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Kosovo Accreditation Agency



UBT

DESIGN PROFESSIONAL BA

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

Prishtina, 16.4.25

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:

- *Self-evaluation report*
- *Site visit interviews*
- *Programme documentation*

Criteria used for institutional and program evaluations

- *KAA Accreditation Manual*
- *ESG Standards*
- *National Legislation on Higher Education*

Site visit schedule

Programme Accreditation Procedure at UBT College	
Programmes:	Design, Bachelor Professional, 180 ECTS (Accreditation) Fashion Design, Bachelor Professional, 180 ECTS (Accreditation)
Site visit:	16 April 2025
Expert Team:	Dr. Ana Vivoda Dr. Peter Purg Nino Alavidze, PhD student
Coordinators of the KAA:	Ilirjane Ademaj Ahmeti, KAA Milot Hasangjekaj, KAA

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:40	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	Rector Edmond Hajrizi Vice Rector Visar Hoxha Dean Ariana Gjoni Head of Department AMD - Gazmend Ejupi

09:40 – 10:20	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	Quality Assurance Officer - Ylber Limani Director of Infrastructure and Services - Murat Retkoceri Secretary General and Director of the Legal Office - Artan Tahirri Prof. Fisnik Laha Quality Assurance Officer at Faculty Level- Mevludin Shabani Quality Assurance Coordinator - Agnesa Shala-
10:25 – 11:10	Meeting with the program holders of the study program: Design	Lecturer Milot Gusija Lecturer Arbresha Hoxha Lecturer Dardan Luta
11:10 – 11:55	Meeting with the program holders of the study program: Fashion Design	Lecturer Hana Zeqa Lecturer Cennet Lika Lecturer Aferdita Statovci
11:55 – 12.35	Lunch break	
12:35 – 13:05	Visiting facilities	Lecturer Beni Cufi- Studio Fotografi Lecturer Cennet Lika- Studio Mode Lecturer Zymer Veliu- Studio AR/VR Lecturer Burim Berisha-Art Studio Lecturer Uran Krasniqi- Studio Diz Grafik
13:05 – 13:50	Meeting with teaching staff	Lecturer Sebil Spat Lecturer Alban Muja Lecturer Ajhan Bajmaku Lecturer Ardita Rizvanolli Prof. Asst. Albulena Bilalli Prof. Asst. Betim Shabani Lecturer Besfort Salihu Lecturer Zymer Veliu
13:50 – 14:30	Meeting with students	Erisa Haziri Rea Kurtaj Rebeka Shabani Halil Hasi Vitesa Raqi Valeza Gerguri
14:35 – 15:15	Meeting with graduates	Zana Maxhuni Shkurte Ejupi Zana Bajrami Nora Bislimi Vleri Beqaj

15:15 – 15:55	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	Dardan Zeqiraj- PLUS PAINT Arianit Dedi-KOOPERATIVA Basri Pllana/ Nexhmenden Statovci- PROGRAF Leonora Mehmeti Hoxha- KOSTUMOGRAFE Visar Statovci- WASTE Creative Arta Tex
15:55 – 16:05	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:05 – 16:15	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

The Faculty of Design at UBT College is widely acknowledged throughout the region as a hub of educational excellence, nurturing the next generation of talented designers. This reputation stems from its student-centered learning philosophy. The program's study spaces are equipped with state-of-the-art tools and resources to support various specializations, including textile and fashion design, graphic and communication design, product design, and building and furnishing. Additionally, students benefit from a unique approach in Integrated Design laboratories, where their distinct perspectives on the industry and its historical context are harnessed through guidance from experienced professors. This highly flexible and personalized method ensures that each specialization flourishes. As a result, students have access to advanced facilities and well-equipped studios, located at the UBT campus in Lipjan.

Due to the change of condition of administrative directive the previously successful program Integrated Design BA was discontinued, but eager to continue the line of design studies that are in high demand with applicants and later employability opportunities in Kosovo and the region the UBT College has ambition to start the study program of Design, Bachelor Professional.

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

1. Mission, Objectives and Administration

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

The Design (BA) Professional program aligns strongly with UBT's mission by aiming to prepare graduates who contribute to Kosovo's development through innovative teaching and impactful research. The program structure supports the Faculty's strategic goals by incorporating sustainability, leadership, and global perspective across key subjects such as Social and Sustainable Design and AR/VR for design. According to the Strategic Plan 2025-2029, actions like annual curriculum reviews and integration of interdisciplinary collaborations show alignment with long-term institutional objectives.

The Integrated Design BA programme was since 2016 already one of the most successful programmes (with more demand than offer, approx.. 3:1), thus Design was a response to the regulatory demand that all programmes have academically habilitated leads, thus UBT resolved to accredit a Bachelor Professional. The discontinued ID programme was transformed into a professionally oriented BA programme. Therein both Market Feasibility Study was key as well as detected student demand (even if there is no evidence of a consistent data gathering approach in this part), besides the alignment with the M&V of UBT; the vice-rector claimed that both Fashion and Design correspond to the "*new uniqueness of the UBT's programme offer to the larger ecosystem in terms of excellence and innovation as well as entrepreneurship and industry specific skills.*". It remains unclear why Product/Industrial or Interior Design (the CEOs claimed the industry in Kosovo is not developed enough) and Graphical Design (the CEOs claimed that it is integrated along all the programmes, also Design) were not decided to be derived as particular programmes, but Fashion was (since it has a strong industry and employment background, a blooming area and Kosova has companies producing for Europe).

The above reasoning and the review of documentation as well as interviews lead the ET to the following recommendation: In the narrative of communicating the new programme and promoting it, consider clearly positioning the new upon the old (successful programme) and set it in the context of the institutional excellence as responding to societal and public needs.

Standard 1.2: The study program is subject to policies and procedures on academic integrity and freedom that prevent all types of unethical behavior. The

documents are publicly available, and staff and students are informed thereof. (ESG 1.1)

The program enforces academic integrity through mechanisms such as the Code of Ethics, Turnitin plagiarism detection, and a well-defined appeal process. Students and staff are educated on ethical standards via handbooks and course syllabi, with further guidance provided through annual trainings and orientation. Although new, the program is integrated within institutional systems proven effective at UBT, as illustrated in previous Ethics Committee reports and strategic emphasis on compliance.

Students have in the interviews confirmed sessions for informing them on this matter, also staff seems to be well informed. According to the interviews, no cases were processed in the predecessor ID programme in the 8 years, which is surprising, the QA team assumed there were some issues but they were “avoided by preventive management”. Thus a recommendation: Assure that the academic integrity policies and procedures are recognized and well understood among all the internal stakeholders, esp. students; and that any procedures are well recorded and transparently processed, in full accordance with the ESG 1.1 / Standard 1.2.

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

Though the Design (BA) program is newly accredited, UBT has established information systems to collect data on student performance, resource use, and stakeholder feedback. Action plans, monitoring procedures, and annual review mechanisms are outlined and planned to launch by 2026. Data protection complies with national legislation, overseen by a designated Data Protection Officer, ensuring ethical use and transparency. The stakeholders interviewed confirmed this was overall a positive aspect of their experience with UBT.

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

The Design (BA) program is supported by a Dean, Program Director, Coordinator, and dedicated Quality Officer. Professional development plans include training in emotional intelligence, plagiarism detection, and language skills. These measures ensure competent support for students and academic staff, as reinforced in the Strategic Plan goals around faculty development and internationalization. The employers mentioned good contact with administrative services of UBT, and they were positively assessed also by the graduates.

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

Although this program is new and not yet subject to prior evaluations, UBT has an established structure for implementing recommendations through quality sub-committees and annual self-evaluation reports. Plans for feedback loops, monitoring, and external reviews are laid out in the Quality Assurance Manual and scheduled for implementation starting in 2026.

The QA team claimed this was done for the Design program through its predecessor Integr. Design BA; e.g. increasing working (creative) spaces – they struggled with about 500 students' needs, the recommendation for equipment and spaces were recognised, and extended. The IT QA manager assured that “enough and adequate IT support.”

ET recommendations:

1. *A (1.1.) In the narrative of communicating the new programme and promoting it, consider clearly positioning the new upon the old (successful programme) and set it in the context of institutional excellence as responding to societal and public needs*
2. *B (1.2.) Assure that the academic integrity policies and procedures are recognized and well understood among all the internal stakeholders, esp. students; and that any procedures are well recorded and transparently processed, in full accordance with the ESG 1.1 / Standard 1.2.*

2. Quality Management

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

UBT's internal quality assurance system follows national regulations and ESG guidelines, supported by its Quality Assurance Manual and Quality Policy. The program includes regular evaluations, feedback loops from students and staff, and review by the Faculty's Quality Sub-Committee. The involvement of stakeholders from academia and industry ensures the quality assurance process is participatory and continuous.

External stakeholder (employers) stressed the importance of critical attitudes of graduates that are very much in demand, and their broad knowledge of the design field – this could be the direction of programme's development in the future. They felt that automobile, furniture and product designs are just as important as graphical design which is currently (from their view, and also agreed by the alumni) dominating the design programme at UBT. The field of design

is rapidly changing and the employers feel they should be contacted more often.

Thus a recommendation as follows: Formalize mechanisms that ensure continuous external stakeholder engagement in quality assurance in a structured and transparent way, as to support the continuous relevance of the PLOs as well as the course POs and their methods and assessment strategies, and in particular practical placements. Placement arrangements should reflect the diversity of the programme in terms of design fields, and the quantity of students envisaged in the process.

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

The Design (BA) program followed a structured and transparent approval process involving internal and external stakeholders. Academic experts, industry professionals, and faculty members collaboratively designed the curriculum, which aligns with strategic goals of innovation and sustainable development. Approval was formally granted by the institutional quality board after a multi-stage internal review.

The programme development boards seem to be functioning well (even if partially informal meetings replace formal procedures), and industry partners are members of these boards. The industry input of information for employment needs plays an important role in program development.

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

Monitoring procedures for the Design (BA) program are based on annual reviews, stakeholder surveys, and performance metrics. Although the program is new, UBT has a proven system in place that includes semester reports and consultations with employers and alumni. This ensures timely adjustments and relevance to market needs.

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

All essential information regarding the Design (BA) program, including learning outcomes, structure, and policies, is published on UBT's official website. Regular updates ensure that content remains accurate and accessible. The transparency of the program information supports prospective students and external stakeholders in understanding program expectations.

Stakeholders in interviews recognized this and confirmed the programme was clearly communicated both in person and online, in the documents, etc.

ET recommendations:

3. A (2.1.) Formalize mechanisms that ensure continuous external stakeholder engagement in quality assurance in a structured and transparent way, as to support the continuous relevance of the PLOs as well as the course POs and their methods and assessment strategies, and in particular practical placements. Placement arrangements should reflect the diversity of the programme in terms of design fields, and the quantity of students envisaged in the process.

3. Academic Staff

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

UBT College recruits teaching staff in accordance with Kosovo's higher education legislation and UBT's internal recruitment regulations. Selection is conducted via open calls and includes criteria such as academic qualifications, professional experience, and alignment with the program's strategic direction. Job openings are extensively advertised, with the Search Committee evaluating applications and conducting interviews based on established criteria. Following the committee's recommendations, the final selection is determined by the Management Board.

For the Design program, faculty are selected based on their expertise in design-related fields and involvement in industry-relevant projects, ensuring academic and practical competence.

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

The program is delivered by permanent staff with graduate-level qualifications in design disciplines such as graphic design, interior design, and fashion design. According to SER, the percentage of courses delivered by full time tenured academics is 100 %. Number of teachers is 38 (out of which 1 - Associate professor and 11- Assistant professors). The teaching workload is on average 8 hours of teaching hours per week per semester or 16 teaching hours per annum.

Faculty members are required to engage in both teaching and research, with support from UBT for continuous development. The staffing plan aligns with the institutional policy that ensures at least three qualified staff per 60 ECTS, which is met by the current faculty.

Standard 3.3: The study program is supported by teaching staff who are subject to advancement and reappointment based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence. (ESG 1.5)

UBT College's advancement process is designed to uphold rigorous standards, ensuring that promotions are awarded based on significant and acknowledged accomplishments in research, teaching, and global engagement, as outlined in the specific articles of the institution's internal regulations. The Regulation on Standards for Election into Higher Academic Titles is publicly available.

The UBT has an advancement policy in place that evaluates staff based on teaching effectiveness, research activity, and community engagement and Teaching evaluations include student feedback and peer review via email surveys, as confirmed by the academic staff during on-site visit, while research output is assessed through publications and funded projects. These procedures ensure that promotion and reappointment reflect actual performance and institutional values.

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

The Faculty of Design's staff development strategy and its annual operational plan detail the involvement of academic staff in a variety of professional development activities, as outlined in the SER. These documents are closely aligned with College UBT's Long Term Operational Plan for Academic Staff Development, which is accessible online. UBT College and the Faculty of Design actively ensure that academic staff participating in the study program engage in professional growth initiatives, including language training and other relevant activities. College UBT assists academic staff in developing their research programs by offering guidance on drafting research proposals, facilitated through its Project's Office

Faculty members receive support for participating in international conferences, training on AR/VR technologies, and access to research grants. According to the Strategic Plan, UBT commits to two professional development activities per year per faculty member. The support system ensures that academic staff remain up to date with the latest design trends and pedagogical methods.

Before commencing their teaching duties, newly hired educators at UBT College participate in extensive training aimed at enhancing their teaching skills. This training begins with mandatory Induction (Orientation) sessions for all incoming academic staff. During these sessions, critical elements of the "Guideline on Competence-Based Teaching" are thoroughly introduced. The guide, accessible online, serves as an essential resource throughout this process.

Recommendation: Enhance the support for academic staff's mobility initiatives, study visits at foreign HEIs, international projects, sabbatical leaves, networks and their engagement in regional and international activities.

Standard 3.5: External associates who teach at the study program have adequate qualifications and work experience for the delivery of the study program and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (ESG 1.5)

Given the practical nature of a professional bachelor program, external associates used during the teaching process are mostly from industry, including professionals from architecture, fashion design, and visual communication. Each associate is vetted for academic credentials and professional portfolio before engagement. Their industry experience ensures the delivery of current, practice-based knowledge aligned with learning outcomes.

External associates primarily handle the practical components of courses, dedicating up to 2 hours per week to exercises in the Design BA Professional program. Additionally, they are allocated 0.3 hours weekly to co-supervise bachelor theses, contributing valuable industry insights and expertise. This structured workload ensures they can deliver high-quality, relevant input without overextending their responsibilities. By co-supervising theses, external associates significantly enhance the research's practical relevance and alignment with current industry trends, enriching students' academic experience and reinforcing the program's ties to the professional sector.

Recommendation: Inviting international lecturers to lead diverse activities - such as workshops, masterclasses, and similar events - to enhance the study programme's quality while exposing students to new perspectives and the latest advancements in the design industry.

ET recommendations:

4. *A (3.4.) Increase academic staff's international activities and mobility (to be addressed within a year).*
5. *B (3.5.2.) Foster stronger participation of international lecturers in the study program (to be addressed within a year).*

4. Educational Process Content

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

The Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) of the Professional BA Design program reflect the mission and strategic goals of UBT, mission by emphasizing creativity, innovation, sustainability, and leadership contributing to intellectual, social, and cultural advancement. Outcomes include practical skills such as prototyping and 3D modeling, ethical design practices, and collaboration in cross-disciplinary settings. These are clearly published on UBT's website and program documentation.

The PLOs are written from a student perspective; they describe what a graduate of the study program will know and will be able to do, include the development of generic and specific competencies, and are divided in knowledge, skills, and competences and are published and explained on the HEI website.

The Professional Bachelor in Design seamlessly integrates practical experience with academic achievement in its structured learning outcomes. The Internship course, worth 3 ECTS credits, involves a set number of hours dedicated to supervised professional practice within relevant institutions or companies. Meanwhile, the Capstone Project carries 12 ECTS credits, requiring students to independently conceptualize and complete a significant project that consolidates their knowledge, skills, and competencies developed throughout the program.

Standard 4.2: The study program intended learning outcomes comply with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. (ESG 1.2)

The program outcomes are mapped against NQF Level 6 and EQF Level 6 descriptors, ensuring they meet national and EU standards. This includes cognitive, practical, and interpersonal competencies expected from a professional bachelor degree.

The learning outcomes of the program equip students with a solid foundation in key theories, principles, and conceptual knowledge as outlined under NQF 6. They enable students to apply their acquired knowledge, conduct research projects, collaborate effectively in teams, and develop the essential skills required by the Kosovo National Qualifications Framework

The BA Design Program's learning outcomes emphasize a comprehensive understanding of fundamental design theories, the practical application of knowledge in real-world scenarios, and the development of both creative and technical competencies. These skills are designed to foster leadership and teamwork in the design industry, ensuring graduates are well-prepared to navigate professional challenges while contributing to the institution's strategic objectives.

By completing the program, students will gain the following knowledge, skills, and competencies:

Compliance is monitored through curriculum mapping exercises during program design and review. According to the interviews, the alignment of outcomes with NQF and EQF levels is safeguarded through a critical discussion between the QA service and the programme development team.

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

The BA program in Design Professional ensures a progression from foundational skills to advanced practice and research. The curriculum is structured around core design areas with increasing complexity over six semesters. Subjects are thematically linked to ensure progression, with each course building on the previous one. This design facilitates a smooth transition from basic skills to advanced application and research. The students' and graduates' positive evaluations of the structure and the content of the curriculum were detected during the interview.

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

The Design (BA) Professional program does not lead to a regulated profession under Kosovo or EU law. However, the curriculum draws on best practices from European professional bodies and associations in the design sector. This includes alignment with competencies recognized in international standards for graphic, fashion, and interior design.

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

The program includes an internship module in the final year, with specified outcomes focusing on workplace readiness, design project implementation, and professional communication. Guidelines for internships are documented in the student handbook, the regulation on compulsory practice is available online and coordinated through the Career Center. Host companies are involved in supervising and evaluating student performance, reinforcing outcome achievement.

The regulation outlines the duration of the traineeship in relation to the ECTS credit system, specifying how study hours are distributed between practical experience and independent work. While students are primarily responsible for arranging their traineeship placement, with support from the College if needed. It also defines the mentor's role in supporting and guiding students, as well as the process for developing and approving the work program.

The Faculty of BA Professional has agreements of cooperation with the following organizations (ARKIV, PEZULL, Kooperativa, PIXELLS, Odna Design & Patterns, Flutra Dedinja, Puntex, Tretekatertat, V-Architecture Studio, Fivestar Nation Activewear, Berna Saraci, Labentine) to assist the students of the program to complete their compulsory practical obligation. The students and graduates reflect highly positively on the internship practice, valuing direct contact with the industry and job opportunities that arise from it. The employers

express fruitful collaboration with the UBT, gladly offer internship positions for the students, approximately 10 places per company.

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

The study program has the ratio of 40 % to 60 % between theory and practise, meaning it is designed to have 60 % of curricula covered with practical case studies. The program uses project-based learning, real-world briefs, and digital tools to promote active engagement and critical thinking. Teaching strategies encourage collaboration, peer learning, and individual creativity. Faculty are trained in student-centred approaches and integrate these into classroom activities, as stated in the Quality Assurance Manual.

The Professional BA Design Program utilizes a diverse range of teaching methods to promote active participation and support the achievement of learning goals. This approach incorporates practical case studies, collaborative projects, problem-based learning, and immersive creative workshops. Enriching the curriculum are visits to galleries and design studios, along with presentations by seasoned design professionals. At the meeting with the academic staff customary excursions to European centres and important design events are planned yearly and several other good examples were mentioned.

Additionally, the learning experience is enhanced through interactive components such as group projects, detailed design critiques, guest lectures from experts (collaborations with Ljubljana and Helsinki were mentioned), teamwork activities, and the use of digital design tools. Students and graduates emphasized the importance of extracurricular activities and the ET recommends to enhance the opportunities with more diverse activities.

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

College UBT could highlight the value of constructive feedback that assesses students' strengths, but also offers clear, practical guidance for further improvement. Continuous assessment is emphasized to support student development. The feedback should be actionable, providing students with specific resources, effective study techniques, and strategic approaches to enhance their understanding and progress in the subject.

Assessments in the Design program include portfolios, presentations, group projects, and theoretical exams, clearly aligned with learning outcomes in course syllabi. Rubrics and feedback forms are used to ensure fairness and transparency.

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

Each course is assigned ECTS credits based on the total study hours required for students to achieve the learning outcomes including contact hours, independent study, and assessments. The standard is 1 ECTS = 25 study hours, which includes attending lectures, participating in workshops, conducting independent research, completing assignments, and preparing for assessments.

Course design and workload estimates are reviewed during curriculum development and adjusted through student feedback. This ensures that credit allocations reflect the actual time required to achieve learning outcomes.

ET recommendations:

6. A (4.3) *Organize more extracurricular student activities (to be addressed within a year).*

5. Students

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

Admission criteria for the Design (BA) Professional program are defined in the regulation for bachelor studies and are available on the UBT website. The criteria include a completed secondary education, a portfolio (where applicable), and an entrance interview. Transparency is ensured through published guidelines and open communication with prospective applicants.

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

While the program is new, UBT has systems in place for tracking student progression, including semester pass rates and course performance. Plans are in place to implement early warning systems and student support based on this data. These actions are part of the Quality Assurance Policy and will be reviewed in upcoming evaluation cycles.

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

The program is integrated into UBT's Erasmus+ network, facilitating mobility for students and staff. Orientation sessions, language support, and international student offices ensure a welcoming environment. Outgoing students are supported through credit recognition.

Standard 5.4: The study program delivery is ensured through adequate resources for student support. The needs of a diverse student population are taken into account. (ESG 1.4)

Student support services include a Career Center, Student Well-being Office, and academic advising. The program considers diverse needs by offering physical access, counselling, and mentoring for students from underrepresented groups. Technological infrastructure and digital access also support inclusive learning.

ET recommendations:

N/A

6. Research

Standard 6.1: The study program ensures the integration of teaching and research and contributes to the creation of new knowledge. (ESG 1.1)

Courses such as "Design Research Methods" and collaboration with UBT's Design Research Center promote integration of research into teaching. Students undertake final projects involving inquiry and innovation. The Strategic Plan outlines objectives for faculty-led research to enhance student involvement and knowledge generation. In interviews both students, alumni and teachers have reported about several notable projects and successful integrations of teaching and creative research, mostly in the realm of production (exhibitions, shows etc.).

Standard 6.2: The study program has a strategy for research, development, and artistic activity which aligns with the institution's strategy. (ESG 1.1)

The Strategic Plan for 2025–2029 outlines development of a Design Research Center focused on sustainability and innovation. Faculty are encouraged to participate in Horizon Europe and regional projects. Artistic activity is integrated through exhibitions and community impact projects.

The research strategy of the programme is on document level well aligned, however in the interviews there was no particular support found to this claim. The Design programme seems however to be dominated at least in its leadership (and transitional origin from the previous ID

programme) by graphic design, since all three leads/heads/”holders” in the interview were teachers there. A particularity of this large programme is that it has no programme director or leader, solely the Dean is top-responsible person for the programme. Thus, a recommendation: Other areas of design should be more evenly represented among the programme leads/heads/”holders” (as they were presented in the agenda).

The investment strategy for infrastructure is not completely clear neither from the documents nor from the interviews, even if the funding (being central) seems to be sufficient for the current needs – however not for such huge intakes of students as requested. Thus another recommendation: consider developing a clear and transparent plan to improve the R&D infrastructure esp. in all creative and industrial fields of design as relevant to employment, esp. those that are not related to graphical design. They should reflect the student intake planned.

Standard 6.3: The higher education institution ensures appropriate infrastructure for research, development and artistic activities. (ESG 1.1)

The EON XR Lab, fashion studio, and digital fabrication spaces provide infrastructure for research and creative projects. Access to digital databases and design software ensures students and faculty can produce innovative work. The institution plans further upgrades by 2027, per the Strategic Plan.

Alumni reported having been involved in the research conference and its publications, and they were involved in laboratory practical projects, and some exhibitions at the campus, and off, even internationally. Students were in the previous ID programme already involved into some creative production activities, with pedagogical as well as cultural industry partners, however the actual possibilities could not suffice for the large cohorts (some year over 500 students in total). This ambitious practice of placements is likely going to continue and expand. However it is not likely that such an ambitiously set number of students per year as requested may be offered a realistic, high-quality out-of-school practical experience. Furthermore, the review of facilities showed an overall limited capacity: the 3 computer labs (one very nicely designed place with around 10 workplaces, and two larger rooms; one with 30, other with 40 computers) cannot suffice for such a large intake quantity of students as requested.

Thus a recommendation: Provide further, more numerous and more diverse opportunities of creative research and production outside of school, such that corresponds to both the actual employment possibilities (absorbance) on the job market on the one hand, and the set student intake on the other. In order to develop enough numerous and diverse offers of this kind, and make them processually stable as well as formally backed, the ET recommends a three-year accreditation period, and a reduced number of students per year.

ET recommendations:

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7. A (6.2.a) Other areas of design should be more evenly represented among the programme leads/heads/”holders” (as they were presented in the agenda).
8. B (6.2.b) Consider developing a clear and transparent plan to improve the R&D infrastructure esp. in all creative and industrial fields of design as relevant to employment, esp. those that are not related to graphical design. They should reflect the student intake planned.
9. (6.3.) Provide further, more numerous and more diverse opportunities of creative research and production outside of school, such that corresponds to both the actual employment possibilities (absorbance) on the job market on the one hand, and the set student intake on the other.

7. Infrastructure and Resources

Standard 7.1: The study program is implemented in adequate premises, laboratories, and equipment relevant to the achievement of learning outcomes. (ESG 1.6)

The program is supported by well-equipped facilities, including art studios, a photography lab, and AR/VR labs. Each facility aligns with specific course requirements, such as digital fashion design or interior modeling. Equipment is regularly updated to reflect industry practices.

The Design Professional (BA) program at UBT College is supported by dedicated facilities and equipment access to several large lecture rooms (with 80 and 90 seats), ensuring ample space for lectures. For smaller group exercises, rooms with 30 seats are available, as well as a PC Lab with 100 computers for technical exercises and software-based tasks.

Other important tools for teaching practical skills are the EON X/R Lab, photography studio, silk-screen printing studio, woodworking laboratory, printing laboratory, art studios and fashion design laboratory.

According to SER, students are provided with commercial software such as Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign) and AutoCAD for Interior design, ensuring they can work with the most relevant tools in the industry. The program also incorporates open-source software like GIMP (for image manipulation) and Blender (for 3D modeling and animation), ensuring accessibility for all students and enabling them to engage with essential design tools.

The expert team requested evidence of licensed software programs for Adobe Photoshop (Ps), Adobe Illustrator (AI), InDesign, Solid Works, After Effects AE, Marvelous Designer, which was not provided.

The program benefits from a well-stocked library with over 350 physical and electronic copies of specialized books in design, fashion design, graphic design, pattern cutting, CAD, art books and other related fields.

Recommendation: The expert team found that the facilities are well equipped and substantial for admission of maximally 50 – 70 students, estimating that the suggested quotas are highly exaggerated.

Standard 7.2: The library and information resources available to the study program are adequate and accessible. (ESG 1.6)

UBT's library features well-equipped reading areas, rooms for group collaboration, and an extensive collection of books specifically curated to support the courses in the Design Professional (BA) program. Students have access to over 350 design-related titles in print and digital formats ensuring that relevant discipline fields are covered. Resources include materials on fashion, architecture, branding, and sustainability. Access to software such as Adobe Suite and AutoCAD further supports information literacy.

Students also benefit from access to electronic resources such as EBSCO, SAGE, and JSTOR, ensuring they have the latest academic materials. The library's facilities, including reading rooms and group workspaces with 100 available seats, are ample enough to support the needs of the Design Professional (BA) program, creating a conducive environment for learning.

Standard 7.3

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

The financial allocation models will be adjusted to align with the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. The current income model seeks to maintain a balanced approach across different revenue streams. While investors' capital contributions have been pivotal for infrastructure development, the funding for program operations, research, and staff development will primarily depend on student tuition fees.

During the on site visit, the management expressed full financial support to the program, program holders did not demonstrate concern regarding sufficient funding, while students, graduates and employers proved high demand for educating design professionals at UBT.

ET recommendations:

10. A (7.1.3) *Acquire licences for the following software; Adobe Photoshop (Ps), Adobe Illustrator (AI), InDesign, Solid Works, After Effects AE, Marvelous Designer (to be addressed within six months).*

11. B (7.1.4.) *Significant reduction of the admission quota – 50 – to 70 students, instead of 150 as proposed by the UBT (to be addressed within six months).*

FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT TEAM

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

OVERALL EVALUATION AND JUDGMENTS OF THE ET

Please provide your final decision. If the decision is positive, specify the accreditation duration and the student quota.

The Design (BA) Professional program aligns with UBT's mission and the Faculty's strategic goals by aiming to prepare graduates who contribute to Kosovo's development through innovative teaching and impactful research. The new program is built upon the Integrated Design BA program that was highly successful and in high demand but was discontinued due to changes in administrative demands. The Design (BA) Professional program is the UBT's response to changes in regulation, adaptation of the program that proved quality, responding to societal and market needs, which should be promoted more clearly.

The program enforces policies and procedures on academic integrity and freedom and is supported by sufficient administrative support. UBT has established information systems to collect data on student performance and stakeholder feedback. The internal quality assurance system follows national regulations and ESG guidelines, with recommendations to ensure continuous external stakeholder engagement in quality assurance to support the continuous relevance of the PLOs. The Design (BA) program followed a structured and transparent approval process involving internal and external stakeholders, with monitoring procedures based on annual and semestral reports. All relevant information regarding the program is clear and publicly available.

The teaching staff is recruited according to national and internal regulations and transparent procedures, the program is covered by full time employed qualified staff. The academic staff emphasize the support for professional development, however the support for mobility initiatives and engagement in regional and international activities should be more intensified. External associates teaching in the program have adequate qualifications, with recommendations to invite more international lecturers.

The PLOs are clearly elaborated, reflecting the mission and strategic goals of UBT, in compliance with the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. The structure and the content of the curriculum is logical, to facilitate a smooth transition from basic skills to advanced application and research. The program includes an internship module in the final year, with specified outcomes focusing on workplace readiness, design project implementation, and professional communication. Teaching strategies focus on student-centered learning, encourage collaboration, peer learning, and individual creativity, while assessment methods are transparent and the workload is properly evaluated in the ECTS.

The admission policy is clear and the plans for monitoring students' progression are in place. The program ensures support for mobility programs, but further motivation for realizing mobility programs are recommended.

The program enforces integration of teaching and research through collaboration with UBT's Design Research Center and different projects. The Faculty outlined the Strategic Plan for Design Research Center development (2025–2029) focusing on graphic design; it would be important to develop all design areas evenly and include other creative and industrial fields.

UBT ensures appropriate infrastructure for research and development of artistic activities, however insufficient for the admission quota suggested by the program. The ET recommends a significant reduction of the number of students per year and enabling more diversified opportunities for creative research and production outside of school, that corresponds to employment possibilities and market demands.

The program is appropriately funded, implemented in adequate premises and the library resources are substantial. The facilities are adequately equipped, taking into consideration the recommendation for significant reduction of the admission quota. In order to maintain its high quality appeal and a most favourable student:staff ratio, and considering its high-quality but still limited quantity resources and space, the Expert Team suggests that the programme intake limit annually is not above 50.

The Expert Team suggests that the accreditation to this programme is granted for the duration of three years.

The Expert Team suggests that all the above recommendations should be fulfilled within one year of the accreditation.

Expert Team

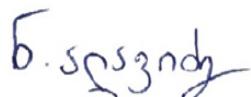
Chair

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Nino Alavidze

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Ana Vivoda

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Member



Peter Purg

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)