UBT College
Faculty of Civil Engineering and Infrastructure

PROGRAMME
Master of Science in
Civil Engineering and Infrastructure

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

7/3/2025, Prishtinë

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INTRODUCTION

Sources of information for the Report:
– *Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the 'Master of Science in Civil Engineering and Infrastructure' programme submitted by the FCEI from the UBT College*
– *Module descriptors (course syllabi)*
– *CVs of the staff*
– *The UBT College website https://www.ubt-uni.net/ (accessed on 19th February 2025).*
– *Stature of UBT College HEIPP (March 2020)*
– *Code of Ethics (May 2020)*
– *Regulation on procedures against plagiarism and the use of Turnitin software (October 2024)*
– *Generative Artificial Intelligence Use Policy Framework (January 2024)*
– *Regulation for the protection of personal data (n.d.)*
– *Administrative and Budgetary Support Policy (September 2024)*
– *Quality Assurance Policy (April 2024)*
– *Guideline for Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Teaching Activity and Assessment Methods and the Guidelines for Student Assessment*
– *Report on average grades, number of students, and student participation at conferences (n.d.)*
– *Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Development Plan (2024)*
– *Syllabus of the Capstone Project and the Master's thesis*

Criteria used for programme evaluations
The expert team followed the programme accreditation evaluation areas and standards, developed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) that are presented in the 'Regulation (KAA) No. 04/2024 for the Manual of Accreditation/Reaccreditation and Validation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes at the Bachelor's and Master's Level' (February 2024).

Site visit schedule

Time	Meeting	Participants
09:00 – 09:50	Meeting with the management of the faculty where the programme is integrated	1. Visar Krelani 2. Visar Hoxha 3. Blertë Retkoceri 4. Hazir Cadraku 5. Bekim Selimi 6. Arberesha Kastrati
09:55 – 10:30	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative staff	1. Ylber Limani 2. Arberesha Kastrati 3. Gelina Maliqi 4. Artan Tahiri 5. Murat Retkoceri 6. Emine Daci 7. Fatbardha Osmani 8. Sadedin Nika

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10:35 – 11:30	Meeting with the programme holders of the study programme	1. Visar Krelani 2. Skender Bublaku 3. Hazir Cadraku 4. Hysen Ahmeti
11:30 – 12.30	Lunch break	
12:40 – 13:20	Visiting facilities	1. Visar Krelani 2. Blerte Retkoceri 3. Lirigzona Morina, 4. Fisnik Laha, 5. Zymer Veliu 6. Arberesha Kastrati
13:20 – 14:00	Meeting with teaching staff	1. Muhamet Ahmeti 2. Feti Selmani 3. Anjeza Alaj 4. Besa Jagxhiu 5. Bledian Nela 6. Visar Hoxha 7. Ilir Abdullahu 8. Driton Kryeziu 9. Majlinda Ferati 10. Ibush Luzha 11. Besnik Skenderi 12. Kreshnik Muhaxheri 13. Beni Kizolli 14. Visar Baxhuku 15. Naser Morina 16. Alban Kuriqi 17. Binak Beqaj 18. Edon Maliqi 19. Zymer Veliu
14:00 – 14:40	Meeting with students	1. Diellza Vishi 2. Arber Shala 3. Sadedin Nikaj 4. Denis Cana 5. Yll Tahiri 6. Uran Kelmendi 7. Ari Hysenaj 8. Linor Sahiti 9. Meridon Kastrati 10. Rina Peja 11. Njomza Ramadani 12. Getuar Zogu 13. Ermelinda Krasniqi 14. Fatbardh Jakupi 15. Ilir Koraqi
14:40 – 15:20	Meeting with graduates	1. Margarita Shala 2. Driton Ibrahimi 3. Eron Mekolli 4. Andi Krasniqi 5. Bekim Tolaj 6. Gresa Xhemaili 7. Xhesika Hasa 8. Mensur Sherifi 9. Bardh Kurteshi – online

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		10. Labinot Vuniqi
		11. Arton Ajeti
		12. Dea Hasani
		13. Valmir Morina
		14. Toska Gjikolli
		15. Butrint Gerguri
		16. Visar Gafurri
		17. Faton Gjigoli
15:20 – 16:00	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders	1. Sefer Susuri – Vellezerit e Bashkuar 2. Perparim Neziri – PROING 3. Milaim Ahmetaj – Ministria e Infrastruktures dhe Transportit 4. Durim Sadrija – KNAUF 5. Rame Hamzaj – Ministria e Mjedisit dhe Planifikimit Hapesino 6. Vigan Syla – IBER LEPENC 7. Jeton Zogaj - KRAPI 8. Lekë Krasniqi – Alba Group 9. Kushtrim Jakupi - Eco Ballkan 10. Arsim Rapuca – Oda e Inxhiniereve te Kosoves 11. Elhami Rexhi - Euroaditiv Mates 12. Servet Spahiu - MMPH
16:00 – 16:10	Internal meeting of KAA staff and experts	
16:10 – 16:20	Closing meeting with the management of the faculty and program	

A brief overview of the programme under evaluation

UBT was established in Pristina, Kosovo in October 2004 and was built on the previous experience of the Institute of Enterprise Engineering and Management (IEME). The institution aims to offer internationally competitive programmes in higher education and lifelong learning and is delivering programmes in areas of law, political sciences, media and communication, mechatronics, energy efficiency, medical sciences, and integrated design.

UBT is composed of 19 Faculties and delivers 25 accredited study programmes, 3 MBAs, and 10 joint international study programmes. 25% of total courses are taught in English and other foreign languages. It is also active in lifelong learning with 200 Open University courses. It is located on 5 Campuses including 40 research labs, 20 support service offices, 20 research and education centres, and 4 libraries. 17,000 students are registered to UBT, 80% at Bachelor's level, and 20% at Master's level. In terms of staff, UBT employs 500 people and 300 visiting foreigners. In terms of research, UBT is organised in 7 institutes and employs 250 scholars.

The Faculty of Civil Engineering and Infrastructure (hereafter, FCEI) started the organisation of teaching and education on the 1st October 2013. The Faculty initially organised the studies only at the Bachelor's level but is now delivering a Master's programme as well. The study programmes offer close professional specialisations. FCEI is also very active in the UBT Material Laboratory where they offer independent third-party testing facilities with accreditation for a wide range of national and international standards. The number of students enrolled in the Master's programme has varied from 75 to 114 in recent years. Most of the

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students come from the UBT Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and Infrastructure. FCEI has various industrial and international partnerships.

The programme under evaluation for re-accreditation is the Master of Science in Civil Engineering and Infrastructure, NQF/EQF level 7, of a total duration of 2 years, with 60 ECTS credits per academic year.

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PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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

1. MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard 1.1 The study programme 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 master's programme in Civil Engineering and Infrastructure (CEI) is very well aligned with the UBT's mission and strategic goals in several ways related to education, innovation, research, sustainable development, leadership, regional growth and socio-economic and cultural development. It adequately recognises the specificities of the HEI position in the regional area. The mission of the Civil Engineering and Infrastructure programme is 'to educate and prepare professionals who will play crucial roles in shaping the built environment and enhancing urban living quality' (SER p. 27). This statement is too broad and too general to make the programme's mission clear to everyone. It does not fulfil what is expected from such a statement (a mission statement is a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the programme goals addressing four questions: Who are we? What do we do? Why do we do it? For whom do we do it?). The ET recommends redefining the master's programme mission, with a special emphasis on its specificities compared to the corresponding bachelor's programme. The intended programme learning outcomes are defined twice in the SER and are not consistent. In pp. 25-26, 19 programme learning outcomes are presented. They are broadly in line with UBT's mission and strategic goals and are accurate, but their wording is not fully compatible with the ECTS User's Guide. In particular, the learning outcomes should not reflect each discipline but, at the programme's level, they should rather encompass disciplines to best highlight the transferrable skills and competencies. Additionally, these learning outcomes are currently overlooking non-technical skills and competencies (communication, management, teamwork, …). In SER pp. 89-90, 8 programme learning outcomes are clearly defined and articulately with the programme mission, fully compatible with the ECTS User's Guide. Additionally, the UBT website (https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/master-programs/civil-engineering-and-infrastructure/aims-and-objectives/) offers a third version with 14 learning outcomes grouped in 'knowledge and understanding' and 'skills and other attributes'. The ET recommends reconciling these three versions and offering one single version. A needs analysis, based on the contribution of the construction sector to GDP, the skill gaps and the high demand for civil engineering and infrastructure-qualified personnel adequately justifies the need for such a programme which is essential for national and regional development. The number of seats (150), although insufficiently motivated in the SER, is clearly justified by the demand and UBT has appropriate facilities and equipment to accommodate and train such cohorts.

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

UBT has enforced adequate policies and procedures regarding proper academic conduct, ethics, plagiarism and artificial intelligence (AI). All these policies and procedures are publicly available and apply to the CEI programme. The Code of Ethics regulates the integrity of the

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academic community related to teaching and research, the responsibility of academic community members; the promotion of knowledge; and academic freedom. It also defines the role and responsibilities of the Ethics Committee and the Faculty Ethics Sub-Committee. UBT is particularly commended for their rapid response to develop a clear 'Generative Artificial Intelligence Use Policy Framework'. The CEI programme systematically uses the software TurnItIn to detect possible plagiarism issues in students' and research work. Regulations have been developed to ensure the highest standard of academic integrity is upheld. However, it suggests that the plagiarism decision is based on the percentage of similarities only. The ET draws the attention of the programme that this percentage may not been accurate, depending on the kind of work or instructions and recommends that the final decision on plagiarism cases should be subjected to a detailed analysis by the lecturer(s). The ET recommends updating the regulations accordingly.

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

FCEI has created an active information management and monitoring system that provides quick access through the Moodle and SMIS connection tools. UBT adopts concrete action plans for monitoring the implementation of the study programme. Data protection is regulated and protected at an institutional level by relevant acts ('Regulation for the protection of personal data') and mechanisms (Ethics Commission and Sub-Commission). The storage and protection of data and privacy is also performed in full compliance with Law No. 06/L-082 On the Protection of Personal Data.

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

UBT has developed an 'Administrative and Budgetary Support Policy' that ensures that the CEI programme has sufficient resources for its operations and growth. This policy defines the procedures for maintaining adequate staffing, conducting annual staff appraisals and providing ongoing training and development opportunities. The CEI programme is supported by an adequate administrative structure that includes a Dean, a Programme Director, a Programme Coordinator, and a Quality Officer. The ET found evidence, in the SER and during the interviews, that the administrative staff is involved in professional development programmes.

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

The CEI programme implements a quality assurance system that ensures continuous improvement based on internal and external reviews. All the reviews and evaluations feed the Annual Faculty Self-Evaluation Report, which is approved by the Quality Sub-Committee and the Faculty Council. The findings from these internal processes lead to the drafting and implementation of a Quality Improvement Action Plan, which is monitored and revised

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annually. The recommendations from the previous accreditation evaluation report are discussed in the present SER and have been generally addressed.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends redefining the master's programme mission, with a special emphasis on its specificities compared to the corresponding bachelor's programme. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
2. *The ET recommends stating clearly the programme learning outcomes as the SER offers two different versions and the UBT website a third version. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
3. *The ET recommends updating the regulations so that the final decision on plagiarism cases should be subjected to a detailed analysis by the lecturer(s) and not solely based on the percentage of similarities. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*

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2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

The CEI programme is subjected to the UBT Quality Assurance Policy and Manual which cover all aspects of programme delivery, including teaching, learning, research, and administrative support. This policy and manual also ensure continuous improvement (with a PDCA cycle) and stakeholder engagement, aligning with national and international standards, like the ESGs. The roles and responsibilities of the different bodies are very clear and coherent. At the College level, the Academic Council assumes the primary responsibility to defend the academic standards and make recommendations about academic matters. At the Faculty level, it is the Faculty Council which has established a Faculty Sub-Committee composed of 7 members including one student, which is positive. The UBT Quality Assurance Policy and Manual define the internal quality procedures. The Quality Sub-Committee's primary role is to regulate and oversee the academic and administrative service evaluation, quality improvement, preparation and supervision of the self-evaluation process, and preparation for the external evaluation of the Faculty. In addition, the role of the Quality Sub-Committee is to compare the actual situation against performance indicators and draw and implement quality improvement action plans for all programmes of the Faculty. Finally, the Quality Sub-Committee's responsibility is to ensure the periodic monitoring and evaluation of the academic programme, student services, resources and stakeholder engagement policies at the Faculty level. These roles are very clear and instrumental. The CEI programme is supported by a dedicated Quality Assurance Coordinator, who is responsible for monitoring the study programme and does not have any teaching obligations. Every member of UBT's academic community is actively engaged in self-evaluation processes, including alumni and external stakeholders. They are regularly surveyed and actively participate in relevant committees and councils. This collective involvement adequately contributes to a culture of continuous quality improvement. Additionally, the SER clearly shows that UBT is collecting and monitoring key performance indicators broadly covering all academic aspects.

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

The Faculty undertakes annual quality reviews based on several surveys:
  – Course evaluation by students, which is done in Moodle;
  – Semester reviews of programmes based on course evaluation by students;
  – Annual review of programmes of the Faculty against performance indicators;
  – Programme and Faculty evaluation by alumni, surveyed electronically;
  – Programme and Faculty evaluation by industry, surveyed electronically.
The ET particularly examined the CEI Strategic Development Plan and the Annual Faculty Quality Report which form comprehensive reports of the Faculty in all academic aspects, based on quantitative (KPI monitoring) and qualitative feedback (surveys). These reports clearly show that the evaluation processes are perfectly embedded in normal processes. The process for the development and approval of the study programme is well-defined involving both internal and external stakeholders. The quality assurance processes are continuous, engaging

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with stakeholders throughout the programme's lifecycle and include the following relevant steps:

– Active stakeholder engagement to align the programme with external needs and expectations,
– Development and execution of the Faculty Strategic and Implementation Plan to monitor progress,
– Effective management of the programme to uphold academic standards,
– Management of departmental and programme human resources to support staff development,
– Dissemination of public information to ensure transparency and accountability.

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

The study programme undergoes regular monitoring to assess its relevance to the needs of society based on several surveys collected from external stakeholders. The results are discussed internally and lead to possible programme revision. Although the study programme undergoes regular checks to establish whether the estimated workload allocation of students and the defined learning outcomes are achievable, realistic, and adequate, the detailed examination of the syllabi reveals some inconsistencies showing that the procedure is not fully operational (see Standard 4.8). This is achieved mainly through the student surveys and the Learning Outcomes Achievement Matrix that each lecturer is required to draft at the end of each course as a self-assessment tool. Regarding the workload, UBT gave good attention to constructive alignment between the learning outcomes, methods and assessment. The ET found evidence that the programme implements an inclusive quality monitoring process that actively involves all key stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, and employers. These stakeholders contribute through structured mechanisms such as questionnaires, focus group discussions, and qualitative interviews. To ensure the quality of student practice, a structured feedback loop is established involving students, mentors, and employers. The data from these questionnaires is used to adjust practice placements, improve mentor training, and ensure alignment between coursework and practical experiences, ensuring continuous improvement in student practice. The collected information from various stakeholders such as students, mentors, employers, and alumni is systematically analysed. Feedback is gathered through questionnaires, focus groups, and performance evaluations, and then incorporated into the Annual Faculty Quality Report. This report identifies areas for improvement in the programme content, delivery, and structure. Based on the findings, a Quality Improvement Action Plan is formulated, which outlines specific actions to update the programme to meet current industry standards, academic requirements, and student needs. The results of the monitoring processes and the resulting action plans remain, however, mostly internal and are insufficiently communicated to all stakeholders. In particular, the action plan should be published on the UBT website.

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

All policies, regulations and guidelines together with information on the study programme are publicly available on the institutional website and appropriate links have been provided in the

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SER (Indicators 1 and 4). However, limited further attention has been paid to Standard 2.4 in the SER. Most of the indicators are addressed by links to the UBT website which do not clearly address the requested information at the CEI programme's level. The information on admission criteria, recognition of qualifications, enrolment quotas, syllabuses, learning outcomes, credits, assessment methods, and final qualification is not elaborated in the SER and could not be found on the website. The report provided by the SER to analyse the pass rate, dropout rate and graduate employment is insufficient as it only gives a general grade average. UBT has already made public information related to the curriculum structure (https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/master-programs/civil-engineering-and-infrastructure/curriculum-structure/), the admission (https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/master-programs/civil-engineering-and-infrastructure/admission/) and the learning outcomes (https://www.ubt-uni.net/en/study/master-programs/civil-engineering-and-infrastructure/aims-and-objectives/), the latter requiring some attention (see Standard 1.1) to be up-to-date. The ET recommends making further publicly available all the information required by Indicators 2 (Information on recognition of qualifications, enrolment quotas, syllabuses, credits, assessment methods, and final qualification are published) and 3 (Information on pass rate, dropout rate, and graduate employment are publicly available and objectively presented).

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends making publicly available the information required by Indicators 2 and 3 of Standard 2.4. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*

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3. ACADEMIC STAFF

Standard 3.1 The study programme 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 advertises vacancies on its website, which serves as an effective national channel to attract a range of qualified candidates. However, the self-analysis reveals limited evidence of consistent use of additional international advertising channels, such as international academic job portals or professional networks. Enhancing recruitment through a broader mix of channels could further support the institution's goal of attracting globally competitive talent.

The SER shows that internal regulations strictly govern recruitment, ensuring that all vacancy announcements include detailed descriptions of the required qualifications. Although formal selection committees are in place, there is potential to enhance transparency by systematically sharing documentation, such as shortlisting reports and final recommendations. Such additional measures would reinforce objective decision-making and align more closely with best practices in academic recruitment.

UBT recruitment procedures align with national legislation and its strategic goals by incorporating academic and professional criteria, including teaching evaluations and publication records. However, the self-analysis lacks evidence of a clearly defined, weighted scoring system that directly maps candidate strengths to the specialised needs of the CEI programme. Introducing or making such a mechanism transparent would further enhance the effectiveness of the selection process.

According to the SER, candidates are provided with comprehensive position descriptions, including detailed teaching obligations, research expectations, and adherence to the institutional Code of Ethics. In addition, the official recruitment guidelines outline professional development pathways and performance appraisal procedures, ensuring that new hires are well-informed about their career progression and evaluation criteria from the outset. As documented in the UBT employment guides, this structured approach aligns with best practices in higher education recruitment and supports long-term career development.

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

The SER demonstrates that 40 out of 54 academic staff hold doctoral degrees and that 100% of courses are delivered by full-time tenured staff. Additionally, the SER provides a breakdown of academic titles among the staff, showing that 54% are professors (full, associate and assistant). However, it does not provide a detailed breakdown of their field of study, i.e. it does not offer information regarding their election into a field corresponding to the field of the study programme. This limits the ability to fully assess the alignment of academic expertise with the programme's specific needs. The ET encourages UBT to include more detailed information on the distribution of specialisations in future reports to enhance transparency and strategic recruitment further.

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The SER confirms that all academic staff in the CEI programme hold only one full-time teaching position at College UBT, as evidenced by their declarations on the E-Akreditimi platform and corresponding contracts.

The programme adheres to European norms for teaching loads, but the workload distribution table reveals inconsistencies—for example, some faculty with a reported 40% teaching load end up with fewer annual teaching hours than those with a 30% allocation, and a teacher with 25% in teaching has the same annual load as someone with a higher percentage. This inconsistency suggests that the current indicators for tracking workload across teaching, administration, research, and community service are not fully standardised or transparent. More systematic and standardised workload tracking would help ensure all staff meet the expected norms and safeguard time for research and professional development.

According to the SER, the proportion of full-time employees fully meets the 50% threshold, providing continuity for the programme's development. There is a wide margin to employ part-time or visiting lecturers as enrolment grows, but the institution should closely monitor this ratio.

The SER confirms that for the CEI programme, the 120 ECTS programme is overseen by four full-time, doctoral-level instructors—exceeding the minimum requirement of two, with extra positions allocated for quality assurance purposes. This robust staffing arrangement provides strong academic oversight.

The current data indicates that the student-teacher ratio is within acceptable bounds and substantially more favourable than the 1:30 benchmark. The SER provides a plan stating that with a quota of 150 students per year—rising to about 210 students after three years—and 40 full-time academic staff, the effective ratio is approximately 1:5. However, there appears to be a discrepancy: with a 90% transition rate and full enrolment of 150 students per year, the total student number could potentially reach 285 over two years, even without considering repeaters. Despite this, the ratio remains well within acceptable limits. Continuously monitoring enrolment trends will be essential to maintaining this advantageous ratio over time.

The qualifications of the academic staff regarding their academic titles and PhD holder qualifications are adequate, as evidenced by Table 1 (SER). Additionally, UBT provided CVs of the staff, and there are available publication profiles via Scopus and Google Scholar. Overall, the instructors hold degrees and have published in fields aligned with the core curriculum.

Academic staff workloads, as presented in the SER, are designed to meet relevant legislative frameworks.

Although the SER indicates that staff have sufficient time for research and student mentorship, and Table 5 (Workload of academic staff) shows that overall workload adheres to the 40-hour norm, there are inconsistencies when comparing the detailed workload distribution in Table 1 (% of workload distribution). It is optimistic that the HEI enables flexibility of load distribution, as shown in Table 1, and it is thus expected that Table 5 cannot demonstrate the variability as it shows characteristic loads. However, the percentages allocated to administrative duties in Table 1 vary significantly, and the lowest for everyone is 15%, while Table 5 suggests a characteristic load of around 10% (approximately 4 hours).

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Additionally, it is unclear how the 'Administration' staff category is integrated into research, teaching, and mentoring responsibilities. A more structured and transparent workload planning approach - with clearly defined indicators for measuring and balancing teaching, mentoring, research, administration, and community service - would help ensure equitable workload distribution, thereby safeguarding faculty research and professional development.

The programme assigns mentors for thesis supervision, and student feedback is generally optimistic about the availability of guidance. Additionally, UBT has mechanisms in place to evaluate the effectiveness of mentorship and adjust assignments regularly.

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

The advancement process is clearly structured and based on the principles of transparency and objectivity, as outlined in the Staff Manual and the Regulation on Standards for Election into Higher Academic Titles. However, while the process includes comprehensive steps - such as a public call for applications, submission of detailed dossiers (including CVs, publication records, and pedagogical evidence), and evaluation by a dedicated committee - further transparency could be achieved by providing more detailed documentation.

The promotion of academic staff to higher grades is based on excellence and significant achievements, including meeting national requirements for publications in WoS/Scopus, high-quality teaching, international engagement, and contributions such as thesis supervision and textbook authorship. The self-analysis demonstrates that advancement protocols are rigorously structured starting with a public call, comprehensive application submissions, and detailed evaluations by designated committees, culminating in final approval by the Academic Council.

While the documented criteria clearly align with national standards and strategic goals, the self-analysis would be further strengthened by providing concrete evidence of how student feedback and high-impact research outputs consistently influence promotion outcomes in practice. Enhanced documentation in these areas would reinforce transparency and the merit-based nature of the advancement process.

Student evaluations, management assessments, self-evaluations, and peer reviews are integral components of the advancement, reappointment, and contract renewal process at UBT College. The institution's structured evaluation process—outlined in the Employee Handbook—ensures that teaching effectiveness (measured by student engagement, clarity, and innovative practices), curriculum development, research activities, and service contributions are all systematically considered in promotion decisions.

However, although these feedback mechanisms are in place, the self-analysis would be strengthened by providing quantifiable data on how frequently these evaluations lead to specific changes in contract renewals or advancement outcomes. Enhanced documentation of the impact of feedback would further reinforce the transparency and merit-based nature of the

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process, ensuring that faculty members receive timely and actionable input aligned with national standards for academic staff development.

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

UBT's approach to professional development is robust, with staff adopting Individual Development Plans at the beginning of each academic year and undergoing a comprehensive evaluation process that includes student, peer, and management assessments. Although the self-analysis indicates that seminars and training on teaching methodologies and emerging topics are provided, the review would be strengthened by including specific indicators - such as participation rates and measurable outcomes - that demonstrate the impact of these activities on faculty development. In essence, the operational plan is well structured, but more granular data on how these initiatives translate into improved teaching and research performance would enhance transparency and accountability.

UBT demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring that all academic staff are involved in ongoing professional development, as mandated by the Employee Handbook and evidenced by participation in language courses and specialised workshops. However, while the self-analysis confirms participation, it also reveals significant variability in training engagement among faculty members. To further enhance consistency and effectiveness, the institution should implement a more systematic follow-up on training outcomes - tracking participation rates and measuring post-training improvements - to ensure that all staff benefit equally from these professional development opportunities and that they align with the HEI's strategic goals for continuous learning and skill enhancement.

UBT supports academic staff in developing robust testing and assessment skills through comprehensive guidelines – namely the Guideline for Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Teaching Activity and Assessment Methods and the Guidelines for Student Assessment – as well as dedicated workshops held in March 2024 with planned follow-up in November 2024.

The SER demonstrates that academic staff have participated in international activities - including mobility programmes, study visits, and international projects. While the Employee Handbook clearly states that staff are encouraged and supported in these endeavours, the SER lacks a detailed breakdown linking individual staff members to specific international engagements. Providing this information would offer more transparent insight into how these activities directly contribute to the programme's quality.

The SER mentions regular workshops - such as the "Workshop on Constructive Alignment and Effective Assessment Methods" held in March 2024 with a planned follow-up in November 2024 - focusing on syllabus design, learning outcomes, and ECTS compliance. These sessions are integral in familiarising faculty with current assessment practices, and it would be good to keep them regularly occurring.

UBT mandates an induction module that covers key pedagogical techniques, including detailed explanations of the "Guideline for Competency-Based Teaching".

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The institution provides all new employees with comprehensive onboarding materials and ethics guidelines, reflecting its commitment to transparency and institutional values.

Faculty members can seek mentorship from senior researchers and are involved in collaborative projects funded by external grants. While these initiatives are commendable, there is a need for a more structured internal funding scheme and formal mentorship programmes to sustain and enhance research productivity consistently. Strengthening these support mechanisms would further align faculty research development with the institution's strategic research objectives.

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

UBT successfully leverages industry professionals and external experts to integrate cutting-edge market insights into course delivery, ensuring that students benefit from the most current real-world practices.

While UBT arranges tailored training sessions - covering essential topics such as ECTS credits, learning outcomes, and innovative teaching practices - for external associates, participation seems voluntary. UBT assures the ET that there is a mandatory brief orientation for all external associates and that it helps ensure consistent adherence to academic standards and enhance uniformity in teaching quality.

Co-supervision with external associates has enriched thesis projects by grounding research in practical industry experience. Nevertheless, the current approach is ad hoc, and a more transparent, systematically implemented policy for external thesis supervision would ensure consistent and effective guidance for all students.

Contracts for external lecturers outline specific teaching hours, according to the SER.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends increasing the transparency in recruitment and advancement (detailed supporting documentation – e.g. evaluation reports – for recruitment and promotion processes).*
2. *The ET recommends standardising the staff workload monitoring (standardised indicators and a structured framework for monitoring and balancing workload distribution).*
3. *The ET recommends strengthening the professional development follow-up (quantifiable indicators to better evaluate the impact of professional development initiatives).*

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4. EDUCATIONAL PROCESS CONTENT

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

The intended learning outcomes for the CEI programme are formulated clearly and comprehensively if only the PLOs provided in the SER pp. 89-90 are considered (see comment in Standard 1.1). These outcomes embody the institution's mission – fostering innovation, sustainability, and practical application – by emphasising competencies that prepare graduates for advanced civil engineering and infrastructure roles. For example, graduates are expected to interpret industry standards and regulations, integrate interdisciplinary knowledge, leverage modern technologies such as machine learning and virtual reality, and work effectively in teams. The SER directly aligns each learning outcome and specific strategic goals.

The same intended learning outcomes align broadly with the programme's general goals and objectives. The SER delineates the programme goals in six areas - ranging from developing legal and managerial competence to fostering leadership and teamwork skills – and adequately maps these goals to corresponding learning outcomes.

UBT's approach to writing its intended learning outcomes is commendable, as they are clearly articulated from a student-centred perspective. The outcomes explicitly state the competencies graduates will achieve. This focus on tangible skills and knowledge directly supports students in understanding what is expected of them upon graduation and aligns with the practical demands of the industry.

UBT's approach to defining its intended learning outcomes is robust and reflects the use of internationally recognised best practices. By adhering to Section 3.3 and Annex 4 of the ECTS Users' Guide 2015, the institution ensures that the PLOs are succinct, consistent, and achievable within the designated workload. Using active verbs helps clearly communicate what students are expected to know and do upon graduation.

The -level complexity, focusing on advanced analysis and critical thinking. The intended learning outcomes are well-structured into knowledge, skills, and competencies. Nonetheless, the SER could better articulate how these outcomes foster higher-order competencies that differentiate the master's from bachelor-level objectives.

The intended learning outcomes are aligned with the EHEA framework, as they enable students to demonstrate advanced knowledge, application, and analytical skills required at Level 7. The outcomes have been benchmarked against leading European programmes, ensuring comparability with similar civil engineering and infrastructure study programmes. However, providing additional detailed documentation on the mapping process would further substantiate the alignment and enhance transparency.

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

The SER provides strong evidence that the programme's learning outcomes align well with the Kosovo Qualification Framework and the EHEA level descriptors. The outcomes are designed to foster advanced knowledge, research skills, and teamwork, which correspond to the competencies required at Level 7. Overall, the documented learning outcomes demonstrate consistency with the frameworks, ensuring that students are equipped to meet the rigorous academic and professional standards expected in civil engineering and infrastructure.

UBT asserts that the graduate-level outcomes are distinct from those at the undergraduate level, with confirmation provided via the syllabus annexed. However, while this reference indicates a differentiation, the evidence is rather brief. A more detailed comparative analysis between the undergraduate and graduate learning outcomes would strengthen the claim and provide clearer insight into the advanced competencies targeted by the master's programme.

UBT's documentation demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes of the study programme are aligned with the level and profile of qualification gained, and they avoid overlapping across different study programmes. The programme's intended learning outcomes are tailored to a Level 7 qualification under the Kosovo NQF and the EQF, emphasising a balanced mix of knowledge, skills, and competencies essential for advanced professional practice in civil engineering and infrastructure. Furthermore, the outcomes are designed to avoid overlapping with other study programmes by focusing on unique, industry-relevant skills such as infrastructural valuation and strategic management. Overall, the alignment appears robust, although additional comparative evidence could further validate the distinctiveness of these outcomes relative to similar programmes.

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

The curriculum demonstrates a logical progression that builds from foundational knowledge in the first semester to more specialised and advanced competencies in later semesters. Courses are sequenced to progressively develop key skills, with foundational modules supporting subsequent advances. Additionally, including a complex capstone project and the option to specialise further support the precise determination of general and specific competencies. There appears to be some potential for overlap, particularly in areas such as structural analysis and water-related subjects, but the specialisation tracks help minimise these redundancies.

The SER demonstrates that the curriculum is structured to ensure a seamless progression of knowledge and skills. Foundational courses are designed as prerequisites for more advanced subjects. This logical sequencing effectively aligns with the intended learning outcomes, ensuring that students acquire the necessary competencies to succeed in higher-level courses and capstone projects.

Although UBT describes a robust approach through competency mapping and constructive alignment supported by workshop reports, the practical evidence in the syllabi reveals notable

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inconsistencies. Disregarding that many syllabi are missing (e.g. Economy in Civil Engineering, Mathematical Methods in Engineering and Modelling, Sustainable Building, Industrial Psychology and Organisation Engineering Law, Ethics and Society just from the 1st semester), the syllabus shows sporadic connections between course-level and program-level learning outcomes, along with high variations in the number and competency level of these outcomes. This suggests that the intended mapping and alignment have not been uniformly implemented for the programme. To fully meet the indicator, further training for academic staff and developing a formal matrix linking course-level outcomes to programme-level outcomes are needed.

UBT provides extensive qualitative evidence that the study programme is aligned with international standards and is comparable to similar accredited programmes in the EHEA. The curriculum's design adheres to the Bologna Process and is benchmarked against leading institutions such as Politecnico di Torino, Tecnico Lisboa, University of Porto, and others, ensuring that graduates acquire competencies that are recognised globally. Additionally, the active engagement in student and lecturer exchanges with reputable European universities further supports the programme's potential for horizontal and vertical mobility in the global market. However, the review would be strengthened by a more systematic and quantitative comparative analysis to explicitly demonstrate how the programme matches or exceeds those of its peers.

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

The SER provides a comprehensive description demonstrating that the study programme is designed in full compliance with the relevant EU Directives. The programme's curriculum is mapped against Directive 2005/36/EC and adheres to ECTS standards, ensuring that civil engineering professionals' required competencies, knowledge areas, and skills are well integrated. The continuous monitoring process and strong industry partnerships further enhance the programme's alignment with European and local professional standards. Overall, the approach appears robust, though more detailed documentation of the mapping process could further strengthen the evidence.

The SER indicates strong alignment with professional association recommendations. The curriculum has been developed with input from national bodies (e.g., the Kosovo Chamber of Architects and Engineers) and international organisations (e.g., the European Council of Civil Engineers), ensuring graduates are well-prepared for local licensing and international certification. Incorporating practice-oriented training, including internships and project-based learning, further supports the recommendations and enhances graduates' employability and readiness for professional examinations. Although the overall approach appears robust, providing more detailed documentation of how specific recommendations have been implemented would further strengthen the evidence of compliance.

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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 (if applicable). (ESG 1.2)

The regulation on Compulsory Practice at UBT College is comprehensive and meets the indicator's requirements. It clearly defines the purpose of the traineeship and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, including the College, traineeship providers, and students. The well-structured regulation links the practice duration to the ECTS system and details the allocation of study hours between practical work and independent study.

The regulation for practice stipulates that each student is assigned a mentor or coordinator from the academic staff, ensuring continuous guidance throughout practice. Furthermore, the practice is organised through formal mechanisms that guarantee placements in external organisations, with the College providing support when necessary. The collaborative development of a work programme formalised through a traineeship contract, ensures that the practical experience is well-integrated with the study programme's learning outcomes and aligns with labour market needs.

UBT demonstrates a robust system for allocating ECTS credits to practical work. The regulation specifies that the traineeship is designed in line with the ECTS framework - allocating 5 ECTS to the practical obligation and delineating study hours between on-site work (60%) and independent work (40%). Monitoring is well-established through the mandatory submission of written reports and certificates of completion, which serve as concrete records of student activity and learning outcome achievement. Overall, the processes effectively ensure that practical work is credited appropriately and closely monitored to maintain academic standards.

The UBT Regulation on Compulsory Practice establishes the roles of all parties involved, mandates formal cooperation agreements with a broad range of industry partners, and ensures that traineeship contracts are in place to clarify responsibilities. Furthermore, built-in feedback mechanisms - through written reports and mentor evaluations - enable ongoing monitoring of the practical training's effectiveness. Overall, these measures effectively support the delivery of the study programme by integrating academic and industry collaboration, although further periodic reviews of employer feedback could enhance continuous improvement.

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

UBT demonstrates a well-developed didactic concept that supports students in achieving the programme learning outcomes. The curriculum's 60/40 split between theory and practice, with 40% devoted to practical case studies, reflects a balanced approach fostering foundational and applied skills. This is additionally supported by different approaches such as case studies, collaborative projects, simulations, and industry excursions.

UBT demonstrates a robust and diverse pedagogical approach that aligns well with the intended learning outcomes at the graduate level. The programme effectively employs various teaching methods - from case studies and design workshops to project-based learning, software modelling, interdisciplinary collaboration, and integrative seminars - that collectively address

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the spectrum of competencies required in civil engineering and infrastructure. Each method is clearly linked to specific programme learning outcomes, ensuring that students gain theoretical knowledge and develop practical skills and interdisciplinary perspectives. While the overall strategy is strong, further details on the evaluation and continuous improvement of these methods could enhance the overall effectiveness of the delivery.

UBT effectively employs diverse teaching methods that promote interactive, research-based learning, problem-solving, and creative and critical thinking. Methods such as case studies, design workshops, interdisciplinary collaboration exercises, team-building activities, and integrative seminars align with the programme learning outcomes, ensuring that students acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to civil engineering and infrastructure. The consistent reference to the Guideline for Constructive Alignment highlights a structured approach to linking learning activities with expected outcomes. However, while the overall strategy is strong, its systematic implementation across MSc course syllabuses is lacking. For example, traditional methods - such as lectures, exercises, consultations, and assignments - dominate, and in courses like Earthquake Engineering, teaching methods like teamwork or individual presentations, case studies, and problem-based learning are mentioned but carry no assigned weight. This raises concerns about how these methods correlate with the specific learning outcomes of individual courses, indicating that further integration and clearer alignment are needed.

UBT demonstrates a proactive approach to ensuring that teaching methods and programme delivery modes remain effective and up-to-date. The systematic review of programme learning outcomes every three years, coupled with annual evaluations of teaching methods based on student feedback, performance data, and industry input, shows a commitment to continuous improvement. Incorporating pedagogical and technological trends - such as the potential integration of interactive simulations and VR tools - further enhances the learning environment. However, the effectiveness of these adaptations would benefit from more explicit documentation of specific changes implemented as a result of these evaluations. While the strategy is strong and aligned with current best practices, additional transparency regarding concrete adaptations would further substantiate the programme's dynamic approach to teaching and learning.

UBT clearly articulates a comprehensive strategy to adapt teaching methods for a diverse student body. The SER outlines specific adaptations for various groups - part-time, mature, international students, and those with learning difficulties or disabilities - across multiple pedagogical formats, such as case studies, design workshops, project-based learning, and interdisciplinary exercises. This detailed breakdown demonstrates thoughtful consideration of different learning preferences and schedules, aligning well with the goal of inclusivity and enhanced student engagement. However, while the planned adaptations are extensive and well-conceived, the SER would benefit from providing evidence of their practical implementation and impact. For instance, data on student participation, satisfaction, or learning outcomes from these adaptations would help verify that the intended modifications effectively support all student groups. Overall, UBT's approach is robust, yet continued monitoring and documentation of these practices are essential to fully confirm their success in practice.

The SER demonstrates a strong commitment to integrating modern technology throughout the study programme. The curriculum incorporates a diverse range of industry-standard tools and

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software - such as AUTOCAD, ETABS, SAP2000, MATLAB, and BIM-Revit - to ensure that students gain hands-on experience relevant to civil engineering and infrastructure. Innovative technologies like drones, 3D printing, advanced sensors, and 5G-enabled monitoring enhance the learning experience by simulating real-world scenarios and aligning academic content with current industry practices. Moreover, the collaboration with the Computer Science Programme to develop a digital application for managing construction permits exemplifies how technology is seamlessly embedded into the curriculum to address both theoretical and practical aspects. These examples collectively indicate that the delivery of the study programme is effectively ensured through modern technology.

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

UBT provides a comprehensive mapping that links individual courses to the overall programme learning outcomes. The matrix, which spans all semesters, clearly illustrates how each course contributes to specific knowledge, skills, and competencies, demonstrating a strong alignment between the curriculum and the intended learning outcomes. However, while the mapping is detailed, further clarity regarding how these contributions are assessed would enhance the transparency of the process. Moreover, insufficient evidence shows how course-level learning outcomes directly correlate with their intended contribution to the programme learning outcomes. The syllabus reveals notable inconsistencies, with sporadic connections between course-level and programme-level outcomes and significant variations in the number and competency level of these outcomes. Establishing a more standardised framework to link and assess course-level outcomes against the overall programme learning outcomes would strengthen the curriculum design and improve consistency.

UBT systematically assesses individual learning outcomes by aligning assessment methodologies with the programme learning outcomes. The Guideline on Constructive Alignment and dedicated workshops for academic staff in November 2023 and March 2024 underscore the institution's commitment to a structured and coherent assessment process. However, while the overall strategy is clearly outlined, the SER lacks detailed examples showing how specific assessments are mapped to individual learning outcomes. Strengthening the documentation with concrete instances of this mapping would further enhance the transparency and effectiveness of the assessment process.

UBT has clearly published the assessment criteria and methods in the course syllabi, along with a detailed grading policy defining each grade's requirements. This transparent framework ensures that students are well-informed about the expectations and evaluation standards from the outset, supporting consistency and fairness in assessment across the programme.

UBT's approach to ensuring objective and reliable grading is comprehensive, as it is underpinned by detailed Guidelines for Student Assessment that offer clear criteria for designing and implementing assessment assignments. These guidelines promote best practices such as using rubrics, multiple assessors, and pair assignment comparisons, which are essential for minimising subjectivity and ensuring consistency. Including illustrative examples and descriptors further aids professors in aligning assessments with intended learning outcomes. However, while the framework is robust, its effectiveness ultimately depends on consistent

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application by all faculty members. Regular monitoring, calibration sessions, and peer reviews could further enhance grading reliability across the programme.

UBT demonstrates a clear commitment to providing timely and constructive feedback. The Regulation for Graduate Studies establishes specific deadlines based on the number of students, ensuring that feedback is delivered within an appropriate timeframe. In addition, the obligation for professors to offer detailed feedback on continuous assessments and final exams supports the development of actionable strategies for student improvement. Overall, this systematic approach to feedback is well aligned with best practices in educational assessment.

UBT has established a clear and structured appeals procedure, as evidenced by the Regulation on Handling Student Complaints. The process is well-defined, with explicit timelines for initial and subsequent reviews, and is communicated to students during enrolment and orientation day. The public availability of the regulation further enhances transparency and accountability. While the absence of specific examples from the new programme under accreditation is noted, the overall framework meets requirements and aligns with best practices in academic governance.

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

The SER indicates that assessment criteria are systematically linked to both course-level and program-level learning outcomes, using various methods - such as exams, research papers, case studies, and project reports - to evaluate theoretical knowledge and practical application. For example, the Advanced Civil Engineering Materials course requires students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts, demonstrating effective integration of assessment with learning outcomes. However, the review of MSc syllabi reveals that the mapping of course-level outcomes (CLOs) to broader programme outcomes (PLOs) is inconsistently structured, and the link between CLOs and specific assessment methods remains unclear. Strengthening this structured mapping would enhance transparency and ensure that assessment methods fully capture what students know and can do.

UBT presents a systematic approach to calculating workload and assigning ECTS designed to align with course-level and program-level learning outcomes. According to the SER, each course's ECTS is determined using the standard of 1 ECTS = 30 study hours, which is intended to cover all learning activities - from lectures and seminars to independent research and assessments. For example, the Advanced Technology in Construction course is allocated 6 ECTS based on 180 study hours, effectively linking the workload to achieving specific learning outcomes such as interpreting relevant technology and regulations.

However, a review of the syllabi indicates inconsistencies in the implementation of this workload-to-ECTS calculation. For instance:
- Earthquake Engineering is assigned 4 ECTS, yet the predicted workload is 150 hours (equivalent to 1 ECTS = 37,5 hours).
- Concrete with Special Properties is assigned 2 ECTS, while the workload amounts to 92 hours (equivalent to 1 ECTS = 46 hours).
- Hydraulic Engineering is assigned 5 ECTS, but the predicted workload is only 70 hours (equivalent to 1 ECTS = 14 hours).

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These discrepancies suggest that the allocation of student workload to ECTS is not consistently applied across courses. Enhanced standardisation and regular review of these calculations would improve transparency and ensure that the assigned ECTS accurately reflect the expected student workload concerning the programme learning outcomes.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends enhancing the documentation of outcome mapping by providing detailed matrices that explicitly link course-level learning outcomes (CLOs) to program-level learning outcomes (PLOs), including clear evidence of how assessment methods measure these outcomes. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
2. *The ET recommends standardising workload-to-ECTS calculations by reevaluating and recalibrating the workload-to-ECTS ratios across all courses to ensure consistency and transparency, addressing discrepancies. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*
3. *The ET recommends strengthening a systematic implementation of innovative learning methods, integrated into the syllabi with clearly defined weights and explicit correlations to the intended learning outcomes.*
4. *The ET recommends increasing the transparency in assessment mapping by developing and publishing detailed documentation showing how specific assessment tasks and methodologies align with individual learning outcomes, supported by concrete examples and regular calibration sessions.*
5. *The ET recommends improving the reporting on adaptations by documenting and communicating specific changes and adaptations made to learning methods and delivery modes based on periodic evaluations, including their impact on student performance and satisfaction.*
6. *The ET recommends improving and standardising the course learning outcome formulation by (i) providing additional training for academic staff using established guidelines for writing learning outcomes and (ii) reviewing and standardising these outcomes across courses to ensure they are clear, consistent, and aligned with the programme's advanced-level objectives. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*

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5. STUDENTS

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

UBT's admission process is clearly defined and well described, and it aligns with the national regulations of the Kosovo Higher Education System. For a candidate to apply, one must possess a bachelor's degree and have a minimum grade of 7 (SER p. 122). All the admission processes are publicly available. During the site visit, it was explained that a personal meeting is organised with all of the potential candidates. If the number of candidates exceeds the possible study places, then the additional entrance exam can be organised.

The application procedure is run through the online system, and all the documents that are needed are received by the Administration of UBT (SER p. 123). Transfer students from other Universities can apply as well. Then, the admission process checks earlier completed courses to see if they are relevant to this MSc programme framework. It is mentioned in the SER that according to national regulations, the transfer procedure is only available under the 70% content similarity of the programmers. The faculty has a transfer sub-committee responsible for determining whether the candidate fulfils the requirements.

During the site visit and reviewing the SER, the ET did not identify any evidence of discrimination regarding the admission process. The application criteria are uniform for domestic and international candidates. The latter must pass the diploma recognition process (SER p. 124).

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

The ET was introduced to the student progress monitoring system in the SER and during the site visit. In the meeting with the teachers, the tutoring system was elaborated: the consultations are weekly at a determined time based on special requests from the students, there are tutoring consultations organised before the exam to answer final questions and also tutoring after the exam is taken to review and provide feedback for the students. The students find this tutoring system very well developed and highlighted that it helps to understand conducted mistakes during the semester when it is not too late to improve. Mandatory tutorship is organised if a student does not pass the exam. The expert finds this methodology quite helpful, and it might explain the low dropout rate of the students in this study programme. As it was mentioned, 5.

UBT carefully considers course completion rates, which signalises what percentage of students have passed the module successfully. If needed, actions are taken during the semester through informal meetings with the students about the issues they might face. Meetings with the teachers are also organised if there is an indication that a curriculum review can be conducted. Also, there is yearly progress monitoring, and the system reviews student engagement based on class participation, group projects, and exams (SER p. 125). The monitoring results and feedback are distributed among all stakeholders: students, teachers, and staff, throughout various channels (emails, Moodle system, etc.).

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The students are well aware of their possibilities during or after their studies. Students can be transferred to another related study field if they want. Afterwards, their studies graduates can continue their studies in the doctoral programme or work in the labour market. A career consultation is provided, and it works appropriately in UBT.

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

During the site visit, the experts were pleased that in the meeting with the students, several were participating in the research exchange programme in Valencia. The students are always encouraged in the mobility programmes with the help of the UBT Office for International Cooperation, which provides all fundamentally needed data: eligibility criteria, required documents, application forms, etc. The students announced that UBT supplied all the information, and additional consultations were conducted if some requirements or procedures remained unclear. The SER states that UBT offers more than 400 universities the opportunity to exchange through various programmes.

UBT College also provides all necessary information about its studies on its official webpage in the English language for foreign students who are interested in their studies at UBT. As mentioned in the SER, UBT provides various services for foreign students, such as help with accommodation, academic advice, foreign language courses, etc. (SER p. 128).

After the mobility programme ends, national and international students must complete the questionnaire based on the study quality, satisfaction with the teaching staff, and infrastructure. Received feedback is analysed, and based on it, the Improvement plan is conducted (SER p. 128). The number of participants is published on the official website.

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

The ET is convinced that UBT possesses enough human resources to provide adequate student support. Student support consists of a tutoring system to answer fundamental questions of each study module; academic consultation offers answers to the regulation procedures of studies; the IT department answers questions regarding technical and software issues; and carrier consultation. The latter (Career Office) helps most students find a proper job in the labour market. The experts witnessed that most of the student's current job positions were filled with the help of UBT. Finally, the experts were blessed to see that the student support service not only exists, but the students are aware of its existence and are not afraid of contacting them when needed. All the services are introduced during the so-called Orientation Day at the start of each academic year (SER p. 130).

UBT has documented its procedures for appeals and complaints. For instance, if the student is not satisfied with the grade, a complaint can be made regarding this situation. The Vice Dean for Teaching and Learning receives the complaint, and he makes the decision. For other academic issues, the Faculty has an Academic Appeals Sub-Committee. (SER p. 130). During the site visit, the students mentioned that they were aware of their rights and the circumstances

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under which they could draft an appeal and their duties. Following academic ethics regulations and plagiarism requirements is essential. UBT uses TunItIn antiplagiarism software to check the plagiarism level.

Students are well-informed about extracurricular activities that are happening at UBT. In the SER, it is mentioned: Open Architectural Days, Moot Court Competitions, Sports Clubs, and social spaces at the Main campus. There are also plenty of activities, including industrial partners. In those activities, students are introduced to the company's activities and have a chance to find a workplace (SER p. 131).

ET recommendations: None.

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6. RESEARCH

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

UBT demonstrates a robust framework for integrating research objectives into the study programme. The research work plan developed by the Civil Engineering and Infrastructure staff reflects the mission, vision, and strategic goals of UBT College, and it is aligned with globally recognised principles, including the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. The selected research areas – from innovative materials and water treatment technologies to interdisciplinary research and industry collaboration – are well articulated and directly support the programme's strategic objectives. However, while the strategy is comprehensive, the documentation could benefit from more detailed evidence of how these objectives are operationalised and monitored over time.

The SER demonstrates robust financial, logistic, and human resource support for the research and scientific research plan of the Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Programme. Funding is secured through a comprehensive mix of internal budgets, national grants from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and EU funds (e.g., Erasmus+ and COST Action), which facilitate a diverse portfolio of research projects aimed at academic and industry-oriented outcomes. Additionally, the availability of detailed lists of research projects and hosting the Annual UBT Conference underscore the institution's commitment to scholarly output and international collaboration.

The institution could enhance its documentation by providing more detailed financial figures and allocation data in future reports to strengthen this research support framework further. Moreover, integrating quantitative metrics – such as the number of research projects, publications, and industry partnerships – would offer a clearer picture of the research impact. A periodic review process to monitor the alignment between allocated resources, evolving research objectives, and a formal dissemination strategy for research outcomes would further enhance transparency and continuous improvement in the programme's research endeavours.

The programme is governed by clear policies defining recognised research, with its activities firmly anchored in international standards and established norms. By referencing key documents - including the Conclusions of the Council on the European Universities initiative, relevant EU directives, and the European Code of Conduct for the Integrity of Research (Revised Edition 2023) – the SER indicates that the research framework is comprehensive and aligned with global best practices. Additionally, the availability of the Regulation on Research and Scientific Work provides transparency and a solid foundation for assessing research activity and outcomes.

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

The SER provides a comprehensive framework for validating academic staff research and professional activity. Research outputs are rigorously evaluated through internationally recognised platforms such as Web of Science, Scopus, and EBSCO, and the weight of these

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outputs is further supported by citation metrics and journal rankings (Q1–Q4). The regulation emphasises key research principles such as reliability, honesty, respect, and responsibility, ensuring the research process is transparent and ethically sound. The public availability of the regulation reinforces accountability and continuous monitoring. To further strengthen this framework, the institution could enhance quantitative reporting by including additional data on the number of publications and citation counts and integrate emerging metrics such as altmetrics to capture a broader impact. Regular updates of the evaluation criteria and more detailed documentation of how research outputs are rewarded would also help ensure continued alignment with international standards. Overall, the mechanisms in place effectively validate both scientific and applied research outputs, and with these enhancements, the process would achieve even greater transparency and robustness.

UBT demonstrates that academic staff in the CEI programme actively publish their research and present their professional achievements in scientific and professional venues. The SER indicates that their research is guided by established legal acts and ethical codes and is disseminated through reputable forums, seminars, conferences, and scientific journals. Moreover, the staff's involvement in consultancy and participation in projects across both public and private sectors underscores the practical impact of their work. However, while the qualitative evidence is compelling, the review would benefit from incorporating more quantitative data – such as publication counts, citation metrics, and concrete examples of consultancy projects – to further substantiate the impact and visibility of research outputs. Enhanced documentation in these areas would increase transparency and provide a clearer picture of how research achievements meet national publication and promotion requirements. Additionally, there is a need for continuous per-cap publication in high-quality journals indexed in Web of Science and Scopus to ensure sustained research excellence.

UBT clarifies that this indicator does not directly apply because it is designed for Bachelor-level studies. However, the institution emphasises that the academic staff of the CEI programme are highly qualified, with professional training culminating in a Doctor of Science degree. Moreover, most staff hold academic calling, as required by the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo and the Regulation for the Academic Advancement of UBT Academic Staff.

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

The SER provides robust evidence that academic staff in the Civil Engineering and Infrastructure programme actively leverage their expertise to offer research and development services that benefit the broader community. Staff involvement is demonstrated through consultancy roles, participation in professional committees, and direct engagement in projects addressing real-world challenges such as structural retrofitting and earthquake evaluations. This multifaceted approach, which also incorporates significant student participation, clearly contributes to socio-economic development and aligns with the institution's mission. However, while the qualitative evidence is compelling, the review would benefit from enhanced transparency through the systematic collection and reporting of quantitative data - such as the number of projects undertaken, specific publication counts, and measurable impact metrics.

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The SER provides strong qualitative evidence that academic staff in the CEI programme actively engage in collaborative research arrangements with both national and international higher education institutions. The text describes various activities supporting the programme's commitment to research collaboration and knowledge exchange. These initiatives contribute to the programme's overall research output and facilitate academic mobility. However, while the qualitative narrative is robust, incorporating more quantitative data would further strengthen the review. For instance, reporting the number of collaborative projects, joint publications, and citation metrics would offer concrete evidence of the programme's research impact. Developing and periodically updating a structured matrix or framework that documents the partnerships, and their specific outcomes would enhance transparency.

The SER shows that the CEI programme has established a robust framework for cooperation with local business partners. The documentation highlights that numerous cooperation memoranda have been signed, enabling joint research projects, shared use of equipment, and collaborative development initiatives integrated into the academic staff's weekly coordination and logistical planning. However, while the qualitative evidence is strong, the review would benefit from additional quantitative data - such as the number of active projects, specific contributions from partner institutions, and measurable outcomes of these cooperative endeavours.

The SER demonstrates that the teaching staff in the CEI programme are actively engaged in technology transfer and knowledge sharing with both the industry and the public sector. The text outlines a flexible, open approach whereby academic staff participate in consulting projects, public-private partnerships, and joint workshops, facilitating the direct application of academic research to address real-world industry challenges. The involvement of the Research Sub-Committee in identifying collaboration opportunities further reinforces the institution's commitment to integrating the latest technological advancements and research findings into practice. However, while the qualitative evidence is robust, the review would benefit from additional quantitative data - such as the number of technology transfer projects initiated, measurable outcomes from consultancy engagements, or feedback from industry partners.

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

The SER provides extensive evidence that the academic staff in the CEI programme are actively producing high-quality research outputs closely linked to their teaching responsibilities. The detailed list of publications, conference presentations, and research projects demonstrates that staff publish in journals and participate in influential forums, ensuring that the programme's research component is robust and well-recognised nationally and internationally. The documentation shows that research activities span a broad spectrum - from innovative materials and structural retrofitting to sustainable construction and intelligent transport systems - aligning with the programme's strategic objectives.

The SER provides comprehensive evidence that academic staff in the CEI programme are actively engaged in research and collaborative publication efforts with students. The extensive list of publications and conference papers demonstrates that the staff produce significant

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research outputs and involves students in these endeavours. This practice supports national publication and promotion requirements and reinforces the programme's research culture.

ET recommendations:
1. *The ET recommends enhancing the quantitative reporting (e.g., publication counts, citation metrics, number of collaborative projects) to provide a clearer picture of research impact and academic staff achievements.*
2. *The ET recommends increasing the transparency in resource allocation by providing detailed financial figures and allocation data in future reports to further substantiate research activities' financial and logistic support.*
3. *The ET recommends developing periodic monitoring and review of the research objectives to monitor the operationalisation of research objectives and the effectiveness of cooperation with external partners, including structured feedback from industry collaborators.*

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7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

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

UBT has several campuses located in Kosovo and is always aiming to improve its infrastructure based on the received European Union Project. The College managed to establish a mechatronics laboratory, GIS Laboratory, Design Studio, etc. (SER p. 158). During the site visit, it was explained that among the most significant upcoming updates is the construction of a new dormitory for students, as there are students who are not residents of Pristina city.

More than 40 testing facilities and protocols are certified. This certification enables the laboratories to be self-sustaining, covering costs for technicians and maintenance through consultancy services. Laboratories are under the supervision of a single professor who ensures collaboration between disciplines. The existing laboratories are well-installed and are in line with the defined study outcomes. Some laboratories have a bigger capacity than others so as the solution the UBT divides the whole course into smaller student groups between 25-30 (SER p. 161). The software used in the practical works is all licensed, and some of them are open source, so the students have the possibility to work on the tasks remotely from home.

The study programme is forecast to admit up to 500 students in the upcoming few years. For the experts, it seemed quite a challenge to cope with, yet during the site visit and in the SER, it was clearly shown that the amount of auditoriums on different campuses (Lipjan, Dukagjini Center) is enough to fit all of them. It is also important to mention that the premises must be suitable for students with special needs (elevators and ramps at the entrance of the buildings). It was noted that there have been several cases in the past, but the infrastructure is fully prepared for them.

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

UBT library works every workday from 9 to 19:30 and even on weekends. UBT library in Lipjan currently has around 100 seats, which seems to be slightly too few for the ET. During the site visit, it was explained that it is just one of several other libraries, and there are enough seated places for the entire UBT college in the libraries. The library consists of working rooms for bigger groups of around 90 seats. The total amount of books reaches 10,000 copies. There are books in both English and Albanian languages. More than 50% of the books are published within the last 10 years (SER p. 172).

Also, the students have access to the database as SCOPUS and the library has a subscription to EBSCO, JSTOR, and SAGE Journals (SER p. 172). During the site visit, students expressed their satisfaction with the current library infrastructure and highlighted very good access to international scientific journals and e-books.

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

In the SER, the financial plan is presented with incomes and expenditures. UBT presents that the biggest percentage of the increased income will be due to the increased Student Fee from 753,000 Euros in 2025/2026 to 2,176,170 Euros in 2027/2028. Yet such an optimistic income increase seemed too optimistic for the experts as during the site visit; it was explained that the number of students would not be increased, and the tuition fee would remain the same. So, for the experts, it remains unclear such a drastic increase.

Additional funding is obtained from national and international project calls. Also, this study programme and the faculty have established great connections with the industry, and it results in various collaborations, such as the training or consultation services provided by the UBT. Gained incomes are devoted, as presented in the SER, to Staff development and research grants, infrastructure, curricular and student support (SER p. 174).

ET recommendations:

1. *The ET recommends that UBT provide a realistic budget with a clear justification of the forecasts. (follow-up to be performed within one year)*

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

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Overall evaluation and judgments of the ET

According to the KAA Accreditation manual, in order to be granted a positive decision for institutional accreditation, every education provider has to demonstrate at least a substantial compliance level in the overall judgment. Therefore, failure to meet at least an overall substantial compliance level entails delaying, withdrawing, suspending or denying accreditation. UBT, MSc in Civil Engineering and Infrastructure study programme demonstrated substantial overall compliance. According to the Manual requirements, the Expert Team recommends accredit the study programme MSc Civil Engineering and Infrastructure at the institution UBT for a period of **5 years** with a student quota recommended of **150 seats.**

Expert Team

Chair

	Philippe Bouillard	7/3/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Tihomir Dokšanović	7/3/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

	Arnoldas Solovjovas	7/3/25
(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

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