Institutional Review of Higher Education Institutions in Albania

Report of Luarasi University College
June 2017

Review Team:

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Date: 29-30 June 2017

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About this review

The overall aim of Institutional Review is to assess the extent to which each HEI meets the Albanian State Quality Standards, which came into force in 2011. Institutional Review is a peer-review process with each review team composed of a mix of UK reviewers appointed by QAA and Albanian reviewers appointed by APAAL. The review team is led by a QAA reviewer.

The resulting reports will serve not only for institutional accreditation based on the extent to which the HEI meets the standards, but will also to inform the HEIs, Albanian government, the public and students of how each HEI meets the standards. This report also helps the HEI to identify priorities for enhancement (the process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported).

The Albanian State Quality Standards have been grouped under five headings, the Evaluation Areas: the Organisation and its Management; Resourcing; the Curriculum; Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research; and Students and their Support.
This report identifies features of good practice, recommendations, affirmations of actions in progress and weaknesses for each Evaluation Area, together with a judgement as to how well the HEI meets the standards. The judgements that the reviewers may assign are: standards are fully met; standards are substantially met; standards are partly met; or standards are not met.

Finally, the reviewers conclude by recommending a summary judgement to APAAL's Accreditation Council. This overall judgement is one of four levels:

- **State Quality Standards are met**
- **State Quality Standards are substantially met**
- **State Quality Standards are partly met**
- **State Quality Standards are not met**.

As part of the report-writing process, QAA has provided expert support to the review team by ensuring that the team supports the findings made in the report with evidence, and also by proofreading and summarising the full report for the summary below.

The context of this review

The non-public School of Higher Education 'Luarasi' was licensed in 2003 and gained its first accreditation in 2008 for a period of six years until 2014. In 2015, it became the University College Luarasi (the University College, UCL). Initially, it comprised a Faculty of Law and offered a single university-level four-year programme of study in law. Since 2012, in accordance with the institutional development strategy, mission and objectives, UCL has expanded to provide several new full-time bachelor's and master's programmes in the areas of law and economics. Graduates are able to contribute to two main pillars of development and democratisation of the country: in the justice system and in economic areas. The more recent programmes are currently in the accreditation process. UCL now offers three bachelor's, five professional master's and four scientific master's programmes. All programmes are full-time and are taught in Albanian. It has 389 students studying first-cycle programmes and 174 students studying second-cycle programmes. To date, over 600 hundred students have graduated.

At the time of this review, the University College comprised two faculties: the Faculty of Law, with departments of Private Law, Criminal Law and Public Law; and the Faculty of Economics, with departments of Finance (Banking), Business Administration and Economics. In addition, there are two research units, the Laboratory of Informatics and the Laboratory of Criminology. The University College has 43 full-time and 38 part-time academic staff.

Summary report

The University College Luarasi (UCL) is a private institution with facilities situated in the city centre and has been operating since 2003. At the time of this review, UCL had 389 students enrolled on three bachelor's, five professional master's and four scientific master's programmes. The University College has 43 full-time and 38 part-time academic staff organised into two departments, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economy.

A self-evaluation report was developed by a team at UCL, which included senior managers, academic and support staff and a student representative. Drafts were circulated to a wider audience within the University College before being finalised and approved by the Rector.

The visit took place over two days on 29 and 30 June 2017. The review team was made up of two senior higher education reviewers from the UK and one experienced higher education member of staff from an Albanian institution. The review team was supported by the Review Manager and a note-taker provided by the Albanian Public Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (APAAL). The review team received a self-evaluation report and a portfolio of supporting evidence eight weeks in advance of the review visit, later supplemented by additional documentation requested. A wide range of supporting information provided by the University College enabled the team to familiarise themselves with the structure, policies, management procedures and nature of teaching and vocational activity undertaken. Evidence included the Statute of the University College, academic regulations, an annual report, admission and orientation procedures, a list of external agreements, examples of programme information and evidence of deliberative meetings.

The review team met with senior managers, students, lecturers, administrative and support staff, as well as external partners, alumni and employers during the review visit. Discussion supported the clarification of procedures, responsibilities and viewpoints. Notes were taken at all meetings. As part of a tour of the learning resources the review team viewed the library, teaching areas, computer laboratories and offices.

The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are fully met. In reaching this judgement, the review team did not record any features of good practice; it did not identify any weaknesses or affirmations of any actions already in progress. UCL has an appropriate and effective governance structure that enables it to accomplish its mission, vision and objectives. The University College is managed as an independent legal entity that performs full decision making regarding all its academic and administrative activities.
The governance structure is clearly described in the University College's charter and regulations. These guarantee its autonomy and its academic freedom, and the charter forms the basis for the University College's educational and research activities. The University College has a comprehensive development strategy. In keeping with the its culture of comprehensive consultation, the Strategic Plan of Institutional Development 2016-2020 is the result of collaborative work with input from all groups of staff and students. UCL has prioritised cooperation with external bodies in its Strategic Development Plan 2016-2020. Locally and nationally, it seeks to develop effective collaboration in education and research with similar institutions and with public and civic bodies, including the prefecture, circuit, municipality, chamber of commerce and industry. Internationally, UCL aims to undertake high-visibility research projects, in cooperation with partner universities. Academic Senate is the body responsible for drafting and proposing the institutional strategy, as described in the Statute. The Strategic Plan describes the priorities in teaching and research, and provides action plans with clear objectives. Progress towards the strategic goals is monitored by an annual review of performance indicators that is the responsibility of the internal quality assurance unit. The administrative structure works well for the University College, allowing free flow of information up and down the different levels of authority and promoting teamwork in a spirit of cooperation.

The Standards for Resourcing are fully met. In reaching this judgement, the review team did not record any features of good practice; it did not identify any weaknesses or any affirmations of actions already in progress. UCL pursues clear and open human resource policies covering the recruitment and employment of staff, which meet regulatory requirements. A significant proportion of the teaching staff at UCL are employed on a
part-time basis. These are established practitioners from the fields of law and economics,

who enrich the teaching process with specialised and practical knowledge. These have included judges at different levels of the judicial system, prosecutors, notaries, lawyers and scientists. This practice has brought a number of benefits to the University College, including ensuring that the programmes of study cover current practice, the provision of placements and internships, and enhanced opportunities for graduate employment. Staff are regularly assessed by student questionnaire, and by teaching observation during lectures. UCL is a private legal entity that operates as a commercial company. The Administrator of the Company and the Finance Office are responsible for financial management of UCL, operating under a holding company, Panorama Group. UCL has coordinated information systems that include a database of student personal, registration, attendance and performance data, which is managed by the Office of the Archive. The University College is currently working to introduce a new digital database to facilitate further the operation of activities for students and staff. In 2016, it agreed to a 20-year lease of a former boarding school from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy. The building has been remodelled to a high standard to make it better suited for teaching activities.

The Standards for the Curriculum are fully met. In reaching this judgement, the review team did not record any features of good practice; it did not identify any weaknesses or any affirmations of actions already in progress. UCL offers programmes that are in line with its mission to be 'a centre of academic expertise specialising in law and economic studies'. Programmes have a professional orientation, are closely related to labour market needs and economic development of the country, and are developed in cooperation with stakeholders. UCL has a number of cooperation agreements with public institutions and private enterprises for the provision of practice placements and internships. It maintains close and positive relationships with employers and alumni and many part-time teaching staff are also able to facilitate internships. UCL has an aspiration to enrich the academic offer with new programmes that meet labour market demands. The Luarasi internal regulations define the general admission criteria, and specific admission criteria are defined in the programme regulations and approved by the Academic Senate. UCL maintains links with the Regional Education Directorate and with secondary schools, and staff, including senior academics, undertake visits to high schools and participate in work fairs. Proposals for new programmes are initiated in the departments, in liaison with external partners and alumni and supported by the internal quality assurance office. The Senate provides ultimate oversight of all educational programmes. UCL promotes foreign cultures through open lectures and a number of opportunities for international competitions and exchanges, such as the Alpha project in Austria and a business competition organised by the American Embassy.

The Standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research are fully met. In reaching this judgement, the review team recorded one feature of good practice; it did not identify any weaknesses or any affirmations of actions already in progress. Study programmes are organised to take account of the balance of subjects across semesters and academic years. Professional practice is a compulsory subject for first and second-cycle programmes and takes place both in the University College's laboratories in forensics and informatics, and also in different companies such as the Courts and the University Hospital 'Mother Teresa' (Morgue), under the joint supervision of the department and host institution. The review team considers the extensive and high quality practice learning opportunities that provide students with the skills they need to succeed in their careers as good practice. Enhancement of study programmes is via a number of interlocking processes including evaluation of teaching quality by the head of department and the dean, student surveys once per semester and performance assessment visits organised by the internal quality assurance unit. At the annual assessment of staff performance, conversations are held with staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses and any underperforming staff are given time to improve. According to its mission, UCL aims to prepare students for elite levels in the areas of economics and law and its research plans are based on these areas. UCL collaborates with other research centres inside and outside the country and a number of activities have been organised in collaboration with other research institutes such as the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of Law at the University of Bari, and the School of Magistrates.

To build capacity, the University College promotes involvement in projects with local and international partners. It has participated in projects such as 'SALTUM' in cooperation with universities in the USA, China, Brazil, and Italy. Furthermore, it has extended its cooperation with the University of Lodz in Poland and the University of Burgenland in Austria through student mobility exchanges. It has a number of partnership agreements and is currently initiating others with the Albanian American Institute, the British Council, and the National Democratic Institute. With the changes in the new law, UCL recently established 'LUARASI IDEA' as a separate legal entity in order to facilitate external

grant applications and so facilitate research development within the University College. The review team considers the scientific research work to be substantial in the context of UCL's stage of development and the programmes offered, with a direct impact on teaching quality.

The Standards for Students and their Support are fully met. In reaching this judgement, the review team recorded one feature of good practice; it did not identify any weaknesses or affirm any actions already in progress. Student enrolment is based upon current legislation and the institutional strategic development plan. UCL offers counselling and support to students through the office for students, and career counselling where students can get information about the organisation of open forums, training, internships, social and sporting activities. The tutorials policy sets out how the academic staff conduct the mentoring process, and students spoke warmly about the support they receive and the availability of staff, saying that staff regard them as colleagues. The University Collegeprovides literature through the library and materials produced by teachers, and from Luarasi University Press and bookstore. Students organise different activities within the framework of the Student Council and represent themselves in the teaching and research governing structures within the University College. UCL provides financial assistance for the activities arranged and the Council has established students' clubs and a newspaper, and established a relationship with a student council in Kosovo. The University College pursues policies for the employment of its graduates, for example by providing a legal clinic, whose main function is to provide legal assistance in the courts for those who cannot afford to fund their own legal protection. It has established 29 collaborations, many of which are with significant public and private institutions and enterprises such as the Albanian Parliament, the Ministry of Culture, the Board of the Albanian Financial Supervision Authority, the State Police, the Albanian Directorate of Patents and Trademarks, the Hysenbelliu Group and a number of representatives from the Albanian judiciary; a number of individuals from these organisations are also employed as part-time staff. These collaborations provide students with a range of high quality internship opportunities, a number of which have led directly to employment. The review team regards the wide-ranging employability support provided to UCL by senior professionals and expert part-time academic staff as good practice.

In reaching these judgements, the review team has recorded two areas of good practice that the University College may wish to build on and disseminate across the Albanian higher education sector. The review team has made one recommendation for the University College to consider as a means of further securing the quality and standards of its programmes and of further enhancing the learning experience of its students.

Luarasi University College undertook the review in accordance with APAAL guidelines.
The review team acknowledges the University College's level of engagement with the process and the cooperation provided to the review team throughout the visit phase. The review team consisted of Ms Penny Renwick (Lead Reviewer), and Dr Diturije Ismaili and Professor Jeremy Bradshaw (External Reviewers).

The review team concluded that the Quality Standards are fully met in five areas.

Summary of findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the extensive and high quality practice learning opportunities that provide students with the skills they need to succeed in their careers (paragraph 4.1; ***Chapter I Standard II.1***)
- the wide-ranging employability support provided to UCL by senior professionals and expert part-time academic staff (paragraph 5.9; ***Chapter I Standard III.9***).

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Summary of judgements for each Evaluation Area

1   The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are **fully met**.
2   The Standards for Resourcing are **fully met**.
3   The Standards for the Curriculum are **fully met**.
4   The Standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research are **fully met**.
5   The Standards for Students and their Support are **fully met**.

Summary judgement

The reviewers recommend to the Accreditation Council that at the University College Luarasi the State Quality Standards are **fully met**.

Detailed report

Evaluation Area 1: The Organisation and its Management

1.1 UCL began operating in the 2003-04 academic year, under a charter drafted in accordance with Law number 8461, dated 25.02.1999, 'For Higher Education in Republic of Albania' and the Council of Ministers Decision, number 156, dated 22.03.2001, 'For non-public schools in the Republic of Albania'. The charter forms the basis for the UCL's educational and research activities. **[SER p.11-12; 1]** UCL reviews and amends the charter and underpinning regulations as required to reflect changes in the national legal and regulatory framework. The version supplied was published in September 2016, **[1; 2]** to incorporate the requirements of Law number 80/2105, dated 22.07.2015, 'For Higher Education in Republic of Albania' and the Ministry of Education and Sport Instruction number 515, dated 27.10.2016. **[SER p.12; 1; 2]** *[Chapter III Standard I.1]*

1.2 The governance structure of UCL is effective and clearly described in its charter and regulations. **[SER p.13; 1; 2]** Academic governance is the responsibility of the Academic Senate, the Assembly of Staff and some standing committees. **[SER p.12; 1]** There is a Rectorate, comprising the Rector, Vice Rectors, the UCL administrator and heads of the main units. **[SER p.13; 1]** There is a Board of Ethics. **[SER p.13; 1]** There are two academic faculties, each with three subunits: **[SER p.13; 1; 2]** the Faculty of Law, with a Department of Public Law, a Department of Criminal Law, and a Department of Private Law; and the Faculty of Economics, with a Department of Banking and Finance, a Department of Business Administration, and a Department of Economics. **[SER p.13; 1]** Senior staff report that, while legal requirements dictate the administrative structure, it works well for UCL, allowing free flow of information up and down the different levels of authority and promoting teamwork in a spirit of cooperation. **[M3]** *[Chapter III Standard I.2]*

1.3 UCL values the input of all stakeholders in the discussion and decision-making process. **[SER p.12-13; M1; M3; M4; M7]** The Academic Senate, the Rector, deans and departments meet regularly in accordance with the charter, and for extraordinary meetings as required. **[SER p.14; 1; EA1-5; EA1-6]** UCL respects and takes into consideration and widely discusses opinions and proposals from all groups of staff and students, in keeping with UCL's culture, in which freedom of speech and of expression, and active participation in discussion or debate is guaranteed for all. **[SER p.14; M1; M3; M4; M7]** The self-evaluation report **[SER p.14]** states that, 'Materials for discussion included in the agenda, are previously distributed in written or electronic form for all members of the respective bodies and each member is free to discuss and present their opinions and discuss with colleagues on various aspects'. **[EA1-5; EA1-6]** UCL respects the student voice; **[SER p.14]** there are elected student members of the Academic Senate, the Board of Ethics and all institutional standing committees. **[2; EA1-1]** Following election, student members of committees receive induction training in an informal setting. **[EA1-2; M4]** Senior staff confirm that student opinion is an important consideration when formulating strategy. **[M3]** *[Chapter III Standard I.3]*

1.4 UCL respects its autonomy limits. Within the framework of the Law nr.80 / 2015, 'On Higher Education in Republic of Albania', UCL has complete autonomy and academic freedom, which are described and regulated through the charter, regulations, list of study programmes and study criteria. **[SER p.15; 1; 3; 8; 44]** Individual programmes of study are approved by the Ministry of Education and Sport, as required by the law. **[33]** *[Chapter III Standard I.4]*

1.5 The University College has a comprehensive development strategy. In keeping with the UCL's culture of comprehensive consultation, the Strategic Plan of Institutional Development 2016-2020 is the result of collaborative work conducted by academic and administrative staff, with input from all groups of staff and students. **[SER p.16; 4; M1; M3; M4; M5; M7]** Academic Senate is the body responsible for drafting and proposing the institutional strategy, as described in the Statute. **[SER p.16; 43 p.2]** The Board of Administration approves the Strategic Plan and its implementation. **[83 art 31; M5]** The Strategic Plan describes the priorities in teaching and research, includes a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis, and provides action plans with clear objectives and mechanisms for achieving those objectives in the short and long term. **[4]** Progress towards the strategic goals is monitored by an annual review of performance indicators, which is the

responsibility of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit. **[37; FE2, FE17; M2; M3; M5]** *[Chapter III Standard I.5]*

1.6   UCL fulfils its legal obligations by drafting an Annual Academic Activity Report. Each report provides a detailed analysis of all the University College's academic and administrative units, and includes input from students and external stakeholders. **[SER p.16; 13; M2; M6; M7]** The Board of Administration and Academic Senate approve the Annual Report, **[2 p.11]** before being submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sport and made available to academic staff and students, by publication on the institutional website. **[SER p.16;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/raport-vjetor/**]** The Rectorate together with the relevant departments and the deans' offices monitor progress with actions identified from the reports . Senate discusses implementation and identifies any requirement for further improvement. The Internal Quality Assurance Unit facilitates the whole process . **[FE17; FE2; FE24; M3]** *[Chapter III Standard I.6]*

1.7   As described in paragraph 1.2 above, UCL has an appropriate and effective governance structure, which enables it to accomplish its mission, vision and objectives. UCL is managed as an independent legal entity that performs full decision making regarding all of its academic and administrative activities. **[SER p.17; 1; 2; 5; 6; 18]** *[Chapter III Standard II.1]*

1.8   The charter and regulations describe the governance structure of the institution and its subunits. **[SER p.17; 1; 2; 3; 5; 6]** These documents guarantee the autonomy of the University College and its academic freedom in all its activities. UCL makes decisions through open discussion and the activity of working groups. **[M1; M2; M3; M4; M5; M7]** Depending on the topic, the discussion may include input from academic staff, support staff, and students. **[67; 69; 46; EA1-6]** The Student Council provides a formal mechanism for UCL students to express their opinion on study plans and programmes, regulations, and anything else that affects students or their studies, and this is further discussed in paragraph 5.7. **[59; 83]** The Student Council provides representation on the institutional committees. **[59; M4]** *[Chapter III Standard II.3]*

1.9   UCL recognises that the curricula of its degrees need to be relevant to the careers on which its graduates will embark, and that its offerings should be refined by market demand. **[SER p.17]** However, in the self-evaluation report, it notes as areas for improvement study of the labour market for the opening of new and innovative programmes in support of future students, and organising a periodic activity with alumni, in order to improve curricula based on market needs and practice. Study programmes at UCL are designed, and developed following review, to meet the requirements of the labour market. UCL seeks external advice from part-time academic staff, employers, external partners and alumni in this process. **[13; 47; 49; EA1-9; EA1-10; M6]** The Student and Career Counselling Office tracks the progress of students after their graduation, and has established an alumni network to maintain relationships with alumni. **[SER p.17; EA1-12; M6; M7]** *[Chapter III Standard III.1]*

1.10   UCL has prioritised cooperation with external bodies in its Strategic Development Plan 2016-2020. **[4]** Locally and nationally, it seeks to develop effective collaboration in education and research with similar institutions and with public and civic bodies, including the prefecture, circuit, municipality, chamber of commerce and industry. Internationally, UCL aims to undertake high visibility research projects, in cooperation with partner universities, part of framework programmes funded by the European Community and other donors. **[SER p.19; 4; EA1-14]** *[Chapter III Standard III.2]*

1.11   The Student and Career Counselling Office has put in place a number of co-operation agreements and memoranda with various public and private institutions, such as the Directory of Copyright at the Ministry of Culture and the General Directorate of Industrial Property, in order to strengthen links with the industries and professions relevant to the programmes of study at UCL, providing contact with the practices the students are likely to experience and the benefit of the knowledge of experts and specialists. **[AE15; EA1-15; FE11]** There are also several cooperation agreements, at national and international level, with higher education institutions that provide opportunities for the exchange of experiences in teaching, staff mobility, extracurricular activities, joint research, and cooperation in publications. **[SER p.20; EA1-15]** Through its relationships with external bodies, UCL has been able to enrich its teaching through conferences and workshops, and professional practices, internships and apprenticeships. Examples include central public administration institutions, courts and businesses. **[SER p.20; EA1-16; EA1-17]** *[Chapter III Standard III.3]*

1.12　　UCL aligns its programmes of study to the Bologna Process. This facilitates bilateral student exchanges with other institutions. **[SER p.20; 11; EA1-16]** It transfers academic staff and students in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the University College's charter and regulations. **[SER p.11; 1; 2]** Student mobility is dependent upon a special commission that decides on the equivalence of courses and credits programmes, according to the study programme in which the student wishes to transfer studies. **[SER p.20; 26]** Through participation in Erasmus+ projects, staff and students have participated in exchanges with European universities, and through round table discussions, the University College has contributed constructively to justice reform and national economic development. **[13; 30; EA1-6; EA1-7]** UCL acknowledges that it needs to do more in this area **[SER p.22]**, and has been working hard to establish partnerships and cooperation agreements, such as the agreements with the University of Burgenland in Austria and with the Aleksander Moisiu University in Durres to provide opportunities for staff and student mobility. **[M1; FE11]** *[Chapter III Standard III.4]*

Findings

Good practice

The review team did not identify any features of good practice.

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Judgement

The Standards for Organisation and Management are fully met.

Evaluation Area 2: Resourcing

2.1   A significant proportion of the teaching staff at UCL are employed on a part-time basis (22 part-time out of a total of 35 academic staff). **[GID]** Institutional practice has been to hire staff according to the requirements of the study programmes, bringing in established practitioners from the fields of law and economics to enrich the teaching process with specialised and practical knowledge. These have included judges at different levels of the judicial system, prosecutors, notaries, lawyers, and scientists. **[SER p.22; 17; M6]** This practice has brought a number of benefits to UCL, including ensuring that the programmes of study cover current practice, the provision of placements and internships, and enhanced opportunities for graduate employment. Recruitment of academic and administrative staff is described in article 26 of the regulations, **[2; 51]** in accordance with Law No. 80/2015, dated 07.22.2015, 'For Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Republic of Albania', and the provisions of the charter. **[2]** The recruitment process has given priority to candidates qualified from internationally recognised universities, as reflected in the current staff composition. **[SER p.23; EA2]** *[Chapter III Standard IV.1]*

2.2   UCL supports its staff though a range of activities that include training sessions such as the Teacher Development Course, open lectures, debates, and social, cultural and sports activities. These include training opportunities for newly appointed staff. Staff also benefit from participating in providing information meetings for current students and for high school graduates across the country. **[SER p.23; 13; 52; 53; EA2-2; EA4-8; M5]** *[Chapter III Standard IV.2]*

2.3   Staff are regularly assessed by the student questionnaire (see 2.14), and by teaching observation during lectures. When the student questionnaire indicates a possible problem, an additional class observation may be carried out, without prior warning to the teacher. Following this, remedial training and development opportunities are provided, and extreme cases of bad practice have resulted in dismissal. **[AE15; FE9; FE13; M5]** *[Chapter III Standard IV.3]*

2.4   UCL organises a number of social and sports activities throughout the academic year for its staff and students. These include sports activities, competitions, and debates on current social issues. **[SER p.24; 56]** *[Chapter III Standard IV.4]*

2.5   Management of human resources is effective and is in accordance with the University College's and faculties' charter and regulations. **[SER p.24; 2; 5; 6]** The responsibilities of the University College and its employees are described in the contract of employment. **[18]** *[Chapter III Standard II.2]*

2.6   UCL is a private legal entity that operates as a commercial company, Nonpublic Institution of Higher Education University 'Luarasi' Ltd. **[SER p.24; 1; 14; EA2-1]** The budget is prepared by the Administrator of the Company and the Office of Finance, and scrutinised by the Rectorate and Academic Senate. **[1; EA2-8; EA2-9]** Implementation of the budget is monitored by the Administrator of the Company in cooperation with governing academic bodies/authorities. **[SER p.25; 1]** *[Chapter III Standard VI.1]*

2.7   The Administrator of the Company and the Finance Office are responsible for financial management of UCL, operating under a holding company, Panorama Group. **[SER p.25; EA2-1]** The University College prepares an annual financial statement, in accordance with legal requirements. The financial statement is scrutinised by the Academic Senate **[EA2-8]** and the Board of Administration, **[EA2-9]** before being submitted to the National Registration Centre and the tax authorities. **[SER p.25; 12; 15]** *[Chapter III Standard VI.2]*

2.8   A licensed accountant audits the UCL accounts on an annual basis to verify that they comply with accounting standards and legal requirements for commercial companies, and that a risk analysis has been performed. **[SER p.25; 16]** *[Chapter III Standard VI.3]*

2.9   UCL has coordinated information systems that include a database of student personal, registration, attendance and performance data, which the Office of the Archive manags. **[SER p.26; p.30]** The University College is currently working to introduce a new digital database to facilitate further the operation of activities for students and staff. It will be launched in July 2017 **[M3]** and will

include nodes for academic and administrative staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders, and is extending its online library network to meet academic staff and students' needs. **[SER p.31; 4; FE1; M3]** There is an institutional webpage, Facebook page and YouTube page. **[45]** The secretariats of the two faculties currently collect and sort the student performance data. The Internal Quality Assurance Unit reviews and analyses the data and shares it with academic staff to help them improve their teaching performance. **[AE 15; M5]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.1]*

2.10 Teaching premises at UCL are equipped with appropriate IT tools for teaching, including computers, video projectors and internet connection. IT support manages these facilities to ensure a reliable service for staff and students. **[SER p.26; 58]** There is a computer laboratory with capacity for 25 students. **[SER p.26; 58; Tour]** Students report satisfaction with the availability of information technology equipment and software. **[M4]** During the visit, the review team was able to confirm the quality and quantity of the information technology resource, and the speed and reliability of the wireless internet connection. **[Tour]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.2]*

2.11 UCL manages its assets effectively in accordance with its strategic plan. **[SER p.26; 4]** In 2016, the University College agreed to a 20-year lease of a former boarding school, the Foreign Language School 'Asim Vokshi' in Tirana, from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy. It has remodeled the building to a high standard to make it better suited for teaching activities. Students reported that they were satisfied with the quality of the accommodation. **[SER p.26; 39; M4; Tour]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.3]*

2.12 The academic activity of the University College is recorded and preserved in the form of academic publications, proceedings of conferences and workshops, and through its special publications. UCL holds copies of these in the library, and in electronic format. **[SER p.27; 59]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.4]*

2.13 The University College has secure arrangements for the management of its assets. The teaching premises and facilities at UCL meet all the requirements of the Minister of Education and Science No. 11, dated 28.02.2011, 'On the procedures and documentation for the opening of a private institution of higher education, first cycle and second study university programmes, non-university study programmes of professional nature, and procedures for the suspension and revocation of the license'. **[SER p.27; 22; tour]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.5]*

2.14 Periodic student surveys include questions about learning resources, facilities and logistics. **[SER p.27; 60]** The University College carefully analyses feedback from these surveys and they contribute to the determination of budget priorities, as confirmed to the review panel by students. **[SER p.27; 60; M4]** Under an agreement signed in 2016, UCL provides the Institute Public Policy and Good Governance with office spaces, logistical support and other administrative facilities. **[61]** There are no currently other agreements to provide services to third parties. **[SER p.27]** *[Chapter III Standard VII.6]*

2.15 UCL operates in a building that has been refitted to a high standard. It is built and fitted out with modern quality materials, and meets all technical and hygienic conditions for operation. The classrooms are quiet, air-conditioned and equipped with appropriate learning technology. The facilities provide adequate accommodation for the current number of students. The building has a central fire-protection system which the appropriate authorities inspect periodically. **[SER p.28; 39; 62]** *[Chapter III Standard V.1]*

2.16 The Office of the Archive is responsible for the management and storage of documents in hardcopy, in accordance with applicable legislation. The appropriate unit carries out the digitisation of institutional data. **[SER p.28]** Management of all documentation, electronically and in hardcopy, is the responsibility of the Registrar's Office, in accordance with the provisions of the regulations. **[2]** *[Chapter III Standard V.2]*

Findings

Good practice

The review team did not identify any features of good practice.

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Judgement

The Standards for Resourcing are fully met.

Evaluation Area 3: The Curriculum

3.1   UCL offers programmes that are in line with its mission to be 'a centre of academic expertise specialising in law and economic studies'. Programmes are closely related to labour market needs and economic development of the country. **[SER p.31; 4; GID; M1; M3; M6]** The Academic Senate approves new programmes **[1; 2]** and UCL offers a range of first and second-cycle programmes in law and economics. **[SER p.31; 9; 10]** The UCL website provides an outline of the study programmes and a range of programme leaflets are produced. **[SER p.31;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/; **52]** The internal regulations define the general admission criteria; specific admission criteria are defined in the programme regulations, and approved by the Academic Senate. **[SER p.31-32; 2; 7; EA3.2; FE3.4, FE3.6]** UCL maintains links with the Regional Education Directorate and with secondary schools; staff, including senior academics, visit high schools and participate in work fairs. **[SER p.31; EA3.1; M5; M7]** In the student survey, all students confirmed that UCL had provided them with what they had seen advertised and that the programme compares favourably with their expectations. Students whom the review team met during the review spoke positively about the information they had received, which informed their initial decision-making. **[Student Survey; M4]** The staff survey confirmed that 90 per cent of staff regard information provided to the public as good. **[Staff Survey]** *[Chapter I Standard I.1]*

3.2   UCL currently offers full-time first and second-cycle programmes in the fields of law and economics. **[SER p.32; GID]** Programmes developed since 2012 are currently in the accreditation process. **[GID; 8; M1]** UCL is in the process of re-establishing its range of continuing education opportunities and summer schools, and is planning to develop courses, for example for election observers and for prisons, and has aspirations to offer some with credit. **[SER p.32; M1; M2; M5]** *[Chapter I Standard I.2]*

3.3   UCL is working to its 2016-2020 Strategic Development Plan and programmes are aligned with this. **[SER p.33; 4; M3]** UCL has an aspiration to enrich the academic offer with new programmes that meet labour market demands, which ultimately come to the Senate for approval. **[SER p.40; M1; M3; M5; M6]** Programmes have clearly specified outcomes. **[SER p.33; EA3.6]** The module-level syllabi submitted in evidence for the review did not specify learning outcomes; however, during the review the students were very clear about the learning outcomes expected. **[10; M4]** Diploma supplements are issued and state the modules studied. **[EA3.8]** In the student survey, all students confirm that the modules fulfil the programme aims and objectives. **[Student Survey; M4]** *[Chapter I Standard I.3]*

3.4   UCL is entirely based in Tirana and offers all of its programmes from there. **[SER p.33; GID]** First-cycle programmes include English in the curriculum, **[SER p.33; 8; 9]** and UCL identified in the self-evaluation report an aspiration to offer some subjects in English. **[SER p.40]** UCL promotes foreign cultures through open lectures from overseas colleagues and a number of opportunities for international competitions and exchanges, such as the Alpha project in Austria and a business competition organised by the American Embassy involving UCL students. **[SER p.34; EA3.7; M1; M3; M4]** *[Chapter I Standard I.4]*

3.5   UCL employs 43 full-time and 38 part-time academic staff. **[GID]** In accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Sports, and the UCL charter and regulations, the University College carefully manages the teaching loads of staff to enable them to engage in other activities such as research and administration, and these are approved by the Academic Senate. **[SER p.34; 1; 2]** The Office of Curricula Development administers teaching plans and subject programmes. **[2]** *[Chapter I Standard I.5]*

3.6   In order to ensure that study programmes are easily understandable and their objectives clearly defined, proposals for new programmes are initiated in the departments, in liaison with external partners and alumni and supported by the Internal Quality Assurance Office. The Senate provides ultimate oversight of all educational programmes. **[SER p.35; 1; M3; M5; M6; M7]** The units and credits for each programme are clearly laid out. **[SER p.35; 8]** With the approval of the Academic Senate, up to 20 per cent of a programme may be reorganised. **[2]** The student guide contains the modules and credits for each programme. **[21]** The internal regulations define the general admission

criteria, and specific admission criteria are defined in the programme regulations. **[SER p.31-32; 2; 7; EA3.2]** Additionally, the UCL website provides an outline of the study programmes. **[SER p.35; http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/]** *[Chapter I Standard I.6]*

3.7   First-cycle programmes provide students with basic theoretical knowledge methods. **[SER p.35; 8]** As set out in the institutional and programme regulations, all programmes allow progressive transition from the first cycle to the second. **[SER p.35; 1; 2]** To be admitted onto a second-cycle programme, applicants must possess a bachelor's degree in a relevant field. **[SER p.35; 2; 26]** There is provision in the book of regulations for students to transfer their studies; although this facility is not set out in the student guide, students have a clear understanding of the process they need to follow. **[10; 50; M4]** First-cycle programmes prepare graduates for employment or for second-cycle study, and if a student is in employment while studying a second-cycle programme their employment is accepted as their professional practice. **[SER p.35; 2; 67]** Study programmes are compliant with the Bologna Process and enable two-way transfers of students. The procedures are set out in the regulations and charter. **[SER p.35; 1; 2; 26]** *[Chapter I Standard I.7]*

3.8   The Student and Career Counselling Office supports students throughout their studies, from initial orientation through to employment. **[SER p.35; 2; Tour; M7]** There is a regulatory framework in place for the management of professional practice placements. **[67]** UCL has formal tutoring arrangements in place and tutors devote at least one hour per week to this role. Preparation for professional placements and for the graduate thesis forms part of the tutoring arrangements. **[SER p.36; 35]** Students reported in the student survey that staff are available to support them, and students spoke warmly during the review of the support that staff provide. **[Student Survey; M4]** UCL employs a wide range of teaching approaches including court visits and simulated court proceedings, and lectures are held in relevant ministries and government departments. **[SER p.32; EA3.9; M5]** UCL recruits staff with relevant qualifications, and part-time staff bring a wealth of experience from their professional fields. **[SER p.36; 17; GID; M5]** In first-cycle study programmes, full-time staff make up 70 per cent of the staffing base and the remaining 30 per cent is provided by part-time staff. **[SER p.36; EA3.10]** *[Chapter I Standard I.8]*

3.9   Appropriately qualified academic staff are involved in drafting the curricula. **[SER p.36; EA3.11; M5]** UCL has cooperation agreements with several public and private institutions to support practice placements and internships, **[SER p.37; EA3.12; M1; M6]** and professionals in their field are involved in teaching on the professional master's programmes. **[SER p.37; EA3.14; M1; M5]** Each department has a research group and every member of staff is involved in research. **[SER p.36; GID; 6; 29]** UCL organises an increasing number of international conferences, around 60 per cent of staff are involved in the publication of scientific papers of international conferences, and the University College collaborates with five higher education institutions in Albania and two international universities. **[GID; http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/; Staff Survey] [Chapter I Standard I.9]**

3.10   UCL programmes are full-time and are designed and delivered in accordance with the Bologna Process. Curricula are organised into modules and credits awarded under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, and to increase the mobility of students through periods of study overseas, UCL has a growing number of partnership agreements with European universities. **[SER p.37; 1; M1; M2]** UCL has a regulatory framework in place for the management of professional practice placements. **[67]** Regulations are in place for the transfer of students and a special commission decides on the equivalence of credits. A number of students have transferred both in and out of the University College, including overseas. **[SER p.37-38; 2I 26; Student Survey]** First-cycle programmes include English in the curriculum, **[SER p.33; 8; 9]** and second-cycle students must gain a formally recognised English qualification in order to be awarded the diploma. **[SER p.37; EA3-15; M4]** The majority of students in the student survey are satisfied with foreign language development. **[Student Survey]** Almost 30 per cent of academic staff have worked overseas in the past five years **[Staff Survey]** and 80 per cent of staff report that internationalisation of the University College is good. **[Staff Survey]** The diploma provided at the end of the programme is accompanied by a diploma supplement. **[SER p.37; EA3.8]** *[Chapter I Standard I.10]*

3.11   UCL organises a number of extracurricular activities ranging from seminars organised by non-governmental organisations through to inter-university sports activities or business fairs. **[SER p.38; http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/; M4]** UCL has a number of cooperation agreements with public institutions and private enterprises for the provision of practice placements and internships. Students

spoke positively about their opportunities to integrate theory with practice during their programmes of study, particularly during internships. **[SER p.38; EA3.12; M1; M4; M6]** *[Chapter I Standard I.11]*

3.12   The curricula offered at UCL have a professional orientation, are closely related to labour market needs and economic development of the country, and are developed in cooperation with stakeholders. **[SER p.39; 4; GID; M1; M2; M3; M6]** Internships and diploma projects are built into first and second-cycle programmes, **[SER p.39; 1]** and to support these UCL has a number of cooperation agreements with public institutions and private enterprises for the provision of practice placements and internships. It maintains close and positive relationships with employers and alumni, and many part-time teaching staff are also able to facilitate internships. **[SER p.39; EA3.12; M1; M2; M3; M6; M7]** All students in the student survey are satisfied with the development of professional competencies and students feel confident about their opportunities in the labour market. **[Student Survey; M4]** The Student and Career Counselling Office keeps statistics about graduate employment. **[SER p.37; EA3.13; M7]** *[Chapter I Standard I.12]*

Findings

Good practice

The review team did not identify any features of good practice.

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Judgement

The Standards for the Curriculum are fully met.

Evaluation Area 4: Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research

4.1 Study programmes are organised to take account of the balance of subjects across semesters and academic years, together with the workload of academic staff. **[9.1; 9.2; M5]** Teaching loads are specified by the head of department and may vary from subject to subject. Professional practice is a compulsory subject for first and second-cycle programmes and takes place both in the University College's laboratories in forensics and informatics, and also in different companies such as the Courts and the University Hospital 'Mother Teresa' (Morgue) under the joint supervision of the department and host institution. **[SER p.42; 68; M4; M5; M6]** Upon completion of the professional practice, the student submits a practice dossier that is evaluated by a practice commission. **[FE4,6]** The student's performance on the professional practice is also assessed by the host employer. **[M7]** The review team considers the extensive and high quality practice learning opportunities that provide students with the skills they need to succeed in their careers as **good practice**. The library provides a range of books in Albanian and in foreign languages, plus access to online resources; it provides compulsory and supportive texts for each programme it offers. **[SER p.42; M4; M6; Student Survey]** *[Chapter I Standard II.I]*

4.2 Diplomas are awarded to students who meet the relevant assessment requirements. Student assessment is based upon the principle of continuous assessment. The regulations specify the format and structure of the thesis and the exam procedures. **[2; 68]** Information on examination procedures is made available to the students at the beginning of the academic year, and the examination regulations and procedures are set out in the internal regulations of 'Luarasi'; examination regulations are available on the website.**[2; 72;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/**]** The University College upholds the principle of confidentiality in exams, and examination results are published by the lecturer posting the grades in a visible place and are documented in the assessment register. **[73; 74]** Procedures are in place for students to complain about exam procedures. **[72; Student Survey]** Complaints against assessment scores are reviewed by an ad hoc commission established by the head of the department to verify the student's claims. **[72]** The structure and details of the diploma thesis are regulated according to the rules for each department and the defence of the thesis at the evaluation committee. **[2]** In the student survey, almost all students report satisfaction with the assessment processes. **[SER p.44; 2; Student Survey]** *[Chapter I Standard II.2]*

4.3 Enhancement of the study programmes is achieved through a number of interlocking processes, including evaluation of teaching quality by the head of department and the dean of the faculty, student surveys once per semester and performance assessment visits organised by the internal quality assurance unit. **[SER p.46; 23; M3; M4; M5; M7]** Under the auspices of the Rectorate, the internal quality assurance unit prepares an annual report, including the student survey results, which is submitted to the Rector and the head of departments, and made available in the University College's governing bodies and distributed via email. **[25; 75; FE2; M3; M4; M6]** Based on the results of student surveys and interviews with academic staff, the department and the University College periodically review the programmes, seriously considering the results and the students' suggestions. **[46; FE9; FE13; FE24; FE25; M5]** The Student and Career Counselling Office and the human resource unit draw conclusions about labour market trends and use these to inform curriculum development in areas such as informatics and security, economics, and public order. **[SER p.46; FE40; FE40-1; FE40-2; M2; M7]** *[Chapter I Standard II.3]*

4.4 The quality of teaching is continually improved by staff undertaking teaching and research training, involving both internal and external lecturers. **[SER p.47; EA4.8]** Lecturers are encouraged to participate in research activities both internally and externally, and to publish in the UCL journals 'Thought' and 'Tribune Juridike', as well as other national and international journals. **[76; 24]** At the annual assessment of staff performance, conversations are held with staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and any underperforming staff are given time to improve. **[31; M2; M3; M5]** The University College recognises that more staff training in teaching and learning is needed, but encourages staff to participate in training sessions or round tables on teaching and learning methods, such as a two-day course in teacher development provided by the London School of Economics. The

internal quality assurance unit is also planning to organise a staff development session where colleagues can share best practice. During the review, staff particularly spoke of the use of staff development to improve underperformance, and the University College may wish to consider how it assures itself that staff development is in place to raise teaching quality for all. **[SER p.31; EA4-8; M1; M2; M3; M7]** *[Chapter I Standard II.4]*

4.5   The department is the basic teaching and research unit at UCL. Each head of department supervises the research activities conducted by the academic staff, individually or as a group, and makes an annual report to the faculty council on progress in research. **[SER p.48-49; 6; M3]** The 2016-2020 strategic plan identified the lack of funds to support scientific development as a weakness but in the last term, consistent with its strategic aims, the University College awarded funding to both faculties to each host a conference, the Innovation and Sustainable Development Conference and the The Vote Right and the Property Right Conference. **[4 p.6-7;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/kerkimi-shkencor/**; M3; M5]** *[Chapter II Standard I.I]*

4.6   The University College encourages academic staff to take part in scientific research activities both individually and in research groups, and they are required to participate in conferences or publish in journals. **[SER p.49; M3; M5; M7]** The staff survey identifies that almost 60 per cent of staff are engaged in publishing in international journals and participate in international conferences. **[Staff survey]** UCL also collaborates with other research centres inside and outside the country. **[SER p.49; 20; M3]** A number of the scientific activities of the academic staff have been organised in collaboration with other research institutes such as the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of Law at the University of Bari, and the School of Magistrates. **[SER p.49; M7]** *[Chapter II Standard I.2]*

4.7   To build capacity, the University College promotes staff involvement in projects with local and international partners, including hosting conferences and participation in different scientific activities. **[11; 20; M7]** The University College has participated in scientific projects such as 'SALTUM' in cooperation with universities in the USA, China, Brazil, and Italy. Furthermore, it has extended its cooperation with the University of Lodz in Poland and the University of Burgenland in Austria through student mobility exchanges. **[SER p.49; EA3-19-30; M7]** The University College has agreements with different regional and international periodicals that encourage staff to publish in their journals, such as the Anglisticum, Diskutime, Reforma and Arcjournals journals, as well as its own scientific journals. **[SER p.50; 20; M5]** It promotes academic text books and different publications through its University Press and online libraries. **[59; 20; M5; M7]** The Rector has already signed a number of partnership agreements and, with the aim of extending its portfolio of collaborations, UCL is currently initiating other partnership agreements with the Albanian American Institute, the British Council, and the National Democratic Institute. **[M1]** *[Chapter II Standard I.3]*

4.8   UCL promotes research through the departments. At the beginning of the academic year, individual scientific research work plans are presented to the faculty council, and, after approval, action plans are developed. **[SER p.50; FE16]** The University College also encourages scientific debate among academic staff. **[SER p.50; M5]** At the beginning of the academic year, academic staff make their personal research plans including planned publications in national and international scientific journals, participation in national and international scientific conferences, monograph publications, participation in scientific projects and planned qualifications and titles. At the end of the academic year, each academic staff member presents a report on the realisation of their scientific research work plan. With the changes in the new law, UCL recently established 'LUARASI IDEA' as a separate legal entity in order to facilitate external grant applications and so facilitate research development within the University College. **[AE15; FE17; FE18; M1; M3; M5]** *[Chapter II Standard I.4]*

4.9   UCL offers all the necessary facilities for research, including literature, internet access and financial support for projects, conferences and the publication of research papers and monographs. **[SER p.51; 4; 59; 20; M3]** The University College aims to recruit qualified academic staff and the department determines relevant criteria at the beginning of the recruitment process according to the priorities sets in the strategic development plan. **[SER p.51; 4]** Each member of academic staff completes a form at the beginning of the academic year where they define their research goals, and at the end of the academic year the staff research achievements are monitored. **[M3]** According to its

mission, UCL aims to prepare students for elite levels in the areas of economics and law and its research plans are based on these areas. **[SER p.51; 4]** *[Chapter II Standard I.5]*

4.10 The University College has a five-year development strategy that aims to support internationalisation, project development and scientific research. **[4]** The research activities of the academic staff are realistic in terms of the current stage of development of the University College, which only offers programmes up to master's level. In light of this, the review team considers the scientific research work to be substantial, with a direct impact on teaching quality, such as the opportunity for master's students to conduct research with Korcha Beer. **[SER p.51; 20; M5]** In implementing the strategic plan, UCL prepared an action plan that includes research, and for the academic year 2016-17 it has so far achieved the two objectives of organising two annual conferences. **[4; FE16;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/kerkimi-shkencor/**]** UCL has also organised conferences, round tables, open lectures, and book promotions in collaboration with other organisations such as the University of Tirana, the South East European University of Kosovo, and the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia. **[76; 77; M7; M5]** UCL encourages academic mobility and welcomes foreign researchers from prestigious European scientific institutes to hold lectures and scientific debates within the framework of the internationalisation of the academic process, such as a colleague from the Bocconi School of Management in Italy. **[SER p.53;** http://www.sdabocconi.it/en/faculty/**; M3]** So far six students and five academic staff from UCL have benefitted from an international exchange mobility programme abroad. **[EA4-4; Students survey; M4]** UCL may wish to consider how it could strengthen this work further in order to enhance and increase its internationalisation. *[Chapter II Standard I.6]*

4.11 Research outcomes are presented at conferences and scientific symposia organised by UCL, and published in periodicals, national and international journals, and those published by UCL. **[SER p.53; 20; M5; M7]** At the end of the academic year, an annual report on the publications and participation of the staff in conferences is prepared. **[20; 59]** *[Chapter II Standard I.7]*

4.12 The University College periodically monitors and evaluates the outcomes of the scientific work of its academic staff and has established a Scientific Research Coordination Unit that is responsible for coordinating UCL's scientific research activity. **[SER p.53; M1; M3]** UCL adheres to defined criteria when hiring staff and in evaluating academic staff performance. **[AE4-13]** The University College is committed to the transfer of research results to the wider society and provided two examples where scientific results are published in the two journals that UCL manages, Tribune Juridical and Mendimi. **[59; M3; M5]** Due to a collaborative relationship with one of the main media groups, most of the University College's research activities have gained media coverage. **[SER p.53; M5]** UCL collaborates with businesses and legal organisations in Albania, such as the Tirana Chamber of Commerce, Hysenbelliu Group, and Credins Bank Albania, with the aim of enhancing teaching practice, and these relationships enable student internships. **[SER p.54; M6]** *[Chapter II Standard I.8]*

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified one feature of good practice:

- the extensive and high-quality practice learning opportunities that provide students with the skills they need to succeed in their careers (paragraph 4.1; *Chapter I Standard II.1*).

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Judgement

The Standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research are fully met.

Evaluation Area 5: Students and their Support

5.1 Student enrolment is based upon current legislation and the institutional strategic development plan. **[4]** Admission criteria are published online, in information brochures and media campaigns, and at visits to high schools. **[**http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/pranimet/kriteret-e-pranimit-2017-2018/**; 52; 58]** In order to inform prospective students, the Student and Career Counselling Office coordinates admission activities and collaborates with departments to hold promotional activities with graduates of high schools. **[79]** A range of admission activities are undertaken, including open days, participation in educational fairs and applicant counselling. **[SER p.55; 79; 78; 52]** UCL evaluates the admission activities that they undertake. **[EA5-1]** The University College welcomes new students to assist them in their academic integration and familiarises them with the programme curriculum. **[SER p.56; 4; 79; M5]** UCL maintains close collaboration with Regional Education Directorates and Education Offices in order to conduct promotional activities. **[SER p.56; 4 p.20]** In terms of student communication, the University College publishes the reception opening times on the webpage and establishes stands near the Registrar's Office. **[SER p.56; 79; M7** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/**]** The overall academic student-staff ratio is 12:1. The student-staff ratio varies slightly between faculties; in the Faculty of Law it is 8:1 and in the Faculty of Economics it is 6:1. **[SER p.56; EA5-4; M3]** *[Chapter I Standard III.1]*

5.2 UCL offers counselling and support to students in both cycles through the Student and Career Counselling Office, where students can get information about the organisation of open forums, training, internships, social and sport activities. **[SER p.56; 34; 79]** A range of communication methods are used including internet, email/phone, the website, periodic advertisement, posters, leaflets, and information stands. **[SER p.57;** http://www.luarasi-univ.edu.al/**; M5; M7; FE1]** Each of the faculty Registrar's Offices holds a personal file for each student, including original high school diploma, transcripts of grades, contract of student's registration, copy of their ID, their address and phone number. **[SER p.57; 80; Tour]** *[Chapter I Standard III.2]*

5.3 The Office for Students and Career Counselling helps students to obtain the information they need and assists in orientation. **[SER p.57; M5]** It supports the students who wish to change their study programme and this is done in accordance with the internal regulations of the University College. **[SER p.57; 2; M4]** The tutorials policy sets out how the academic staff conduct the mentoring process and the students whom the review team met spoke warmly about the support they receive and the availability of staff, saying that staff regard them as colleagues. **[EA5-5; M4; M5]** At the end of the academic year each tutor prepares a report for the head of department on the tutorship of the group of students, where they make recommendations for improvement. **[FE5; M4; M5]** *[Chapter I Standard III.3]*

5.4 Following the 'Procedure for the treatments of the students with grants' social scholarships are awarded for students with disabilities and to those from the Roma and Balkan Egyptian communities. **[32]** To date no disabled students have been recruited, but in the last academic year the number of scholarships awarded has multiplied, increasing from 14 in 2015-2016 to 77 in 2016-2017 **[32; EA5-3]** Scholarship support is monitored throughout the year and if a recipient does not perform well, the scholarship may be removed the following year. **[M3]** The University College provides support for students who are athletes. **[EA5-6; M4]** It does not offer any part-time studies. **[GID]** *[Chapter I Standard III.4]*

5.5 The University College provides literature through the library and materials produced by teachers, and from Luarasi University Press and bookstore. **[82]** The library enables access to electronic resources that offer free materials, including textbooks and foreign magazines. **[FE82.1; 82.2]** The library has 2,543 book titles, of which 763 are in English. **[36; FE82]** UCL enriches the book funds for each study programme and for research. Students provide feedback through surveys or by making a specific complaint if a required book is not available. Teachers sometimes make books that are needed for their courses available from their own resources. **[SER p.58; M3]** Students report satisfaction with the availability of texts in the library **[Student survey]**. A range of online libraries are also available, which are classified according to each faculty. The library is open from 08:30 to 14:00 and 15:30 to 19:00. **[SER p.58; M4; Student survey]** *[Chapter I Standard III.5]*

5.6	Tutorship for students is provided throughout the academic year. The University College advises that each student retains the same tutor throughout their cycle of study. **[35]** Support for academic study is provided by the teachers of the courses. **[10; M4]** Students who encounter difficulty are supported by a number of orientation and consulting sessions. **[35]** The faculty council evaluates the effectiveness of the tutorship service. This is done through questionnaires developed in collaboration with students, in which each student expresses an anonymous judgement on the performance and effectiveness of collective and individual tutorship. **[EA5-8; M4; M7]** The tutorship coordinator for the faculty, in collaboration with the coordinator of the Office of Student and Career Counselling, compiles an annual report on the tutorship service that is submitted to the faculty council. **[FE5]** *[Chapter I Standard III.6]*

5.7	The students are represented on the University College's governing bodies in accordance with the law and its internal regulations. **[2; 83; M3]** Students organise different activities within the framework of the Student Council and represent themselves in the University College's teaching and research governing structures. Through the Student Council they express their opinions and make proposals, as regulated by the Statute and composition of the Student Council. UCL supports students' activities through the Office of Students and Career Counselling. UCL provides financial assistance for the activities arranged by the Student Council and the Council has established students' clubs, a newspaper, and, in response to student requests, established a relationship with a student council in Kosovo. **[83; M4]** *[Chapter I Standard III.7]*

5.8	Students are supported in their personal, social and academic achievement through the Student and Career Counselling Office, which supports the cultural life of UCL, for example tourism visits, artistic activities and sport activities. **[SER p.60; 56; M4; Students Survey]** UCL has agreements with the Ali Demi sport complex, privately owned sport facilities where students can participate in a range of sporting activities such as football and volleyball. **[M4]** UCL has signed a contact with a life insurance company for the protection of the students' health. **[79; FE14; Student survey]** *[Chapter I Standard III.8]*

5.9	The Student and Career Counselling Office is responsible for recording the employment statistics of the graduates. **[SER p.60; 47; 84]** The University College pursues policies for the employment of its graduates, for example by providing a legal clinic, whose main function is to provide legal assistance in the courts for those who cannot afford to fund their own legal protection. **[84; M4]** It has established 29 collaborations, many of which are with significant public and private institutions and enterprises such as the Albanian Parliament, the Ministry of Culture, the Board of the Albanian Financial Supervision Authority, the State Police, the Albanian Directorate of Patents and Trademarks, the Hysenbelliu Group and a number of representatives from the Albanian judiciary. A number of individuals from these organisations are also employed as part-time staff. **[M4; M6]** These collaborations provide students with a range of high quality internship opportunities, a number of which have led directly to employment. **[SER p.60; M6]** The review team regards the wide-ranging employability support provided to UCL by senior professionals and expert part-time academic staff as **good practice**. *[Chapter I Standard III.9]*

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified one feature of good practice:

- the wide-ranging employability support provided to UCL by senior professionals and expert part-time academic staff (paragraph 5.9; *Chapter I Standard III.9*).

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any recommendations.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress.

Judgement

The Standards for Students and their Support are fully met.

Evidence list

SER

Upload No.	Evidence No.	Title
1		Rector Declaration
2	GID	General Information Document
3	SER	Self-Evaluation Report
4	1	Charter
5	2	Regulations
6	3	Organisational Chart
7	4	Strategic Plan
8	5	In Albanian - Faculty Regulations
9	6	In Albanian - -Department Regulations
10	7	In Albanian - Programme Regulations
11	8	Study Programmes
12	9	Study Plans
13	10	Syllabuses
14	11	In Albanian - International cooperation
15	12	Annual budget
16	13	In Albanian - Annual Budget Report
17	14	In Albanian - Study Tariffs
18	15	In Albanian - Financial review
19	16	In Albanian - Audit reports
20	17	In Albanian - Staff lists
21	18	In Albanian - Academic personnel contracts
22	19	In Albanian - Student contracts
23	20	Report on scientific activities
24	21	Student Guide
25	22	Infrastructure KU Luarasi
26	23	Regulation of organisation of studies
27	24	Manual of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit
28	25	In Albanian - Procedure for reviewing study programmes and reports
29	26	Student transfer procedures
30	27	Qualifications of academic staff
31	28	In Albanian - Evidence of evaluation commissions (examples)
32	29	Report on academic research activity of academic staff
33	30	In Albanian - ERASMUS+ report
34	31	In Albanian - Teaching quality assessment indicators
35	32	Procedure for granting scholarships to students
36	33	In Albanian - Decisions of Collegiate Bodies
37	34	In Albanian - Student Office and Career Counselling Reports
38	35	Rule of tutorage
39	36	In Albanian - Library fund
40	37	Student performance indicators (statistics)
41	38	In Albanian - Membership/Representatives of the bodies of 'Luarasi' University College
42	39	In Albanian - Lease contract and panimetry of the property
43	40	In Albanian - Career book
44	41	In Albanian - Research-scientific activity form
45	42	In Albanian - Performance indicator

46	43	In Albanian - Composition of the Academic Senate, NJBSC and Ethics Council
47	44	In Albanian - Student admissions criteria
48	45	In Albanian - Web page/e-mail/YouTube
49	46	In Albanian - Records of meetings and the decision-making bodies
50	47	In Albanian - Data on student employment
51	48	In Albanian - Alumni activities
52	49	In Albanian - Labour market study spreading new programmes
53	50	In Albanian - Information on inter-institutional cooperation
54	51	In Albanian - Model employment procedure
55	52	In Albanian - Promotional leaflets
56	53	In Albanian - correspondence with DAR and school visit agenda
57	54	Collaboration with 'Aleksander Moisiu' University
58	55	In Albanian - Orders for the appointment of Heads of Department
59	56	In Albanian - Report of student activities
60	57	In Albanian - Act of agreement Sicred-Luarasi
61	58	In Albanian - Quantitative data for equipment
62	59	In Albanian - Luarasi Publishing
63	60	In Albanian - Student survey model
64	61	IPPM Contract
65	62	In Albanian - Hygienic sanitary and fire protection permits
66	63	In Albanian - MAS building assessment act
67	64	In Albanian - Grading/matriculation/graduation notebook model template
68	65	In Albanian - Legal clinic contract
69	66	In Albanian - Procedure for opening new programmes
70	67	In Albanian - Practice guide
71	68	In Albanian - Degree Regulations/guidelines for diploma presentation
72	69	In Albanian - Decisions on tuition practices
73	70	In Albanian - Decision on the approval of diploma theses
74	71	In Albanian - Decision on permanent faculty and institutional commissions
75	72	In Albanian - Exam regulations
76	73	In Albanian - Record of exams
77	74	In Albanian - Questionnaire for lecturers
78	75	In Albanian - Questionnaire for programme evaluation
79	76	In Albanian - List of conferences with themes
80	77	Public Relations Office report
81	78	In Albanian - Photo by promoter activity of 'Luarasi' University College
82	79	In Albanian - Career Counselling Office
83	80	In Albanian - Student application form
84	81	In Albanian - List of open lectures
85	82	In Albanian - Evidence of online library, Library fund
86	83	In Albanian - Statute and composition of Student Council
87	84	In Albanian - List of students employed at 'Luarasi' University College

Additional Evidence (AE)

Upload No.	Evidence No.	Title
15		Response for additional evidence
16	EA1-14	Strategy for Cooperation and International Cooperation
17	EA2.6	Staff international studies
18	EA2-5 Nr2	Staff appointments panel
19	EA2-5 Nr3	Staff vacancy - person spec
20	EA2-5 Nr4	Staff appointment report
21	EA2-5 Nr5	Staff appointment cover sheet
22	EA2-5 Nr6	Staff appointment report
23	EA2-5 Nr1	Recruitment procedures
24	EA3.1.1	In Albanian - Adresa DAR
25	EA3.10	In Albanian - Staff
26	EA3.12.1	Memorandum of Cooperation
27	EA3-8.1	In Albanian - Diploma Certificate Bachelor of Business Administration
28	EA308.2	Translation - Diploma Certificate Bachelor of Business Administration
29	EA3-8Nr3	Diploma Supplement
30	EA3-8Nr2	In Albanian - Transcript
31	EA3-12	Cooperation agreement
32	EA3-19-11	Partnerships - Strategy for cooperation and international cooperation
33	EA3-19-30	Report of ERASMUS + programmes
34	EA3-19-67	Practice Guidelines
35	EA4-11	Report of Academic staff research activity
36	EA5-3	Scholarship statistics
37	EA1-2	Training for students elected to formal committees
38	EA1-4	URL of annual report
39	EA1-6	Evidence of staff and student involvement in decision making
40	EA1-9	Evidence of market research to inform programme development
41	EA1-10	Examples of external stakeholder involvement in programme design
42	EA1-12	Work of Student Office and career counselling work - links with alumni
43	EA1-15	Evidence of cooperation with other institutions
44	EA2.6	Evidence of staff qualified from international universities
45	EA2-1	Luarasi University registration status
46	EA2-2	Evidence of staff induction and staff development
47	EA3.10	Staff: student ratios
48	EA3-1	Request for secondary school visit
49	EA3-2	Programme specific admission criteria
50	EA3-5	Evidence of how the Student and Career Counselling Office gains feedback from students
51	EA3-7	Examples of promotion of foreign cultures
52	EA3-9	Evidence of different teaching approaches
53	EA3-11	Documentation to open the Professional Masters programme in Security and Public Order
54	EA3-12	Evidence of cooperation agreements that support professional practices

55	EA3-13	Graduate employment statistics
56	EA3-14	Evidence that professionals in their field are involved in teaching on professional masters programmes
57	EA3-16	Office of Projects and External Relations Annual Report 2015-16
58	EA4-5	Quality Assurance Manual - periodic review of study programmes
59	EA4-7	Round table discussions - staff and students
60	EA4-8	Statement about staff workshop
61	EA4-8	Certificate of attendance staff workshop
62	EA5-4	Evidence staff:student ratios
63	EA5-5	Evidence about orientation and mentoring of students
64	EA4-1.1	Conference budget
65	EA1-1	Evidence of how students are elected to the Academic Senate, Board of Ethics and other committees
66	EA3-15.1	Diploma Certificate
67	EA1-7	Evidence of staff and student support for international exchanges
68	EA2-8	Extract of the minutes of the meeting of Academic Senate
69	EA2-9	Extract of Board of Administration papers showing scrutiny of annual budget
70	EA3-3	Conditions of enrolment in the 2nd cycle study programme Master of Science in Civil and Commercial Law
71	EA3-6	Programme level learning outcomes
72	EA3-15	TOEFL Certificate of Achievement
73	EA4-1	Conference budget
74	EA4-12	Action plan for implementation of Strategic Plan 2016-17
75	EA4-13	Example of research evaluation
76	EA5-1	Evaluation of admission activities
77	EA5-6	Support for athletic students
78	EAR-18	Student Council visits to Republic of Kosovo
79	EAR-18-1	Student photo
80	EAR-18-2	Photo
81	EAR-18-3	Photo
82	EAR-18-4	Photo
83	E5-8	Student questionnaire - tutoring
84	EA4-4	Evidence of international exchanges - staff and student
85	EA1-16	List of collaboration agreements

Further Evidence (FE)

Upload No.	Evidence No.	Title
1	FE1	In Albanian - e-mail sent to students on the creation of University Online System
2	FE2	In Albanian - Report of Quality Assurance Group
3	FE 3.1	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
4	FE 3.2	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
5	FE 3.3	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
6	FE 3.4	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
7	FE 3.5	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
8	FE 3.6	In Albanian - Approving the criteria for admission
9	82.1	Subscription to the Economist
10	82.2	Annual membership Questia

11	82	Library titles
12	25	In Albanian - Procedure for reviewing study programmes and reports
13	FE 4	In Albanian - Explanatory material on practice
14	FE 5	In Albanian - Tutorial report - sample
15	FE 6	In Albanian - Internship summary
16	FE 7	In Albanian - Annual Report on Academic Year 2016
17	FE 8	In Albanian - Practice Guide
18	FE 9	In Albanian - Class observation report
19	24	Internal Quality Assurance
20	FE 10	In Albanian - Internship Agreement
21	40	In Albanian - Career Book
22	40.1	In Albanian - Career Book
23	40.2	In Albanian - Career Book
24	FE 11	In Albanian - List of Memoranda
25	FE 12	In Albanian - Practice Form
26	FE 13	In Albanian - Evaluation process. Academic Staff Evaluation
27	FE 14	In Albanian - Agreement on Student Insurance
28	FE 16	In Albanian - Research Strategy Plan
29	FE 17	In Albanian - Action Plan Luarasi IDEA
30	FE 18	In Albanian - Research Centre Documents
31	FE 31	Contract for the online system
32	FE 19	Staff members in attendance during the review

Meetings

M1   Meeting 1
M2   Meeting 2
M3   Meeting 3
M4   Meeting 4
M5   Meeting 5
M6   Meeting 6
M7   Meeting 7