BRITISH COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

FINAL REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

December 17, 2024

Pristina

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation Report (SER)*
- *Other documentation provided by the British College of Technology*
- *Interviews*
- *Site visit*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *Kosovo Accreditation Manual*

Site visit schedule (November 20, 2024)

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Time	Meeting	Participants/Comments
9:00-9:50	*Meeting with management of the HEI*	*Muzafer Shala - Head of Institution* *Shqipran Kabashi - Governing Council* *Zahir Cerkini - Governing Council* *Egzon Salihi - Head of Program and Vice dean* *Gentiana Blakaj - Vice dean for quality assurance*
9:50-10:40	*Meeting with QA representatives and administration services*	*Jon Kajtazi - General Secretary* *Flaka Jonuzi - Quality Assurance representative* *Miranda Molliqaj - Internationalization office* *Alban Rrahmani - Financial office representative* *Vlerë Tahiri - Student service representative* *Qëndrim Rexha – IT service*
10:40-11:30	*Visiting tour on the facilities*	*Muzafer Shala*
11:30-12:40	*Lunch break*	

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12:40-13:20	*Meeting with the teaching staff*	*Besnik Murati*
		Blinera Bislimi
		Valerina Smakaj
		Kaltrina Kajtazi
		Arian Mehana
		Egzon Salihu
		Gentiana Blakaj
		Muzafer Shala
13:20-14:00	*Meeting with the employers of graduates and other external stakeholders*	*Mendim Mustafa - IT industry*
		Xhelal Jashari - IT industry
		Enis Demolli - IT industry
		Berat Ujkani - IT industry
		Dardan Sojeva - IT industry
14:00-14:10	*Internal meeting of ET and KAA*	
14:10-14:20	*Closing meeting with the management of the institution*	*Muzafer Shala - Head of Institution*
		Shqipran Kabashi - Governing Council
		Zahir Cerkini - Governing Council
		Egzon Salihi - Head of Program and Vice dean
		Gentiana Blakaj - Vice-dean for quality assurance

A brief overview of the institution under evaluation

The British College of Technology (hereinafter BTC) is a private higher education institution operating under Law No. 04/L-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, licensed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation.

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The mission of the BCT aims to address all three pillars of the higher education institution, teaching, research, and community reach (the third role).

The BCT is in the very initial stage of its development. At the moment, it plans to offer one bachelor program, namely Professional in Applied Computing.

So far, the academic staff is mostly related to the British Gymnasium of Technology, a vocational high school that was established in 2021. Although the BCT already has plans for further infrastructure development, it intends to start operating in the premises of the British Gymnasium of Technology.

INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

1. PUBLIC MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES (ESG 1.1)

Standard 1.1 The higher education institution has a well-defined mission statement that comprises three main pillars: teaching, research, and community service and it is publicly available.

The BCT has defined its mission statement as follows: "...to provide integrated education tailored to industry needs that encourages sustainable learning, critical thinking, and professional excellence" (SER, p. 7). Further, the BCT states that it is committed to (1) Offering a curriculum that combines theory and practice to foster advanced knowledge in technology; (2) Promoting collaboration with the private sector to provide practical experience for students; (3) Encouraging the development of interpersonal and professional communication skills; (4) Promoting innovation and scientific research as part of the learning process; (5) Preparing students to be responsible leaders in an ever-changing world" (SER, p. 7).

Education and research are the main focus of the BCT´s mission, but a community reach is present there, too, namely by emphasizing leadership and ethical responsibilities in an ever-changing world.

This can be agreed that the BCT Statute and mission statement indicate the specific role of the institution within the national higher education system.

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The mission statement is available at the website of the BCT (www.bct.academy).

The BCT declares and this was proven to some extent during the interviews that the mission statement was developed in a participative process where internal as well as external stakeholders were involved, using virtual as well as in-person meetings.

This remains to be seen in the future (if the institution gets accredited) whether the institution will adopt a systematic approach to formulating, approving, implementing and periodically reviewing its mission statement. It needs to be acknowledged, however, that the BCT has already prepared a relatively structured and systematic procedure for reviewing its activities and documents, including the mission statement. This is incorporated in the Strategic Plan of the BCT for the next five years, starting from 2025.

There can be seen a positive correlation between the BCT´s mission statement and strategic documents of the institution.

Standard 1.2 The institutional mission is clearly reflected in the strategic plan, decision making and long-term institutional objectives.

With regard to the above-mentioned, this can be therefore confirmed that the mission statement has the potential to serve as a basis for strategic planning processes and achievement of strategic goals of the BCT.

Medium and long-term objectives of the BCT can be viewed as consistent with and supportive to the mission statement. They include expanding the program offering to address market demands. Also, regular updates of the curriculum, based on industry feedback and technological advancement are envisaged.

Also, the projection of the mission statement into the curriculum and in the implementation of quality assurance measures seems to be clear at the BCT.

This can be concluded that the mission statement of the BCT has the potential to serve as a guiding framework that informs every level of institutional strategy.

Compliance level: Fully compliant

ET recommendations:
> *None*

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2. STRATEGIC PLANNING, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (ESG 1.1, ESG 1.6)

Standard 2.1 The HEI has developed a comprehensive strategic plan that covers all aspects of its operations for a minimum of five years. This plan includes teaching, learning, research, artistic work, quality assurance, student services, investment in infrastructure, and community service initiatives, leadership, HR, internationalization etc. The plan was created in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure it meets the needs of all parties involved.

The BCT has a Strategic Plan (declared for the years 2025-2030, but in reality, covers the next five years) that relates to main aspects of the institution´s operation for the indicated period. The Strategic Plan is relatively complex, emphasizing nine strategic objectives. They include (1) Academic Excellence and Curriculum Development; (2) Quality Assurance; (3) Accreditation and International Recognition; (4) Industry Collaboration and Partnerships; (5) Faculty Development and Innovation; (6) Student Experience and Success; (7) Digital Transformation and Infrastructure; (8) Growth in Enrolment and Brand Recognition; and (9) Community Service and Social Responsibility.

The Strategic Plan contains not only strategic objectives, though. These objectives are complemented with plans of action and key strategic initiatives, key indicators, indications of financial plans as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans. The Strategic Plan as well as plans for financing are built with a dynamic gradation taking into account an expected development of the institution.

Besides the Quality Assurance Office, the Governing Council and the Academic Council are supposed to be involved in monitoring and evaluation.

Also, the link of strategic planning and the information management system can be seen at the BCT, with the potential to provide regular feedback on ongoing activities. This will include financial data. performance metrics, and student outcomes.

BCT declares that its Strategic Plan was developed in a participatory manner, involving internal as well as external stakeholders. This was confirmed during the interviews to some extent.

Standard 2.2 The strategic planning is supported by the annual and long-term budgeting process, allowing for frequent updates and adjustments.

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The BCT´s strategic planning is supported with financial/budgeting documents emphasizing long-term as well as annual perspectives, and there is a room for flexible updates and adjustments, if considered necessary.

There are also plans for a reporting and management system that has potential to provide evidence of progress at the BCT.

As for risk management, BCT has a risk management mechanism that evaluates potential risks and develops strategies to minimize these risks. The financial plans of the BCT contain a comprehensive risk management component with a reserve fund (20.000 EUR) to be put aside annually to address uncertainties.

Standard 2.3 The HEI has established a responsible, efficient, and effective internal organization structure, procedures and policies, with the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making.

The organizational structure, procedures and policies of the BCT seem to be clear, logically built and transparent. Also, there is a room of inclusiveness in it. The policies are usually not yet confirmed by the governing body, though (dates and signatures are missing).

The Governing Council is the body responsible for high-level strategic oversight, including financial management and policy approval. The Academic Council deals with academic quality (curriculum design, research initiatives, teaching standards) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Council. Dean of the College is a chief academic and executive officer, supported by two Vice-deans (with agendas of teaching and research; and international cooperation and quality assurance). General Secretary is the main function dealing with administration issues at the BCT, also liaising with the senior leadership of the BCT.

Several support units are planned to function at the BCT, among them the Quality Assurance Office, Financial Affairs Office, International Cooperation Office, and Student Service and Diplomas Office.

There are also several academic committees to work at the BCT, namely Academic Staff Committee, Quality Assurance Council, and Studies Commission.

Consultative and decision-making bodies are composed of members of academic, administrative staff and students at the BCT. Student involvement in decision making bodies is declared by the BCT´s representatives and this is also included in the Statute of the BCT. The

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Governing Council plans to have one student representative with a voting right only on student matters; the Academic Council plans to have three student representatives, and the Council for Quality Assurance plans to have two student representatives. There is also a Student Council at the BCT, and its future functioning will be guided by regulation.

The Statute of the BCT also mentions regulations for electing student representatives in decision-making and consultative bodies related to academic affairs of the BCT, but so far these are not yet specified further.

Involvement of founders/stakeholders in the Governing Council is also included in the Statute of the BCT.

Standard 2.4 The HEI has appropriate and sufficient administration that demonstrates effectiveness and supports the HEI in daily operations.

It can be assumed the BCT has appropriate and sufficient administration that will perform effectively and will support the BCT´s daily operations in time of conducting the study program. The administration is adequately qualified and specialized, at the moment it is represented especially by the Financial Affairs Department, International Cooperation Office, and Quality Assurance Office.

The BCT leverages digital platforms to support internal and external communication related to main functions of the institution, both administrative, and academic.

The BCT also envisages regular training opportunities for the administrative staff to support their professional development.

Also, administrative staff´s performance is supposed to be the subject of evaluation in which the data from different groups of internal actors (including students) are planned to be used.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Make sure documents related to existing policies are dated, signed and confirmed by the main governing body of the BCT.*
2. *Make sure regulations for student elections to decision-making and consultative bodies related to academic affairs at the BCT ensure the election process as well as structures and processes for student representation are in place and they are fair, transparent and free from discrimination.*

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3. FINANCIAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (ESG 1.6)

Standard 3.1 The HEI demonstrates that it has sufficient financial resources in the short and medium term to reach its mission and objectives set out in the strategic plan and can demonstrate financial sustainability.

The BCT has a well thought over financial plan for a short- as well as medium-term perspective. This plan envisages diverse sources of funding with the support of the founder at the initial stages (first years) of the institution´s operation. This can be seen as the plan which represents the way to reach the institution´s mission and objectives as they are formulated in the Strategic Plan of the BCT. This can be assumed, the BCT has sufficient financial resources to start its operation, and there is also a clear plan to achieve financial sustainability at the BCT.

The budgeting of the BCT is calculated to cover the costs and also to make possible adjustments that would respond to a changing situation.

This can be agreed that the funding model has the potential to promote institutional autonomy and is transparent, as for the core of financial operations. The financial plan clearly outlines the founder´s support, the phased approach is used and decreasing dependency on external inputs over time can be expected. Financial plan is developed in accordance with the Strategic Plan of the BCT.

Standard 3.2 The HEI ensures appropriate funding for educational activities.

Financing plans of the BCT envisage appropriate funding of educational activities (especially the study program, as planned). Financial allocations are clearly structured to support program operational requirements and projections of its growth for the next five years. This also includes financing of the introduction of specializations, such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and Cybersecurity.

Collaboration of the BCT with business and other external partners includes the plan to get additional funding sources for the BCT and its study program.

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Also, the BCT plans to invest sufficiently into the acquisition, equipment, digital platforms, and other instructional materials, digital tools and learning management systems. This can be seen in the financial plans of the institution.

Standard 3.3. The HEI has officially approved a research budget that is sufficient to support its institutional research objectives, including funds for research equipment and facilities.

The BCT is in the initial stage of its development, which relates to research, too. The Strategic Plan envisages support research (namely applied research) and technology -focused fields.

The allocations for equipment, facilities, and staff training relevant to research development are planned at the BCT.

Standard 3.4 A senior governing body (or Specialized Office) is responsible for overseeing and managing the institution's budgeting and accounting functions. They ensure that financial auditing reports are regularly prepared and published.

Primary responsibility for financial oversights is on the Governing Council at the BCT. This is supported by the Financial Affairs Office that operates on a daily basis, covering main budgeting and accounting functions. This can be considered as a standard arrangement.

The BCT has established internal auditing protocols with annual reports prepared for the Governing Council´s review.

This can be agreed that the BCT has prepared policies in place to continuously improve the quality of education and research (they need to be approved, though, as already mentioned above). Also, regular investments in facilities, equipment and staff training are planned.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
> 1. *Make sure the BCT will be prepared to gradually benefit from more sources of income than the founder´s support and tuition fees.*

4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, RESPONSIBILITY, AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY (ESG 1.1 ESG1.8)

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Standard 4.1 The HEI has policies and effective mechanisms for monitoring unethical behaviour and all the employees and students are informed thereof.

The BCT declares it is prepared to promote academic integrity and freedom and maintain ethical standards. The BCT has a Code of Ethics, which is designed to serve as a prevention to all forms of academic dishonesty and ensure that the integrity of both academic staff and students is safeguarded. However, similarly to many other cases, in the official document provided, the approval date of the regulation by the Academic Council and the signatures are not included. The approval dates/signatures are also not specified for 'Regulation on Procedure and Disciplinary Measures'. The Ethics Commission, Disciplinary Commission and Appeals Commission are envisaged at the BCT.

As for anti-plagiarism, the BCT declares it "will employ an anti-plagiarism platform that is accessible to all academic staff and students".

There is no evidence of a clear procedure for intellectual property ownership from the commercialization of ideas developed by academic staff and students.

Standard 4.2. The HEI ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social activities).

The BCT's communication strategy is designed to ensure clarity and accessibility, providing comprehensive information through multiple channels, such as the BCT´s website, social media, open-door events, and informational materials like brochures and flyers.

The BCT utilizes an online platform, Edupage, which serves as a repository for the data concerning student demographics, course offerings, assignments, and financial obligations.

During the interviews, the BCT representatives confirmed their plan to make publicly accessible the students' final works.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Make sure students and the staff are well trained for the effective use of the Edupage platform.*

5. QUALITY MANAGEMENT (ESG 1.1, ESG 1.2, ESG 1.7, ESG 1.9)

Standard 5.1 The HEI has established and implemented a highly structured and efficient quality assurance and improvement system, which is continuously being improved.

The British College of Technology (BCT) has established a publicly accessible quality assurance policy, integrated into its strategic management framework to ensure academic and operational excellence. This policy is operationalized through a strategy and action plan, incorporating regular evaluations, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with European Higher Education Area (EHEA) standards. The BCT has established procedures to consistently monitor, evaluate, and enhance the performance of its quality assurance system by tracking, measuring, analysing, assessing, and implementing necessary changes to close the loop. However, these comprehensive responsibilities are currently managed by only one individual, which may pose challenges to sustaining and improving the system's effectiveness over time.

The BCT has formally established a Quality Committee and a Quality Management Office to oversee its internal quality assurance processes, with clearly defined roles and representation from all stakeholders. However, in practice, these functions are managed by only one individual, with minimal or no active involvement from the committee, raising concerns about the effectiveness and inclusivity of the quality assurance framework.

The BCT allocates limited resources to its quality assurance system, which is primarily managed by a single individual, highlighting potential constraints in ensuring its optimal functionality. At this moment, the institution is not using the results of external reviews since this is accreditation and the institution did not have external audits in the field of higher education.

Standard 5.2 The HEI has quality policies and procedures that include the collection and analysis of relevant data, with the purpose of ensuring and improving the quality of all institutional activities (academic activity, student services, administration, etc.). These procedures include all stakeholders of the higher education institution (students and external stakeholders - employers, alumni, representatives of professional organizations, civil society organizations and internal stakeholders).

The BCT has established mechanisms to systematically collect and analyse data on its processes, resources, and outcomes, though the limited staffing within the QA Office presents challenges to fully leveraging these mechanisms for institutional development.

While mechanisms for collecting and analysing student-related data are formally in place, the BCT currently lacks an enrolled student population due to its accreditation status, rendering these systems underutilized at present.

A central database is in place to store and provide access to statistical data, but its full potential is constrained by the small QA Office and the absence of active academic or administrative units utilizing it for comprehensive reporting and quality monitoring.

The BCT formally involves all academic and administrative units in its quality assurance procedures; however, the limited capacity of the QA Office restricts the effective engagement of governing bodies and middle management in ensuring continuous improvement.

Although students are expected to actively participate in quality assurance processes, the current absence of a student body means this provision remains theoretical, awaiting practical implementation.

Standard 5.3 The HEI established a formal process for the design and approval of its study programs.

The study programs at the BCT have undergone a thorough internal process and received formal approval from the institution, but their application remains theoretical due to the absence of an enrolled student body.

Procedures and policies for the development and approval of study programs are well defined and involve internal and external stakeholders, though the small QA Office may limit the full realization of this collaborative approach.

The BCT has established procedures and key indicators for monitoring the quality of program delivery and methods for gathering necessary data.

Standard 5.4 The HEI periodically monitors and reviews the study programs to ensure that the programs are in line with mission and the institutional strategy. The monitoring of the study programs involves active stakeholder participation.

The British College of Technology has implemented well-defined procedures to monitor, review, and enhance the quality of its study programs, actively engaging stakeholders, including employers, to ensure programs meet labour market needs.

Regular monitoring processes effectively assess the feasibility, practicality, and suitability of ECTS allocation, learning outcomes, and workload estimates, ensuring that programs remain aligned with academic and professional standards.

The BCT has outlined a framework for involving stakeholders, such as students, staff, alumni, and employers, in the monitoring processes of study programs through tools like questionnaires that gather insights on workload, learning outcomes, resources, and graduate employment. However, it was observed during the site visit that not all relevant stakeholders are consistently engaged in these processes, limiting the breadth and inclusivity of feedback necessary for comprehensive program evaluation.

The BCT has established clear and well-defined procedures for monitoring and improving the quality of student internships, ensuring continuous implementation and incorporating valuable feedback from students, mentors, and employers.

The BCT collects and analyses information regularly, ensuring that study programs are updated to remain relevant and aligned with current needs. While the institution has processes for adapting programs based on monitoring results, communication of these outcomes and action plans to all stakeholders is insufficient, as highlighted during evaluations. There is a plan to publish a revised study program on the BCT´s website; however, the lack of robust communication channels limits stakeholders' awareness and engagement with such updates. Strengthening communication efforts is essential to foster transparency and enhance trust among all parties involved.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Increase staffing within the Quality Assurance Office to ensure that responsibilities are shared and adequately managed. Actively involves the Quality Committee and key stakeholders, such as academic staff, employers, and external partners, to improve the inclusivity and effectiveness of the quality assurance framework.*
2. *Develop robust communication channels to ensure that monitoring results, action plans, and program updates are effectively disseminated to all stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, and employers. This will foster transparency, encourage active participation, and build trust in the quality assurance processes.*
3. *Establish a plan to incorporate insights from external audits and benchmark against similar higher education institutions once accreditation is achieved. This will ensure that quality assurance processes are informed by best practices and aligned with international standards, driving continuous improvement and institutional growth.*

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6. LEARNING AND TEACHING (ESG 1.2, ESG 1.3)

Standard 6.1 The HEI has established policies and procedures that apply to all study programs. The institution actively monitors the implementation of these policies and procedures to ensure their effective realization.

The BCT provided a document called 'Key Performance Indicators' for the study program. It includes the areas, such as teaching quality, student performance, engagement with industry, curriculum content, research activities, infrastructure, and student satisfaction. However, as the BCT is at its very initial stage, there is still no implementation of these functions yet. There is no evidence of established monitoring and supporting mechanisms by specialized internal structures either. All statements are the plans for the future operations.

Standard 6.2 The study programs' intended learning outcomes are formulated clearly, precisely, and comprehensively according to the best practices; they are aligned with the published mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution, and they are publicly available. *Mandatory

The BCT has established other units besides the Academic Council, such as Quality Assurance Council and Studies Commission to enhance the quality of delivery. The roles and responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Council are highlighted in the regulation. There is a limited description on the Studies Commission under the KPIs document.

The BCT indicated in the SER that 'proposed curriculum at KAA, for the BA Professional in Applied Computing program, embodies best practices in defining and structuring learning outcomes. However, there is no reference to best practices in other institutions/countries. But this can be confirmed that the document ʻList of courses and learning outcomesʼ provides the evidence about the alignment of study program goals and objectives with intended learning outcomes which include skills, knowledge, and values and are written with regard to the student perspective. In the SER as well as during the interview session, it was mentioned that PEARSON is referred to as a benchmark.

The information about the program is not yet available at the webpage of the BCT, which can be understood, since the program is not yet approved.

Standard 6.3 The HEI demonstrates that each study program is designed considering the correlations between learning outcomes, teaching methodology and assessment. *Mandatory

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The BCT specified the learning outcomes, teaching methodology and assessment in all the syllabi. This also includes the subjects´ weight expressed in ECTS credits. There are correlations between learning outcomes, teaching methodology and assessment in the program.

It was also stated that the Studies Commission, in collaboration with the Industrial Advisory Board ensures that 'the BCT's programs remain current by updating the curriculum based on the latest research and market trends. However, there is no specific evidence of this practice, since the program is not yet realized.

Since there is only one program under consideration, there are no interdisciplinary programs or student mobility opportunities within the BCT.

Standard 6.4 The HEI ensures that ECTS allocation is appropriate.

The BCT claims that they allocate ECTS credits as outlined in the "ECTS Users' Guide". The distribution of the workload calculation includes a combination of lectures, practical sessions, individual study, project work, and assessments, ensuring that students receive a valuable learning experience.

The practical session credits are doubled over the lectures. ECTS credits seem to be aligning with the actual workload. This can be confirmed that the BCT ensures that students are neither overburdened nor under challenged, fostering a sustainable and productive learning environment.

Standard 6.5 The study program's intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors.

The BCT proposed the program BA Professional in Applied Computing, for the Level 6 of the National Qualification Framework. The BCT also works with PEARSON and offers PEARSON BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma (HND) during the first and second years of the program, which leads to a recognized qualification at the European Qualification Framework Level 6. The program's outcomes are differentiated across levels, with foundational skills addressed in the initial years and more advanced, specialized competencies developed in the final year. This can be confirmed that the intended learning outcomes of the study program are aligned with the level and profile of qualification gained.

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Regulations for Bachelor Studies also highlight the ECTS credits as well as mobility within the program.

Standard 6.6 If the HEI study programs lead to degrees in regulated professions, they are aligned with the national and EU Directives and recommendations issued by the national and international professional associations.

The program does not lead to a degree in a regulated profession. The program integrates, however, certifications such as AWS, Azure, and Cisco, which are internationally recognized. The BCT claims students (graduates) will also be prepared for certification exams and professional licensures.

This can be assumed that the study program was built taking into account the recommendations issued by professional bodies in the field.

Standard 6.7 The higher education institution ensures student-centred teaching and learning.

The curriculum of the study program is designed in such a way that it enables the use of various pedagogical methods. As a result, the students will be exposed to a mix of lectures, seminars, practical exercises, quizzes, and capstone projects. This way, interactive and research-based learning, stimulation of problem solving, and creative and critical thinking has a chance to be realized. Also, the BCT also plans to leverage Integrated Development Environments (IDEs), cloud-based tools, and virtual labs to enhance learning. It can be assumed there will be used modern technologies to support a diverse student body in the program.

Standard 6.8 The HEI ensures that evaluation and assessment are objective and consistent and ensures that intended learning outcomes are achieved. (ESG 1.3.)

Each course syllabus defines the grading components in advance - i.e., in the programming course this will include assignments (20%), quizzes (20%), capstone projects (25%), and a final exam (20%). These criteria are planned to be communicated to students at the beginning of each semester, to ensure transparency. Also, the plan is to provide students with feedback on evaluation results, and to ensure objectivity and reliability of grading.

Although it is stated that academic staff receive training in assessment methods, there is no evidence for this statement. The Edupage is used for grading, feedback and all data for the student's progress to be monitored and implemented through this online system.

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Standard 6.9 The HEI ensures that a functional procedure and mechanism for student appeals is in place. (ESG 1.3.)

The appeals procedure is stated in academic regulations, which are to be reviewed by a committee (Article 47 of the Statute, 3.9). There were no examples of appeals presented. All the student rules, rights and duties are also available in regulations made publicly accessible on the website of the institution as well as in the Student Manual.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Provide informative sessions for the staff on the functional application of key performance indicators and its analysis by the related units and members.*
2. *Establish monitoring and supporting mechanisms to ensure that key performance indicators are achieved by specialized internal structures within the BCT.*

7. RESEARCH

Standard 7.1 The HEI has developed a research strategy which is integrated within the institutional strategy and aligns with its institutional mission. This strategy is reflected in a detailed action plan, which includes clearly specified performance indicators and is made publicly available.

The BCT published a 'Research Plan' for five years, dated 2024, but again, not specified when and how exactly it was approved. Its components, activities and phases highlight; Establishing Foundational Research Capacities (Year 1), Enhancing Faculty-Led Research (Years 2-3), Expanding Student Research Opportunities (Years 2-4), and Building Research Dissemination and Feedback Mechanisms (Years 3-5).

The BCT envisions becoming a hub for practical technology research, addressing real-world challenges and contributing to the digital economy, as outlined in the BCT's strategic vision document. However, the faculty members do not seem to have stronger research experience (holding mostly master's degrees), and they seem to be focused more on teaching than research activities. The number of research-qualified faculties is scarce to support the plan now.

Research-support unit is not yet established at the BCT, although one of the two vice-deans has in his agenda teaching and research.

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Research performance reports are not published yet.

Standard 7.2 The HEI ensures that academic staff are committed to the achievement of high-quality research work and/or professional activity.

As already mentioned, the Research Plan of the institution can be seen as a basis for internal regulation of research activities. The BCT plans to acknowledge academic staff contributions through scientific publications, presentations at conferences, and collaborations with industry partners. Within the Research Plan, the BCT claims that there will be a focus on establishing research frameworks and necessary resources to support both academic staff and student research activities. To achieve this, it is aimed to develop a `Research and Development Hub' with resources, tools, and guidance for research projects.

Also, it is planned to conduct faculty training workshops on research methodologies, proposal writing, and publishing. It is also aimed to integrate research components into student curricula, introducing students to practical, research-oriented assignments in foundational courses. However, it was not clear how these goals would be achieved and what kind of funds, resources were already allocated for this purpose.

Standard 7.3 The HEI ensures that the academic staff has a proven track record of research results on the same topics as their teaching activity.

Although the BCT highlighted its intention towards incorporation of research in teaching, the lack of research-qualified and experienced faculty can limit realization of this goal. It was also highlighted as a weakness by the BCT that 'the staff's sole possession of master's degrees may restrict opportunities for advancement in scholarly research and limit the institution's research profile'.

Student involvement and junior staff support in the research are also planned, the BCT declares, without more specification.

Lastly, the BCT is aware of - so far - the insufficient financial resources for research projects and professional development which would limit opportunities for advancement in implementing the research strategy.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Increase funding and other resources for research and professional development.*

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2. *Recruit more experienced research staff to support research strategy.*

8. STAFF, EMPLOYMENT PROCESSES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ESG 15.)

Standard 8.1 Teacher recruitment is in line with national legislation, internal regulations in effect and it is based on objective and transparent procedure.

The BCT developed 'Staff Recruitment Regulation' through which it specifies the positions as the BCT, and qualification requirements related to these positions. The very process of recruitment is mentioned just briefly and in a general manner in this document. At the time of evaluation, there was no concrete evidence of advertising vacancies at the BCT, though.

This can be assumed the candidates for employment/newly employed staff will be provided with the necessary information related to the position descriptions and conditions of employment. For this purpose, the BCT has developed the Staff Manual which includes relevant information.

Standard 8.2 The higher education institution has enough permanent academic staff adequately qualified for the delivery of the study programs.

The BCT declares its commitment to create a sufficient and fully qualified body of academic and administrative staff. The plan for the third year of student enrolment is to have 12 full-time academic staff, the BCT mentioned in the SER (p. 87). For the first year of student enrolment the BCT plans to have four full-time lecturers (equating to one per 45 ECTS) and some part-time academic staff employed, too. The BCT also declares its commitment to meet external requirements related to the academic staff workload related to teaching as well as mentorship.

The BCT is in an initial stage and the existing staff was mostly recruited earlier and served as part of the existing institution offering pre-college education (British Gymnasium of Technology). Although the BCT plans to maintain a student-to-academic staff ratio below 1:30, the number and qualifications of the faculty members can be seen as the point requiring improvement (with regard to teaching, research and the third role ambition of the institution). This was in fact proven during the site visit interview, too. From seven faculty members interviewed (as teaching staff members), only four of them had been in the e-accreditation system with a contract uploaded. The remaining ones are either not declared or have no contract uploaded onto the system.

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Standard 8.3 The promotion and re-appointment of teaching staff is based on objective and transparent procedures and policies which are publicly available, which include the evaluation of excellence, and they arise from the higher education institution's mission and strategic plan.

In its Strategic Plan, the BCT envisages development of its academic staff (already enrolled people), and there are some actions planned toward this end. The promotion and re-appointment of the staff are partly dealt with in some regulations of the BCT that are publicly available (at the website of the institution). Mainly this is embedded in the Staff Recruitment Regulation but also in the Staff Manual where it is also declared that objectivity and transparency will be in place. Evaluation of the performance is also a part of the above-mentioned.

The selection committee (in case of recruitment/re-appointment) and the Academic Council take responsibility for implementing the procedures. The existing staff seems to be aware of the procedures as well.

Standard 8.4 The higher education institution ensures and supports academic staff in their professional development.

The BCT has a professional development plan for academic staff. It is structured and it covers areas such as language training, digital skills, and specialized courses. It seems, the staff at BCT have a chance to participate in training activities related to curriculum development, ECTS compliance, assessment methods, and more. Mobility and other international staff development opportunities are not in place yet, most probably due to the fact the BCT is in the very initial stage of its development and has limited international collaboration connections.

The BCT has a plan to provide newly recruited staff with adequate training and ensure all main onboarding procedures will be implemented.

Standard 8.5 The HEI ensures that its external associates have adequate qualifications and work experience to deliver study programs in line with the program's objectives and intended learning outcomes.

The BCT plans to work with external associates to support the study program. During the interviews with stakeholders, the respondents declared the intention and support for the delivery of the program as well. The BCT intends to provide external associates with training on its academic standards, ECTS guidelines, and teaching methodologies. The BCT also

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declares it is open to involvement of the external associates in mentoring/co-mentoring final works of the students, so far without further specification.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *Make sure the BCT has a sufficient number of qualified staff to be able to achieve the institution´s mission.*

9. STUDENT ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES (ESG 1.4, ESG 1.6)

Standard 9.1 An admission policy is clearly defined and is made publicly available.

The BCT has clearly defined and comprehensive admission requirements, including criteria such as prior education, grades, and assessments, which are transparently published to guide prospective applicants. This ensures that candidates are well-informed about the expectations and processes before applying, fostering clarity and accessibility.

The BCT provides transparent and easily understood admission requirements for international students, ensuring that the process is accessible and aligns with the institution's commitment to inclusivity. All relevant information is made publicly available, enabling international candidates to navigate the application process with confidence.

The BCT ensures that prospective students will have access to all necessary information about programs, services, scholarships, and fees through the institution's website and possible open days. This transparency supports informed decision-making and demonstrates the institution's commitment to accessibility and student-centric practices.

The institution guarantees that all enrolled students meet the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) requirements by holding a high school graduation diploma or an equivalent qualification. This rigorous adherence to admission standards ensures academic integrity and compliance with national regulations.

The BCT's admission mechanisms are designed to evaluate candidates' preparedness and ability to succeed in its programs, including well-defined procedures for decision-making. These measures help ensure that incoming students possess the necessary skills and qualifications to thrive academically.

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The BCT consistently applies its admission procedures fairly and transparently, ensuring that all students are evaluated without discrimination. The institution also prioritizes the inclusion of under-represented groups, reflecting its dedication to equity and diversity.

The BCT has established a transparent procedure for recognizing study periods, including participation in programs, such as Erasmus. This approach can facilitate student mobility and ensure that academic achievements are appropriately credited. The institution has procedures for recognizing periods of study, supporting students who transfer between programs or institutions. These processes reflect the BCT's commitment to academic continuity and student success.

Standard 9.2 The HEI collects and analyses information on student progression and takes appropriate actions to ensure students completion of the study program.

The BCT has established a structured system for monitoring student progress and providing assistance or counselling to address academic challenges, though these processes remain theoretical as students are not yet enrolled due to the accreditation phase.

The BCT ensures that mechanisms are in place to inform students about the availability of teaching staff, including consultation hours, which will be implemented when the institution transitions to an operational phase with an enrolled student body.

While procedures for annually monitoring student progression and completion rates are well-defined, the absence of students during this accreditation phase limits the ability to implement and refine these processes in practice.

Standard 9.3 The HEI ensures appropriate conditions and support to outgoing and incoming students (national and international students).

The BCT has established a framework to support students in international exchange mobility programs, including an Office for International Cooperation, though the absence of enrolled students during this accreditation phase limits its operational effectiveness.

While the BCT plans to provide regular information on international mobility opportunities, this remains theoretical at present, awaiting an active student population post-accreditation, and also mobility agreements to be made.

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Regulations for recognizing ECTS credits are clearly defined, ensuring transparency for future students, though their implementation is yet to be tested due to the current absence of enrolled students.

The BCT has provisions to publish detailed information on application procedures and admission conditions, including programs in foreign languages, which will be operationalized once the institution is fully functional.

The BCT aims to attract foreign students and has outlined support mechanisms for their integration, though these efforts are currently preparatory due to its accreditation status.

Plans to provide foreign language courses to international students are in place, demonstrating the BCT's commitment to fostering a globally inclusive academic environment, pending the enrolment of students.

The BCT has mechanisms prepared to collect and analyse feedback from both national and international students to improve mobility procedures.

While the BCT aims to provide data on outgoing student mobility, the absence of student enrolment over the past five years precludes any current reporting or analysis of mobility trends.

Similarly, the BCT has not yet hosted international students for mobility programs, but plans are in place to track and analyse incoming mobility data once students begin enrolling.

Standard 9.4 The higher education institution ensures 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.

The BCT has outlined plans for employing qualified professional, administrative, and technical staff to support students, though these roles remain untested due to the absence of enrolled students during the accreditation phase.

The BCT has detailed regulations and a proposed Student Handbook covering all phases of the student lifecycle, including rights and responsibilities; however, these resources are theoretical and await implementation once students are enrolled. The institution has outlined procedures to identify and address the needs of students with special requirements. The BCT intends to provide guidance on academic and career paths through tutors and supervisors, but

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the actual implementation of these services has yet to be realized with regard to the result of the accreditation phase. The complaint procedures are clearly defined and publicly accessible, but their functionality and impartiality have not been practically demonstrated in the absence of an enrolled student body. The BCT has established policies to ensure complaints are handled impartially by individuals or committees not affiliated with the parties involved. Plans to offer a range of scholarships and financial aid to incentivize academic achievement and support under-privileged students are in place, but these initiatives remain untested until the institution begins admitting students. A senior staff member is designated to oversee and develop student support services at the BCT.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. *Focus on finalizing and fully implementing the student support systems, including academic counselling, career guidance, and support for special needs students. Given that many of these systems are still in the planning phase, it is essential to ensure they are fully operational as soon as students are enrolled to provide effective and timely support.*

10. LEARNING RESOURCES AND FACILITIES (ESG 1.6) *Mandatory

Standard 10.1 The HEI ensures adequate premises and equipment for performing education processes and research.
*Mandatory

The British College of Technology (BCT) currently operates from a building designated for the British Gymnasium of Technology (BGT) and has plans (that were shown to the expert panel during the site visit) to expand this facility to accommodate educational activities and research for its higher education program(s). But these plans are yet to be realized. Documentation on premises and equipment, including lease contracts and inventories, is already established for the British Gymnasium of Technology (BGT) building. However, the existing building is currently in use by the British Gymnasium of Technology. The new extension is in the planning stage at the same facility and construction has not yet begun in the time of the evaluation. Although the plans are to be appreciated, the expert team could not see the guarantee that building will be completed once student enrolment starts. Also, there was no clarification or distinction how the two different levels of education will be provided at the same premises, considering the planned number of students to be enrolled by the BCT annually. Therefore, while the BGT facility includes IT equipment, laboratories with specialized resources for higher education curricula are not yet established and plans to develop these are dependent on future infrastructure expansion.

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While the BGT facility includes IT equipment, laboratories with specialized resources for higher education curricula are not yet established and plans to develop these are dependent on future infrastructure expansion.

The BCT has acquired adequate licensed software for study programs once the higher education institution becomes operational, but these resources are not currently in place. The existing infrastructure is not sufficient to support the delivery of the BCT's proposed study program or its intended learning outcomes, as additional space, equipment, and IT services will need to be developed to meet accreditation requirements.

Adjustments to premises and equipment to accommodate students with special needs are not yet implemented, although the BCT plans to incorporate these features in its future infrastructure development.

The current facilities do not provide sufficient office space for academic staff members of the higher education institution, and this will need to be addressed during the planned expansion.

Facilities for cultural, sporting, and extracurricular activities are minimal and currently serve the BGT (gymnasium), with no dedicated provisions for higher education students at this stage.

Food service facilities that meet the needs of staff and students are not yet available for higher education operations, as the institution is in the planning phase for expanding its infrastructure.

A senior staff member has been designated to oversee and develop the BCT's infrastructure and resources, ensuring alignment with the institution's long-term plans for higher education.

Standard 10.2 The HEI ensures adequate library resources for their study programs.
***Mandatory**

The British College of Technology (BCT) does not yet have a dedicated library facility equipped with reading rooms, group work rooms, or its own book stock, as the current focus is on developing its higher education infrastructure.

Plans are in place to ensure that future library facilities will meet the requirement of providing reading and group work rooms with adequate seating for at least 10% of the total number of students in each study program, though these facilities are not yet implemented.

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The institution does not currently possess a dedicated book stock or sufficient electronic resources to cover the curricula, but it plans to acquire domestic and international specialty literature, with at least 50% of titles from recognized publishers within the last 10 years.

The library plans to provide a sufficient number of books and resources to meet the needs of all enrolled students, though these acquisitions are contingent on future enrolment and operational expansion.

Subscriptions to domestic and foreign electronic resources that align with BCT's mission are currently in place.

Accessibility to library services beyond regular class hours and systems for tracking book borrowing and returns are planned for the future, since library facilities and operations are established to support the institution's higher education goals.

Compliance level: Non-compliant

ET recommendations:
1. *The BCT should secure dedicated premises explicitly used for higher education operations, ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements.*
2. *The BCT should expedite the establishment of a temporary digital library platform to provide immediate access to electronic resources, journals, and academic databases, while simultaneously advancing its plans for physical library facilities with adequate seating, book stock, and group work areas. This dual approach will ensure that library resources are available to support the study programs as soon as student enrolment begins, aligning with accreditation standards and institutional goals.*

11. INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Standard 11.1 The HEI has formulated and implemented a proactive institutional collaboration plan that aligns with its mission institutional strategy. This plan is clearly reflected in the institution's decision-making and resource allocation in this field.

Institutional collaboration is included into the Strategic Plan of the BCT. The international recognition ("to enhance the institution's reputation and attract international students") as well as the ambition to "strengthen industry ties to ensure practical training and enhance students' employability" are among the strategic objectives. This includes the planned actions, such as "Develop partnerships with international universities for student exchanges and joint degree programs; Collaborate with industry partners to align curriculum with international

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standards, ensuring that programs prepare students for local, regional and global employability; Forge strategic partnerships with technology companies, local businesses, and start-ups to facilitate internships, capstone projects, and guest lectures; Establish an Industry Advisory Board that provides guidance on curriculum relevance and emerging technology trends; Develop real-world, industry-based capstone projects for students in collaboration with partner companies, enhancing practical learning."

The BCT has formulated Regulation on Internationalization, in which internationalization, mobilities and partnerships are well defined.

As already mentioned earlier in this report, the BCT is in the very initial phase of its development. This is probably also why the evidence of already existing international collaboration is so far limited to the unsigned text of Memorandum of Understanding with Flensburg University of Applied Science.

Hosting international events, such as conferences, summer schools that would gain international recognition are not in place yet.

Standard 11.2 The HEI has implemented mechanisms to facilitate collaboration with national and/or international higher education institutions, networks and organizations. The HEI provides support to teaching staff to establish partnerships with the academic community, locally and/or globally.

This can be assumed that the BCT plans to support international cooperation and mobility.

The BCT´s Regulation on Internationalization and Mobility serves as a guiding document to clarify the BCT´s intentions and indicate some BCT´s involvement in this field. Article 9 of this regulation relates to Funding and Scholarships. It concretely states that" The institutions will seek funding for internationalization and mobility programs from a variety of sources, including ERASMUS+, EU grants, and international scholarship funds. To support the widest possible participation, British College of Technology will offer financial assistance to both students and staff, covering travel, accommodation, and tuition fees where applicable." This general statement sounds promising for the future.

The special administrative unit, the International Relations Office, is established to provide support in this context at the BCT.

Standard 11.3 The HEI established and maintained relationships with local industry, public sector, employers and local community.

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As already mentioned earlier in this report, the BCT emphasizes the relations with industry and other external bodies as one of its objectives. Specification of its context and its link to student activities is not yet concretely elaborated but can be expected when the study program starts. This relates to potential research and other activities of the BCT.

The BCT has established an Industrial Advisory Board which should "offer independent and critical expertise in evaluating the academic activities", as it is stated in the BCT´s Regulation on Industrial Advisory Board.

As for the contacts with local schools, there is a strong tie of the BCT with British Gymnasium of Technology. The evidence of more intensive contacts with other local schools is not available, which can be, however, explained by the initial stage of the BCT´s development.

Standard 11.4 The HEI has established and maintains relationships with its alumni.

There are no alumni of the BCT, and the institution does not deal specifically with this issue yet.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:
1. Make sure ambitious plans of internationalization and partnership with the industry and also other external stakeholders, including local schools, become true by implementing concrete steps in indicated directions.

OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT TEAM

The British College of Technology meets one (1) accreditation standard fully, eight (8) accreditation standards substantially, one (1) accreditation standard partially, and **one (1) accreditation standard is not compliant with requirements (standard 10, a mandatory one).** At the same time, the Expert Team formulated 16 recommendations which in the opinion of the Expert Team could help to further improve the institution, if considered.

Overall, the Expert Team considers the British College of Technology **not compliant** with the standards included in the KAA Accreditation Manual and, therefore, **does not recommend accrediting** the institution.

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Expert Team

Chair

	Milan Pol	December 17, 2024
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Olgun Cicek	December 17, 2024
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Domagoj Švigir	December 17, 2024
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