. Thus, teaching begins with general preclinical medical courses in the first semester, more clinical courses in the second semester, and then moves on to more professional courses in the following semesters. The same logic is followed with professional courses, in which case it starts with the basics of professional courses in the first semesters and goes deeper at the level of professional sub-fields. Practical experience is an integral component of the program, and each student is required to undertake and satisfactorily complete 2300 hours of practical experience - direct contact with the patient (Directive 2005/36/EC and 2013/55 / EC) which are translated into ECTS. The allocation of ECTS is appropriate and justified and the assessment/examination methods are adequate for the time being, but the heads of the program should revise them periodically. A revision of the ECTS allocation per discipline should consider students feedback regarding the real workload for each discipline. The ET recommends reconsidering if attendance should be part of the assessment criteria. When revising the program, the college should also review whether the assessment methods and criteria succeed in checking if the students reached the intended /declared learning outcomes of the discipline. All items are missing codes, even in additional documents sent. (evidence 25).

Students in the nursing program begin clinical experience during the first year and complete it in the third year. Each teacher is obliged to discuss learning outcomes with students and accommodate their incorporation.

Interactive learning activities such as problem-based learning, sharing information, flipped classroom and virtual simulation, workshops, group work and seminars with

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discussions are used, also Moodle platform is used. In some courses, oral presentations of students' research findings in a clinical setting are highlighted as an important part of the teaching and learning strategy. **Exams are obligatory for all the mandatory and elective courses, exams are public except for the practical parts.** Results from the exams are recorded in the SMIS (electronic platform). Only persons who can prove their legal interest are eligible to have an insight into the exam records. Written exams are determined by the Subject Leader and the course committee. The exam content is determined by the course syllabus, whereas the mode of examination, assessment, and duration of certain parts of the exam shall be regulated by the Faculty Council. Organisation of the exam terms, their number and schedule, as well as students' rights and responsibilities concerning the registration and taking the exams are regulated by the Faculty Regulation on Undergraduate and Graduate studies. Student numerical grading is based on a national scale from 5-10 and harmonised with ECTS (A, B,C,D, E, F). Subjects that are graded numerically are based on: regular attendance of classes, results achieved at colloquiums, practical examination, final testing of theoretical knowledge. As mentioned before, the heads of the program could re-discuss the relevance of including attendance rates in the formula for calculating the final grade of the student. Though ET understands the reason for monitoring the attendance of students and maybe considering it when allowing a student to take part in an exam, it is less obvious the reasons to include them as an element of the grading system.

The documents related to student exam application and examination results are kept indefinitely while colloquium documents are stored for three years. This is recognised by the ET as an appeal procedure. As mentioned in other sections of this report, this procedure should be more communicated to the students so that they gain confidence to use it.

Students receive an induction session prior to the commencement of each academic year. The Dean delivers the induction session, and **the student handbook is distributed at this session** and also provided to the student through the Student Portal and College Homepage. Upon graduation graduates of the nursing program will be prepared to work in all healthcare settings (primary, secondary, and tertiary), with all ages (newborns, children, adults and older) and with patients with acute or chronic illnesses. They will also be able to assess needs, plan and implement interventions and evaluate the results of interventions carried out. Graduate nurses will also be responsible for managing care cases, teaching, and leading scientific research projects. Clinical education is organised at clinical placements within the social and



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health areas. The education is organised in close collaboration between the educational institution and the clinical placement to strengthen the connection between the students' learning in theory and practice. The practical work is primarily organised in cooperation with University Clinical Centre and Ministry of Health through an Agreement for Access to Clinics' Facilities. The institution also has an Agreement with the Ministry of Health that provides access to primary and secondary Family Medical Centres. Several individual agreements have been concluded with Municipalities. An agreement with the Municipality of Pristina offers access to all Family Medical Centres.

Quality assurance of clinical training is carried out in such a way that every student has an ID card with the curriculum they must fulfil to graduate. The Mentors work closely with them to ensure they meet all the criteria. Some of the tutors of the UBT are like invisible supervisors. They work based on a contract. As mentioned in other sections of this report, the ET urges the college to develop a QA system for the clinical training.

Individual agreements are deemed very important to operationalise and regulate the practice in view of shared competence in primary and secondary health care. During the visit, the management of the faculty told ET that they had more than 400 partnership agreements signed (e.g. Vienna, Sapienza, Tirana, Turkish institutions, US etc.). UBT also has a centre in Budapest. During the visit, ET asked about the main improvement of the program since the last evaluation is. Recommendation was linked to curriculum and syllabus. The management of the faculty said that they worked on improvements, clearly set goals for students, what they will do, in what way and what they will evaluate. They also improved the equipment of the laboratories.

Additional documents state that 85% of students complete their studies within three years. The management of the faculty wants to increase the enrolment in the study of nursing, but the ET are concerned that there is no real capacity - human and material - to sustain a qualitative teaching and learning process for a higher number. Therefore, increasing the number of admitted students is not realistic under the current conditions, especially in the clinical environment, where one mentor can guide a maximum of 2 students.



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Standard	Compliance (yes/no/partially)
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.	Yes
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

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Standard 4.5. If the language of instruction is <u>other than Albanian</u> , actions are taken to ensure that language skills of both students and academic staff are adequate for instruction in that language when students begin their studies. This may be done through language training prior to the commencement of the program.	NA
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.	Partially
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.	Partially
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: Partially compliant level

ET recommendations for the college management/heads of the programme:

1. *Continue to put efforts in improving the quality of the clinical training, by targeting a student-trainer ratio of 2:1;*
2. *Develop and implement QA instruments and procedures to monitor the quality of the clinical stages including checking if their learning outcomes are reached by students - e.g., if they have developed the appropriate skills and competences.*
3. *Continue efforts to develop reliable and valid mechanisms for checking the standards of student achievement.*
4. *Increase significantly the number of hours dedicated to palliative in the study program.*
5. *Add the missing codes for each subject, in the syllabuses and related documents.*



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2.5. Students

There is an admission procedure, in line with the college procedures (*see also the mentions about this in section 2.4 of this report*). The admission process includes checking if students have graduated from secondary school and successfully promoted the Matura Exam. The SER mentioned *‘Only students that have completed at least three years of prior education in medicine, biology, physics and chemistry at upper secondary school level will be considered for admission’ and someone during the site visit mentioned that Graduating from a Medical Secondary vocational school is considered an advantage` - as these students are one of the targeted groups by this study program. Moreover, for prioritising the interested candidates, they sit an entrance exam that consists of subjects from Chemistry, Biology and Physics. However, neither the SER, nor the discussions during the site-visit, managed to **clear the exam procedure on how students are ranked for being declared admitted.** Moreover, the college needs to develop mechanisms to check the consistency of applying the admission procedure in an equitable manner for all students (especially if enrolment is allowed all-year long). Last but not least, the college has to make clearer how they check if candidates *‘have psychophysical abilities for the nursing profession’* (SER, p.63). The ET would like to note that students appreciated that this college is strict in choosing the best students, with the highest level of previous knowledge. This is considered a good practice, and the ET recommends the college to continue this practice: instead of enrolling big numbers of students, focus on the quality of the students and their training.*

At the moment, the program enrolls 150 students/year out of which none is known to have any disability, but the college has some measures in place to support students with different types of disabilities to reach their academic potential (SER, p. 65). The SER and during the site-visit it was mentioned that they are grouped in lecture groups of 60 students and smaller groups of 9-12 students for the practical part. **In theory, this way, the college creates the premises that could ensure an effective and interactive teaching and learning process, but in reality this is not enough.** It needs to be accompanied by active investment in continuous training of academic staff and clinical mentors to improve their teaching capacity in order to address the diverse student population and their different learning styles (*see for further details the section dedicated to the Educational process*). Moreover, the ET is concerned that the college doesn't really have the capacity to train (teach) all these students. This is proved by the fact that **this**

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organisation of the student groups is not reflected in the timetable where one would expect to see 3 identical lectures for each of the disciplines, and at least 14 identical laboratories for each of the disciplines.

Moreover, it is not clear to the ET if there are also part-time students or just full-time students though it was mentioned, during the interviews, that all students have to follow the same student regulations.

Attendance is mandatory. Given the high number of lecture groups and subgroups for the practical part, more flexibility could be given to students to recover from a missed lecture or missed practical lab, by attending it with different groups. This flexibility is useful especially for very well motivated absences: medical leave, a difficult situation in the family etc. A discussion about the importance and relevance of mandatory attendance is recommended, especially in the case of students that are also working nurses, for example.

The college has a polyclinic in Pristina which is a great plus for ensuring the context for clinical practice. However, there are a lot of concerns of the ET about the quality of the clinical training and the consideration of patient comfort. Some of them are mentioned in the other sections of this report, therefore we won't repeat them, but we want to **stress the importance of developing QA mechanisms for the clinical training.** They could include training the clinical trainers/mentors, develop feedback forms for students and mentors to fill in at the end of the clinical stage, assign a maximum number of 2 students to each mentor etc.

The ET also salutes the fact that **the college has a simulation centre** they use during the training of the students in programs related to health sciences, especially in the practical part before they start the clinical practice.

Student assessment is described in the syllabuses and discussed with the students at the beginning of the year. The results after an exam are received by students quite fast (1-2 days) - through **the electronic platform which is used to record all academic results** - and they can contest the result after consulting with their professor (this can be done during specific consultation hours planned after the results are published). However, **it is not clear if the results from the exam are accompanied by mechanisms of assistance to help students reach the intended outcomes in due time.** The SER mentioned the existence of a mentor



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program as well as the possibility of using tutorials. They should be more clearly monitored to see if they are used by the intended users (students in the position of dropping out) and/or what is their efficiency (*e.g. did they help the students recover and reach the intended outcomes?*).

Approximately, **85% of the students graduate in due time (three years)**. Some of the rest need more time to finish and defend their thesis, while others quit studying due to different reasons: getting a job, going abroad, changing fields of study or personal reasons. The ET appreciates the efforts of the college to conduct interviews with all students that drop-out of the program. This is an appreciated practice at international level and could be complemented by periodical reports regarding the reasons why students drop-out and recommendations on how they could be supported to change their minds and finish their studies (when this is possible). **The program has a high employment rate of graduates: which increased from approximately 60% in 2021 to almost 80% in 2023** (and this figure might be updated in time as the generation that just graduated in June 2023 will continue to improve the employment rate). More detailed information about the employment of the graduates would be useful and this could be obtained through the questionnaires addressed to the recent graduates, but also reaching the graduates from previous generations, through the Alumni Association (that already exists and has a dedicated Facebook page). **We take this opportunity to encourage the college to develop the activity of the Alumni Association.** It is an international practice to gather former graduates in an alumni club/association, that organises periodical meetings for the graduates and uses an online platform to communicate news to alumni, invite them to the institutions events (e.g. fundraisings) or to facilitate a lecture as guest speakers, ask graduates to promote the institution to third parties or host students in practical stages. The program would definitely benefit from a more active and involved alumni association.

The teacher and the students are both responsible for the originality of the student work. The college has a Code of Ethics and Student Conduct that regulates ethical behaviour and what is supposed to be done when an incident of plagiarism occurs. The students are first introduced to this code, during the induction period. They can read it in depth on the electronic platform. Moreover, the faculty has acquired and uses the TurnitIn plagiarism detection software to detect potential violations in the final thesis of students. **The ET recommends that the software is opened for usage to students and teachers, so that they could also check their own work (papers).**



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Students rights and obligations derive from the UBT Statute and internal regulations and are included in the contract each student signs with UBT. As mentioned before, some of the regulations are available, in English, on the College website, while the rest are said to be found on the online platform. Among the rights of the students there is the right to appeal, but there is little evidence that this right is exercised. It seems that students more often `refuse` a grade, when they are not content with it, choosing to re-sit the exam in the next examination period, rather than contest it through an appeal. More efforts could be made to inform students about their right to appeal should they feel discriminated or miss-treated by any professor during an examination.

As mentioned before, teachers are available for consultations 2h/week and after the results of the exam are published online. Most often the consultation hours are dedicated to the students in the final year, preparing their final thesis. As it is not clear if the teacher allocates 2h/week/student generation (that would be 6h/week for the entire program) or simply 2h/week for all students from the entire program, one might question if they are enough. Given the high number of students and student groups, it would be a good idea to re-evaluate the need vs the availability of these consultations and maybe supplement them or offer some complementary options (e.g. group sessions if several students have similar questions about the content of the lecture).

In the end, the **ET would like to stress the importance of continuing efforts in order to ensure the opportunity for student mobility abroad.** The ET is aware of the international and political context of Kosovo, as well as the visa issue that derives from them. Given the numerous interinstitutional agreements signed by UBT, some solutions to create exchange programmes for students could be found. For example, the college could start by targeting countries where Kosovar people can travel easier. Then, the focus could go towards professional internships if they are easier to organise than learning/studying exchange programs. Moreover, the Nursing Faculty could organise, in cooperation with the other nursing faculties in Kosovo, a national exchange program. This way, students could study for a certain period of time in another higher education institution or conduct clinical practice in a different city/clinic than those typically considered for this program.

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Standard	Compliance (yes/no/parti ally)
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.	Partially
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.	Partially
Standard 5.4. Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given promptly and accompanied by mechanisms for assistance if needed.	Yes
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. ^{[[1]]} _[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.	Partially
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.	Partially

Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

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ET recommendations for the college:

1. *Make the admission procedure clearer (e.g., by defining the mathematical formula used to rank interested candidates for enrolment). Make sure the admission procedures are applied consistently and fairly to all applicants.*
2. *Make the appeal procedure easier to use and encourage students to use it whenever they feel miss treated.*
3. *Offer more transparent flexible arrangements for students to meet their attendance criteria.*
4. *Make the Turnitin platform accessible to both students and teachers, for them to check their papers individually.*
5. *Consider increasing the consultation hours and offer some additional group sessions of consultations, when needed and appropriate.*
6. *Continue and intensify efforts to set up exchange programmes for students. They could be for studying or for practice (internships in clinics abroad) and/or national or international mobilities.*
7. *Develop the activities of the Alumni club.*

2.6. Research

The College has approved a “*Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications*”. In article 1 of this Regulation it is mentioned that the mission is to “...*promote innovation, research, publication of research results and development of academic capacity of its staff*”. According to the UBT website, based on research activity, the College aims to become, in certain profile areas, the leading innovation motor for Kosovo. Moreover, the UBT has some specific goals for research as they are defined in the College website. The general strategic objectives are clearly defined in the “*Research Strategy*” of the Institution. The Research in the nursing field aims to create new knowledge and guides in this field. Moreover, as mentioned at the SER, academic staff of the nursing department works toward student’s research competencies. The research areas of the program are mentioned in the SER. However, **the Faculty doesn’t have a specific Research strategy and it’s important to develop one, immediately**. When the ET team asked the College to provide a Research strategy as an additional document, they provided one but irrelevant with the nursing study program. They provided the Research Strategy of the

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BA in English Language program. The ET team doesn't know if the College did this by mistake or purposely. The College is expecting to increase the revenues from research from 3% to 11% next year. When ET asked the authorities about this issue, they said that they are expecting more applications in research projects and more funding for projects from the Ministry. **To the ET view, an increase by 8% it's not realistic and the College needs to revise this target.** Moreover, the lack of the EU research funded projects (i.e. HORIZON Europe projects) makes this target difficult to reach. During the meeting with the Heads of the study program, they had no idea about the existence of a research strategy. **It is strongly recommended to replace the heads of the study program as they were not informed about the research aspect.**

In the workload of the academic staff it is foreseen that the academic staff spends 10 hours weekly for research activities. The academic staff confirmed that they conduct classes, **research**, consultations and other activities. In the SER it is mentioned that the Dean based on the skills, experience and capacity of the staff allocate the workload. The Annual Development Plan of the professors contains information about research. However, research activities are not part of the self-assessment evaluation (except one question that asks about involvement in research projects). **The College needs to undertake significant efforts to include research in these documents** as well as in the peer-to-peer evaluation forms, when they will be developed and implemented. During the meetings at UBT, it was mentioned that academic staff can be promoted based on the research activities that they conduct. However, it is important for the College to integrate in the existing "*Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications*" **an article where to clearly mention the process of promotion, the needed number of articles and any other criterias needed.**

The UBT College has clearly defined what research is in the SER. The Research Strategy of the Institution categorises the research activities as well as the possible outputs. The UBT also has a procedure on how to evaluate articles, books and other scientific materials that are not published in well-known national or international publishing houses (article 2 of the *Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications*). **The ET considers this as a good practice and that the institution needs to continue doing this procedure.**

The College in the SER presented a list of articles published by the academic staff jointly with their area of specialisation. More or less, the staff has published work in similar topics that they



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conduct their teaching activities in. However, **the list presented in the SER is very old** and when we asked the authorities they mentioned that we couldn't put all the articles of the staff. The ET asked for an additional list of the published articles the last two years and the College sent a list but without responding accordingly to our request. The College put in a document **(in an unuseful format/ a difficult to read structure)** a list of publications, conferences etc. Some of the published articles are old and not of the last two years as requested. **The Faculty needs to have a database with all the scientific work of the academic staff and to update it regularly (at least once per year). The database should contain the articles and books published, the conferences, workshops, seminars and all other relevant activities. It is worth mentioning that some of the academic staff had several publications the last few years in very good and indexed Journals.** In general, the academic staff publish their scientific work in different journals or publishing houses as well as present their work in different research activities and conferences. They fulfil this standard, but it is important to mention that the nurses that are part of the academic staff, have low quality scientific work. The academic staff also has the chance to publish their work in the annual conference that the College organises. This chance has been exploited by the staff and was reported by the heads of the study program and the academic staff during the meetings. Staff can also exploit the Semmelweis University Research Centre which is based in Budapest. **However, no concrete actions were presented about the contribution of this Center for the nursing staff.** To some extent, the academic staff can benefit from grants for research that are provided by the College. During the meeting with the heads of the study program they had no knowledge of research activities, while during the discussion with the staff they were not concrete on where they publish their work. **The general perception of the ET is that the research activities of the academic staff (mainly nurses) is minimal and of low quality.** All groups confirmed that they have access to international databases and this is something that can help the staff to improve the quality of research. Moreover, the staff has access to anti-plagiarism software which is also something positive. The articles presented at the SER for the 6.7 standard are very old.

In the contract of the academic staff, article 6, it is mentioned that they are obligated to publish at least one scientific article annually and to use as affiliation the UBT College. Additionally, the staff is obligated to register and have accounts at different databases such as Researchgate, GoogleScholar etc. **However, in some of the articles presented at the list of the**

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publications, authors didn't have as affiliation the UBT College. It is not clear if they have a double affiliation (in this case it is important to include both) or if these publications are before their employment at the College. However, it is important to mention that the articles published by the academic staff are mainly in collaboration with staff from the same College or maximum from an Institution inside Kosovo. **It is important for the academic staff to be encouraged and to provide them incentives to publish articles and research work in collaboration with academic staff working abroad.** This can on the one hand improve the quality of the research done and on the other hand increase the chance of publishing in prestigious journals. It is important to mention here that the lack of mobility (for both incoming and outgoing academic staff) is a key obstacle for publishing in high indexed journals. Lack of mobility makes collaboration with international experts difficult.

The College reports that academic staff provide their research publications to the students during classes. The staff confirmed this, while the students said that their professors provide them articles or some links at Moodle that they can access additional information. Despite the fact that this method is used at the College, it is not well-documented. The material provided to the students **is not included in the syllabus and the ET considers it important to do so.**

The academic staff is obligated to do all their activities (including research) based on the national and international ethical standards. The *"Code of Ethics"* that the institution has approved has detailed information about this issue (especially article 6 of the document). **However, the ET considers it important to include in the contract of the personnel information and some obligations about intellectual property.** This could increase their awareness about this important issue.

To the best of the ET knowledge, the UBT Students research group that the College reports on has no concrete results till now, **while the students that participated in the meeting said that they are not part of this.** There is little to no proof of the involvement of students' research activities of the academic staff. The ET requested a list of articles/conferences where students were included. The UBT College provided a list of publications where students were included. The publications were in 2020, 2021 and 2022 at the International Conference that the College organises. However, it is worth mentioning that inclusion of the students in research activities is done only by some specific professors (according to the authors list) and it's not an extended

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phenomenon. Additionally, students are not part of the publications in scientific journals. **The ET considers that inclusion of the students in research activities at UBT is not systematic and part of the regular procedures, but rather an individual endeavour of some teachers, thus more efforts are needed by the authorities and the academic staff to improve this.**

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

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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
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.	Partially
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.	Partially

Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

ET recommendations for the college management/heads of the programme:

1. *Develop a Research Strategy that will focus on the specific needs of the nursing program.*
2. *Revise the expectation for an 8% increase in revenues from research the next year.*
3. *Include research activities as part of the self-assessment evaluation questionnaire and the peer-to-peer evaluation format, when it will be developed and prior to its implementation.*
4. *Consider the revision of the existing “Regulation on Scientific Research and Publications” by defining the impact of research on academic staff promotion.*
5. *Collect data and create a database with all the scientific work of the academic staff and to update it regularly (at least once per year);*
6. *Support the nurses involved in this study program to improve the quality of their research activities and the publication of the results.*



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7. *Encourage Academic staff to use as affiliation the UBT while in case of double affiliation, its recommended to use both;*
8. *Continue the efforts to increase the number of mobility of academic staff for both incoming and outgoing;*
9. *Encourage and provide incentives to academic staff to publish jointly with academicians working in European Universities.*
10. *Ask their teachers to include in the syllabus the additional information (such as research articles) provided to the students.*
11. *Include of information about intellectual property in the contract of the academic staff.*
12. *Increase efforts and multiply actions to include students in research activities and make them part of the publication process.*
13. *Clarify what research activity is expected from teachers interested in a promotion and what are the criteria for career advancement.*

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

The premises of the Nursing Faculty are situated in the UBT Innovation Campus Lipjan. The institution operates in a medium-size modern facility built in 2017. The premises as well as the furniture were erected last year in a large investment and development portfolio at UBT Hospital that the ET salutes. The infrastructures for the teaching are in a place and in a good condition. There is also a proper financial plan to maintain high quality education and resources. All other resources, for example, such as rooms for group works, library, IT-technology and softwares, rooms for staff and students, are good. The faculty premises includes four (4) auditoriums and nine (9) smaller seminar rooms and eighteen (18) polyclinics. In addition, it has designated office space for staff and students. All rooms are equipped with modern teaching equipment and are easily adaptable to various modes of teaching. A videoconferencing auditorium has been arranged in 2017 with technical aids, conference equipment, a television set, a video projector, and a smart board. The faculty also has printing and photocopy equipment for students. The premises were constructed and tailored for higher education purposes by the institution. The institution does not pay rent thus leaving more potential resources for future capital investments. **These premises and equipment are primarily intended for other study programs.**



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During the visit, the staff showed the ET many rooms intended for nursing care, which should be used for the needs of performing laboratory exercises. **The premises are adequate and large enough, but extremely poorly equipped** - not in correlation with the intended usage of the rooms. For example: in one room, one doll on a cart, intended for transport, the wasps were on the bed. Smaller models were exhibited at large distances to gain on the number of cabinets. Everything seen is only sufficient for equipping a maximum of two cabinets.

UBT library has rich traditional and online literature in Albanian and English. The library is stocked with about 80,000 titles, an important resource for academic staff, scientific research, and students. However, the ET has insufficient proof to be able to judge whether they are enough to cover the needs of all students (for example if they need to all borrow the same book from the library, to prepare for an exam). It is also difficult to appreciate if the library seating for studying covers the needs of 10% of the students enrolled by this program, as it is not clear how many students, from how many programs share the same library. **UBT also has an electronic library, where students and academic staff have access to online libraries such as: EBSCO host, J-Store, Sage journals etc.** that allows students to access newer scientific articles that they can use for their research studies. The library also has relevant literature for nursing needs. Infrastructure and resources meet all standards according to the KAA accreditation manual. The ET recommends to facilitate remote access to this valuable resource to both students and teachers.

Standard	Compliance (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



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<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) owned or rented spaces adequate for the educational process;b) owned or rented laboratories, with the adequate equipment for all the compulsory disciplines within the curriculum, wherever the analytical syllabus includes such activities.c) adequate software for the disciplines of study included in the curriculum, with utilisation licence.d) library equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock according to the disciplines included in the curricula.	Yes
<p>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.</p>	Partially
<p>Standard 7.5. The education institution's libraries must ensure, for each of the study programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	Yes
<p>Standard 7.6. The infrastructure and facilities dedicated to the implementation of the program is adapted to students with special needs.</p>	Yes

Compliance level: Substantially compliant level

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ET recommendations for the college/the heads of the study programme:

1. *Reduce the number of students as to correlate with the number of equipped spaces dedicated to the Nursing program.*
2. *Better equip the laboratories so it serves the needs of the Nursing program;*
3. *Enstate a management system to monitor the overload of each laboratory space (ensure that the laboratories dedicated to the Nursing program are not shared with other programs in a manner that affects the quality of the teaching process in the Nursing program);*
4. *Facilitate remote access to the online library/international databases of journals, to both students and teachers.*

3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The program called Bachelor in Nursing is submitted for reaccreditation, for the NQF level 6, with an academic degree to be conferred Bachelor of Nursing.

The program currently enrolls 150 students annually and accepts transfers from similar programs offered by accredited institutions in Kosovo or abroad (based on an internal evaluation of the college).

Since the last external evaluation, the college invested both in the human and material resources, with a focus on research related actions. However, there are still aspects that need the attention of the management, and which concern the ET as they might possibly affect the overall quality of the program:

- the lack of quality procedures for the clinical training and the high number of students allocated to one clinical mentor;
- the conditions in which the clinical training takes place might create discomfort for the patients;
- the insufficient spaces for the intended student population and the lack of adequate equipments in some of the spaces;
- the small number of professors with a PhD title in nursing compared with the still rather high number of medical doctors involved in the program;
- lacking details about the practical activity of the students for each discipline;
- the unclear admission procedure;

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- the fact that the heads of the program don't seem to be very acquainted with the program (e.g. they did not participate in revising it) thus raising questions about their appropriateness for the position;
- the low quality research activities done especially from the nursing staff;
- the insufficiently well defined research concept of the BSc program;
- the insufficient progress in research;

The ET appreciates the efforts done by the UBT College, which has made impressive investments for all its programs and is recognised as one of the best private institutions in Kosovo. However, for this particular program, at this moment, the ET strongly recommends to reduce the number of enrolled students/year, in order to guarantee a qualitative teaching and learning process for all, until the above-mentioned shortcomings of the program are resolved.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program Nursing BSc offered by UBT 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 *1 year* with a number of *100 students* to be enrolled in the program. This will give the KAA the opportunity to check again with the college, the progress of the programme, in one year and reconsider than both the duration of the accreditation and the number of students to be enrolled in the future.

4. APPENDICES (if available) - NA

Expert Team

Chair

D. Zeleznik

(Signature)

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(Print Name)

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Member

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18.08.2023

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Member

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08.08.2023

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