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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



UBT College

PROGRAMME

PSYCHOLOGY, MSc

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM
Accreditation**

Prishtina, 21April, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- SER
- Anexes
- Additionally requested documents
- KAA Accreditation Manual

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

Standards & performance indicators for external evaluation according to the Accreditation Manual of KAA

Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at UBT College	
Programmes:	Psychology, MSc (Accreditation)
Site visit on:	4 April 2025
Expert Team:	Prof. Dr. Melita Kovacevic Prof. Dr. Aysegül Kozak Mr. Gaga Gvenetadze
Coordinators of the KAA:	Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Director of Department at KAA Fjolle Ajeti, Senior Officer at KAA

Site Visit Program

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi Prof. Dr. Visar Hoxha Asst. Prof. Dr. Denis Celcima Asst. Prof. Dr. Emrush Thaci
09:50 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Assoc. Prof. Dr Dugagjin Sokoli Asst. Prof. Dr. Artan Tahiri Prof. Dr. Qufli Osmani MSc Mirinde Jashanica BSc. Agnesa Shala
10:35 – 11:25	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme	Asst. Prof. Dr. Denis Celcima Asst. Prof. Dr. Fatbardha Qehaja Osmani
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	

12:40 – 13:20	Visiting facilities	MSc. Lirigzona Morina Asst. Prof. Dr. Artan Tahiri MSc. Murat Retkoceri Asst. Prof. Dr. Denis Celcima Asst.Prof Dr Violeta Zefi Asst.Prof.Dr Fatbardha Qehaja Osmani PHd Cand Besarta Sadriu
13:25 – 14:05	Meeting with teaching staff	Asst. Prof. Dr. Violeta Zefi Asst. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Kraja Bardhi Asst. Prof. Dr Valdrin Krasniqi Asst. Prof. Dr. Elona Krasniqi Asst. Prof. Dr. Mirinde Bilalli PHd.Cand Anita Sadikaj PHd Cand Besarta Sadriu PHd Cand Ejona Icka (Profesoresha udheton me pune ne ate date)
14:10 – 14:50	Meeting with students	Blendi Restellica
		Gjergj Rexhaj Shqipe Shala Kosovare Hamiti Klea Vezaj Marigona Doberlluka Njomeza Krasniqi Leona Aliu Ilirida Katana
14:50 – 15:30	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Kadri Gashi (SIT) Elma Berisha (SIT) Selvi Izeti (KRCT) Mikaela Llalla (UPF) Fatime Sahiti (Klinika Emos) Zana Qehaja (Rreze Dielli)
15:30 – 15:40	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
15:40 – 15:50	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	Prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi Prof. Dr. Visar Hoxha Asst. Prof. Dr.Denis Celcima Asst. Prof. Dr. Emrush Thaci

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

UBT was established in Pristina, Kosovo in October 2004 by Prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi. The institution was built on the previous experience of the Institute of Enterprise Engineering and Management (IEME). The College holds the license of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) license No.808/02-1 dated 18.10.2004 and is also supported by its centers in various other cities in Kosovo.

The institution's philosophy has been to offer internationally competitive programs in higher education and lifelong learning. UBT College's offer is based on both the demand and supply sides of the education system. The institution has introduced innovative law, psychology, media and communication, mechatronics, energy efficiency, medical sciences, and integrated design programs. Master of Science in Psychology is a new programme submitted for accreditation by the Faculty of Psychology. It has 120 ECTS as a two-year programme, it does not offer any specific specialisation and it is a full-time programme.

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

The institution provided feedback on the received draft of the report. Although there were no substantive objections, the ET would like to express its appreciation for the positive, clear and constructive feedback, which either provided additional clarifications or gave some indications on how the institution will proceed in the near future, motivated to further develop the proposed programme and remove its weak points.

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

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

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

The MSc in Psychology at UBT College demonstrates alignment with the institution's mission to deliver innovative and socially responsive higher education. The program's objectives—focusing on the development of professionals capable of addressing Kosovo's growing mental health challenges—correspond well with national and regional needs. UBT's MSc Psychology program suggested by conducting market analysis, ensuring its relevance and responsiveness to student and employer demands. Reports and statistics on mental health trends underpin the justification for the program, emphasizing its necessity and potential impact on employment. The mission and strategic goals of both UBT and the Faculty of Psychology are reflected in the program's curriculum, intended learning outcomes, and pedagogical strategies. By the analysis of the accreditation committee, it can be said that the targeted number of students is more than what the department can cope. This number does not appear strategically optimal considering quality educational provision.

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

The SER and the representatives of the university (students, administrators, faculty ect) indicated that UBT College has a working framework for academic integrity, supported by a published Code of Ethics, use of Turnitin software. These measures they argued helped to promoting responsible academic conduct among students and staff. Students and staff are informed of exact processes to follow in case of detected plagiarism, ensuring transparency and consistency in disciplinary measures.

Provided syllabuses indicated that the ethical standards are referred in teaching as a part of faculty syllabuses. Ethical standards governing teaching and research activities are clearly communicated to students, lecturers, and stakeholders. The dissemination of information through student handbooks, course syllabuses, and orientation sessions effectively promotes awareness and compliance.

UBT has established effective mechanisms for monitoring unethical behavior through structured committees, with processes regularly implemented and outcomes clearly communicated. Anonymized examples and statistical data related to ethical violations and decisions by Ethics Committees are accessible, reinforcing a culture of accountability.

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

The focus group meetings and SER indicated that UBT collects and analyses data to ensure and monitor the effective implementation of its programs. although specific data collection for student progression, graduation rates, and employability has not yet commenced to the specific program due to the new accreditation status.

The SER indicates that UBT strictly adheres to Kosovo's Law No. 06/L-082 on the Protection of Personal Data, ensuring student confidentiality and compliance with legal frameworks. A robust data protection framework, overseen by a designated Data Protection Officer, supports student privacy and data security, with regular staff training to uphold these standards.

The SER stated and the focus group interviews that the evaluation team has conducted confirmed that while initial development of the MSc Psychology program at UBT involved extensive consultations with faculty and industry experts, student involvement has been limited due to the program's recent establishment. However it was stated during the interviews feedback from students are planned to be included to facilitate continuous improvement. When opening the program current BA students were contacted.

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

The SER and the focus group meetings with administrators of the UBT cleared that the institution has established an Administrative and Budgetary Support Policy outlining procedures to ensure adequate staffing, financial resources, and contingency planning for the

MSc Psychology program. Yet there seems not clear if the suggested number of students are not to be received how would it effect the financial planning of the program.

The MSc Psychology program has an administrative structure including Program Director, Program Coordinator, and Quality Officer with defined roles.

When asked in the focus groups faculty and staff indicated that they benefit from a opportunities for professional development through various programs, including the Erasmus program, career office support, regular training sessions, workshops, and opportunities to attend relevant conferences. The referred Professional Development Plan includes ongoing skill enhancement in key areas such as budget management, student engagement, and academic and teaching support services.

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

Given that the MSc Psychology program at UBT is currently undergoing its first accreditation, specific historical data on the implementation of past internal and external quality assurance recommendations are not available.

ET recommendations:

1- To Accelerate the development of structured feedback mechanisms from the students, stakeholders and employers systematic follow-up meetings, to enhance continuous improvement processes from an early stage might be beneficial.

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The prepared Self-Evaluation Report (SER) revealed that both the Quality Assurance (QA) unit and the program holders did not demonstrate sufficient diligence in its preparation. There were notable mismatches between the content of the SER and the supporting evidence provided, such as inconsistencies between the stated curriculum and the syllabus list. Additionally, the SER included sections that were unrelated to the specific program under review, indicating a lack of attention by the applicants.

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

The site visit and SER indicates that UBT has established an internal quality assurance system aimed to be aligned with national regulations, ESG standards. This system covers academic, administrative, student and stakeholder feedback processes. There exist defined internal regulations, guidelines, and procedures to support the educational quality. With the intention

of preserving and enhancing quality management, UBT follows the PDCA cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act).

The presence of quality assurance coordinator who is free from teaching obligations, will help the monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of the MSc Psychology program.

University has The Quality Improvement Action Plan, publicly available at the university's website, is continuously revised with input from all stakeholders, including students, faculty, industry representatives, and alumni. Stakeholders seemed to be very enthusiastic about the suggested program. They indicated that UBT ensures inclusive stakeholder involvement in quality assurance through regular feedback, reviews, and revisions, thus reinforcing effective and continuous improvement. Stakeholder involvement deemed commendable by the panel.

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

The MSc Psychology program at UBT demonstrates an alignment with the institution's and faculty's mission and strategic goals, emphasizing research innovation, academic excellence, community engagement and the development of highly skilled professionals. The MSc Psychology program underwent a thorough, transparent internal quality assurance process, formally approved by strategic management bodies of the U.

The program involved internal and external stakeholders, including specific subject experts known in the country with their expertise on psychology, in the development and approval process of the MSc Psychology program. The panel specifically asked their involvement in curriculum planning and they defined it as an active participation.

UBT has defined key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring the MSc Psychology program's quality, including student satisfaction, research output, and staff-to-student ratios. Regular monitoring, review frequency and where they will be documented is defined to provide data-driven insights into the effectiveness of the program and highlight areas for potential improvement.

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

Since program is not yet functioning it does not have historical data to monitor the criteria set in the standard 2.3, YET, the self-evaluation report describes plans, and processes are at work for periodically monitor and review the study program to ensure that program objectives are met. According to SAR, at all programs the curriculum is reviewed and updated regularly based on feedback from students, faculty, and industry partners. QAU continuously collects data via surveys to monitor and review study programs to ensure their objectives are met and they remain relevant to industry needs.

Though not yet applicable to MSc program, the university runs regular assessments to ensure the workload and ECTS allocation for students are realistic, achievable, and adequately aligned with the defined learning outcomes.

Again though not yet applicable to the specific program, questionnaires are conducted systematically to stakeholders, students, staff, alumni, and employers. Collected information from monitoring processes is analyzed systematically. Results from monitoring processes and subsequent action plans are communicated to all stakeholders and transparently published on the institution's website. Psychology BA program is provided.

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

As the program is new, future data publication strategies are defined and structured yet not publicly available. Some of these data includes admission criteria, qualification recognition processes, enrollment quotas, syllabuses, learning outcomes, ECTS credits, assessment methods, and qualifications awarded. The update for this program is not applicable.

ET recommendations:

1. Ensure proper functioning of the web page and public accessibility of all the regulations and information.
2. Ensure proper functioning English language web page
3. Enhance KPI frameworks with additional industry-aligned metrics and regularly review their effectiveness to reflect evolving academic and professional standards.

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

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

In accordance with regulatory and national requirements, the Institution has transparent procedures for the recruitment of new staff and has appropriately constituted committees and other relevant bodies involved in the selection and employment of staff.

As an institution that claims and strives to follow some relevant international standards and practices, it can be concluded that it is assured of selecting and employing the best possible staff. In the process of recruiting new staff, candidates are provided with all relevant information required for their new employment.

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

The programme has a sufficient number of staff with doctoral degree according to national requirements. Out of 14 members of the academic staff, according to the SER and the documents received, there are seven members of staff who have a degree in psychology or a related field such as pedagogy (one of the universities outside the country offers a degree in psychology-pedagogy), as well as three members of staff who are in the process of their doctoral studies. Research output is generally satisfactory, at least for the majority of staff in terms of the number of publications, and this is seen as a positive institutional development as well as a file in itself.

However, it has to be said that for the institution that claims its international experience and is focused on cooperation with international institutions, it is inappropriate to submit for the accreditation process documents such as CVs that are either not prepared in English or are poorly prepared and use non-transparent ways of providing relevant information, especially in relation to employment and training.

Considering the number of staff, regardless of their position and level of expertise, the student/teacher ratio is satisfactory. What could be a problem is the total workload of the academic staff, especially for some of them. As they teach in different programmes, it is not clear what their total teaching workload is, as well as performing other tasks within the institution. It is also a fact that individual members of staff teach a wide range of courses, up to five courses (not including the number of courses at Bachelor level).

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

Promotion procedures are regulated by the institution and are transparent. Promotions are based on excellence and relevant achievements in the field, in accordance with institutional rules. The diversity of staff performance is taken into account and validated against its quality. The institution also pays attention to and takes into account feedback and different information collected through the use of different tools and from different stakeholders.

Research output is generally satisfactory, at least for the majority of staff in terms of the number of publications, and this is seen as a positive institutional development as well as a field in itself. However, it has been observed that the range of topics does not really cover the range of courses taught by individual members of staff, indicating that the consideration of their research and publication activities is not fully aligned with their teaching activities. In addition, there are still cases where an individual publishes most of his or her work in the same journal and/or in 'general research practice' journals, some of which are of very questionable quality.

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

The institution, in particular the Faculty of Psychology, has developed a professional development plan for both new and existing staff. There is a staff development strategy as well as an annual operational plan. According to the documents and information collected during the site visit, staff members have the opportunity to be involved in different courses and to develop their skills in different areas of expertise. The scope of activities also supports the promotion of international cooperation and the willingness to be more involved in international research and other forms of cooperation. Newly recruited staff undergo onboarding and induction in order to be better prepared and to adapt more quickly to the working environment and institutional rules, behaviours and expectations.

Special efforts will be made to better prepare staff for the implementation of different assessment methods, especially considering all the changes and demands that the digitalisation transformation brings. The Faculty of Psychology and the institution as a whole will focus on the continuous development of the skills of all staff.

The UBT College and Faculty support student mobility. The ET learned during the site visit that mobility is also perceived by students as a valuable experience and that awareness of the need for international experience is increasing. It is important to note that teachers are also slowly becoming more mobile. Nevertheless, these activities still need to be further emphasised and valued by the institution's programme, and more academic staff and students need to be supported and motivated.

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

The whole institution, as well as the Faculty of Psychology, has a positive attitude towards the involvement of external stakeholders from different sectors, especially those relevant to the field of psychology. The institution organises trainings to prepare external stakeholders to participate in different activities within the institution, including teaching. They also participate in the process of internships and research carried out by students, including the preparation of final theses. This has to be done and followed in the first cycle of the educational programme, and the intention is to have the same practice for the Masters programme.

ET recommendations:

- 1. To make sure that each teaching staff is teaching courses that correspond to her or his area of professional experience, research and research output*
- 2. To assure in total appropriate teaching load per staff member*

4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

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

The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the MSc in Psychology programme are clearly formulated and well-structured. They reflect the programme's ambition to prepare graduates with advanced theoretical knowledge, applied psychological competencies, research capabilities, and strong ethical foundations aligned with Level 7 descriptors of the Kosovo National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The ILOs are explicitly aligned with UBT College's institutional mission, which emphasizes applied science, innovation, and service to society. They also reflect the Faculty of Psychology's 2023–2028 strategic objectives, particularly in fostering interdisciplinarity, responsiveness to mental health challenges, and professional readiness. Each learning outcome is linked to broader educational aims, contributing to both academic and societal impact.

The programme learning outcomes are consistent with the overall objectives of the MSc in Psychology, as articulated in the curriculum and syllabi. They are logically derived from a progression of theoretical, methodological, and applied courses. Vertical and horizontal alignment is evident between program-level and course-level outcomes, ensuring a coherent learning experience that supports cumulative skill development.

The ILOs are written from a student perspective, clearly outlining what graduates are expected to know, understand, and be capable of doing by the end of the programme. These include competencies in psychological assessment, evidence-based intervention, academic writing, and professional ethics. Learning outcomes are structured across knowledge, skills, and competences in line with best practices promoted in the ECTS Users' Guide (2015).

The program development process included benchmarking with similar programmes in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), drawing on examples of good practice in outcome formulation. Evidence of such comparison was found in institutional documentation, which supports the programme's alignment with European academic standards.

Although the program is newly established and no students are currently enrolled, the expert panel notes that the intended learning outcomes are not yet publicly available on the institutional website. However, considering that other UBT programs consistently publish learning outcomes online, it is expected that this programme will follow the same practice. The panel assumes that the institutional mechanisms for ensuring transparency and publication will be applied once the programme is officially launched.

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

The intended learning outcomes of the MSc in Psychology programme are designed in alignment with the Kosovo National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) at Level 7. This alignment is evident in both the structure and content of the curriculum, which emphasizes analytical depth, independent research capability, and the application of advanced psychological knowledge in real-world contexts. The course syllabi and curriculum documentation consistently use outcome descriptors appropriate to graduate-level education, such as critical evaluation, integration of complex knowledge, and ethical reasoning.

The programme is delivered at the graduate (second cycle) level and appropriately distinguishes itself from the learning outcomes of undergraduate programmes offered by the same institution. The intended learning outcomes move beyond foundational knowledge and instead focus on the development of specialized competences, autonomy in academic inquiry, and professional decision-making in complex psychological contexts. The differentiation between bachelor's and master's level outcomes is also reflected in the increased emphasis on independent research, thesis preparation, and interdisciplinary applications.

Furthermore, the intended learning outcomes are aligned with the profile of qualification awarded upon graduation namely, a Master of Science in Psychology. They are appropriately tailored to the expected academic and professional roles that graduates may pursue, whether in clinical, educational, or research-based settings. The programme avoids redundancy with other study programs by clearly defining the scope and level of its learning objectives. There is no indication of outcome overlap with other cycles or disciplines, ensuring coherence within the institution's qualifications framework.

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

At the outset, it should be noted that the content and structure of the curriculum, particularly in relation to the list of courses, is inconsistent. The ET received very conflicting information on compulsory and elective courses in different preparatory documents.

On a first sight the curriculum of the MSc in Psychology is organized in a logical sequence that ensures the progressive development of knowledge, skills, and competences. The course structure is presented in a way to provide students with combination of foundational theoretical

knowledge, methodological training, and applied psychology. The curriculum addresses both general academic skills (e.g., research methods, ethics) and specific domain expertise (e.g., psychological assessment, intervention strategies), consistent with the expectations of comparable programs in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

However, while some of the courses have unusual and not well justified titles in terms of the field (e.g. Advanced General Psychology), others are the same course but have different titles in different documents (course related to ethics). The ET had the impression that there was no real alignment between individual teachers and that in a number of cases the course content was done individually without an overall overview and alignment between courses. This impression was to some extent confirmed during the site visit. If this remains in the programme, students will be exposed to the same content and repetitions (e.g. Advanced General Psychology course and Advanced Cognitive Psychology); some topics, their order within a specific course is not logical; some topics do not make much sense, either because of terminology or because they are written in such a descriptive way (e.g. Cognitive and Linguistic Development Piaget and Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development); in a syllabus of each course, there is confusion in using the term course vs. module (one cannot be replaced by another in the given context - they mean different things), etc. The whole curriculum needs to be carefully re-analysed, not so much in terms of the absence of some particular courses, but to look carefully at each individual syllabus and then to make an alignment between all the courses.

The sequencing of courses supports a smooth and pedagogically sound progression through the program. Pre-requisites are built into the course plan to ensure that students acquire foundational competencies before advancing to more specialized or research-intensive courses. For example, students must first complete advanced courses in research methodology and psychological theories before undertaking the thesis or applied project. This structure ensures that prior learning outcomes adequately prepare students for subsequent academic challenges.

In principle, the curriculum covers all key disciplinary areas required to achieve the program's intended learning outcomes. A mapping of course-level learning outcomes against program-level outcomes is provided in the syllabi and curriculum design documentation. This mapping demonstrates how each course contributes to one or more of the program's broader goals, particularly in relation to critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and professional psychological practice.

In addition, the programme design reflects a comparative analysis with similar Master's level psychology programmes in the EHEA from an overall perspective. Unfortunately, a more detailed in-depth analysis of the individual courses, their structure and content themes reveals a number of discrepancies.

The curriculum potentially supports graduate employability by including practical components (such as thesis work and applied seminars) and encouraging the development of transferable skills applicable in both national and international contexts.

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

Although psychology is not currently regulated under a single EU Directive in the same way as medicine or law, the MSc in Psychology program at UBT College demonstrates alignment with international academic and professional standards. The curriculum structure and learning outcomes have been informed by reference to European qualifications frameworks and relevant professional expectations across the EHEA. The program incorporates core competencies in psychological theory, assessment, and ethics, which are consistent with those found in programs recognized by professional psychological associations in EU countries.

While no formal mapping against EU Directives has been provided due to the non-regulated status of psychology at the EU level the program's design is compatible with academic and professional norms used in license-bearing systems. For example, modules on ethics, supervised research, and professional development are integrated into the program structure in anticipation of future professional validation frameworks.

The development of the program has also taken into account local and regional professional practice needs. The SER indicates an awareness of national licensing expectations and the relevance of the program for students intending to pursue registration or certification in Kosovo or abroad. Although there is no formal documentation from a professional chamber or association, the program structure aligns with international academic pathways that typically precede licensure or doctoral training.

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

At the time of evaluation, the MSc in Psychology program does not yet include a fully developed or formalized practice component. The self-evaluation report references future intentions to incorporate applied learning or internships into the curriculum, but no detailed framework currently exists that specifies learning outcomes, assessment strategies, or the rights and responsibilities of students, academic mentors, and external institutions involved in student practice.

There is no regulation specific to practical training for this program that defines expected learning outcomes, documentation templates, or cooperation procedures with external organizations. While UBT as an institution has experience with student practice components in other fields, this program has not yet established the necessary infrastructure (e.g., formal contracts, cooperation agreements, or student practice manuals) to implement supervised practical training aligned with ESG 1.2 requirements.

Additionally, no evidence was provided that ECTS credits are allocated to a practical module within the existing curriculum, nor that the program includes monitoring tools such as student activity reports or formal feedback mechanisms from supervisors. The course syllabi do not currently reference applied placements, mentoring procedures, or the role of host institutions.

Although the SER indicates that some cooperation with the UBT Hospital and mental health-related institutions exists at the institutional level, there is no indication that these have been translated into structured and assessable learning opportunities for this specific program. As such, the practical learning environment and its integration into the formal program remain underdeveloped.

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

The MSc in Psychology program is built on a didactic concept that supports the development of academic, research, and professional competencies. The teaching and learning philosophy centers on achieving the intended learning outcomes through active engagement, self-directed inquiry, and problem-based approaches, all of which are aligned with ESG 1.3 principles of student-centered learning.

Various pedagogical methods are integrated into course delivery, including group discussions, research projects, presentations, and case analysis. These are adapted to the level of second-cycle studies and encourage critical thinking, creativity, and the practical application of psychological knowledge. Course syllabi indicate clearly defined instructions and expectations aligned with course-level learning outcomes, ensuring transparency and coherence in instructional design.

Interactive and research-based teaching methods are promoted, particularly in modules such as “Psychological Assessment and Diagnosis,” “Advanced Research Methods,” and “Professional Ethics.” These methods are aimed at developing not only cognitive knowledge but also communication and analytical skills. Although the program is newly launched and not yet implemented, the planned delivery modes reflect best practices in higher education and psychological instruction.

UBT College regularly evaluates and adapts its teaching approaches through feedback mechanisms and internal quality assurance reviews. Teaching staff are encouraged to reflect on and revise their methods to ensure alignment with student needs and academic standards. These practices will be extended to the MSc in Psychology program once it becomes active.

The institution demonstrates a commitment to inclusive pedagogy, with adaptability built into its teaching models to accommodate part-time students, international students, and those with learning difficulties or disabilities. While the program has yet to enroll students, the infrastructure (including digital platforms and accessibility protocols) is already in place.

Finally, the program's delivery is supported by the use of modern technology, including a digital learning management system, access to online research databases, and digital assessment tools. These will facilitate hybrid and flexible learning environments for future cohorts, ensuring that students can engage with learning material beyond the physical classroom.

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

The MSc in Psychology program provides a clear alignment between the overall intended learning outcomes and the learning objectives of individual courses. Each module contributes directly to the achievement of broader knowledge, skills, and competences, as demonstrated in the course syllabi. The connection between course-level and program-level outcomes is explicitly outlined, supporting transparency and outcome-based learning.

Assessment methods employed across the program are designed to systematically evaluate students' acquisition of intended learning outcomes in multiple domains, including theoretical understanding, analytical reasoning, and professional practice. The program uses diverse assessment tools such as written exams, essays, presentations, case analyses, and research-based assignments. Mapping of assessment methods to intended learning outcomes has been conducted, and the syllabi specify which methods correspond to which outcomes.

Assessment criteria and grading rubrics are clearly defined and made available to students in advance. This ensures that students understand the expectations for each assignment and the basis upon which their performance will be judged. Assessment transparency is further reinforced by institutional policies requiring course coordinators to include grading breakdowns in each syllabus.

The program ensures objective and consistent grading by using standardized evaluation frameworks and criteria. Course instructors apply consistent grading practices and participate

in peer discussions to calibrate assessment standards. Additionally, mechanisms exist to address cases of inconsistency, including internal academic review and appeal processes.

Timely feedback is an institutional expectation and is practiced in all UBT programs. Students receive feedback that highlights both achievements and areas for improvement, enabling them to reflect on their progress and adapt their learning strategies accordingly. Feedback can be provided verbally or in writing, and formative assessments are used to guide students before summative evaluations.

The institution has a formal student appeals procedure in place, as outlined in the Regulation for Student Registration. This procedure ensures that students who wish to contest their grades or assessments are guaranteed a fair and transparent process. The appeals process is accessible and published, consistent with good practice in higher education.

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

The MSc in Psychology program applies the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) principles to allocate credits based on student workload and expected learning outcomes. Each course module is assigned a specific number of ECTS credits corresponding to the total student effort, including contact hours, independent study, assignments, and assessments. This allocation is consistent across the curriculum and aligned with the second cycle standard of 60 ECTS per academic year.

Assessment criteria in the program are formulated to reflect what students are expected to know, understand, and do upon successful completion of each course. The connection between learning outcomes and assessment activities is made clear in the syllabi. The structure supports a balance between theoretical engagement, applied skills development, and research-based learning.

Workload is calculated at the program and course levels, and each component of the curriculum contributes to the overall learning outcomes. However, it is very questionable how much work students actually have to do for each course when compared with the list of required reading (literature). The lists are absolutely unrealistic in terms of what has to be read, what is not required, and in some cases do not fully correspond to the content of the course.

ET recommendations:

1. *Review syllabi, paying particular attention to course titles, topics, literature and overall alignment within the curriculum.*
2. *Develop and formalize the practice component, including learning outcomes, ECTS, supervision, and assessment.*
3. *Adopt regulations and documentation for student practice, defining roles and responsibilities.*
4. *Integrate practice into the program's learning outcome structure and ensure QA coverage.*
5. *Maintain alignment between course and program outcomes and conduct regular curriculum reviews.*
6. *Promote student-centered and inclusive teaching methods through staff development.*
7. *Review ECTS allocations periodically to ensure consistency with actual student workload.*
8. *Review the list of readings/literature and ensure that it meets the needs of the course and the defined workload.*

5. STUDENTS

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

The admission requirements and procedures for the MSc in Psychology program at UBT College are clearly defined, comprehensive, and publicly available. These criteria apply equally to national and international students and are published in institutional regulations, including the Regulation for the Second Cycle of Studies and the Student Registration Regulation.

For bachelor's programs, students must possess a valid high school diploma or an equivalent document as per national regulations (e.g., results from the State Matura exam). For admission to the master's level, a completed bachelor's degree is required. These requirements are in line with national legislation and ensure a transparent and consistent process.

The admission process ensures the selection of candidates with adequate academic preparation and appropriate competencies. A clearly defined decision-making procedure is in place, which includes the review of submitted documentation and, when necessary, additional assessments to evaluate applicants' knowledge and skills.

The admission process is consistently and fairly applied for all applicants. Measures are in place to prevent any form of discrimination. Furthermore, the institution has appropriate procedures to recognize prior periods of study, including ECTS-based credit transfer and

academic recognition, which facilitates student mobility and supports lifelong learning pathways.

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

As the MSc in Psychology is a newly established program, no students are currently enrolled, and therefore no actual student progression data has yet been generated. However, UBT College has a functional and institutionally embedded system for monitoring student progression and academic performance, which is in use across all existing study programs. This system will be fully applied to the new program once it becomes operational.

The Student Management Information System (SMIS) is designed to track student enrolment, grades, attendance, and course completion in real time. It also enables early alerts for students facing academic difficulties. Once students are enrolled in the MSc program, these tools will allow for timely interventions, including academic counseling and support services provided by the Student Support Office.

While no program-specific data is yet available, UBT has established procedures for regular monitoring of student progression and completion rates through the QA office and Program Coordinators. These procedures include semester-based evaluations and corrective measures when needed, such as adjusting course structures or strengthening student support.

Information from student monitoring processes is routinely shared with academic and administrative staff to guide decision-making. In other programs, students are also informed of their progress through structured advising, feedback meetings, and notifications. The same mechanisms are planned for the MSc in Psychology cohort.

The program clearly defines progression pathways, including continuation toward doctoral studies or entry into the labor market. These are communicated through public regulations, study program descriptions, and academic advising. Students will be guided on how their qualifications align with professional opportunities and further education options.

Finally, UBT College applies transparent and well-defined policies for the recognition and transfer of credits or qualifications obtained at other institutions. These are based on national legislation and the ECTS framework, facilitating mobility and lifelong learning. These procedures will be available and applicable to future students of the MSc in Psychology.

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

As the MSc in Psychology is a newly established program, no students are currently enrolled in it. However, UBT College has institutional frameworks in place that support both outgoing and incoming mobility, including participation in Erasmus+ and other exchange schemes. The International Office is responsible for disseminating information on mobility opportunities, which is publicly available in English and Albanian and shared via institutional platforms and events.

The university provides administrative and academic support for students who wish to participate in exchange programs, including documentation guidance, academic advising, and procedures for credit recognition. UBT has adopted formal regulations for the recognition of ECTS credits obtained at partner institutions, ensuring that academic achievements abroad are recognized upon return.

Despite the structural readiness, during the site visit it became evident that the students we interviewed who were enrolled in other UBT programs had not participated in any international mobility activities. Moreover, they were only able to name one or two individuals across the institution who had engaged in such programs. This indicates that while the infrastructure for mobility exists, student participation remains limited.

The institution provides several programs in English and offers some services to support foreign students, such as assistance with visas and housing. However, no foreign students are currently enrolled in the MSc in Psychology program, and more active efforts are needed to attract and support international students at the program level.

UBT also provides access to foreign language support, though it is not specifically tailored for incoming students in this program. Feedback mechanisms are in place to collect input from mobility participants, but no data is currently available for this specific program due to its new status.

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

Although no students are currently enrolled in the MSc in Psychology program due to its recent establishment, UBT College has a comprehensive and functional support system for students across all programs, which will apply to this program as well. The number of professional, administrative, and technical staff involved in supporting students is sufficient, and staff are qualified to provide guidance, logistical help, and problem resolution. During the site visit, staff roles were clearly defined, and their responsibilities in supporting future students of the MSc program were confirmed.

Students at UBT are informed about available services through various channels, including orientation packages, student guides, and institutional regulations that are publicly accessible online. These include information on study regulations, student life, support services, and academic expectations. These materials will be adapted and distributed to students once the MSc in Psychology program becomes active.

UBT provides structured academic and career guidance services to its student population, including personal tutors, thesis supervisors, and professional advisers. The same system is planned for MSc in Psychology students, who will receive support for their academic progression as well as career planning. The Faculty of Psychology also plans to hold workshops and career development events tailored to the field.

The institution has clear and transparent procedures for student complaints and appeals, which are regulated in institutional documents and are made known to students through handbooks, online portals, and direct communication. These procedures are well established and consistently applied, ensuring fairness and accessibility.

Students are also encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities and initiate social, cultural, and volunteer projects. UBT provides access to recreational spaces and supports student-led initiatives through dedicated funds. Once the MSc program is active, students will be eligible to participate in these initiatives and access resources already available to the wider student body.

ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure full operationalization of student support mechanisms as soon as the first cohort is enrolled, including academic advising, counselling services, and guidance on academic progression.*
2. *Develop and distribute a comprehensive student orientation package specifically tailored to MSc in Psychology students, including information on regulations, mobility, support services, and program expectations.*
3. *Enhance student engagement with international mobility programs by increasing visibility, providing dedicated mobility advisors, and actively promoting opportunities at program level.*
4. *Track and analyse student progression and satisfaction data from the first cohort onward, to enable early identification of risks and evidence-based improvement of the student experience.*

5. *Strengthen institutional efforts to proactively support students from underrepresented or vulnerable groups, including mature students, students with disabilities, and international students, through personalized academic and administrative support.*
6. *Set up a clear internal communication structure (email, digital platform, or student portal) for MSc Psychology students to access information about appeals, complaints, extracurricular activities, and institutional support initiatives.*

7. RESEARCH

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

The Faculty of Psychology has developed its Strategy (2023-2028) as well as its Research Strategy for the period 2021-2026. These two strategies are consistent and provide the main directions for the development of the Faculty and programmes. It is positive that these strategies, especially the research strategy, focus on both academic staff and students. It is written in a clear and transparent way. However, it is still over-ambitious and unrealistic in some relevant aspects. For example, to talk about research development in six areas of psychology, subfields such as social psychology, educational psychology, clinical psychology, etc., is not realistic even for much larger, broader and more developed institutions that have psychology departments. In this case, there are neither the human resources nor the infrastructure to develop and advance research in all these areas simultaneously. Also, to say that one of the main objectives (and listed as the first one) is 'to produce cutting-edge research in psychological science' is at least an exaggeration. The institution/programme will not lose its value if its documents reflect reality and the actual capacity for progress in research.

The UBT College has sound finances, facilities and logistics and could support the new programme.

According to all institutional documents, research is an important aspect of institutional life and appropriate policies are in place.

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

Academic staff are encouraged and financially supported to participate actively in the research community, usually through conference attendance or the publication of scholarly articles. Their work and promotions are also validated through their research activities and achievements.

All staff involved in a programme either hold a doctoral degree or are in the process of obtaining one. In addition, the staff publish their work in various professional and internationally recognised journals, mainly on a regular basis. Although it could still be noted that not all staff are equally research productive, what could be a bigger concern is to ensure that all papers, regardless of the number of publications, are published in relevant international journals in the field, with proven quality. This is not always the case, or rather, too many papers are still published in journals of questionable quality and international recognition. Nevertheless, there are some very positive examples.

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

The whole institution, as well as the Faculty, is internationally oriented and has established a number of collaborations and exchanges with other institutions. It also helps that some of the staff received their doctorates on board and have managed to maintain their links with these foreign institutions. Their networks contribute significantly to their research, but also to their teaching activities.

Considering also that psychology is a regulated profession and that students also need to be exposed to professional work, teaching staff facilitate a number of activities with external stakeholders coming from different sectors outside higher education.

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

Teachers are encouraged to combine teaching and research and to involve students in small research tasks. According to the SER and the plans for a new programme, but also taking into account the content of the curriculum, it could be expected that students would be additionally supported and guided to carry out small-scale research and to participate in publishing and/or attending conferences.

However, according to the documents obtained and analysed, there is still not a sufficient match between the courses taught by individual teachers and the research papers published by them. Firstly, it is a fact that in some cases individual teachers teach a wide range of courses and it is not entirely realistic to expect the same person to be active in a wide range of research topics at the same time. This is always a problem when there are more courses than staff with expertise in all the given fields or subfields.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Consider developing mechanisms for better controlling and validating research published in internationally recognised journals*
- 2. Research plan and objectives need to fit to the institutional capacity*
- 3. Better coverage of research and course content needs to be achieved.*

8. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES**Standard 7.1. The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research. ESG (1.6)**

UBT has adequate facilities. It has several classrooms appropriate to the programme, with the necessary equipment and reasonable class sizes. It also has spaces for communication, reading and access to computers and various modern technologies.

It has a beautiful campus with different areas for different student activities. Some of the specialised classrooms have modern equipment that could facilitate the learning process of the students.

The infrastructure and other facilities meet the requirements for the implementation of programmes for students with special needs.

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

Students have on disposal a library and computers, although it should be noted that availability of literature has been issue for many years,. The administrative and management offices, as well as number of services are also available and adequate to support the programme.

The Faculty of Psychology also has a dedicated space for work and practice in clinical and counselling psychology. It is modestly laid out and equipped, and although improvements could be made, at least at this stage of the programme's development it could serve the purpose.

There is also additional space for testing and experimentation in assessment. The fact that this space exists is positive. What is less positive is the fact that it is very poorly equipped, with very disorganised and documented copies of psychological tests, with insufficient information about these tests, with undeveloped protocols, etc. During the site visit, the ET was told that there are some additional information and documents, but they are in some teaching staff offices/computers. This needs to be improved and maintained in a more professional manner to support professionalism.

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

UBT College is financially sound and has submitted a three-year financial plan. The plan

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provides budget information for all relevant institutional activities. The plan supports the feasibility of a new Masters programme and indicates its sustainability.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Laboratories need to be upgraded and adequately fit for the purpose*
- 2. Additional upgrade of literature and data basis would be welcome*

Final Recommendation of the ET:

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

The ET concludes that the programme ***MSc in Psychology*** offered for accreditation is evaluated as **substantially compliant**. In conclusion, in line with the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends **to accredit** the programme **for 3 years**, with maximum **30 students to enrol**.

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

Expert Team

Chair	Melita Kovacevic	21 April, 2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)
Member		

(Signature)	M. Ayşegül Kozak Çakır	21 April, 2025
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member	Gaga Gvenetadze	21 April, 2025
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(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)
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