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The College “Pjeter Budi”

INSTITUTIONAL

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

11 FEBRUARY 2024, PRISTINA



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit:

12th of February 2024

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Dr. Olgun Cicek (Chair)
- Prof. Dr. Alan Brickwood (Member)
- Giga Khositashvili (Student Expert)

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Ilirjana Ademaj Ahmeti
- Arianit Krasniqi, KAA Officer

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-Evaluation Reports*
- *Strategic Plan*
- *Policies and procedures*
- *All additional documents provided*
- *KAA Accreditation Manual (Updated 2022)*
- *Interviews during the site-visit*
- *College Web-page*
- *KAA Manual for External Review of HEIs (2021)*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA Accreditation manual (Updated 2022)*
- *KAA Manual for External Review of HEIs (2021)*



1.2. Site visit schedule

12th of February 2024

Time	Meeting	Participants/Comments
09:00 – 10:10	Meeting with the management of the institution (<i>no slide presentation is allowed, the meeting is intended as a free discussion</i>)	
10:10 – 11:10	Meeting with Quality assurance representatives and Administrative services	
11:15 – 12:15	Meeting with Deans of Faculties (Head of programmes in case of smaller colleges)	
12:15 – 13.15	Lunch break	
13:15 – 14:05	Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure	
14:05 – 14:50	Meeting with teaching staff	
14:55 – 15:40	Meeting with students	
15:45 – 16:30	Meeting with graduates	
16:35 – 17:20	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	
17:20 – 17:30	Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA	
17:30 – 17:40	Closing meeting with the management of the institution	

1.3. A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

Pjetër Budi College was established in 2005 by decision of the College Board of the Institute for Studies in a meeting of 15.05.2005 based on the Law on Higher Education (Law 2003/14 of data 17.07.2003 and Administrative Instruction No. 14 / 2013 dated 17.07.2003, on the licensing and registration of the private higher education providers (PHEP) in Kosovo.

It was followed on 2006 by the decision of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), decision no. 494 / 02-1, dated 10.04.2006. Based on the decision of MEST, decision no. 586 / 02-1, dated 09.05.2007., the College was licensed for a period of 5 years. On 07.07.2013 Pjeter Budi College received institutional accreditation, decision no. 510/13 for the three-year period, 01.10.2013-30.09.2016 from the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

Pjetër Budi College ”as a PHEP was accredited in July 2009, as a College for the Study of Applied Sciences - Organisational. On 19.07.2021 Pjeter Budi College received institutional



accreditation, decision no. 2084/21 for the three-year period, 01.10.2021-30.09.2024 from the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

Currently at BA and MA level the College offers the following study programs:

- Customs and Forwarding (BA)
- Master of Management (MA), with specialization: Tourism and Hospitality Management,

Pjetër Budi College was licensed by the decision of MEST in 2006, but the institutional and academic accreditation has been transferred to the competencies of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency from 2009 . Therefore, the table below includes only AKA decisions on institutional and program accreditation.

2. INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

The institutional evaluation consists of 11 sub headings through which the administration, organisation and management of the institution, as well as teaching and research are assessed.

2.1. Public mission and institutional objectives

As being a small institution and focusing on specific programs; Bachelor degree in Customs and Freight Forwarding and Master degree Management in Tourism and Hospitality with 337 students.

The mission of the College is defined as: “Adequately prepare human resources with specific scientific and professional profiles in compliance with local, regional and international labour market needs, who will contribute to sustainable economic and social development of Kosovo and wider” covering three main pillars of teaching, research and community service. As being a small college the research and community service contribution is relatively less than the teaching.

PJETER BUDI College also intends to provide an environment which encourages the intellectual and personal development of its faculty members, students, at the same time promoting academic integrity for students and teaching staff, academic quality’ procedural transparency and simplicity, openness as well as ensuring equality on gender, religion or nationality matters.



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The mission of the Institution is developed jointly with the academic staff of the Institution in compliance with local, regional and international labour market needs, who will contribute to sustainable economic and social development of Kosovo and wider.

Pjetër Budi College is strongly committed towards its strategic goal of becoming a prestigious institution in the higher education system in Kosovo and in the region too. At the same time, the Colleges constantly works to provide a suitable and convenient work environment, a collegial working atmosphere for study and personal growth that ensures and guarantees academic freedom for students and staff, which are balanced with the tough requirements and quality assurance criteria.

The College's vision is not focused only on providing a qualitative education, which is comparable and competitive to the similar institutions outside of Kosova, but also provides a special attention to the relevant research activities conducted in Kosova and the region in the targeted fields.

The working group of the "Pjetër Budi" College, during this academic year have updated/ revised the Strategic Plan for 2024-2028. During the process of analysis, five main areas for the development of activities of the College were identified: 1) study programs, 2) scientific research work 3) human resources, 4) local and international cooperation and 5) quality assurance.

The process ended with the identification and determination of the College's strategic objectives for the period 2024-2028: 1. Study programs contemporary and comparable with other institutions in the region and beyond which respond the labor market needs; 2. Scientific research work becomes integral part of daily activities at College Pjetër Budi with the aim of developing scientific and research capacities and the advancement of study programs; 3. Development and engagement of qualitative staff for the needs of College PjetërBudi; 4. Establishing and advancing local and international cooperation in order to achieve common interests; 5. Building a functional system for quality assurance.

However, as being a small college PDC needs to establish medium and long-term institutional objectives which are consistent with and support the mission. The institution also needs to strengthen its resources and develop strong management and coordination structure ensuring

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the participation of internal and external stakeholders in the medium and long term institutional realistic and achievable objectives.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Revise the management structure to ensure the participation of internal and external stakeholders*
2. *Provide necessary resources to achieve the mission in the medium and long term*

2.2. Strategic planning, governance and administration

Pjetër Budi College has a strategic plan for a period of five years introduced recently (2024-2028).

During the preparation of the strategic plan, PDC worked in close consultation with the academics at the institution, as well as external stakeholders and private sector representatives. The Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028 has been developed by a diverse working group also organizing some workshops with different groups.

During the period of Strategic Plan development, several documents were taken into account: previous self-evaluation reports, recommendations of the international experts team provided by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, rules and procedures of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, previous institutional Strategic plans, the European Standards and Guideline 2015 (ESG 2015).

Although PDC has a stable financial situation to smoothly operate during the new strategic plan period, the institution must also ensure its decision-making system and internal operating regulations in conformity with current legal provisions by restructuring the leadership approach for more participation of internal stakeholders on decision making processes with clear, transparent and effective. As a small-scale institution, rather than being centralized, more flat organizational structure and strong leadership commitment would help to achieve the mission in the long term.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant



ET recommendations:

1. Ensure decision making system and internal operating regulations in conformity with current legal provisions through clear, open, effective and participative mechanisms.
2. Establish an effective system for administration to ensure the functioning of organization, staffing levels and qualifications, and functions rigorously.

2.3. Financial planning and management

As a private institution, the College is entirely dependent for its income upon receipts from student fees enhanced by other external sources such as grants, donations and payments for contract teaching, research and consultancy. It receives no state funding and, unlike state-funded higher education institutions (HEIs), its students have to pay for their education. This gives the College some distinctive characteristics. These include a vocational orientation to its portfolio of programme provision where students have a high expectation of successful employment upon graduation; significant competition for student numbers with other state funded and private HEIs; and a need to be especially innovative and entrepreneurial to survive and prosper.

This scenario is fully appreciated, well presented and addressed in the College's Self Evaluation Report (SER) and in the way it has, and will continue, planning and managing its financial affairs. This is especially so following a difficult period that included discontinuation of some provision, due to loss of approvals, and the downturn during, and following, the global pandemic.

It is clear that the College management have had a realistic grip on managing a difficult situation and may have to continue to handle difficulties, hopefully less dramatic and severe, but not uncommon for a college of this size and shape. For that reason, the College leadership might consider giving some further attention, if it does not already do so, to some of the 'drivers' specific to student recruitment. These would include not just year-on-year total student numbers but simple comparative data such as applications vs enrolments, progression and especially attrition rates. Essentially a cohort analysis. There can, for example, be a very different picture from the recruitment of planned numbers from a small application compared to a large one and from (possibly related) high attrition rates in progression. The College clearly collects this information already but the EE was unable to ascertain from the documentation if it was being collated in a way that could usefully provide additional indications of emerging



trends in student recruitment thereby giving early warning of risks to financial stability. That information was not evident in the SER.

Given satisfactory reaccreditation of the College, and subsequent restitution of its portfolio of programmes, the External Experts (EE) were satisfied that there should be sufficient financial resources in both the short and medium term to deliver its Mission satisfactorily. The EE were equally satisfied with financial policies appropriately supportive of an HEI and with arrangements in place for effective oversight, professional management and monitoring both in terms of income and expenditure. These to include major initiatives in securing funding for collaborative projects and events; funding to stimulate teaching staff research and development; international cooperation; and other initiatives that include scholarships for students on the basis of merit, financial hardship and special needs.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Whilst there is little doubt that financial affairs are well led and managed, the EE would recommend attention be given to some of the statistical ‘drivers’, specific to a college of this size and character, on patterns of student numbers that could give advance information affecting financial stability.

2.4. Academic integrity, responsibility and public accountability

The College has an Ethics Committee, reporting to an Ethics Council, and a comprehensive set of formal regulatory legal documents to include a Code of Ethics for staff and separately for students, protocols for examinations and assessment and the award of scholarships. It claims to have had these in place since its establishment in 2005 and that these are subjected to regular review and updating. Alongside these there are a full range of practical regulations, protocols and ‘standing’ procedures that ensure the protection of academic freedom and personal rights more generally.

In particular the College has in place standards governing the general execution of responsibilities and behaviour of both its staff, students, others outside the College with whom it interacts and a comprehensive obligation for the College to be transparent in all that it does. The latter to include the promulgation of clear, accurate, relevant and objective information on its mission, plans, purpose, actual performance and output against those objectives. It also

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includes data on student enrolments, staff research output, student pass rates, opportunities for students, graduate employment, scholarship opportunities, tuition and any other fees – all whilst including the protection of personal data. For students, much of this is readily contained and communicated via a Student Handbook. All papers comprising reports, findings, proceedings and decisions taken by the College and by other bodies concerning the College are made freely available.

Plagiarism clearly continues to pose difficulties and threats to academic veracity, similar to that experienced by most other HEIs. This is constantly under review. In the meantime, the College has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the international research sharing internet platform ‘Academia.edu’ and uses this to check all undergraduate and postgraduate theses in addition to research papers.

Whilst the EE were unable to sample or find evidence of how much of these arrangements worked in practice, from any past incidents, they were satisfied that, via its regulatory framework, standing procedures and communications, the College makes clear and transparent the standards it requires, what it offers, what it expects of its people, what they can expect of it and what happens ‘when things go wrong’.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations: NA

2.5. Quality management

PDC has a formal quality assurance policy which describes the institutional quality assurance system, its processes, mechanisms, instruments, reporting, data collection, timeframes, quality cycle, responsibilities of all individuals and units involved in these processes. The institution has adopted “QA Action Plan 2024-2028”. The adopted policy on quality assurance and management, covers all activities and stakeholders within the institution and also covers outsourced activities. It clearly describes the processes that relates to the quality assurance, instruments and human resources involved.



PDC also formed a “Working Group of the Strategic Plan” conducted in-depth analysis of the identified areas, where quality assurance is identified as one of the five strategic objectives, building a functional system for quality assurance. This action plan is considered as a complementary document to the Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028, in the area of quality assurance.

At the managerial level, there is Vice-rector appointed for Teaching, Research and Academic Development, in the administrative level: Office for Quality Assurance, ECTS, Research and Academic Development and Committee for Quality Assurance. The Quality Assurance Committee is composed of all categories of staff: Vice-rector for Teaching, Research and Academic Development, Officer from the Office for Academic Development, ECTS and Quality Assurance, 2 study programs coordinators and student representative. The Commission meets at least twice during the academic year to gain an overview with regard to quality assurance and management and provide necessary recommendation for improvement

The institution has an office called “Office for Academic Development, ECTS, Quality Assurance and R&D”. The aim of the office is to continuously follow the work and activities and reflect upon them. The College have established a Commission for Quality Assurance composed of members from managerial level, academic, administrative and students representation. Although the office has an overwhelming name and set of functions, its intention is to implement the action plan effectively and periodically to establish a quality culture. The other units need to be more actively engaged and collectively functional in achieving the set objectives at College level.

Adequate human, financial and material resources are provided for the leadership and management of quality assurance processes. The Action Plan includes: Objectives, activities, implementing period, responsible persons/ offices, measurements and time of implementation and it function on daily basis. However, at the same time the number of people actively involved in QA processes is very limited. Therefore, the QA functions need to be allocated to and contributed by other unites as well.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *The Office of QA should be renamed with more emphasis on the QA Action plan and its implementation*



- 2. QA office practices need to be spread to include input from other units, to cover the whole range of institutional activities. This to also include contributions from other stakeholders on a periodic basis*

2.6. Learning and teaching

The College has in place general policies and procedures applicable to all of its existing and any new academic programmes, modified in the light of the previous EE report on the 2020 reaccreditation event. These exist to ensure compliance with the mission and strategic objectives of the College, with National and European frameworks for higher education standards equality and for compatibility internationally. An example of the latter being the ECTS system of programme credits to facilitate opportunities for movement and cooperation across national borders

On a more specific level these include regulations for the determination of bachelor and masters' programmes – enrolment; objectives; content, together with how that content is taught and learnt; assessments to ensure attainment of objectives and how those assessments are used for monitoring, feedback and award. These apply to existing provision and new proposals. The most recent review of the compliance of study programmes with these standards was conducted in 2023 with an emphasis then upon labour market needs – both locally and nationally.

Having been satisfied with organisational and administrative compliance the EE were keen to establish how the College maintained and enhanced the vitality of its programmes. This they believed to be especially important for a relatively small HEI institution specialising in vocational business-related studies that included, within its portfolio, an MA in tourism and hospitality management and a BA in customs and freight forwarding. Both being unique and serving highly volatile, globally-driven, business environments.

Discussions exploring this issue were a delight and confirmed not just the vitality of the programmes but a commendable level of enthusiasm, awareness and commitment from a wide range of groups and especially from employers and other external stakeholders with whom the EE met during the visit. This enthusiasm and commitment were equally strongly voiced from representatives of the College's senior management, deans, heads of academic departments, teaching staff, students and alumni. Certainly, the contributions from this wide range of interested parties, when added to a claimed 90% employment record for graduates, completely



dispelled the negativity contained within several SWOT analyses in the SER that had been compiled two years or ago following the previous institutional re-accreditation.

Those contributions also drew attention to early prospects of restoring a previous portfolio of business-related programmes and, within three to five years, the probability of additional business-orientated new programmes in cybersecurity, logistics, international trade, communications and contract law and enhancements to the teaching of English. All deemed high priority for the Kosovo workforce. The College has initiated a review of its existing portfolio of programmes during 2023.

Certainly, it is easy to identify additional topics for the curriculum of practice-based multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programmes such as these. What is more difficult is deciding what needs to be reduced or removed to make space and avoid overloading the curriculum and student. One solution used to be lengthening the duration of programmes. Now programme designers have to be more innovative and deploy solutions such as ‘prioritising’ subject components by ‘levels of understanding’. This can result in subject ‘X’ requiring, for example, ‘mastery’ or competence; whilst another subject ‘Y’ needing only that students gain an ‘awareness’ or ‘familiarity’.

Employers spoke positively about there being a highly appropriate balance between theory and practice and were proud to speak of their commitment to the College and practical support that included the provision of scholarships, supervised work experience, internships and employment.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations: NA

2.7. Research

Pjeter Budi College is a small HEI with a relatively limited capacity to do research alone both in terms of scope, human resources and infrastructure. It nevertheless recognises, fully and properly, the need for it to contribute to the acquisition of knowledge to ensure the quality of its teachers, the material they teach and more generally within a national environment with a low level of research activity. The SER refers to several reports that confirm less than 0.1% of



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Kosovo GDP is invested in research and development against a 2020 European Union target for its members of 3%.

The EE were therefore impressed with the unequivocal commitment and measures being taken to accelerate research activity in the College that had made ‘research and scientific work a priority’ to increase the number of publications in peer review journals, and was allocating funds accordingly. Measures to include the training of staff to acquire skills and experience in the preparation of research proposals, especially those to include collaboration with other HEIs in Kosovo and abroad. An intended increase in exposure to successful practice from best practice in literature and involvement in events are also to be applauded. Especially where these are self-financing and can extend and complement the scope of the College’s core competences in ‘business and business-related subjects.

The College is required under KAA regulations to ensure ‘each academic staff member produces a least an average of one scientific/applied research publication or artistic outcome/product per year...’ under the name of HEI where they are employed. This is both sound and non-negotiable but also needs to be interpreted with a degree of flexibility that takes into account that much of the College’s strengths lie in its distinctiveness as a ‘Business School’ committed to teaching mostly young people who will graduate and enter a world of ‘practice’. That certainly does not preclude targets focused upon numbers of ‘scientific publications’ but neither should it ignore the enormous, important and valuable contribution from other forms of staff scholarly and professional activity in both mainstream ‘business’ and complementary subject areas.

Behavioural and legal dimensions and a ‘rush’ of new ‘just in time’ orientated business models dependent upon interconnectivity of communications could be examples. Applied research, contract research, collaborative ventures, cooperation with external ventures that draw upon complementary, not just mutual advantageous benefits, seemed to the EE to be an obvious, attractive and potentially highly advantageous areas for the College to equally accelerate. This is especially so taking into account the relatively high current ratio of part-time to full-time staff (7:11) and very clear practical and enthusiastic support on offer from its alumni, employers and stakeholders the EE were delighted to meet. Clearly, issues of intellectual property rights (IPR) would need to be addressed.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

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ET recommendations:

1. The College exploits its strengths and potential in determining what constitutes ‘research and scientific work’ flexibly and appropriate to its mission.

2.8. Staff, employment processes and professional development

Based on the submitted documents as well as the interviews with academic and administration staff, all seem to be aware of the policies and procedures in place are engaged, motivated as well as satisfied with the existing conditions.

It is clear that PDC has a comprehensive set of policies and regulations in place and included in an employment handbook accessible to all teaching and administrative staff. It includes rights and responsibilities, recruitment processes, supervision, performance evaluation, promotion, support processes, and professional development. The regulation for staff employment also describes the steps and criteria for employment for academic and administrative staff separately. The recruitment processes are clearly defined and implemented. It also ensures equitable treatment of all applicants. The Statute of the College also determines the criteria for academic staff as well as academic advancement (see Statute).

Orientation for newly appointed staff is carried out properly in ensuring familiarity with the institution and its services, programs and student development strategies, and institutional priorities for development. Some of the academic staff have been given the opportunity and funding to excel their academic career as well as personal development.

All staff employed in the institution (academic, scientific, administrative) hold the relevant qualifications so that they are able to effectively manage educational, scientific, research, creative activities and administrative processes.

Teaching loads for faculty members (FT & PT) are equitable across the institution, taking into account the nature of teaching requirements in different fields of study. The number of students is currently relatively small, therefore the academic staff and student ratio is well balanced. Teaching hours (Professors, 6 hour per week; Lecturers, 6 hours per week; Assistants 8 hours per week) for the academic staff is regulated with the Regulation on Salaries and Working



hours for Academic Staff (Annex 14). Additionally, academic staff is obliged to hold contact hours with students as specified in the syllabus for each course.

Criteria and processes for performance evaluation are clearly specified and made known in advance to all staff and determined in the contract for duties and responsibilities of each employee. Additionally, staff are informed from the beginning of their employment for the mechanisms of the performance evaluation through the statute of the college. Academic staff evaluation is done at least through self-evaluation, students, peer and superiors evaluations, and occur on a formal basis at least once each year. The results of the evaluation are made publicly available. There is no peer evaluation process in practice at the moment.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *May introduce peer evaluation process for teaching staff*

2.9. Student administration and support services

According to the submitted documents the admission requirements differ according to the study level. Currently college offers programs on two levels and the procedures are planned accordingly. For Bachelor studies applicants need to have successful completion of high school with at least 12 years studies. If the applicant was studying outside the country, they need to present the document prepared by the appropriate entity, stating that their high school diploma corresponds with the local requirements. As for the Master studies, applicants are required to have a diploma from the Bachelor level and successfully pass the internal exam organized by the college, if the study field from the previous level is different than the Masters one. During the site visit the expert team met with students and double checked the procedures they went through when started studies. Students enrolled in the MA program confirmed that they had an exam to pass through, if the field of their previous study level was different.

The information about the college is accessible through its bilingual web-page. The study programs with the list of the courses, together with the syllabuses are available for general public. The student's guideline describes different procedures related to teaching and learning, however the information about the fees is not included, neither is anything about the principles of the academic integrity. The study program standards together with the Code of Ethics and other regulations are accessible in a separate space in the college's web-page. **It is**



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recommended to elaborate more on the student's handbook and include information about the tuition fees and academic misconduct.

As it was noted during the interviews, the college is organizing orientation week in each academic year. This usually takes place at the beginning of Autumn semester. This event is seen as the first meeting with students where all administrative aspects are discussed and described. In addition to this, by the end of academic year the graduation ceremony takes place. According to the regulation regarding the scholarships, three different types are described. There is a merit scholarship for BA students, and scholarships for people with disabilities or those from the lower income families. The regulation gives further details how students can apply for the scholarships and what procedures they need to go through. The expert team double checked, during the interviews with the students, if they are familiar with the above-mentioned procedures and learnt they had been informed. However none of them had ever got this scholarship.

During the interviews the administrative staff confirmed that the institution is monitoring students' academic achievements. In addition to this, the Quality Assurance office is collecting the data through the surveys in each semester, asking students to evaluate the processes as well as their experience. Moreover, there is a Student Support and Career Development Center, which also monitors students' needs. All this information is accumulated under the vice-rector for teaching and learning and some interventions are being planned accordingly. The expert team had questions regarding the number of the students in the current study programs, as the recent five years showed some decrease. The college confirmed that they are familiar with the tendency, explaining it with the fact that quite big number of the young generation has left country.

The Regulation for Organizing the Examination and Students Evaluation describes the appeals procedures in detail. The rules are freely available on the college's web-page. According to this document, students have a right not to agree on the grade and obtain details on how they can submit, to the course teacher or to the faculty administration, a written appeals document. First the instructor of the course will discuss the grade with student, but if this after this explanation student still has a concern, he will be scheduled to retake the exam. The expert team asked students if they ever had a case of appeals in their experience, but none could remember an instance. However, one of the professors mentioned a case, when he held additional consultations with students to explain the outcome of the assessment.



The college declared it had access to text matching software (Akademia), that is described as an Albanian tool, or a software that works in case of texts written in Albanian. The college web-page says the same, however the link did not respond when tested. The Code of Ethics, together with the regulation of Disciplinary Responsibility, describe the procedures how plagiarism is detected and what the sanctions might be. However, the students as well as teachers, could not remember any single case of detecting plagiarism in recent years. In addition to this, the EE were informed that the text matching software is only used in the case of BA and MA theses and not for final papers or for assignments within the courses. Although it depends on the course content and assessment activities, the expert team recommends that the College promote the usage of the plagiarism detection tool in teaching and learning to enhance the quality of education. Moreover, it is recommended to design activities to further promote the principles of Academic Integrity in the college to increase the awareness amongst students and staff.

The office of Students Services and Career Development is a key structural unit responsible for advocacy of student's interests. They are working closely with students to identify their needs, not only related to teaching and learning, and report back to the college authorities and vice-rectors, to discuss the cases and plan some steps accordingly. In addition to this, the Quality Assurance Office organizes the data collection of satisfaction surveys that students are asked to complete and return. The data is collected in each semester giving students the chance to report about any concern they have. During the interviews with students, they confirmed to have had such experience of filling satisfaction surveys and having consultation in the students support department.

The expert team found out that the teaching staff have mandatory hours for consultations in each week and some students confirmed that they have used such service. The academic staff are also actively involved in promoting different internships and employment activities, as students mentioned from time to time their professors directly provide those possibilities. In addition to this, students also mentioned the Career Development Center of the college, which officially distributes information to students and alumni, not only about employment, but also regarding extra-curricular activities that are being arranged at the college. According to the strategic plan, some training is already planned to help students develop skills related to effective self-presentation and drafting the CV.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:



1. It is recommended to elaborate more on tuition fees and prevention of academic misconduct in student's handbook;
2. It is recommended the collage promote the usage of the similarity detection tool in teaching and learning to enhance the quality of education;
3. it is recommended to design activities to further promote the principles of Academic Integrity in the college to increase the awareness among students and staff.

2.10. Learning resources and facilities

According to the submitted documentations the college presented the budget for the next five years. The major part of the incomes is expected to be from the student's tuition fees, that are in-line with the number of the students as well. The action plan is based on these calculations and all the activities are based on the budget. The expert team tried to identify what was the guarantee for the college to get the exact number of the students as planned in advance. As it was explained during the interviews the Bachelor's program is quite unique and not many institutions are offering studies in this field. However, the number of the enrolled students in Master's program do not indicate that all the vacant places are used. **The expert team recommends the college develop a financial risk management strategy to guarantee adequate financial resources are provided for service and system developments.**

The library is accessible five days a week, even after the regular working hours. The library resources cover both printed and e-resources. The majority of the books are in Albanian, while there are some textbooks into English. As for the academic journals the majority are on English. There is an e-repository for the textbooks and library also provides access to academic database (EBSCO). During the interviews with students the expert team double checked if they used the library services. As it turned out, students from the bachelor's level mostly used library for reading or getting the textbooks, while those from the Master's program rarely visit the library, they explain it with the fact that the reading resources are on e-format. The expert team asked questions regarding the usage of academic databases, students did not had information that those resources were accessible and could not remember any training regarding the usage of academic databases. They confirmed that the information about the library was provided during the orientation week. **The expert team recommends the library to design and actively promote the training modules in using Academic Databases, especially for MA students.**

The library is using Library Integration System that makes it possible to catalog, record the loans and borrow the library resources. Moreover, the library is having inter-library loan

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service with the National Library of Kosovo, meaning that in case specific titles are not available at college they are bringing them from the National Library. As it is described in the self-evaluation report the college is planning to even increase the number of the partners and form this kind of collaboration with partners outside of the country as well.

The building of the college has a capacity to cover spaces for academic staff and for classes to be conducted. In addition to these spaces for the administrative offices like – Quality Assurance, Information Technology and Finance departments are also arranged in the same building. There is a space for teachers to conduct consultations as well as additional meetings with students if needed. According to the submitted documents, students are evaluating the infrastructure within the satisfaction surveys. The collected data is analyzed by the Quality Assurance Office and is forwarded to the vice-rector for Budget, Infrastructure, Cooperation and Students Issues. The facility meets the requirements of Kosovo legislation on health and safety. However, the library reading hall is quite small in a space and would be nice to have capacity of hosting more readers. During the interviews they openly indicated that it would be nice to have cafeteria in the building. **The expert team recommends to dedicate some space to this facility, as it is helpful for both students and teachers.**

During the interviews the expert team tried to get information whether the college was ready to meet the requirements for people with special needs, meaning both the infrastructure and other teaching/learning facilities. As it turned out so far, the infrastructure is not sufficient with people in special needs. The administrative staff members declared that they can provide support with adequate teaching resources if they get students with special needs, but they have not such practice till now. The expert team believes despite of the fact that there are not such students currently it is crucially important to have all the facilities in line with the standards required for people with special needs. Therefore, **it is recommended that college considers all requirements to transform the infrastructure and make it accessible for people with special needs.**

The classrooms are equipped with IT infrastructure, computers and projectors. This technique is accessible for teachers and students. All the inventory that is used by different stakeholders of the college are being monitored and documented. The IT department is responsible for the technical issues that arises in everyday activities and provide support to both faculty members and students. In addition to this, IT department is conducting training how to use different software or hardware. During the interviews it was mentioned by the staff members that those trainings were extremely helpful during the COVID19 Pandemic when the college was shifted to Emergency Distance Teaching.



The expert team tried to identify if the budget of the college is in-line with the necessity of updating the infrastructure like computers, information and security systems, the library recourses and other needs. As the submitted documents illustrate there is some amount dedicated to this in the budget, however this is a planned budget and there is no guarantee that the expected number of the students will choose these study programs. Although students and academic staff confirmed to be satisfied with the facilities, this threat is identified by the college staff in the submitted self-evaluation report as well, namely saying that the computer infrastructure, as well as some equipment at the college needs to be renewed/updated but with the given financial support it is not possible. The expert team positively assess the fact the organization itself identifies the weaknesses, but in order to guarantee the further development of the processes **it is recommended that the college devotes adequate financial resources to infrastructural projects, like renewing the existing hardware, as well as other facilities.**

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. It is recommended the college develop a financial risk management strategy to guarantee adequate financial resources are provided for service and system developments.*
- 2. It is recommended the library to design and actively promote the training modules in using Academic Databases, especially for MA students.*
- 3. It is recommended to dedicate some space to the cafeteria, as it is helpful for both students and teachers.*
- 4. it is recommended that college considers all requirements to transform the infrastructure and make it accessible for people with special needs.*
- 5. it is recommended that the college devotes adequate financial resources to infrastructural projects, like renewing the existing hardware, as well as other facilities.*

2.11. Institutional cooperation

PDC with limited resources and a small number of students with two programs is more locally oriented institution. At the same time the institution acknowledges local and international cooperation as a crucial aspect for the overall enhancement and development of the teaching and learning processes, as well as of the scientific research at the institution.



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There is more focus and achievement through local cooperation with industry due to the unique nature of its bachelor degree. However, international cooperation is one of the five strategic objectives identified in the Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028.

In the last 2 years, the college has been successful in two different calls as project leader, while for the third project as project leader it has successfully passed the first stage of project selection and are waiting the final result. Therefore, PDC has to establish close links and create opportunities to have more international cooperation through exchanges, projects etc.

Although there is internationalization emphasis on the new strategic plan as well as the action plan and agreements with some institutional partners, PDC needs to establish resources and links for connecting students and academics to the European institutions and industry. In the Strategic Plan of the College, there are foreseen measures and activities that will be taken, in order to increase the number of participation in local and international projects. In addition, the College also needs to organize more international and regional events for the visibility and outreach.

As per the SER, the internship can be linked to the preparation of the Bachelor / Master thesis. Students can attend either paid or unpaid internship, but need to conduct at least one month of internship. The internship should be proofed and documented by the student through documents as described under “quality assurance tools”.

PDC intends to develop further actions in the field of international cooperation and contributions to the community and these are included in promotion criteria and staff performance review. The academic staff is encouraged to participate international forums and supported financially as well.

Their progress in international level, will help for evaluation in the career promotion. The Strategic Plan foresees funds for supporting staff to become more present in the intranational level. This policy needs to be encouraged and enforced by providing the necessary tools and resource to the faculty members to be achieved. Furthermore, the College, should establish mechanisms which are established to support cooperation with international higher education institutions, networks and organizations in their fields of operation.



On the other hand, there is a strong link with the local industries and employers to support institutional cooperation on student placement, employment opportunities, projects and teaching delivery by experts, study program update, advisory committee roles etc. at local and regional level. Alumni contact is maintained on a regular basis keeping them informed about institutional developments, inviting their participation in activities, and encouraging their support for new developments through surveys.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

- 1. Establish close links and create opportunities to have more international cooperation through exchanges, projects*
- 2. Provide resources and links for connecting students and academics more to the European institutions and industry*
- 3. Organize more international and regional events for the visibility and outreach.*

The panel decided to recommend to be re-accreditation for Pjeter Budi College for 3 (Three years).

Expert Team

Chair

Prof.Dr. Olgun Cicek

14.03.2024

Member

Prof.Dr. Alan Brickwood

14.03.2024

Member

Giga Khositashvili

14.03.2024
