



**AGJENCIA E SIGURIMIT TË CILËSISË NË
ARSIMIN E LARTË**

**Report of the Institutional Accreditation
of New York University of Tirana**

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REVIEW TEAM:

1. Prof. Asoc. Dr. Hemion Braho Lead Reviewer



2. Dr. Gentian Elezi Reviewer



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About this review

The overall aim of Institutional Review is to assess the extent to which New York University of Tirana (UNYT) meets the Albanian State Quality Standards which came into force in 2011. Institutional Review is a peer review process with a review team composed of a mix of experienced international higher education reviewers and Albanian reviewers appointed by ASCAL. The review team is led by an experienced Albanian higher education reviewer.

The resulting reports will serve not only for institutional accreditation based on the extent to which the UNYT meets the standards, but will also inform stakeholders, Albanian government, the public and students of how the 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 ASCAL and Accreditation Board. This overall judgement is one of four levels:

- **State Quality Standards are fully 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, ASCAL 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.

Background of New York University of Tirana

New York University of Tirana (UNYT) was founded in 2002. It is the only American-style liberal arts college operating in Albania. Over 1,000 students have graduated from UNYT and they are currently pursuing successful careers nationally and internationally, as professional business people and entrepreneurs. Some are also continuing academic careers in Albania and abroad. UNYT is a private university delivering four-year American-type bachelor's study programmes. It secured its first institutional and programme-specific accreditation in 2006 and was reaccredited in 2015. Study programmes were reorganised and accredited to lead to an Integrated Second-Level Diploma in 2007 and a professional master's in 2010. The integrated Master of Science programme in Law was licensed in 2009. All programmes other than the MSc in Law, which was developed in collaboration with the University of Greenwich, operate in collaboration with the State University of New York Empire State College and the University of Bolton. The MBA programme, equivalent to Master of Science, was initially licensed in 2008. Three other graduate programmes were designed and operated in collaboration with the University of Greenwich: the LL.M in International and Commercial Law, the MSc in Computer Science and the MA in International Affairs. They were licensed in 2012 and 2013. UNYT has been recognised as a university since 2012. It has also offered doctoral programmes in Business Administration, Computer Science and Humanities and Social Sciences since 2012. These doctoral programmes were accredited and are in the process of reorganization.

During the last academic year UNYT has reorganized the basic and main units, has reorganized the study programs and has opened new study programs which will start their activity in the academic year 2021-2022. In particular, UNYT decided to reorganize the Professional Master Programs into 4-year Bachelor programs. As a second step UNYT decided to reorganize all the 4-years bachelor programs into 3-years bachelor programs

Starting next academic year, UNYT will offer new study programs through existing and reorganized departments / faculties:

1. Master of Science in Psychology, through the Department of Psychology;
2. Bachelor in Business Informatics, through the Department of Business Informatics and e-Business.
3. Bachelor in Applied Banking and Finance, through the Department of Economics and Finance,
4. Integrated Master of Science in Architecture, through the Department of Architecture and Design.
5. Bachelor in Telecommunication and Network Engineering, through the Department of Telecommunication and Network Engineering.

Furthermore, UNYT has reorganized its academic structures by creating three Faculties, each comprising of three departments. In accordance with the institution

reorganization starting from the academic year 2020-2021, UNYT will be composed of 3 (three) faculties namely: Faculty of Economy and Business; Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Faculty Of Engineering and Architecture and I (one) Institute, The Institute of "European and Balkan Studies

Summary report

The New York University of Tirana, has developed the self-evaluation report, prepared by the self-evaluation team. The self-evaluation team included senior staff, academic and administrative staff and also a student. Drafts of SER were circulated for comment within the University being finalised and approved by the Rector and Senate. This is not the first periodic accreditation process for UNYT. In 2017 this University has completed the last accreditation process and with decision BA No.102 (10.11,2017) of the Accreditation Board, New York University of Tirana got 3 (three) years of accreditation.

The SER provided an introduction to the operation of the University. The SER was supported by evidence, and more targeted evidence was supplied prior to and during the review. The evidences were available in English and in Albanian. Overall the review team found the SER to be a helpful document upon which to build the review.

The review visit took place over two days. The review team was made up of two senior higher education reviewers from Albania and Italy. The review team was supported by a Review Manager provided by ASCAL, the agency responsible for reviews of higher education in Albania. The review team was provided with a self-evaluation report and a portfolio of supporting evidence weeks in advance of the review visit, and supplemented by additional documentation requested. Over 170 documents were considered, which enabled the team to familiarise themselves with the structure, policies, management procedures, facilities, teaching and research activity at the University. Evidence considered included the Statute of the University, Academic Regulations, Annual Reports, admission and orientation procedures, the range of external agreements, examples of programme information and evidence from deliberative meetings.

Several meetings took place during the two days of the review visit which allowed the review team to gain a clearer understanding of responsibilities, procedures and the views of staff and students. The review team met with the Rector, senior staff, students, academic staff, administrative and support staff, alumni, and representatives of local and partner organisations. Notes were taken at all meetings. As part of a tour of the University the review team viewed libraries, computer rooms, laboratories, teaching spaces, administrative areas and all the other facilities of UNYT. Having reviewed all evidence available, the team reached the conclusions set out below.

The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are **fully met**. The organisation of the University is defined within its Statute and Regulations, and established procedures and protocols are followed for formal meetings. The University has done good progress in meeting the requirements of law 80/2015. The review team finds that UNYT has build up a good collaboration with public and

private institutions for students support during the practical training and also for their future employment. The Statute, as the fundamental document that determines the basic norms and rules of UNYT functioning and activities, is done in compliance with UNYT mission, vision and objectives. New York University of Tirana has a very strong collaboration with national and international private institutions for research and staff-students support exchange. It is recommended to increase the financial autonomy of the basic units, specifically the departments.

The standards for Resourcing are **fully met**. The responsibilities for resources are clearly set out in the Statute and Regulations of the University and are carried out appropriately through the Rectorate, Senate and Administration Board. The review team confirmed that the University has generally appropriate and effective systems and processes for managing both its human and physical resources. The construction project of the University Campus has been approved while the construction works are expected to start soon.

The standards for the Curriculum are **fully met**. Programmes are offered in the three cycles of study and reflect the University's mission and its position in the country and labour market. The study programs are designed with reference to the demands of the labor market and reflect the flexibility of this market. The curriculum has clear study and training objectives. UNYT has built strong and comprehensive links with partner institutions and associates in professional skills who are able to support the students. The review team that UNYT has sufficient data on graduated employed students.

The standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research are **fully met**. The University has a developing research agenda. Teaching is managed appropriately. The University applies a continuous improvement of teaching quality including foreign expert staff. UNYT provides considerable access to students for the completion of practical and professional training in cooperation with some local institutions, whether public or private. More students should be encouraged and involved in research projects awarded to UNYT. The University should carefully address different interpretations from instructors, regarding the assessment procedures.

The standards for Students and their Support are **fully met**. The University provides guidance, advice and tutorial and other support to prospective and current students and, where possible, to students with additional needs or from disadvantaged minorities. A well-resourced library is available to students. The University has a sufficient Alumni database. The established practice and functionality of the role of the academic advisor/supervisor is a very good practice which has proved to improve student experience and academic performance. Students should be encouraged to be more active in exchanging programs. It is recommended to increase contacts with the alumni network and try to include them in collaborations for research projects.

Summary of findings

Good practice

- New York University of Tirana has a very strong collaboration with national and international private institutions for research and staff-students support exchange. (**Chapter III Standard III.3**)
- The established practice and functionality of the role of the academic advisor/supervisor is a very good practice which has proved to improve student experience and academic performance. [**Chapter I Standard I.8, Chapter I Standard III.3**].

Weaknesses

No weaknesses were found.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to make available an institutional web page also in Albanian since it is accessible only in English language. **Chapter III Standard II.1**
- More students should be encouraged and involved in research projects awarded to UNYT. **Chapter II Standard I.1**
- UNYT should carefully address different interpretations from instructors, regarding the assessment procedures (During M7 there were contrasting versions between staff on the possible use of additional assignments for improving grades). **Chapter I Standard II.2**
- Students should be encouraged to be more active in exchanging programs (extremely few of the students in the sample chosen for the meeting with the review team had had the experience or had the intention to apply). **Chapter II Standard I.6**
- It is recommended to maintain closer contacts with the alumni network and try to include them in collaborations for research projects. **Chapter I Standard III.9**

Affirmation of action being taken

- The construction project of the University Campus has been approved while the construction works are expected to start soon. **Chapter III, Standard V.1**

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 review team recommends to the Accreditation Board that at the New York University of Tirana the State Quality Standards are **Fully met**

Evaluation Area 1: The Organisation and its Management

1.1 New York University of Tirana carries out its academic and scientific activity based on the legal acts in force, on its statute, and on all other acts approved by UNYT governing bodies and authorities. It is a public higher institution and was established in 2002. **[SER p.3]** The Statute is the fundamental document that determines the basic norms and rules of UNYT functioning and activities, in compliance with its mission, vision and objectives. The statute is compiled based on in Law No. 80\2015 “On the Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania”, Article 33. The UNYT mission and strategic plan are drafted in accordance with the Statute, the Law on Higher Education, and its bylaws **[Annex 1.3/Annex 1.4/ Annex 1.5]** These documents regulate the University’s teaching, scientific and administrative activities, in compliance with its mission and objectives and extends its regulatory affects to all the governing structures. **Chapter III Standard I.1**

1.2 The organization and management of UNYT are ensured by collegial bodies and are carried out in compliance with the legal framework in force. The highest decision-making bodies are the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration, which make possible the administration of the academic and financial activity of the university. **[Annex 1.1/Annex 1.2]** Other collegial structures, academic and administrative governing authorities operate at the University, in accordance with the legal and sublegal acts in force. The Academic Senate, as the highest collegial decision-making body, decides on the most important strategic planning of the institution in the fields of teaching, scientific research and gives its approval on administrative and financial matters. This body functions according to the UNYT Statute, which stipulates all its competencies **[Ibid.]**. It meets periodically, usually once per month, and issues its respective decisions. The Board of Administration, as a collegial decision-making body supervises and controls the university’s activity, regarding administrative, financial, and assets management of the institution. **[Annex 1.10]. Chapter III Standard I.2**

1.3 The collegial bodies of UNYT meet periodically, in accordance with the provisions of the specific regulations for their functioning. The Senate, as the highest academic collegial body of the University, carries out its activity in regular meetings **[Annex 1.47/M2]**. Its members are chosen by the Faculties and representatives of the Student Council. The Academic Senate carries out its functions in cooperation with other UNYT collegial bodies. It cooperates with the Board of Administration and other collegial bodies on approving the University's statute and regulation, medium and long term strategic planning on teaching and scientific research development, UE budget, etc. Furthermore, the Board of Administration, as a collegial body responsible for the financial administration of the institution, cooperates with the Academic Senate on drafting and approving the annual budget and the medium-term budget based on the proposals made by the main units and basic units, on the strategic plan on institutional development and on the medium-term budget program **[Annex 1.48]**.

1.4 The Deans are head of the faculties and their appointment is recommended by the Rector and they are elected by the Academic Senate. The Heads of Department are recommended by the Deans and appointed by the Rector. The Department is the

basic unit which enables and carries out the constructive discussion among members of the academic staff. The department meeting is led by the head of the department and throughout it, matters are addressed, tasks on teaching, the study programme, scientific research activities carried out by the department members are monitored and appointed, and also the relationship with the students is addressed. **[Annex 1.2/Annex 1.15]. Chapter III Standard I.3**

1.5 New York University of Tirana functions in compliance with the legal basis in the field of higher education, based on which it has drafted its internal functioning acts that guarantee external and internal autonomy of the institution. Internal autonomy is ensured by the university's Statute and Regulations, which define the organizational and functioning rules of the institution and periodic institutional evaluations. **[Annex 13.13/ Annex 1.14]** One of the mechanisms established to ensure and guarantee internal supervision and assessment is the Commission for the Quality Assurance Standards, which is a permanent committee within UNYT. **[Annex 1.11/Annex 1.14]**. In New York University of Tirana faculties have their financial autonomy and the review team found that the financial requests of the departments are fulfilled **[M2/M8]. Chapter III Standard I.4**

1.6 UNYT bases its strategic development on the Strategic Plan for 2017- 2023 **[Annex 1.23]**, and the recently revised Strategic Plan 2020-2025 **[Annex 1.4]**. The Development Strategy determines the main aspects of the institution that require further development, such as: teaching and studying, internationalization and mobility, research, social engagement, staff and infrastructure. The revised Strategic Plan incorporates as a new goal the 'Future Era of Education' focusing on Digitalization on Teaching and Learning (goal 61). The measures for fulfilling the strategic objectives, in compliance with the mission, objective and development platform of UE and funding resources, is described in this document. **[Annex 1.5] Chapter III Standard I.5**

1.7 At the end of each academic year the University compiles an Annual Report in accordance with the guidelines from the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. This report gathers evidence from department level upwards **[Annex 1.14]**. All academic and administrative structures and different levels of management prepare the annual report and it is approved at a joint meeting between the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration **[Annex 1.47/Annex 1.48]**. Based on the findings of the report, the Rectorate takes measures on improving the progress problems of the institution in general or in specific aspects, and also determines the responsible structures for their fulfilment. **Chapter III Standard I.6**

1.8 UNYT's organization enables academic freedom, financial, organizational and staff selection autonomy, in compliance with the legislation in force. It is organized in main units (faculties/institutes) and basic units (departments/scientific research centers). **[Annex 1.15]** The organization of UNYT is in accordance with the requirements of Law No. 80/2015 and to benefit the fulfilment of the institution's mission and objectives. The New York University of Tirana is composed of three Faculties, each of which comprises of two departments and a research center. In accordance with the reorganization of the institution, starting from the academic year 2020-2021, UNYT will be composed of 3 (three) faculties namely: Faculty of Economy and Business; Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Faculty Of Engineering

and Architecture and one Institute, The Institute of "European and Balkan Studies". **[Annex 1.19/Annex 1.20]**. UNYT has also its own website, which provides information on details of the history, university structure, important documents, mission and values, research and study programmes offered by the University. [<https://unyt.edu.al/>]. It is also available only in English language. **Chapter III Standard II.1**

1.9 The Collegial bodies of the UNYT are: Academic Senate, Board of Administration, Academic Staff Assembly, Committees, Ethics Commission, Centers, Rectorate and Dean's Office. These bodies operate in compliance with Law No.80/2015 "On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions" and in accordance with the Statute, Regulations, and these are sent to management to be acted on. Academic staff are involved in internal debate under institutional procedures prescribed by statute. **[Annex 1.1, M1, M2, M8] Chapter III Standard II.3**

1.10 UNYT has started to monitor the employment of its graduates through the years, by maintaining contacts with recent graduates. They have started to create a database in several departments in order to check how their curricula fits the labour market. The Career Consulting and Alumni supervise this process **[Annex 1.23/Annex 1.23.1]**. Still there is a lot of work to do for complete this database. UNYT has applied to the MESY for the opening of a new 3-year bachelor program in "Applied Banking and Finance" adopted in partnership with BKT. The novelty of this program is that it accommodates its students to study half of their theoretical based courses with UNYT and the other half courses to be practiced with BKT **[SER p.11]**. The institution is continuously informed about regional economic development through peer collaboration with other institutions or by attending conferences addressing national and international progress topics. UNYT has conducted a labour market research which helps them to set priorities on the new study programs based on the needs of the region. **[Annex 1.23.1] Chapter III Standard III.1**

1.11 New York University of Tirana pays special importance to cooperation with other institutions by being active in this aspect, through cooperation as a partner in various projects and through close interaction with higher education institutions **[Annex 1.25]**. In its activity, the institution has tried to find a balance between competitiveness and cooperation, inside the country and regarding international relations. In its renovated strategy 2020-2025, UNYT clearly determines the further internationalization plan development of medium and long-term partnerships and cooperation. **[Annex 1.4/Annex 1.27] Chapter III Standard III.2**

1.12 UNYT collaborates with several institutions for partnerships and research collaboration such as Tilburg University, Netherlands; University of Granada, Spain; University of Genova, Italy **[Annex 1.34/Annex 1.35/Annex 1.36]**. For the purpose of student mobility, UNYT is part of the Erasmus programs **[Annex 1.54/Annex 1.55/Annex 1.56]**. Also during the meetings with students, alumni and partners it has been clear that UNYT has taken measures to build up a good collaboration with public and private institutions. **[Annex 3.17/M4/M5/M6] Chapter III Standard III.3**

1.13 The University has shown to have a good approach towards students and staff mobility in the framework of collaboration within different international agreements. It

is one of the main goals of UNYT expanding the network of collaborations with universities and research institutions with the aim to offer its students international experience, as well as, develop professional training programs for its personnel **[Annex 1.4]**. The responsible office in charge of student/staff mobility and exchange opportunities at UNYT is the International Relations Office (IRO) **[Annex 1.39]**.
Chapter III Standard III.4

Findings

Good practice

- New York University of Tirana has a very strong collaboration with national and international private institutions for research and staff-students support exchange. **(Chapter III Standard III.3)**

Weaknesses

No weaknesses were found.

Recommendations

It is recommended to make available an institutional web page also in Albanian since it is accessible only in English language. **Chapter III Standard II.1**

Affirmation of action being taken

No affirmations were found

Judgement

The standards for the Organisation and its Management are **Fully met.**

Evaluation Area 2: Resourcing

2.1. The New York University of Tirana has a system of organizing “bottom-up” functions through the organogram approved at the highest collegial level of the Institution and this organizational scheme is part of the University Statute **[Annex 1.2.1]**. HEI is in accordance with the employment policy that is presented to the academic staff with regular full-time contracts, the academic staff with part-time contracts and the administration staff. In all academic units of HEI, the three UNYT Faculties respectively, the staff of all three categories are engaged in academia, but also in administrative duties compatibly with their profession and skills. In accordance with the organogram **[Ibid.]**, other constituent units of the UNYT encompass the part of the administrative staff that fulfils their functions (Research Centres, laboratories, etc.) **[Annex 2.1]**. The UNYT has a statute which sets out the formation of standing committees that help organize the work of the University **[Annex 1.1/Annex 1.2]**.

For the recruitment of the academic staff at all levels of academic units, the institution has unified procedures and they are publicly announced in the specific section on the University website <https://unyt.edu.al>. For the recruitment of the academic staff, the UNYT has regulations approved at the senate level, in which regulations define the modalities of procedures and the employment criteria of academic staff **[Annex 2.2]**.

Chapter III Standard IV.1

2.2. Teaching staff state that they are engaged in training provided by the University and this includes, for example, teaching methodology, attendance at conferences, collaboration activities with other universities and publications **[Annex 4.2]**. This training is consistent with the objectives in the University Strategy **[Annex 1.3/Annex 1.4]**. All staff are involved with providing information for applicants on Open Days and they use leaflets, presentations and social networks to inform applicants about the study programmes **[Annex 5.7]**. The University also organizes extracurricular activities which enables staff to engage in the social life of the University **[Annex 2.19]**. Administrative and Academic staff have also participated in various Development Workshops and Trainings **[Annex 2.91]**. ***Chapter III Standard IV.2***

2.3 The University organizes training activities for both academic and administrative staff according to University priorities **[Annex 2.9/Annex 5.105/M8]**. Heads of Department set objectives for staff each year according to their roles and at the end of the year the member of staff completes a self-evaluation form **[Annex 4.21]**. Staff assessment is focused on three main areas; teaching, scientific research and administrative activities as set out in the Individual Performance Assessment Form and supported by the Quality Assurance Manual **[Annex 1.11]**. Evidence is taken from student on-line questionnaires completed at the end of every semester, peer evaluation, teaching, research and publications, mobility and Head of Department

evaluation [Annex 4.20/Annex 4.22/ Annex 4.26]. The University supports staff training in western universities under the framework of cooperation agreements with international universities and projects, for example Erasmus+ [Annex 4.35]. In terms of training, UNYT encourages staff to participate in developing projects and activities such as the Quality Assurance training project (<https://unyt.edu.al/index.ft/projectsresearch/qainal/>). **Chapter III Standard IV.3**

2.4. The staff and students of the UNYT are also involved in social activities. Examples of good practice In this regard can be mentioned Charity Club and other social activities [Annex 2.19]. However, cases in which academic staff and students are involved in social activities such as the contribution to the environment, reaching out to the community in need in times of natural disasters such as the two earthquakes (September and November 2019) [Annex 5.82]. Academic seminars have been organized on a monthly basis to promote social dialogue [Annex 3.13]. During the visit of the Review Team there was a good cooperation of the academic and administrative staff related to the management of the situation regarding the pandemics and the spread of the virus COVID-19 by keeping the distance, the control of the temperature of the students and the personnel. **Chapter III Standard IV.4**

2.5 The institution has in place an appropriate structure to whom is devolved the duty to monitor human resources and the academic potential skills pertaining to academic and assistant academic staff. This structure is part of the governing body of the university and its functions are defined in the main university statutory documents such as the statute and its internal regulations [Annex 2.1]. The HR structure is a structure focused also on the bureaucratic side of the recruitment procedures but also in the enhancement and development of the potential skills that the academic staff might have [M9]. **Chapter III Standard II.2**

2.6. HEI respects the rules and regulations in force for the management, distribution and use of finance [Annex 2.23]. The budget distribution is approved by the University Senate. Academic units do not have financial autonomy; the budget is centralized at the University level [Annex 1.10]. Budget expenditures are managed by the board of directors and reported to the senate. University budget expenditures become transparent at the senate, faculty and department levels. Being also part of the senate, information on budgetary issues can also be passed on to students. **Chapter III Standard VI.1**

2.7 UNYT conducts an annual Financial Management Process (FMP) [Annex 2.13]. The budget is discussed in the Senate, drafted by the Rectorate and approved by the Board of Administration. The initial budget is drafted at department level,

consolidated at faculty level and then sent to the General Administrator who formulates the University budget for discussion at the Senate and approval at the Board of Administration. UNYT pursues a policy of budgetary and financial control in accordance with the UNYT Statute and the Finance Department Code of Conduct **[Annex 2.24]**. The department budget is based on the department plan which follows the University's Strategic Plan **[Annex 1.4]**. Following approval of the budget at the Board of Administration, the devolved budgets are sent back to the heads of department for implementation. Performance against budget is discussed at the Senate and the Board of Administration and financial reports are audited each year. As a consequence of this policy, the institution is regularly subject to internal and external audit procedures **[Annex 1.16/ Annex 1.17/SER, p. 16]**. **Chapter III, Standard V1.1; Chapter III, Standard V1.2; Chapter III, Standard V1.3**

2.8 The University has an effective intranet with a password protected Wi-Fi system. Students have on-line information system through the internet, which enables them to access personal information including their grades for assessments **[M3, M4, M5, M7]**. They can also access information such as libraries, laboratories and electronic archives. The website is an important source of information [<https://unyt.edu.al>] for staff and students and contains, for example, details of study programmes, the annual academic calendar, teaching timetables, examination timetables and details about the University's regulation and operation **[Annex 2.28]**. The University also has a presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Students state that teachers use a range of electronic means to make resources available to students, including personal emails and software packages, as well as an e-learning platform **[M3, M4, M5]**. At the university there is in place a good pedagogical and teaching information system, which guarantees access to all students and university's employees to relevant information data regarding the lessons schedules, attendance of lectures and seminars, exams, confidential treatment of grades, valuation and other data pertaining to the registration and further improvement of the academic activities **[Annex 2.27/Annex 2.43]**. Teaching rooms, laboratories, computer rooms and libraries are equipped with appropriate information technology, for example, Wi-Fi, computer stations, projectors and relevant software **[Site Tour]**. **Chapter III, Standard VII.1; Chapter III VII.2.**

2.9 The UNYT has rented two large buildings where its main units are located **[Annex 2.32/Annex 2.33]**. In the meantime, the construction project of the University Campus has been approved while the construction works are expected to start soon **[Annex 2.44/M2]**. The University maintains a record of its real estate and other immovable assets statements, as evidenced in the Report of Fixed Assets and certified by the external audit **[Annex 2.30/Annex 1.17]**. **Chapter III Standard VII.3**

2.10 Study programs at three levels are organized at the New York University of Tirana, its Faculties and Departments respectively. These study programs are not in

opposition to state law and thus cultivate the preservation of academic, cultural and scientific heritage. UNYT uses storage and backups for saving and archiving data keeping materials in appropriate premises, equipment, and climatic conditions **[Annex 5.27]**. The University library has the archive for all staff and UNYT publications, including masters and doctoral theses, which are stored in both paper and electronic forms **[Annex 2.31]**. **Chapter III Standard VII.4**

2.11 The infrastructure of the University provides suitable accommodation for the daily administrative and academic operation of the University **[Annex 2.30]**. This includes offices, social areas, teaching rooms, laboratories, computer rooms libraries and sports venues. It also provides a logistics administrative structure to carry out the functions of common interest **[M3, M4, M5, M7, Site Tour]**. **Chapter III, Standard V11.5, V11.6**

2.12 During the visit of the Review Team **[Site Tour]** in the premises of UNYT in general, namely the Faculties, Departments, libraries, Classrooms, laboratories, sanitary facilities, it was noticed that their maintenance is of high quality. Classrooms have basic teaching facilities. The campus is modern, quiet, well maintained and located away from industrial sites. The library was located in the basement of the building, on two sides of a main corridor. The facilities used by UNYT are functional, with easy access from all the users, meet the technical standards for teaching facilities, specifically referring to lighting (natural and artificial), orientation of the buildings, wind protection, heating of the premises, which are used to the maximum, All campus is covered by Wi-Fi and internet access is provided in all classrooms, labs and library so that students can work at any location they prefer **[Annex 2.36]**. **Chapter III Standard V.1**

2.13 All information related to students, their studies and tuition fees is maintained in a digital database, the Gnomon Database System. UNYT uses the system to maintain files on all of its students, which include details on application, admission, induction, grades, work experience and graduation certificate **[Annex 2.42]**. GNOMON adapts to UNYT needs and assists the Finance Department to better manage and plan revenues and cash flow Individual student records have been maintained by the Faculty Secretariat **[M9]**. Hard copies of all essential academic activities are archived and regulated by a Policy Document on Archives **[Annex 5.27]**. **Chapter III Standard V.2**

Findings

Good practice

The review team did not identify any good practice in this Evaluation Area.

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weakness in this Evaluation Area

Recommendations

The review team did not identify any good practice good practice in this Evaluation Area

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team affirm the following action in progress in this Evaluation Area:

- The construction project of the University Campus has been approved while the construction works are expected to start soon. **Chapter III, Standard V.1**

Judgement

The standards for Resourcing are **Fully met.**

Evaluation Area 3: The Curriculum

3.1 UNYT offer the opportunity to obtain a university degree at bachelor's, master's or PhD level in a variety of academic and professional areas, according to its mission and objectives [1.6.] These programs provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to succeed in the work environment. Programs are offered in all three study cycles and UNYT provides information to the public and prospective students regarding its study programs through various communication channels, such as its website [www.unyt.edu.al], face-to-face meetings, open days, direct contact with high school directors and visits to high schools [M9]. All tools utilised are complementary and provide accurate information about the study programmes. UNYT has established its own profile and image based on its mission. Its study programmes are extensively in line with the needs of the labour market, elaborated in the relative Market Study. [1.23; 1.23.1; M2; M7].

The UNYT has established a Marketing and Public Relations Office [Annex 1.44], which is very active in promoting the University and its programs [M3]. The Students Affair Office [Annex 5.1] is also well functioning [M9].

The Academic Senate of the UNYT has approved clear application procedures and admission criteria for Albanian and foreign students. The admissions process and criteria are clear and easy accessible [5.1; 5.9; 5.10; 5.14; M2; M9]. These criteria are included in promotional materials [5.37; 5.38], as declared at the Ministry of Education and its agencies, and published on UNYT's website [<http://unyt.edu.al/admissions/undergraduate/application-process/>]. UNYT has set up appropriate structures for managing all the process of admission, from recruitment to formal enrolment. The general criteria for admission are set in the University Rules and Regulations Document [Annexes 1.6; 1.7], while there are also specific criteria set for each of the study programs [M8] [SER p.20]. **Chapter I Standard I.1.**

3.2 UNYT pays attention to keep up to date with context development in formulating its offer for qualifications. This includes several activities such as training courses, conferences, seminars, debates, field-trips, etc. In addition, UNYT offers more tailor-made activities to address the needs of specific groups of students [SER p.21]. This approach favors an increase of productivity of students and improves their results. Students are also asked to attend regular seminars held by academic staff or invited professors, in order to engage them more actively in the academic environment. Another important element in this perspective is related to the role of the Alumni Office and Career Office. The feedback provided by the alumni on how to improve programs, trainings, and other activities is also an important tool for maintaining the quality and the versatility of the offer. This is further enhanced through the process of direct students' feedback and the work of the Quality Assurance Office. The evaluation form filled by the students several times a year [M3] ensures a continuous monitoring of the quality of programs and teaching, from the students' perspective. **Chapter I Standard I.2**

3.3 In general, study programs offered at UNYT are in line with its mission and its institutional development strategy **[Annexes 1.3; 1.4]**. Programs present a balanced approach between general disciplines and more concentrated courses **[Annex 3.28]**. In both first and second cycles, the programs have taken into consideration not only the theoretical aspects of each discipline but also on how to better connect with the professional career and the required skills after the studies **[Annexes 3.25; 3.26; 3.27] [M8]**. UNYT has been quite innovative by adopting a student-centered learning philosophy, which aims at making the pedagogical process more practical and inclusive. This has turned out to produce considerable results and good feedback from students **[M4; M5]**. Study programs at UNYT integrate well with the model developed by the European Commission **[SER p.23]** for the first and second cycles **[Annexes 3.32| 3.33]** aiming at including in the diploma all the necessary information **Chapter I Standard I.3**

3.4 UNYT offers study programmes in all three cycles, in line with national and international trends and in compliance with the Law on Higher Education **[Annexes 3.4; 3.5]**. The UNYT has continuous collaboration with other European universities in the program offers it provides. UNYT is particularly keen on promoting recruitment of Albanian citizens from diaspora, in line with national policies for education. Each year, UNYT allocates quotas for students of Albanian diaspora and for foreign students **[Annex 3.45]**. This part is facilitated from the fact that programs are offered in English. In this respect, UNYT has integrated in its Bachelor programs courses such as English Composition, Albanian language, and Turkish language, aiming at an internationalization strategy **[Annex 3.38]**. **Chapter I Standard I.4.**

3.5 UNYT has a good planning system when it comes to its human resources, infrastructural and financial capacity at the stage of drafting new programmes. There is a general balanced distribution of responsibilities and tasks, according to the roles that staff holds. The workload is spread between teaching, research, administrative tasks, and other activities. It also takes into account individual interests of staff for other projects and professional development **[M7; Annex 3.46]**. The University assigns lecturers' workloads annually in accordance with the criteria set out in law and the institutional regulation. The teaching load is distributed based the current law on Higher Education and respective bylaws as well as on schedules per semester and per year, by the Heads of Departments in collaboration with Faculty Deans **[Annexes 5.35; 3.18]**. Part-time lecturers are also contracted when necessary, especially for specialized courses **[Annex 2.16]**. Academic staff who primarily conduct research have a smaller teaching workload, in particular PhD students **[M5]**. Evaluation of this distribution is also included in the annual report of each department which also helps for a better planning of the following year in terms of workload and budget required **Chapter I Standard I.5**

3.6 The UNYT website provides the necessary Information about all study programmes. These are also published in the Student Handbooks [**Annexes 3.28; 3.30; 3.49**]. The University gives handbooks to students and discusses the handbooks with them during induction and orientation. The lists of courses are also the reception and the Students Affairs Office. Courses syllabi are also provided to students electronically and in hard copy at their first course session or included in course websites developed by academic staff. This was also confirmed by students [**M4; M5**]. The syllabus format are in line with the current state bylaws and includes all necessary sections for providing clearly goals, objectives and learning outcomes of the course. The same for the study programs [**Annexes 3.10; 3.28**]. The process of designing a program carefully considers all necessary elements, such as the existing program, needs for improvement or for a new program, based also on outcome from market research [**Annex 3.20**] *Chapter I Standard I.6*

3.7 Bachelor's study programmes provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them for the second cycle of studies. The second cycle has also all the necessary elements to prepare them for the third cycle [**Annex 3.50**]. UNYT students who have completed a Bachelor's program, have been admitted to second cycle studies within the country or abroad [**Annex 3.52**]. The curricula are divided in different categories of courses, according to the national legal provisions [**DCM No.41, 24.01.2018**]. The courses have balanced properly between theoretical content at all levels, and the practical skills required [**Annex 3.25; 3.26; 3.28**]. It is important to point out that some of the programs have also undergone quality assurance from foreign partner's institutions (SUNY/ESC and the University of Greenwich) as foreseen in the collaboration provisions [**M2; M8; Annexes 3.35; 3.43**].

There is a general good knowledge of students about study programs and their components. The Handbook and the website are primary sources for their information. In addition, the respective academic advisors help them in this direction. Regarding international programs and opportunities, the International Relations Office keeps them informed [**M3**]. UNYT has collaborations with several European universities and its students have had the possibility to benefit from exchange programs.

Labor market opportunities and employment considerations are also taken into account when designing course syllabi [**M8**]. For this purpose, syllabi include additional activities to teaching, from guest lectures to field visits. This ensures a proper balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Regarding employment, UNYT has a Career Office which supports students. In addition, a Career Fair is organized each year, connecting students with several companies [**Annex 3.57; M9**] *Chapter I Standard I.7*.

3.8 UNYT has a smooth practice for supporting students to transit from high school to university, by offering them services and by quickly integrating them in the academic life. An induction day is organized with freshmen which helps new

students to receive information regarding the University, its processes, facilities, etc. **[Annex 5.39]**. In addition, they are also provided the handbook and introduced to the types of academic support and respective centers.

Each new student is assigned an academic supervisor. The supervisor provides counseling and supports them during the course of their studies **[Annexes 5.36; 5.43]**. This position is highly appreciated by students and is regarded very effective in helping them with different types of challenges **[M4; M5]**. Another way of supporting new students is through the Writing Center and Math Center **[Annexes 3.28; 5.52 5.53]** which help students who need targeted support in order to be better integrated in the University programs **[M9]**. These services were considered very useful by students **[M4]**. In many cases, the University refers to these services students who face challenges and require more tailor-made support.

In addition to classic teaching methods, faculty of UNYT employs alternative activities based on students' requirements and needs. These include guest speakers, involvement of students in academic seminars, simulation of Court cases for law students, field visits, etc. **[Annexes 3.13; 3.14; 3.16; 3.58; 3.59; M4; M5]**.

Chapter I Standard I.8

3.9 Most of the faculty members are quite active with research and external collaborations. In the second cycle, UNYT engages lecturers who have already completed their PhD and show a good track record of research products. Several examples were provided for this section from the faculty members **[SER p.27; M7; M8]**. The research component has been given more importance in the UNYT strategic plan. UNYT has set up a Research Project and Innovation Centre (RPI), which the aim of focusing on scientific research in relation to economic and technological development **[SER p.27; Annexes 1.3; 4.45; M2]**.

The Masters of Science programs are in line with research policies foreseen in the Strategic plan. It is an advantage that many of the students in these programs are already working **[M5]**. The faculty members teaching in the second cycle have long professional experience and close links with the labor market, including private sector and public institutions. This helps students to extend their network and profit from theoretical and practical skills during their studies and when researching for their thesis **[Annex 3.63]**. The Career Office at UNYT plays an active role and monitors employability of students after their studies, which is included in its annual report **[Annex 5.96]**. Over 70% of the second-cycle programmes are taught by full-time faculty **[Annex 3.64]** ***Chapter I Standard I.9.***

3.10 UNYT uses the American credit system for all study programmes, which is convertible to Bologna standards. **[SER p.28; Annex 3.10]**. All study programmes provide the necessary information about the programme structure, such as the course schedule, grading system and policy, workload, and credits under the American system and conversion into ECTS.

After graduation, students receive their diploma and a transcript of their grades, which details the grading system at UNYT, the definition of credit and its equivalency

to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) **[Annex 3.65]**. The new and reorganized programs are now in line with the Bologna system **[Annexes 3.22; 3.38]**.

The programs allow and facilitate mobility and several students have used this opportunity, by having exchange experiences in many European universities. In addition, UNYT has also hosted foreign students for a semester **[Annex 3.54]**. Credits and grades have been easily transferred in all cases **[Annex 3.55; SER p.28]**. Having English as the official language, facilitates UNYT students for exchange experiences. Students at each level undergo international examinations on English language prior to admission in the chosen program **[Annex 5.14]** **Chapter I Standard I.10**.

3.11 Study programmes at UNYT have an appropriate balance between theory and practice through the inclusion of practical exercises, case studies, and laboratory classes to support lectures. Students are also exposed to real practice through internships and/or projects related to their area of study. Internships are arranged by the university, thank also to its partnerships with business community and public institutions. Bachelor students need to provide an internship report as a requirement **[Annexes 5.107; 5.109]**. Students are engaged often in projects, which is a component that aims at developing practical skills. UNYT tries also to involve students in research projects **[Annexes 4.32; 4.51]** although more can be done in this direction, as it emerged in the meetings of the review team with the groups of students **[M4; M5]**. UNYT also foresees the support for students' initiatives for organizing or participating in educational and other events, to enhance their learning opportunities **[Annexes 5.86; 5.83; 5.78]** **Chapter I Standard I.11**

3.12 UNYT implements a labour market study which is taken into account while designing study programs **[Annex 3.20; M2]**. The programs outline clear professional paths for students after finishing their studies **[Annex 3.28]**. Internships, which are mandatory for the first cycle programs, are also a good opportunity for connecting with the real world and applying the knowledge and skills acquired. Students also prepare a final report, which describes the host entity, describes the experience and lessons learned during the internship. They also offer personal reflections and advice for further interns. The report is presented in the final class of the respective module. UNYT has agreements with both public and private sector organizations that offer internships and placement opportunities **Chapter I Standard I.12**

Findings

Good practice

The review team did not identify any good practice.

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weakness.

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 UNYT organises its studies as stated in its Statute and documents them in the Student Handbook, on the website and in individual syllabuses. The University manages staff workloads appropriately by balancing teaching, research and administration. The teaching processes are coordinated by the Departments **[Annex 4.2]**. The UNYT is well-equipped for delivering and implementing its academic offer smoothly, with sufficient spaces and logistical aid in its premises. Teaching and learning resources support fully UNYT's academic offer. Students and staff have access to several library databases and an agreement with McGraw Hill Higher Education publishing **[Annex 5.59; 5.1112]**. UNYT is in control of all its activities and monitors regularly their implementation **[Annex 4.3]**. *Chapter I Standard II.1*

4.2 UNYT provides students who have passed all obligations of a study programme with the relevant diploma, which is approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. Graduation criteria and procedures are published on the website. Prior to the final assessment for the diploma, students will have completed a number of other assessments. The methods of assessment are outlined in the curriculum together with the regulations on examinations **[Annexes 4.7; 4.10; 4.50]**. UNYT informs its students through the Students Affairs Office and the Records Office, on all aspects of exams from protocol to disputes **[SER p.31]**. UNYT has recently revised its internal regulations which are published on the website **[Annex 4.8]**

Assessment of students is included in the curricula and the course syllabi **[Annexes 3.10; 3.11; 3.28]**. Examination is not always anonymous **[SER p.31]**. Students are also responsible for the quality standards of the examination by signing a commitment document such as the Student's Honour Code **[Annex 5.31]**, which entails policies on cheating and plagiarism. If students do not agree with the grade, they first discuss it with the respective professor and, if not satisfied of the outcome, they can proceed with a procedure to the upper stages as foreseen by UNYT rules **[Annexes 3.28; 4.11; 1.6; 1.7]**. Students seem well-informed about these procedures **[M4; M5]**.

Students address concerns first with the academic advisor and then advance an academic petition if they think that the issue still persists. The petitions are handled by the Head of Department and afterwards to a committee. Their decision is then communicated to the student in writing **[Annexes 1.6; 1.7; 4.19]**. In the meeting, students reported that they have used this right at least once with satisfactory outcome **[M4]** *Chapter I Standard II.2*.

4.3 UNYT pays attention that its study programmes are continually improved. UNYT has several mechanisms to ensure quality control and improvement of its academic products. It regularly monitors the performance of instructors through a series of evaluations, including course student evaluations, peer evaluations, individual assessment performance reports, and grade transparency reports **[Annexes 4.20; 3.23; 4.21; 4.22; 3.47]**. All courses are evaluated every semester, and those taught

by new professors twice per semester. The focus is on teaching quality, skills, evaluation, and the study program. In addition to course student evaluations, students provide feedback through an exit survey after graduation **[Annex 4.24]**. These reports provide continuous evaluation of academic staff and serve the purpose of improving the study programs **[SER p.32]**. Peer-reviewing consists on quality check from other colleagues, from the same field. The purpose is to provide constructive feedback on what and how to improve teaching activities and performance. In addition, it is used as an instrument for advising on decisions regarding promotion and tenure of instructors **[Annex 3.24]**.

These reports combined serve for improving study programs, where possible. Another source for these curricula revisions come from business community where UNYT graduates work, as well the Career and Alumni Office, and market research **[Annexes 1.25; 5.97; M.6] Chapter I Standard II.3**

4.4 UNYT has a solid policy to continuously improve teaching quality. Responsibility for quality assurance and for continuous teaching improvement is institutionalized in the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) and it is implemented through the respective Permanent Commission (PCIQAS). This body is responsible for monitoring the teaching quality in cooperation with the coordinator of Quality Assurance **[Annex 1.3]**. UNYT has improved this system over the years through collaborations with SUNY and other institutional partners, by adopting best practices and complying with performance indicators **[SER p.33]**.

Members of the Committee are elected by the Academic Senate **[Annex 1.1]** and are responsible for developing and strengthening the quality system at UNYT. PCIQAS coordinates procedures for internal and external evaluation. It is composed by 5 members, representing all faculties, students, and one external member. UNYT has also benefited from participating in an Erasmus+ project focused on strengthening quality assurance in private higher education institutions in Albania. The Quality Assurance Office uses various mechanisms to monitor and ensure quality, such as the students evaluation process, peer evaluation process, self-assessment, etc. **[Annexes 4.20; 4.23; 3.23; 3.24; M3]**.

In addition to the quality of teaching, UNYT pays attention in complementing its offer through other policies and activities such as the academic advisor, Math center, Writing center, Academic Support, Counseling Center, etc. **[Annex 3.6]**. In addition, UNYT has a rich stock of audio-visual library with books and journals from all its study fields, computer rooms, laboratories, etc. **[Annexes 5.56; 5.57; 5.58]**.

In order to improve quality, UNYT encourages and supports its staff to participate different events such as conferences and workshops or research abroad. Its staff participates also in international projects and programs. However, more financial resources should be allocated to abroad research activities of staff.

Generally, UNYT has a well-established system for ensuring quality. Its new strategic plan 2020-2025 has put quality at the center and has formulated a strategy with clear objectives **[Annex 4.39] Chapter I Standard II.4**.

4.5 UNYT departments and research centres are the basic academic units. The departments and research centres are overseen by chairs and heads, respectively, who carry the main responsibility for scientific research activities, although staff in both units teach and carry out research. There are three research centres, one per Faculty.

Departments include in their annual reports a review of the educational programs and research activities, through a swot analysis [Annex 3.47; 3.48]. After this exercise, through a Senate decision of 12.02.2020 [SER p.34], UNYT has been re-structured in three faculties starting from the academic year 2020-2021. Research centers have also been re-organized and a new Institute of European and Balkan Research has been established, with three branches: Research Center on European Studies, Research Center on Balkan Studies, and Project and Innovation Center [Annexes 1.19; 1.20; 1.21]. This strategic shift is quite an important development for UNYT, since it sets the path for its research focus in the years to come. As emerged from the meetings [M1; M2], this reorganization was done in order to comply with recent trends in labor market, as well as to ongoing processes.

UNYT departments and research center have been quite active in international cooperation and projects, being awarded several EU projects. These are good opportunities for strengthening its academic capacities and improving its research records and output. **Chapter II Standard I.1**

4.6 UNYT gives incentives for scientific research. It supports new research initiatives, especially of an interdisciplinary nature, and encourages them in different ways: it employs academic staff in research centres; it employs doctoral students; and it supports small-scale research projects promising to transform to larger-scale projects via a specific budget provision. Jean Monnet modules have been a successful experience in the recent years. The Jean Monnet Center of Excellence has also been a positive example for strengthening teaching and research quality. UNYT has partnerships with other institutions whose scope of activities includes research **Chapter II Standard I.2**

4.7 UNYT is actively working to increase internationalization of its research. It is a member of several associations, such as the European University Association and the Balkan University Association. Its research centers have been very active in applying in many bids, with a satisfactory success rate such as with the Jean Monnet programs [Annex 4.38; 4.42]. The plan of UNYT for the near future is to increase its efforts in this direction, by using its newly established Institute on European and Balkan Research. UNYT has partnered with several universities and European partners in the last years, participating in different joint applications [Annex 4.42]. UNYT pays particular attention to the opportunity of its researchers and academic staff to publish in international academic journals and participate in research conferences [Annex 4.40]. UNYT itself has organized two international conferences between 2018 and 2019, with important keynote speakers and many participants/scholars from different countries.

In the context of its internationalization efforts, UNYT has signed many memorandums of understanding and partnership agreements with international universities and research centers [Annex 1.25], from different countries **Chapter II Standard I.3**

4.8 UNYT's research priorities are being determined by a mix of components [M2]. On one hand, they are guided by the expertise profile of the university and, on the other, they are based on the interests of its faculty, the directions of European grants and other calls, and the current developments and labor market. In 2018, UNYT elaborated and adopted a research strategy composed by pillars. This document [Annex 4.45] determines nine research pillars, three for each faculty, accommodating all the factors described above.

In addition to its international activities, UNYT has organized research events for a national audience. Graduate conferences have been organized for master theses defenses [Annex 4.46] and for doctoral theses defenses [Annex 4.47] **Chapter II Standard I.4.**

4.9 UNYT invests sufficient resources for the implementation of its research activities. Research funds account for 25% of the value of UNYT's annual budget [Annex 1.10]. Research centres employ staff who focuses mostly on research. When hiring new academic staff, UNYT gives priority to scholars with considerable research experience, especially in its research pillars and priorities, will complement the existing research pillars.

In the last years UNYT has increased the share of revenue coming from projects and grants [Annex 1.45]. UNYT is increasing its efforts to compete in international research funding and grants, in order to fund its research priorities more efficiently **Chapter II Standard I.5**

4.10 UNYT provides continuity in the scientific research field. This has improved further in the recent period. UNYT has included research as priority in its main strategic documents [Annexes 1.3; 1.4] and in elaborating its Research pillars document for 2018-2022 [Annex 4.45]. In this framework, UNYT has identified three main objectives: measurement of research output, internal scheme to motivate academic staff for research and apply for funding, and encouraging scientific publications. For measuring quality and quantity of research output of its faculties, UNYT has adopted a specific system [Annex 4.48]. Most of UNYT efforts in applying for grants have been focused in Jean Monnet programs. UNYT plans to expand its activity and be involved in more bids in the coming period.

UNYT considers involvement of graduate students in research projects as an important element and give several examples for their inclusion [Annexes 4.44; 4.45]. However, there is a need to improve their engagement in a more structured and regular basis, as the review team meetings with students showed [M4; M5]. Students involvement in publications is a positive approach [M5; Annexes 4.40; 4.41] which needs to be further encouraged through incentives.

UNYT has been active in mobility schemes, by using its International Relations Office **[M3]**. This office has provided continuous information on opportunities for staff and researchers **[Annex 4.35]**. A total of 10 exchanges (plus 2 incoming) staff have used these opportunities **[Annex 4.36]**. Most of the research activities have taken place or are foreseen within the framework of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (2019-2022). Although this is a very important scheme and step for UNYT, for the future it will need to continuously diversify its research activity portfolio **Chapter II Standard I.6**

4.11 UNYT has been active in publicizing its scientific research outcomes. It has conducted a two international conferences and six academic seminars, and intends to organise more. It has organized also several open lectures, workshops, and other similar events, such as summer/winter schools in the framework of its EU projects. Its main document (Research Pillars) is being regularly updated. There is a budget line for the organisation of scientific conferences **[Annexes 1.10; 2.20; M2]**. UNYT has promoted research in different fora and has planned to issue a new journal on Balkan Studies **[Annex 4.27]**. Its faculty members have been able to implement research in international universities and have published their research work in peer reviewed journals indexed in Scopus **[Annex 4.40]**. Three of them have also been members in different editorial boards **[Annex 4.41]** **Chapter II Standard I.7**

4.12 UNYT implements annual evaluations of research outcomes of its academic staff **[Annex 4.26. M2]**. This is a self - assessment with few measurable indicators, but it has also developed a system for measurement applied by all faculties. Transfer of scientific research outcomes happens in several ways: first, by involving young researchers in the research groups **[Annexes 4.44; 4.45]**. This is done mostly with doctoral students. Another way is through partnerships with business communities and professional entities, which provide opportunities for scientific transfer **[M6]**. Publications are also another instrument, which include peer-reviewed international journals **[Annex 4.27]**. The new journal on Balkan Studies aims at increasing further the scientific transfer. The role of the vice rector for research will be crucial in improving this standard **Chapter II Standard I.8**

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 identified the following recommendations:

- More students should be encouraged and involved in research projects awarded to UNYT. **Chapter II Standard I.1**
- UNYT should carefully address different interpretations from instructors, regarding the assessment procedures (During M7 there were contrasting versions between staff on the possible use of additional assignments for improving grades). **Chapter I Standard II.2**

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 UNYT develops mid-term development projects **[Annex 1.3]** and recruit's students in a variety of ways. It improves continuously its PR strategies to ensure outreach of candidates for all three cycles. UNYT uses several channels for providing extensive information to its prospective students. First of all, this happens through the Admission Office (AO) and its activities. The office functions according to its rules and regulations **[Annex 5.1]**. Its role is to provide exhaustive information to students and answer their questions through all possible means of communication. In addition, different events help in this direction, such as participation in educational fairs, cultural events, visits and meetings at high schools, etc. Students are also provided with the Student Handbook via email **[Annex 3.28]**. The Admission Office has its own action plan **[Annex 5.5]** and is very active in Albanian cities, in meetings and other promotion activities. It also invites high school students to Open days on campus, providing them with the handbook and other information on the whole process **[Annexes 5.9; 5.10]**.

The AO is also responsible for several other activities such as the scholarship exam **[Annex 5.11]**, which offer students the possibility of getting a full scholarship, information on transferring their studies **[Annexes 3.68; 3.69]**, assistance to international students for documentation, visa, etc. It also covers the final stages of the process by providing candidates with a letter of acceptance **[Annex 5.17]**. UNYT has maintained an approach with small classes with an overall ratio of 8.3 per instructor **Chapter I Standard III.1**

5.2 UNYT informs and communicates with its students and academic staff in a variety of ways. There is a clear division of responsibilities and duties among the different offices within the UNYT for this purpose. In general, UNYT has built an efficient communication and information system, and students are satisfied with its functionality **[M4; M5]**. Apart from the traditional channels of communication, UNYT is also very active in social media platform, for interaction with students. These are used not only for students, but also for larger audiences **[M3; Annex 5.24]**.

Personal files, contacts, and data of each student are stored by the Records Office (RO). This office is also in charge of managing the final registrations of students by reporting to the QShA, in order to receive their matriculation numbers **[Annexes 5.26; 5.27; M9]**. The RO prepares also schedule of courses and assists academic staff in filling the grade reports appropriately. It supports the staff with in all the necessary steps during exams, especially in filling the different forms correctly **Chapter I Standard III.2**

5.3 UNYT orientates, mentors and guides its students through several methods. First, it offers them a detailed Student Handbook, which explains the structure of academic programmes, academic regulations, student services, student life and the Student Union. This document has proved to be very useful for students **[M4]**. All students are assigned an advisor. The advisors' responsibilities are explained in

respective procedures documents **[Annexes 5.43; 5.44]**. Advisors mentor and advise students throughout their entire cycle of studies, from registration of courses to monitoring progress until graduation and providing references for the future plans **[Annex 5.48]**.

Students are provided with schemes of study planning for every semester **[Annexes 5.49; 5.50]** which help them in structuring efficiently their efforts. The advisor works individually with each student. Apart from the support of the advisor, students are also assisted by other entities, according to their needs, such as the Counselling Center, Writing Center, Math Center, Career Office, etc. which help and mentor students to be better oriented and strengthen their capacities **[Annexes 5.51; 5.52; 5.53; 5.54]** **Chapter I Standard III.3**

5.4 UNYT supports students from specific social categories, including students with special needs. It is firmly committed to equal opportunities of admission and support to students regardless of race, religion, sex, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, personal status and physical disabilities **[Annex 1.1]**. UNYT has created the necessary infrastructure for students with special needs, including an elevator to help students with mobility problems. UNYT structures also cooperate with the Counselling Center, in order to adapt its teaching accordingly, when a student is physically or psychologically in need **[M4]**. The Academic Support Center support them with assistance for the different social challenges they might face.

UNYT has offered full scholarships for students with disabilities and for Roma and Balkan-Egyptian minorities. Several examples were provided **[SER p.43; M4]**. UNYT informs regularly its minorities students for other potential scholarships and qualification opportunities **[Annex 5.55]** **Chapter I Standard III.4**

5.5 UNYT provides the necessary literature and support for its students. Its library provides adequate textbooks, supplementary literature and guided support to deliver its curriculum. The premises of the library are appropriate and can accommodate up to 48 people, with 12 computer seats and two group work desks for five students each **[Annexes 5.56; 5.57]**.

The library has a book stock of 7,715 titles and an e-library with access to different electronic databases including JSTOR, Emerald Insight, EBSCO, etc. These databases are accessible by students off-campus as well. Due to an agreement that UNYT has signed with McGraw Hill, students are offered electronic course-packs **[Annexes 5.59; 5.112]**. In addition, since 2017 students have access to the virtual library of McGraw Hill. UNYT has a budget provision for library purchases which ranges from 12.000 to 15.000 Euro per year, according the needs and plans of each department. The library offers its services to students with extended hours during the week and office hours during the weekend. Each student can borrow books using their identification cards **[M4]** Students with visual impairments have adequate access to lectures using audio facilities **[M4]** **Chapter I Standard III.5**

5.6 UNYT offers first-cycle students in all years of study, an adequate support through its university services to help them progress. The support and mentorship are continuous from their admission to their graduation and even later in the labor market. These support services involve several structures within the UNYT, such as the Admission Office, Records and Registration Office, Academic Support Center, Counseling Center, etc. **[Annexes 5.51; 5.60; 5.61; 5.51]**. The Academic Support Center plays a specific role also for the students' personal development and well-being,

Another relevant structure is the Dean of Students **[Annex 5.62]**. The Dean is a member of the academic staff appointed by the Senate. The Dean cooperates closely with the other supporting structures in order to ensure that students are receiving the necessary support. The support is given to first-year students even for core skills, such as the English language of Math, in order to help them to catch up and overcome initial difficulties. There are several free lectures provided for these cases **[Annex 5.53]**. In particular, the Writing Center works intensively with students who have difficulties with academic writing and English. Native-speaking instructors and advanced non-native contribute in the Writing Center, by working and mentoring closely students' progress. Support is given also for how to work on assignments and how to avoid plagiarism **Chapter I Standard III.6**

5.7 UNYT encourages its students to participate actively in university life and has established the necessary environment for this to happen. There is an active Student Union, which represent student's interests. The SU covers most of cultural, academic, requests, protests, etc. that might come up during the course of the academic year. The SU holds elections once per year **[Annexes 5.76; 5.77]**. Its structure is composed by the president, the vice-president, the treasurer, and general secretary. The SU operates under the Dean of Students **[Annex 5.78]**. UNYT allocates a fund in each annual budget for covering the SU financial expenses **[Annex 5.79]**. Since 2018, the SU has contributed in establishing a University Newspaper **[Annex 5.80]** which covers information about several categories of activities for students **[M2]**

Chapter I Standard III.7

5.8 UNYT is supportive of the cultural and sports quality of the students' lives. Its premises contain sports facilities, including a covered pitch for football, volleyball and table tennis, and the rest areas for student socialisation. UNYT works actively to develop a sense of belonging by encouraging and supporting several extracurricular activities and structures **[Annex 5.82]**.

UNYT holds various cultural events, from art exhibitions **[Annex 5.84]** where students can present their work, to inviting guest speakers to interact with students. The UNYT proved to be quite creative in engaging students during the first wave of the pandemic, by organizing extracurricular activities online, such as an E-talent show during the weekends, in order to keep the sense of community and positivity among students **[Annex 5.85]**.

UNYT has also been attentive to sports events, such as championships and tournaments. UNYT continuously encourages its students to participate in national sports events and to promote a healthy lifestyle. In three disciplines, basketball, volleyball, and football, the UNYT has been an active participant with its students **[Annex 5.86]**. The UNYT collaborates with the Albanian Red Cross to promote the importance of blood donations and blood testing **[M4]**. UNYT has a doctor as required by law **Chapter I Standard III.8**

5.9 UNYT assists its students' in their integration path towards employment. It has established a Career Office (CO) as foreseen in the Statute **[Annex 1.1]**. This office offers guidance to students and helps them on how to increase their chances in the labour market. The CO has a specific annual action plan with set priorities **[Annex 5.94]**.

UNYT actively collaborates with business and professional communities to provide its students with employment opportunities and it provides them with a list of partners **[Annexes 5.95; 5.96]**. The CO keeps track and registers statistics about its students **[Annex 5.97]**. These data are useful for the other decision-making structures of the university.

UNYT has signed several memorandums of understanding with different institutions and business partners **[Annexes 5.98; 5.99]** in order to create opportunities for students to engage in internships and practical experiences in these entities. The CO manages all these relations and the networking activities **[Annex 5.102; M6]**. The CO prepares student for the labour market by organizing several supporting activities, such as workshops and trainings, in order to increase their skills **[Annex 5.104]**. An annual job fair is organized with the participation of many different partners **[Annex 5.106]**, providing exposure for students and potential match-making for employment. These events have been satisfactory for students and alumni **[M5; M6]**. Another strategy adopted by the UNYT to prepare students for the labour market has been to contract and engage part-time representatives of partner companies, to teach modules or courses **[Annex 5.110]**. This is another contribution to their training, which has been appreciated by the students **[M5; M6] Chapter I Standard III.9**

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following good practice:

- The established practice and functionality of the role of the academic advisor/supervisor is a very good practice which has proved to improve student experience and academic performance. **[Chapter I Standard I.8, Chapter I Standard III.3]**.

Weakness

The review team did not identify any weaknesses.

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendation:

- Students should be encouraged to be more active in exchanging programs (extremely few of the students in the sample chosen for the meeting with the review team had had the experience or had the intention to apply). **Chapter II Standard I.6**
- It is recommended to maintain closer contacts with the alumni network and try to include them in collaborations for research projects. **Chapter I Standard III.9**

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**.

List of evidences

A. New York University of Tirana self-evaluation phase

1. UNYT Shkresa Percjellese per Akreditimin Institucional
2. UNYT VETËDEKLARIMI
3. UNYT_RVB_Vleresim Institucional_ ALB, 21.07.2020
4. UNYT_SER_Institutional-Self-Evaluation-Report_ENG, 21.07.2020
5. List of evidences
6. Annex 1. Senate Decision for Action Plan [21.11.2017]
7. Annex 2. Vendimi i Senatit per Permbushjen e Rekoma ASCAL
8. Annex 3 Shkresa Percjellese /
9. Annex 4. Action Plan for Implementation of Recom. of ASCAL / Implem. of Recomm. of ASCAL
10. 1.1 UNYT STATUTE -2017, Eng
11. 1.2 UNYT Statuti i UNYT-2020, (Draft), Eng
12. 1.2.1 UNYT Organigrama- 2020, (Draft)
13. 1.3 UNYT Strategic Plan 2018-2022, Eng
14. 1.4 UNYT Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Eng
15. 1.5 UNYT Mission and Objectives, Eng
16. 1.6 UNYT Rules and Regulations, Eng
17. 1.7 UNYT Rules & Regulations, Updated, Eng
18. 1.8 UNYT Faculty Rules & Regulations, Updated, Eng
19. 1.9 UNYT Department Rules and Regulations, Updated, Eng
20. 1.10 UNYT Yearly Budget, Eng
21. 1.11 UNYT Quality Assurance Manual, Eng
22. 1.12 UNYT Quality Assurance Annual Report, Eng.
23. 1.13 UNYT Minutes of QAC, Action Plan
24. 1.14 UNYT Annual Report on Academic Performance -MASR 2018-2019, Eng
25. 1.15 UNYT Academic and Administrative Staff 2017-2018
26. 1.15 UNYT Academic and Administrative Staff 2018-2019 /
27. 1.15 UNYT Academic and Administrative Staff 2019-2020
28. 1.16 UNYT Internal Auditing Report
29. 1.17 UNYT External Auditing Report
30. 1.18 UNYT Legal Consultancy Service Agreement 2019
31. 1.19 UNYT MESY Approval for Reorganization of the Faculty
32. 1.20 UNYT MESY Approval for reorganization of two Faculties
33. 1.21 UNYT Misioni dhe Objektivat e Instituti European dhe Ballkanik i Kërkimit Alb /
34. 1.21 UNYT Mission and Objectives for European and Balkan Research Institute En
35. 1.22 UNYT New Program Application Stages Sample 2020
36. 1.23 UNYT Market Research Strategy /
37. 1.23.1 UNYT Market Study, Eng
38. 1.24 UNYT BKT-UNYT MoU
39. 1.25 UNYT List of Agreements and MoUs
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41. 1.27 UNYT Internationalization Strategy, Updated, Eng
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45. 1.30 UNYT Memorandum of Agreement with ESC /
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47. 1.32 UNYT UoG Diploma
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50. 1.35 UNYT Agreement with University of Tilburg, Erasmus +
51. 1.36 UNYT Agreement with University of Genova, Erasmus +
52. 1.37 UNYT Communications with National Erasmus + Office in Tirana
53. 1.38 UNYT Mevlana Agreement with University of Anadolu
54. 1.39 UNYT International Relations Office Regulation, Alb (1)
55. 1.39 UNYT Relations Office Regulations, Eng
56. 1.40 UNYT Foreign Students Guidelines, Eng
57. 1.41 UNYT MESY Approval for Reorganizing Bachelor and Integrated Master Programs
58. 1.42 UNYT MESY Approval for New Bachelor Program in Business Informatics
59. 1.42 UNYT MESY Approval for New Bachelor Prog.in Telecomm. and Network Engineering
60. 1.43 UNYT Rules and Regulations of Marketing and Public Relations Updated, Alb
61. 1.44 UNYT Rules and Regulations of Marketing and Public Relations, Alb
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63. 1.45 UNYT Pasqyra financiare - 2018
64. 1.45 UNYT Pasqyra financiare - 2019
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67. 1.47 UNYT Senate Decision No. 62, Alb
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69. 1.47 UNYT Senate Decision No. 66, Alb
70. 1.47 UNYT Senate Decision No. 66, Eng
71. 1.48 UNYT Board of Administration Decisions 09.03.2020
72. 1.48 UNYT Board of Administration Decisions 13.02.2020
73. 1.48 UNYT Board of Administration Decision 16.7.2020
74. 1.48 UNYT Board of Administration Decision 30.7.2019
75. 2.1 UNYT Human Resources Policy Document, updated Eng
76. 2.2 UNYT Recruitment Procedure updated, Eng
77. 2.2 UNYT Recruitment Procedure, Eng
78. 2.3 UNYT Job Announcement Template & Publication
79. 2.4 UNYT Staff Job Description
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86. 2.10 UNYT Policies on Ranks, Salaries, Benefits Updated, Eng
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88. 2.12 UNYT Guideline for International Staff
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99. 2.21 UNYT Template Administrative Staff Contract.
100. 2.22 UNYT Administrative Staff Folder
101. 2.23 UNYT Yearly Budget Proposal Procedure, Eng
102. 2.24 UNYT Code of Practice, Finance Office, Updated, Eng

103. 2.25 UNYT Manual of Information Security, Eng
104. 2.26 UNYT Software Installation Policy, Eng
105. 2.27 UNYT IT Data protection Policy, Eng
106. 2.28 UNYT IT Support Services, Eng
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111. 2.33 UNYT Rent Contract Building B 2019
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115. 2.37 UNYT Hygienic certificates
116. 2.38 UNYT Fire safety certificates 2019
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118. 2.40 UNYT Post Earthquake Inspection Certificate
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120. 2.42 UNYT Electronic System (GNOMON) Contract
121. 2.43 UNYT Bank Safety Database
122. 2.44 UNYT New Campus Project
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124. 3.4 UNYT List of Existing Programs 2017-2020, Eng Alb
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143. 3.26 UNYT Bachelor in Business Administration Program Folder
144. 3.27 UNYT MSc in CS Program Folder
145. 3.28 UNYT Bachelor, PIND Law STUDENT HANDBOOK-progamms rules and regulations, 2019,
146. 3.29 MSc in Computer Science, Program Rules and Regulations, 2018,
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149. 3.34 UNYT ESC Bachelor Degree requirements
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155. 3.42 UNYT Evidence of Double Grading Çausi Klajdi, Hasa Orest
156. 3.43 UNYT CMR - SAP from UoG
157. 3.44 UNYT Number of Students by Citizenship-Bachelors, 2019-2020
158. 3.47 UNYT Annual Monitoring Report Form
159. 3.48 UNYT Sample Annual Departmental Monitoring REPORT 2018-2019
160. 3.51 UNYT Bachelor in Computer Science Program Folder
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164. 3.55 UNYP Outgoing Student Mobility, Fall 2019
165. 3.55 UNYT Outgoing Student Mobility Evidence - Science Po, Rennes, Spring 2019
166. 3.56 UNYT Incoming Student Mobility Evidence - METU Spring 2020
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172. 3.62 UNYT MSc in IR Student Handbook
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178. 3.68 UNYT Transfer Credit Regulation, Updated, Eng
179. 3.69 UNYT Transfer of Studies Policy, Eng
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206. 4.26 UNYT Individual Performance Assessment Form 2018-2019 Sample
207. 4.27 UNYT International Journal of Balkan Studies Website

208. 4.28 UNYT Dept. B.A admin. quality assurance report on grading fairness+Fall 2018
209. 4.28 UNYT Dept.Law quality assurance report on grading fairness Spring 2019
210. 4.29 UNYT Course Evaluation from Students Report Fall 2018
211. 4.29 UNYT Course Evaluation from Students Report MSc
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256. 5.14 UNYT Senate Decisions on Admission Criteria and Quotas 2019
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297. 5.57 UNYT Library Resources and Policy, Eng
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299. 5.59 UNYT McGraw Hill Contract
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6. **M6:** Meeting with the stakeholders and the alumni
7. **M7:** Meeting with full-time and part-time academic staff
8. **M8:** Meeting with Deans and Heads of Departments
9. **M9:** Meeting with the administrative staff in charge of the students
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11. Site Tour