



University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini”

Bachelor's in Business and Management, BA; R,

with specializations:

- 1. Bank, Finance and Accounting;**
- 2. Management and Entrepreneurship**

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

17.03.2025, Pristina

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Statute of UIBM (HEI);*
- *Regulation of bachelor studies;*
- *Regulation for Quality Assurance and Evaluation;*
- *Quality Assurance Guideline;*
- *Package of Instruments for Quality Measurement;*
- *Performance evaluation manual;*
- *Syllabi;*
- *SER*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA Accreditation Manual*
- *Testimonials of faculty, staff, students and stakeholders*
- *ESG standards, guidelines, and best practices*

Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini”	
Programmes:	Business and Management, BA; R, with specializations: 3. Bank, Finance and Accounting; 4. Management and Entrepreneurship
Site visit on:	03 March 2025
Expert Team:	Goran Oblakovic expert Rainer Harms expert Asnate Kazoka student
Coordinators of the KAA:	Milot Hasangjekaj Head of Post Accreditation Division Fjolle Ajeti, Senior Officer at KAA

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Qazim Tmava - Dean Esat Durguti – Vice-dean for research and international cooperation Arif Krasniqi – Head of program
09:50 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Filloreta Kunoviku Demiri – Vice-dean for teaching and quality development

		Natyra Misini – Quality assurance office Ermira Sopa - Secretary Krenare Basholli – Administrative staff Alban Fazliu - Administrative staff
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with the program holders of the study programme	Prof.assoc.dr. Qazim Tmava Prof.dr. Esat Durguti Prof.dr. Bashkim Bellaqa Prof.assoc.dr. Filloreta Kunoviku Demiri
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch break	
12:40 – 13:20	Visiting facilities	Filloreta Kunoviku Demiri Esat Durguti
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff	Prof.dr. Bashkim Bellaqa – Full time Prof.assoc.dr. Ajtene Avdullahi – Full time Prof.assoc.dr. Edita Bekteshi – Full time Prof.dr. Mehush Aliu – Full time Prof.assoc.dr. Arbnor Ajeti – Full time Prof.assoc.dr. Shefket Jakupi – Part time Milaim Mehmeti, PhDc – Full time Arif Krasniqi, PhDc – Full time Besë Sadikaj, PhDc – Full time Besart Hajrizi, PhDc – Full time Erëza Rushiti, PhDc – Part time
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with students	Njomza Gashi Elmedina Kurti Dardan Ahmeti Endrit Haxha Fatbardha Bellopoja Aulona Carani Bleard Kadrija Eron Salihu Qerime Shabani Bleart Januzi Valerija Qerkinaj
14:40 – 15:20	Meeting with graduates	Ariona Rushiti Florina Thaci Plotmira Haziraj Sevdie Zeqiri Ardita Zuka Ahmet Peci Ermir Dajaku Nderim Osmani Albulena Vallqi

		Orion Nimani
15:20 – 16:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Elvis Feka Vesa Broja Valbona Sadiku Behxhet Nimani Luan Mehmeti Blerim Breznica Berat Peci Jeton Imeri
16:00 – 16:10	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:10 – 16:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

The Business and Management Bachelor program is aligned with the mission of "Isa Boletini" University, which focuses on “quality teaching for preparing staff in unique areas for Kosovo, the region and beyond, dedicated to conducting research, professional projects and professional counselling in the service of sustainable development and increasing well-being and social advancement” (source: SER).

The university serves students from Kosovo and Albania, strategically addressing regional workforce needs in the business administration sector. The program is designed to equip students with skills that meet labor market demands in both Kosovo and international job markets.

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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 Business and Management Bachelor program is aligned with the mission of "Isa Boletini" University, which focuses on “quality teaching for preparing staff in unique areas for Kosovo, the region and beyond, dedicated to conducting research, professional projects and professional counselling in the service of sustainable development and increasing well-being and social advancement” (source: SER). Program details, including curriculum structure, learning outcomes, and objectives, are publicly accessible through the university’s website to ensure transparency and accountability. However, defining clear, quantitative minimum and goal KPIs

in strategic documents will enhance strategic impact assessment and facilitate data-driven decision-making for continuous improvement.

The university serves students from Kosovo and Albania, strategically addressing regional workforce needs in the business administration sector. The program is designed to equip students with skills that meet labor market demands in both Kosovo and international job markets. The learning outcomes are clearly defined and made publicly available to students, employers, and stakeholders via the university website.

A need analysis of the student program is implicit. The SER mentions involvement of employers in an industry council, and demand of the program by potential students. More material to back up a systematic need analysis would have strengthened the arguments of the Programme. At the same time, the employers and alumni interviews held at the accreditation support the claim for the demand of the study. The number of students admitted to and planned for the Business and Management Bachelor is argued to be based on analyses such as market analyses and reports “with high school students” (SER, p. 26). Yet, the SER and the additional material does not fully highlight how the justifications for the number of students emerge. We suggest that the program uses more transparent and better documented assessment of future student numbers.

The university provides adequate facilities. Administrative, education and research staff can support the number of students. For example, the student/teacher ratio is good, and staff indicates there is room to accommodate students. The educational infrastructure is at a sufficient level. We suggest that the program considers investing in entrepreneurship- and design- specific workplaces (e.g. fablabs, design labs etc.)

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 university enforces a Code of Ethics, an Ethics Committee, and anti-plagiarism software to prevent academic misconduct. Students and faculty are required to adhere to these policies, ensuring fairness and integrity in academic work. The Plagiarism check software is used to detect plagiarism, which a similarity threshold of 15% . All these measures are clearly outlined and publicly available in university policies, course syllabi, and student handbooks. We suggest to include an AI policy.

Additionally, the university has an Ombudsperson who is responsible for safeguarding, monitoring, and advancing the basic liberties and rights of students, faculty, and administrative personnel against the acts or inactions of university authorities. The SER states that neither the Ombudsperson nor the faculty management have received any complaints from the Faculty of Economics.

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)

Digital platforms are used for both students and staff. For example, the Student Management System (SMU) is a platform that provides all the services that students require. The Learning Management System is used to manage learning operations such as course content, assignments, student performance data, and feedback. Information to be used for quality management is collected systematically, and the data is used on a structured way to improve education and operations (see EER sections on quality management). At the university leadership level, this relevant information is reflected in the report on “Key Performance Indicators”.

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)

Students and teachers agree that administrative staff is accessible, knowledgeable, and exhibit a pronounced service orientation. Administrative staff at the university have access to general professional development opportunities. The university support was also confirmed in the meetings by administrative staff. We suggest the SER on standard 1.4 should be more specially tuned towards the standard itself; here, information came via additional documents and interviews.

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)

The SER (Table 11) lists 32 recommendations from a past re-accreditation. The table lists the Faculties reactions, and sources for evidence. The SER further details the procedure by which the Faculty addresses the results of accreditation. The committee recognises the effort that went into realizing improvements based on the colleagues’ recommendations. We suggest to explain more clear-cut if reactions to accreditation are dealt with in the regular Quality management cycle, or whether a particular task force is used.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Define clear, quantitative minimum and goal KPIs for Faculty’s Strategic plan (e.g. enrolment increase/number, retention rate, graduate employability, number of new industry partnerships, increase/number of scientific publications, research funds through projects and collaborations, percentage of students and staff participating in international mobility, etc.): We noted that the current report on :Key performance indicators is a description of the past rather than setting SMART goals for the future.*

2. *A more structured, evidence-based approach is needed, including quantified evaluations of freshmen interest, labor market needs, and infrastructure capacity: We noted that the current SER remains a bit vague on the sources used, and the way that evidence informs the nature of the Program.*
3. *To improve students' familiarity with anonymous reporting channels and disciplinary procedures, the institution should implement awareness campaigns: The fact that currently, an Ombudsperson did not handle cases from the faculty may be a reflection of missing awareness.*
4. *Provide a structured, evidence-based approach to claim that administrative support is appropriate and sufficient. We suggest you do this at the level of the program, not only at the level of the faculty. Data could be used, e.g. such as the number of admin staff hours per student, as compared to other faculties, etc.*

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

The design and operation of an internal quality assurance system at the HEI (the Faculty of Economics (FE) at the University of Mitrovica “Isa Boletini”) shows a strong focus on quality, which is an integral part of operational activities. The HEI (FE) systematically collects and analyses indirect data on its processes, resources and results. The cycle of the internal quality assurance process at HEI (UIBM) is with national regulations, ESG and other international standards (visualized in SER page 33).

The quality assurance policy covering all aspects related to the delivery of the study are publicly available and posted on the HEI website. As well as the internal quality assurance procedures for the study program which are defined by the internal regulations of HEI. These documents include (but are not limited to):

- Statute of UIBM (HEI);
- Regulation of bachelor studies;
- Regulation for Quality Assurance and Evaluation;
- Quality Assurance Guideline;
- Package of Instruments for Quality Measurement;
- Performance evaluation manual;
- Syllabi; etc.

The HEI's quality officers are part of the Quality Assurance Office (QAO), they are not part of the HEI academic staff and have sufficient time to devote to the quality assurance. The office cooperates closely with the Rector of HEI and the Deans of each program.

The HEI collects indirect measures frequently (each semester) uses it to manage, improve all its activities and further develop them. The implementation timeline is not fully clear, and the time needed to implement a change is relatively unknown. To fully implement a cycle for continuous improvement (PDCA), HEI needs to develop direct measures, i.e. to measure learning outcomes. However, the current procedures include annual evaluations of teaching effectiveness and infrastructure adequacy, contributing to ongoing quality improvements.

The HEI has an adequate monitoring plan for the implementation of the quality assurance procedures for the study program. Within the study program a Vice Dean for teaching and quality development is leading the process. The Vice Dean promotes the best quality practices and ensures their implementation at the academic unit level. Further, the Vice Dean oversees the organization of internal and external evaluation processes, including coordination of self-evaluation reports, organization of external evaluation visits by international experts, analysis and comparison of external evaluation reports by international experts, etc.

The quality system defines timeline and responsibilities for academic and administrative staff. Further all stakeholders, including students, faculty, and industry representatives, participate in the monitoring process through surveys, focus groups, and advisory board meetings.

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

The University's (UIBM) mission is to provide quality teaching for preparing staff in unique areas for Kosovo, the region and beyond, dedicated to conducting research, professional projects and professional counseling in the service of sustainable development and increasing well-being and social advancement. So, development of the study program Bachelor's in Business and Management aligns with the institution's/academic unit's mission and strategic goals. The program was developed, and is continuously reviewed, through multiple levels of internal and external evaluations. The HEI was established by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, and ratified by the Assembly of Kosovo. Based on the HEI's (UIBM) Statute (Article 17), the main governing bodies at the university level are the Governing Council and the Senate, while the Council of the Faculty of Economics is a decision-making body at the HEI level. The program was approved by all above mentioned bodies based on solid evidence-based approach.

The program's continuous improvement is managed through the Quality Assurance System, which is well defined, and includes input from external stakeholders. The labor market and industry surveys are conducted annually, and the Advisory Board at faculty level meets frequently. The entire approach ensures program's relevance to market needs and the regional specifics

The HEI tracks student pass rates, faculty performance, and graduate employment rates as key performance indicators (KPIs) for the program. These indicators defined in the Quality

Instruments Measurement Package are regularly reviewed (annual or semi-annual basis) through the Quality Assurance System and utilized for strategic decisions and program (curriculum) adjustments. At the same time, KPIs should be further defined, a minimum and goal KPI values should be set.

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

The study program undergoes regular monitoring to assess its relevance to the needs of society, the employer surveys, round tables, alumni meetings and meetings are conducted systematically. The size of the program makes possible quite close and personal relationship between internal and external stakeholders, what can only be viewed as an advantage. Through the Quality Assurance System improvements are based on the stakeholder feedback.

The Quality Assurance System also ensures the study program undergoes regular checks to establish whether the estimated workload (ECTS) allocation of students and the defined learning outcomes are achievable, realistic and adequate. This is performed through a variety of indirect measures (i.e. the student surveys, faculty self-assessments, survey of external stakeholders, etc.), but no direct measures are utilized. Students fully understand ECTS and workload assignment. This practice could be further developed through constructive alignment of learning objectives, teaching methods and assessment methods.

The HEI conducts various evaluations, and all internal and external stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, and employers are involved in the monitoring processes of the study program. Questionnaires, focus group discussions, and different evaluations are utilized to evaluate student performance and workload, academic success, resources, employment of graduates, etc. Faculty, employers, students, alumni and staff have confirmed in meetings that their feedback is collected and considered in program adjustments, ensuring continuous improvement. During the meetings all stakeholders confirmed the program is quite practical, preparing students for labor market. The testimonial of Raiffeisen bank is a good example of such evaluations.

The information is collected systematically and on a regular basis, external stakeholders are surveyed every second year, while alumni and graduates are surveyed annually. Internal stakeholders are surveyed every semester or annually. The data collected is analyzed and concrete actions are taken to ensure that the program is up to date.

The results of the monitoring processes and the resulting action plans are communicated to all stakeholders and published on the HEI website. The results of the mentioned surveys are bases for decision-making and curriculum updates.

Besides surveys and industry feedback, HEI utilizes accreditation reports to update course content and teaching methodologies. Improvements are integrated into the HEI's quality assessment process and strategic planning.

Reports on quality assurance activities and improvement measures are published on the university website.

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

The HEI has made all policies, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the study program publicly available on their website, ensuring transparency for all stakeholders (internal and external). Available is the information related to the study program, learning outcomes, curriculum, syllabuses, lessons' schedules, consultation hours, administrative issues, and exams, as well as any other information related to the events within the academic unit.

Information on admission criteria, recognition of qualifications, enrolment quotas, syllabuses, learning outcomes, credits, assessment methods, and final qualification are published. Information on pass rate, dropout rate, and graduate employment are publicly available and objectively presented. Admission criteria, qualification recognition, and enrollment quotas are clearly defined and published on the university's website and continuously updated. Data on graduate employment, pass rate and dropout reports are collected and publicly available as well. Date accuracy, reliability, and objectivity was confirmed in the meetings with external and external stakeholders. All data is continuously updated on the HEI's website and noticeboards on the campus.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Review and improvement of the continuous improvement cycle is recommended. HEI needs to consider how to develop direct measures, i.e. start measuring learning outcomes.*
- 2. It's recommended that all mandatory courses should have at least one learning outcome in the provided learning outcome matrix.*
- 3. Syllabi should be further developed- constructive alignment. Some active verbs used to describe the learning outcomes are not EQF level 6 or 7, some syllabi do not distinguish general goals of the course and learning objectives. HEI should consider constructively aligning learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment methods.*

3. ACADEMIC STAFF

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

The employment of academic staff at the University "Isa Boletin" in Mitrovica is regulated by national laws, internal university policies, and accreditation standards. Hiring follows a structured selection process, with job openings announced online and within the university premises.

IB follows a detailed academic staff recruitment process. Review committees assess applicants and recommend candidates.

The admission of academic staff at IB follows strict procedures on selection processes. Candidates must fully meet all specified criteria. The hiring process is transparent and structured, ensuring clarity for applicants, reviewers, and the Senate.

Applicants for academic positions at IB can access job descriptions, general conditions, and relevant regulations on the university's website.

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

IB academic staff meets all accreditation requirements and plays a key role in the institution's growth. Faculty members adhere to regulated teaching loads, with no professor covering more than two positions per year (see the submitted CVs). More than 50% of the program modules are taught by full-time faculty. Most course instructors are full-time staff with the necessary qualifications and research experience. The program maintains a strong academic foundation, supported by qualified PhD-holding faculty, ensuring high-quality education and compliance with academic standards.

Full-time professors have a weekly teaching load of 6 lecture hours and additional consultation hours. Faculty members cannot hold more than two teaching positions per academic year, in compliance with Kosovo's accreditation regulations (evidence: CVs provided).

The program under evaluation ensures that faculty members are not overburdened, maintaining their teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. Teaching hours and course assignments follow European institutional standards, allowing faculty adequate time for research, student mentorship, and professional development. This balance supports a high-quality educational environment that benefits both students and staff.

For the program under evaluation, more than 50% of the academic staff are full-time faculty, complying with Article 26, point 5.3.3 of Administrative Framework No. 15/2018 on Accreditation in Kosovo. Additionally, as per Regulation (AKA) No. 04/2024, the program meets accreditation standards by employing full-time staff with doctoral degrees for the student group and 60 ECTS in the study program.

The student-to-teacher ratio in the program under evaluation is about 1:17, which is considered sufficient for achieving learning outcomes, relatively low by Kosovo standards and relatively stable over time.

The academic staff involved in the implementation of the study program possess qualifications that align with their field of education.

The academic staff's workload complies with IB University regulations. The mentoring responsibilities are shared among regular academic staff, following IB statutes. For the planned student enrollment, there is sufficient staff to oversee and mentor the master's thesis process, with additional support from colleagues serving as co-mentors. The Faculty has adequate staff

to guide students in the new study program and mentor final theses, in line with the regulations for basic studies.

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

The academic staff at the study program are eligible for advancement and reappointment through a regulated process. The UBIM Statute sections 168-171 on Selection Procedures for academic staff appointments and promotions ensures equal treatment of candidates based on qualifications and experience. To advance, academic staff must publish a specific number of papers: at least one for assistant professor, three for associate professor, and five for full professor. Additionally, to be appointed as full professor, candidates must have mentored final theses, authored textbooks (at least one), a significant number of monographs (at least two monographs; the published doctorate is known as a monograph), participated in projects, and received positive student evaluations. These qualification criteria are in line with other Institutes of Higher Education in Kosovo.

The performance evaluation of academic staff is essential for advancement, as outlined by the Performance Evaluation Manual. Evaluation committees focus on teaching quality and quality of research as key criteria in advancement considerations.

We appreciate a forward-looking perspective on professional development, such as illustrated in the development plan (annex 3.2.1) on a person-by-person basis.

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 IB University Faculty of Economics prioritizes the professional and scientific development of its academic and administrative staff through structured training programs, research support, and international collaborations. The university's Personnel Development Plan focuses on faculty advancement, scientific research, and publication support. The Center for Professional Development and Education provides training in teaching methodologies, curriculum design, technology integration, and foreign language instruction. Research at IB is reinforced through financial support for projects, conferences, and publications, alongside investments in advanced infrastructure, including laboratories and digital resources. The university fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and encourages international mobility through grants such as Erasmus+, CEEPUS, COST, TEMPUS, and others.

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)

External collaborators engaged in the study programs at IB possess the necessary qualifications and experience to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Their practical expertise align closely with the program objectives. External teachers are onboarded in a systematic way. They

are systematically embedded in education. For example, they are also required to give consultation hours. Also, they are evaluated with the instruments of the framework of quality assurance.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Improve the strategy of staff mobility and follow up on yearly basis. Staff mobility seems to be concentrated among a small number of staff, while others could also benefit from it.*
- 2. Highlight the role of the external teachers and researchers more systematically, e.g. by providing information on the syllabi and program websites accessible to students.*

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 program under assessment offers two specializations – “Bank, Finance and Accounting” and “Management and Entrepreneurship”.

There are nine expected learning outcomes for the program listed in the SAR:

- Provides advanced knowledge in the field of economics, business, management, entrepreneurship, finance, banking, accounting, and knowledge on the data collection techniques and methods of analysis applied in the relevant fields;
- Applies advanced knowledge and skills in the field of business and management, understanding business and economic problems at the national level and beyond, and to apply adequate methods and techniques to solve these problems;
- Argues in-depth skills on international financial operations, financial markets, and accounting in relation to international transactions through problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking;
- Analyses at an advanced level the practical aspects of interpreting and applying the principles of management, financial accounting, managerial accounting, as well as assessing the impact of legislation, including fiscal regulations and doing business;
- Compiles financial analysis according to the needs of stakeholders, gives adequate recommendations, and communicates professionally with stakeholders through financial and non-financial reporting;
- Creates analysis on the importance of identifying, assessing, and predicting the consequences of risk taken within the activity of business entities;

- Responds to opportunities and threats arising from the external environment (political, economic, social, legal, technological) and poor governance taking into account organizational behaviour;
- Evaluates investment decisions by applying software programs to draw valid conclusions; and
- Recommends and applies appropriate tools, approaches, models by adapting to different business situations and recommending responses to changes in the business ecosystem.

In the SAR (p.59) the university states that “The learning outcomes of the program are based on the program profile and describe what a student knows, understands, and is capable of doing upon completing the program”.

Each learning outcome should be easy to measure and should refer to one or several courses in the curriculum. In the case of this program, some learning outcomes are rather lengthy. It could also be due to poor translation, but several of the learning outcomes are defined in an odd manner, for example, “provides advanced knowledge”.

Another important element to note is that the learning outcomes do not differentiate the two specializations, it almost seems as if the full set applies to both. In this case, the usual practice would be defining core learning outcomes that are common for the whole program and defining the specific learning outcomes for each of the two tracks.

The learning outcomes have been published on the university website with a link included in the SAR, however, as it is currently provided, the link leads only to the list of learning outcomes and does not connect it with any program or faculty. It would be important that the learning outcomes are published on the university/faculty website in a section where the program overall is described (title, admission requirements, employment opportunities, study places etc.).

The best practice in formulating the learning outcomes both on the program and course level would be separating the knowledge, skills and competences and using relevant verbs that ARE typical for each of these groups. The university has reflected on these three elements (p.61, SAR), however, from a very general perspective and not linking them with the particular program.

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

Generally, the description and the verbs used comply with the requirements for EQF level 6 education, however, with the observations and criticism explained above.

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

The program starts with the integration of fundamental and interdisciplinary courses to build a foundation for professional courses. In the SAR, the university states that “The program curriculum is specialized and contains advanced content in the field of business and management in general, with a particular focus on management, entrepreneurship, finance, banking, and accounting.”

The expert team was also presented with a mapping of the program learning outcomes against the courses included in the curriculum. As mentioned before, although the program announces two specializations, the program learning outcomes and the abovementioned mapping do not show any differences for the specializations. Also, currently, each of the learning outcomes is claimed to be covered by more than 20 courses increasing the complexity and questioning whether all these courses are necessary for achieving the outcomes. The best practice would be to perform a mapping of program outcomes against the course-level outcomes showing clearly which course-level outcomes contribute to achieving which general outcomes.

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)

The study programme does not lead to a degree in any regulated profession therefore this standard is assessed as non-applicable.

However, the expert team would like to note that, according to an agreement with the Institute for Accounting, Auditing, and Finance (IKAF) the students who complete their bachelor's studies in the specialization of banking, finance, and accounting will be granted the first level of certification as "Accounting Technician" upon registration with IKAF.

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)

The study program does not include a mandatory practice therefore this standard is assessed as non-applicable.

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

Everyone, whom the expert team met during the site visit was overall satisfied with the teaching and learning methods. The teaching staff emphasized that the teaching process is very student-centered and the students interviewed were all satisfied with it.

In the SAR, the university claims that there is a didactic concept that supports students in achieving the desired learning outcomes and this concept is implemented through teaching strategies or techniques used to help students become independent and strategic learners.

The student progression rates and dropout rates are noted in the SMU system and also in the quality reports. However, as noted in section 5 of this report, the drop-out rates presented in the annual quality reports and the additional information presented to the expert team are contradictory therefore the reliability of the monitoring system has to be questioned.

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)

All courses include formative assessment and the final exam, in courses where there is one, constitutes a relatively small share of the final mark.

The course descriptions follow a unified format and the assessment methods are recorded. The students met during the visit also confirmed that they are informed about the exact assessment approach at the beginning of the course.

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

In all course descriptions, there is a detailed table of the course workload including the hours calculated for different components. These hours are tied to all components including lectures, self-study and assessment activities.

While the formal system for ECTS allocation seems to be well in place and consistent, it is also important to measure the actual workload of the students and evaluate whether it is feasible.

ET recommendations:

- 1. Reconsider the learning outcomes to separate and clearly demonstrate the common learning outcomes of the general program and specific learning outcomes for each specialization.*
- 2. Rewrite the learning outcomes so that they all start with an active verb and are easy to measure.*
- 3. In addition, please consider structuring/sub-dividing the learning outcomes into knowledge, skills and competencies, even if this structure is not used for formal purposes.*
- 4. Perform a mapping of program learning outcomes against the course level learning outcomes to clearly identify the potential overlaps or gaps in course content.*

5. *Ensure that the information on program learning outcomes is available on the program page along with the program admission requirements, curriculum, admission requirements, number of study places etc.*
6. *Perform regular analysis on the actual student workload for each course to ensure that the total workload is manageable.*

NOTE: The expert team appreciates the ongoing efforts of specifying the PILO (see response of “comments to the evaluation report”). However, changing PILO requires a structured process that takes time. Thus, the PILO represented to us in the SER remains the PILO agreed on by the UIBM institutions at this time and remains the basis of our assessment.

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)

This is a bachelor program, therefore the admission requirements are standardized. They consist of completed secondary education (either with a graduation exam or without) and the successful completion of the admission exam organized by the university.

According to the SAR and confirmation obtained during the interview, only candidates who achieve at least 40% of the total points allocated for the admission exam are accepted. Candidates who do not achieve at least 40% of the total points allocated for the admission exam cannot be admitted, even if there are unfilled places according to the competition.

Based on the information presented by the university, the number of admitted students has been lower than the number of applicants in the last 5 years, therefore confirming that the admission process is functional and selection takes place, even if there are study places available.

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)

According to the information provided in the SAR and additional documentation, the student progression data are stored for all courses and the program overall in the SMU system. There are four stages of actions implemented – data collection and analysis, academic counseling and support, improvement actions and monitoring the effects of implemented measures. The dropout rates were provided for the last 5 years and they are also included in the annual quality assurance reports. Overall, the dropout rates are low, however it is important on which evidence this conclusion is made. For example, in the annual quality assurance report for the academic year 2021/2022 the number of students who dropped out from studies is announced as 3 only, however, in the additional information presented to the expert team the number is

23. It would be important to align the internal practice of collecting these data so that the data would be consistent. Inconsistency of the data could also serve as a reason for not applying relevant and important actions to address the dropout.

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

As learned during the site visit and from the SAR, the student transfer process is possible and regulated in the internal regulatory documents. The students aspiring to transfer their studies to the Faculty of Economics must meet the criteria specified in the transfer announcement and the relevant regulations.

The expert team was presented with two files for student transfer, confirming the successful transfer.

According to the university, there is no significant number of transfers, as the university is constrained by the requirement to adhere to the quota set in the student management system by the ministry and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

The university has made certain steps in fostering student mobility. In the additional information provided, the university confirmed 4 cases of international outgoing student mobility. There are several mobility agreements in place, through which the professors of partner institutions participate in teaching and scientific mobilities.

The lack of incoming mobility can be explained by the lack of courses taught in English. The introduction of program elements in English is a strong recommendation by the expert team not only regarding enabling the incoming mobility but also in supporting the “internationalization at home” through more English components and digital opportunities.

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

The study program delivery is supported by the Center for Career Development, Center for Professional Development and Education, Office for Psychological Support and Well-Being, Ombudsperson, Support Office for students with special needs.

A special induction session (program) is organised for students who are admitted to the faculty/university. There is a separate Student Council for each structural unit.

Until now there haven't been any complaints about any aspect of the student life submitted through the formal complaints system.

ET recommendations:

1. *Ensure that the data on student drop-out are collected consistently and that the actions taken reflect the actual situation with the dropout.*

2. *Explore and implement activities of “internationalization at home” through program components in English, online/digital activities in English to support the mobility opportunities for students who are not able to participate in a physical mobility.*

6. RESEARCH

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

The university strategic research plan posits three mission elements (1) “to enable and advance scientific research at the University by supporting and training curious researchers for advanced research; (2) To create a research leader by increasing the sense of scientific values to make research accessible, applying the knowledge and transformation of scientific ideas into action projects, inspired by research and needs; (3) interaction, increased engagement and community challenges of society, to create a more competitive and globalized environment, wider institutional cooperation and partnership, and economization of valuable resources”.

On (1) the supporting aspect. The SER highlights the financial contribution for publications. The evidence (footnote 196 SER) is an Albanian document only. However, teachers/researchers emphasise the utility of this type of support. Further, the SER lists basic IT infrastructure as a means to support research. The committee regards contributions such as those that support open access fees and the use of basic IT equipment as basic supporting measures. Human resource development for research is not mentioned in the SER. The University Strategic Research Plan lists a number of intended actions, but it is not clear if they were achieved, and that the participation of Faculty Staff in these central research activities was. Both financial and HR support towards staff are instrumental in enabling up-to-date and scientifically sound education. Thus, the Study program aligns with the University Strategic Research Goals on this aspect.

On (2) “scientific values” we see a clear link to the study program in the programs emphasis of ethically sound research. On “accessible research”, we see a clear link towards the study program: Accessible research is also refers to research journal databases that are accessible to students. Thus, the Study program aligns with the University Strategic Research Goals on this aspect.

On (3), Community challenges of society, please refer to our response to the SER standard 6.3.

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.

The academic staff of the study program is supported to achieve high-quality research work. We already noted the open access fees that support publications from a certain quality level on. We also noted that researchers have access to IT and databases necessary for their research. The university has several mechanisms to incentivize research productivity of staff. For example, the use annual prizes such as "Academic Prize," "Student of the Year," and "Best Paper of the Year" at the university level. Also, they use clear and documented research publication targets (see, e.g., appendix 6.2.1 "development plan for academic staff") that are used for determining staff promotions. Finally, staff teaching and administrative workload should allow them to engage in research.

We note that a minimum level of output quality is aimed at when emphasizing that research out to be in journals indexed on the Scopus and Web of Science platform. Yet, this is only a minimum requirement.

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 SER on standard 6.3 emphasized international collaboration in various forms. We see, e.g. doctoral mobility (Tempus), staff mobility (Erasmus+), international research projects, international conferences, and international co-authorships. On a structural level, these activities are supported by the office of the Vice Dean for Research and International Cooperation. Also on a structural level, several cooperation assignments, e.g. with Tirana Business University, were reported. At the same time, the SER is silent on individual support for international mobility. To summarize, on international academic cooperation, we see a structural approach with uses many instruments and is oriented to a variety of institutions and countries.

On the topic of national and business cooperation, the SER chapter on 6.3 mentions an Innovation Center. No further information is given. The SER also addresses an Industry Advisory board, but does not report on the role of the IAB in research. Individual staff members mentioned business cooperation in research, but these did not seem to be systematic.

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

The teaching staff of the study program have a track record of research in their respective fields. There is a caveat, however. The faculty is a Faculty of Economics, and that is reflected in the economics-centred research output. Yet, the program to be accredited is a business administration program. While some aspects of the disciplines are similar, they are distinct in their research objectives and preferred methodologies. For those staff members who teach in the Banking, Finance and Accounting track, their research is more closely related to the discipline they teach, however, still with an economics flavor in research. For those staff

members who teach in Management and Entrepreneurship, their research is only vaguely related to management and entrepreneurship fields (see, e.g. the mission statement of the Academy of Management as a reference

ET recommendations:

- 1. A research strategy should focus the strategic direction in terms of content. Business administration in general, but also the fields of the specializations are very broad research fields. A further specification of content domains (e.g. commercial banking, international entrepreneurship etc.) helps to create profile of the faculty, orientation to the students, and synergy among researchers*
- 2. Upgrade the quality criteria faculty publications from index inclusion to Q1 / Q2 outlets.*
- 3. Develop an internationalization strategy that helps to create structured, long-term impact in the faculty internationalization activities. The current SER suggests that internationalization happens is largely based on individual initiatives. In these activities, consider connecting with partners higher up in international university rankings.*
- 4. Install staff development activities on the university and the faculty; clearly report faculty member participation in these activities.*
- 5. Consider a faculty or even personal research budget*
- 6. Consider supporting conference visits.*
- 7. Consider a systematic assessment of the state of national business & society relationships in research, and the role of program faculty in them. See, e.g. literature on impact reporting.*

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

The HEI has adequate premises and equipment for performing educational activities and research, in the newly developed campus in Mitrovics. Faculty of Economics occupies building 2, that has a total of 13783m2. The premises include:

Type	Location	Quantity	Area (m ²)	Tables	Chair Capacity (Seats)
Classroom	Building 2	9	855.9	242	484
Amphitheater	Building 2	2	411.3	175	350
Library	Buildings 1 & 2	2	1062.3	305	475
Offices	Building 2	15	390.08	28	56
Administration	Building 2	1	57.9	2	2
Cafeteria	Building 1	1	393.1	180	212
Laboratories	Building 2	4	386.5	118	236
Total	Buildings 1 & 2	34	3557.08	1050	1815

The modern campus, with a space of 20m² per student in the indoor areas and 90m² in the outdoor spaces, includes the construction of a student canteen and dormitory for students and academic staff, the construction of four sports fields (football, basketball, volleyball, tennis) within the university campus.

The laboratories for all compulsory activities within the curriculum of the study program are well equipped, have all necessary software licensed and installed (i.e. SPSS, PSPP, R, anti-plagiarism programs, etc.). Wi-Fi is available 24 hours a day throughout the campus, Eduroam is fully functional.

The space, equipment, and entire are fully functional and capable to serve much larger number of students than currently enrolled in the program. The schedule for most classrooms has a lot of vacancies, and the facility is underutilized. There is available space, equipment and the number of teachers for a larger number of students enrolled in the study program.

Premises and equipment dedicated to the implementation of the study program are adjusted to students with special needs, i.e. there are several elevators, entrances and hallways are wide, there is a ramp at the main entrance.

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

The HEI and its students have access to two libraries. The new library in building 2 is equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms and its own book stock suitable for the courses included in the study program. The library and its services are available for extended hours, for at least two hours after the last class ends, so it operates beyond normal class time to ensure access when required by users. Since the campus has dormitories, it would be beneficial to extend those working hours even further, after the current closing time at 18.00hrs.

The new library has been constructed for larger number of students than currently enrolled in the program, so it ensures enough seats in the reading rooms. The number of seats in the group work rooms and the number of total seats in the library is sufficient with the current number of

students enrolled in the study program. There are over 30 computers in the library, including 5 in a group workroom.

During the campus and library visit, book stock and other electronic resources from Albanian and foreign specialty literature were inspected, to confirm sufficient literature to cover the specific courses within the curricula and the needs of all students.

The total number of titles in the two libraries are:

- 8239 books in the Library of Building 1, of which 5,375 are in Albanian, and 2,918 are in other languages (English, Serbian, Serbo-Croatian);
- 1436 books in the Library of Building 2, of which 63 are in Albanian, and 1,373 are in other languages (English, Serbian, Serbo-Croatian).

The total number of book and journal titles for the Faculty of Economics is 244 whereas:

The number of book titles is 234 from which:

- 154 are in Albanian language;
- 72 in the English language;
- 6 in the Serbian language;
- 1 in Polish language and;
- 1 in Slovenian language.

The number of journal titles is 10, from which:

- 8 are in Albanian language and 2 in English language.

Total number of copies of books and journals: 1032

Books:

- Albanian: 589
- English: 419
- Serbian, Slovenian, Polish: 8
- Number of journal copies: 16
- Albanian: 7
- English: 9

The books and other materials are from the subjects taught at the University. Most of the books are available for check-out and home study, according to a time frame in which students must return these books in accordance with the library usage regulations.

The HEI continuously updates the number of subscriptions to domestic and foreign publications and periodicals. The HEI has an agreement with the National Library of Kosovo,

which provides our students with access to approximately 700,000 book titles and improves opportunities to access online libraries.

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

The financial background of the HEI is stable, as it is a public university. The budget calculations for the program are sufficient, even though the total number of students is never reached due to mandatory quota system. Even with current numbers the students in the study program sustainability of the program for the next five years is demonstrated. With the large investments in new buildings and infrastructure, it would make sense to increase the number of enrolled students. The testimonials during the meetings with all stakeholders, as well as market research, support this conclusion as well.

The HEI has an opportunity to gain additional sources for funding the study program through national and international projects, as well as through cooperation with business partners and the local community. Further diversifying funding is recommended.

ET recommendations:

- 1. The university has an opportunity to gain additional sources of funding through projects including EU funding, research projects, collaborations with the business community, etc.*




8. THE OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FO THE EXPERT TEAM

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION	Fully Compliant
2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT	Substantially 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	Fully Compliant
Overall Compliance	Substantially Compliant

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

UNIVERSITY "ISA BOLETINI" IN MITROVICA FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, the Bachelor's in Business and Management study programme demonstrated an overall Substantial compliance. According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends to accredit the study programme Bachelor's in Business and Management, at the University "Isa Boletin" in Mitrovica, for the period of 3 years, with the student quota of 120 seats (60 seats for Bank, Finance and Accounting specialization and 60 seats for Management and Entrepreneurship specialization).

Expert Team

Member	Prof. Goran Oblakovic		17.03.2025
Member	Prof. Rainer Harms		17.03.2025
Member	Asnate Upmace		17.03.2025