



Institutional Review of Higher Education Institutions in Albania

**Report of New York University
of Tirana
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.

The review team referred to the APAAL Handbook 2016-17, the self-evaluation report, a range of pertinent documents in the evidence base, the further requested evidence and meetings held with various staff, students and stakeholders

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 review 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

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 LLM 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, which are currently under review for accreditation.

Summary report

UNYT is a private university with facilities located in Tirana. It offers first, second and third-cycle programmes in English and first-cycle programmes in Albanian. Two faculties make up the University: the Faculty of Economics and Business and the Faculty of Law, Arts and Sciences. UNYT's mission is to offer students the opportunity to obtain a university degree at bachelor's, master's or PhD level in a variety of academic and professional specialisations, which will provide them with the knowledge, skills, openness and confidence necessary to succeed in a diverse, international work environment, and prepare them for life as contributing, productive citizens of the global community. It does this through four departments, two research centres and one institute. The Departments are Business Administration, Economics and Finance, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Computer Science. The research centres are Economics and Business, and Social Sciences. It has an Institute for Studies on Democracy and Development. In 2016-17, UNYT had 703 students enrolled on full-time study programmes.

A self-evaluation report was developed in three phases by a self-evaluation group of seven people at UNYT, which included senior managers, academic staff, support staff and a student representative. In the first phase, the self-evaluation group was trained on campus by APAAL's experts. The second phase involved such things as establishing the methodology, university-wide discussion of the process in the governing bodies, interviews with students and University staff, and other information gathering. The third phase consisted of the writing up of the self-evaluation report and internal circulation of its contents to all stakeholders. The self-evaluation report was excellent. The written English was very good and statements were, for the most part, clearly referenced. UNYT supplied all of the additional evidence requested by the review team in good time.

The visit took place over two days, on 15 and 16 June 2017. The review team was made up of two senior higher education reviewers from the United Kingdom 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 the portfolio of supporting evidence eight weeks in advance of the review visit, later supplemented by additional documentation requested before and during the review visit. In all, some 364 documents enabled the team to familiarise themselves with the structure, policies, management procedures and nature of teaching and research activity undertaken by UNYT. Evidence included the Statute of UNYT, academic regulations, annual reports, admission and orientation procedures, lists of external agreements and memoranda, 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, employers and alumni during the review visit. Discussion supported the clarification of procedures, responsibilities and viewpoints. Notes were taken at all meetings by both UK and Albanian participants. As part of a tour of the campus the review team viewed the library, teaching areas, social areas and offices, and saw a demonstration of the UNYT's online and electronic information systems.

The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are substantially met. Two standards are not fully met, **Chapter III Standard I.3** and **Chapter III Standard III.1**, but this does not present any serious risks to the management of the area. UNYT works in accordance with its Statute and regulations and regularly improves them. It is efficiently managed through its governing bodies, such as the Board of Shareholders, Senate and faculty councils, in which staff engage in constructive debate to facilitate decisionmaking. There is, however, a lack of transparency of decisionmaking at the most senior management level of UNYT concerning the activities of the Board of Shareholders, which is a weakness.

The review team recommends for immediate attention that UNYT publishes all the minutes of the Board of Shareholders meetings. UNYT has constructed a developmental strategy for planning purposes. It assembles a thorough annual monitoring report, which it makes available to all staff and students and submits to the Ministry of Education and Sport. UNYT is well organised and has appropriate structures to carry out its mission to deliver quality education to cycle one, cycle two and cycle three students through its four departments within two faculties. It does not, however, have a market research strategy, which is a weakness. The review team recommends for attention in the near future that UNYT writes and implements a market research strategy to inform the development of its strategic plan. UNYT collaborates with partners locally, nationally and internationally to the benefit of its staff and students. UNYT also employs international staff and admits international students.

The Standards for Resourcing are substantially met. One Standard is not fully met, **Chapter III Standard IV.3**, but this does not present any serious risks to the management of the area. UNYT manages its human resources well. It openly recruits staff through its clear procedures and faculty hiring policy. At the beginning of each year, it integrates its academic, research and administrative staff, all of whom are aware of their responsibilities, in line with its specific guidelines. It evaluates its academic staff annually through individual development plans. UNYT does not currently have a promotion policy in place for use, but it is in the process of updating of its Internal Academic Work Procedure Rules and a new promotion policy will be in that document. The absence of a promotion policy is a weakness because staff do not have access to a written policy for career advancement. The review team recommends for immediate attention that UNYT writes and implements a complete promotion policy. UNYT manages its finances effectively by drafting its budget in accordance with procedures defined by law and its Statute. It is periodically audited internally and externally. It has a good information management system through which it manages its operations effectively. It also manages its real estate well and stores its archive. UNYT has an adequate and contemporary infrastructure to carry out its activities. It possesses full documentation of its academic activity in hard copy and electronic form.

The Standards for the Curriculum are substantially met. One Standard is not fully met, **Chapter I Standard I.6**, but this does not present any serious risks to the management of the area. UNYT offers study programmes in accordance with its mission and capacities and in line with its developmental strategy with local, national (particularly law), and international (particularly business) trends. Most of the programmes are clearly defined and offered well within the capacities, both human and physical, of the institution. Some programmes are double degrees. First-cycle programmes provide students with basic knowledge. They are drafted to help students acclimatise to the institution, and UNYT staff also help with that acclimatisation. The recognition of a US bachelor's diploma as an Albanian bachelor's and professional master's is a weakness, because it does not sufficiently distinguish between first and second-cycle programmes. The review team recommends for immediate attention that the UNYT reorganises the study programmes as first and second-cycle programmes and offer them separately. Second-cycle and third-cycle programmes rely on research active staff and collaborative partner input. UNYT owns statistical data for its graduates. It uses the American credit system for all of its programmes, but has designed them to convert to Bologna standards to provide opportunities for student mobility in Europe. UNYT's study programmes blend theoretical and practical work, which prepares students for employment.

The Standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research are substantially met. Three Standards for research are not fully met: **Chapter II Standard I.1**, **Chapter II Standard I.4** and **Chapter II Standard I.8**, but this does not present any serious risks to the management of the area. All elements of student study programmes are effectively organised and applied, including those involving placement and internship, and UNYT provides students who have passed all elements with a diploma. It ensures that all study programmes are continuously improved through semester review and evaluation by students

and staff. It has a clear policy to improve teaching through staff appraisal and training programmes under the oversight of its Quality Assurance Office in collaboration with the Deans of Faculty. UNYT departments do not highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research, which is a weakness. The review team recommends for immediate attention that all UNYT departments highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research with realistic plans to maximise strengths and minimise weaknesses. UNYT is concentrating further on scientific research internationalisation, although many of the mechanisms to do so have only recently been developed and have yet to show significant results. UNYT does not adequately determine its priority areas of scientific research, which is a weakness. The review team recommends for immediate attention that UNYT establishes a clear vision for the future development of its scientific research with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound targets. UNYT invests resources in the implementation of its research. It also has established a continuity of research through its 2012-2017 Strategic Development Plan, which is to be taken forward in its 2017-2022 Strategic Development Plan. UNYT publicises its scientific research outcomes and has held a few international conferences. It records the outcomes of its scientific research, but does not evaluate the outcomes, which is a weakness. The review team recommends for immediate attention that UNYT writes and implements a policy for the evaluation of research outcomes.

The Standards for Students and their Support are fully met. UNYT pursues the correct policy for new students' entrance and makes use of the U-Albania Portal. It informs and communicates with its staff and students effectively through face-to-face meetings, email, social media, hardcopy announcements and its website. It holds student files in electronic and written form. It has appropriate structures in place to mentor and guide students through their study programmes, such as its support services, individual academic advisors and individual supervisors. It provides the basic literature, both hard copy and electronic, for student needs, and its comprehensive Student Handbook is a feature of good practice. UNYT supports students from specific social categories, including those with special needs, such as visual impairment. UNYT encourages students to participate in university life through its support of a Student Union and through student representation on its governing bodies. It assures the cultural and sports quality of student life with various events and an indoor sports pitch. It assists its students' transition into employment with its dedicated Career and Alumni Office and its numerous collaborative agreements with local institutions.

The review team concluded that the Quality Standards are fully met in one area and substantially met in four areas.

Summary of findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following feature of good practice:

- UNYT's Student Handbook, which ensures that students have easily accessible and detailed information in one place about their study programmes and all other aspects of student life at the University(paragraph 5.3; **Chapter I Standard III.3**).

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weaknesses:

- the lack of transparency of decisionmaking at the most senior management level of UNYT (paragraph 1.6; **Chapter III Standard I.3**)
- the absence of a market research strategy to inform the development of UNYT's strategic plan (paragraph 1.12; **Chapter III Standard III.1**)
- the absence of a promotion policy (paragraph 2.3; **Chapter III Standard IV.3**)
- the recognition of a US bachelor's diploma as an Albanian bachelor's and professional master's is a weakness because the study programmes and their objectives are not clearly defined, in this case differentiated, at different levels (paragraph 3.7; **Chapter I Standard I.6**)
- that departments do not highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research (paragraph 4.5; **Chapter II Standard I.1**)
- the absence of a clear vision with specific priorities for the future development of scientific research (paragraph 4.8; **Chapter II Standard I.4**)
- the absence of the evaluation of the outcomes of UNYT scientific research (paragraph 4.12; **Chapter II Standard I.8**).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- for immediate attention, that UNYT publishes all the minutes of the Board of Shareholders meetings (paragraph 1.6; **Chapter III Standard I.3**)
- for attention in the near future, that UNYT writes and implements a market research strategy to inform the development of its strategic plan(paragraph 1.12; **Chapter III Standard III.1**)
- for immediate attention, that UNYT writes and implements a complete promotion policy(paragraph 2.3; **Chapter III Standard IV.3**)
- for immediate attention, that UNYT reorganises the US bachelor's diploma and the Albanian bachelor's and professional master's study programmes as first and second-cycle programmes and offers them separately(paragraph 3.7; **Chapter I Standard I.6**)
- for immediate attention, that all UNYT departments highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research with realistic plans to maximise strengths and minimise weaknesses(paragraph 4.5; **Chapter II Standard I.1**)
- for immediate attention, that UNYT establishes a clear vision for the future development of its scientific research with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound targets(paragraph 4.8; **Chapter II Standard I.4**)
- for immediate attention, that UNYT writes and implements a policy for the evaluation of research outcomes(paragraph 4.12; **Chapter II Standard I.8**).

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

Summary Judgement

The reviewers recommend to the Accreditation Council that at the New York University of Tirana the State Quality Standards are **substantially met**.

Detailed report

Evaluation Area 1: The Organisation and its Management

1.1 UNYT is a private institution of higher education with an autonomous status and academic freedom. It was founded by the decision of the Council of Ministers No.397, dated 15 August 2002. UNYT activity is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, in Law No.9741, dated 12 May 2007, 'On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania' as amended. **[2, Creation, p.2]** UNYT offers programmes of study in the first, second and third cycles, as approved in legal acts. This follows the approval of the status of UNYT as a 'university' by the Council of Ministers Decision No.448, dated 11 July 2012. Doctoral programmes in Business Administration, Computer Science and Humanities and Social Sciences were accredited by the Accreditation Board Ordinance No.3, dated 07 April 2017.**[2]** Other than the MSc in Law, which was validated by the University of Greenwich, UK, all programmes operate in collaboration with the State University of New York Empire State College.**[SER p.4; 28.]** UNYT structures operate according to its Statutes.**[2;2.1; 2.2]** The Student Union has written its own constitution, which it is currently revising.**[19.2.1; SER p.5][Chapter III Standard I.1]**

1.2 The Board of Shareholders is the highest collegial administrative body, which guarantees the mission of the University, including its financial and administrative processes.**[02, Articles 8 and 9]** The Board of Shareholders operates in accordance with Article 81 of the Statute and Law No.9901 'On entrepreneurs and commercial companies in the Republic of Albania' with functions defined in the founding charter of UNYT as a limited-liability company on 26 April 2002. **[1; B1.1.2, Articles 8 and 10]** The Statute of the University defines the institutional functions of the Board of Shareholders. **[2, Article 31; B1; B1.1.1]** Other collegial decision-making bodies are the Senate and the Rectorate, with additional structures operating in accordance with the Statute.**[SER p.6; 2, Articles 7- 49; B1.1.2]** The Rector and the UNYT Administrator are the highest academic and administrative authorities, and they work closely together.**[2, Articles 19 and 21]** Until the future implementation of the law of Higher Education in Albania (Law 80/2015), UNYT will continue to be managed by the Board of Shareholders, according to Company by-laws, after taking advice from the Rectorate, Quality Assurance Unit and the Finance Office.**[2, Articles 8 and 9][Chapter III Standard I.2]**

1.3 UNYT is now in the process of establishing new decision-making structures in which the Administrative Board will have operational responsibility, while the Board of Shareholders retains the decision-making on key strategic issues. This arrangement was approved by the Board of Shareholders and Academic Senate in March 2017 and submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sport for final approval on 23 March 2017.**[2.2]** At the present time the Board of Shareholders is managed by the General Manager and the minutes of meetings are regarded as confidential and/or sensitive. Apart from decisions affecting some academic matters, the minutes are not published.**[M1; M4; M14][Chapter III Standard I.2]**

1.4 Decisions of Senate are fully transparent and are implemented by the Rectorate. **[M4; M5]** Operations at the level of faculty and department are managed by their respective councils. Ethical considerations are delegated to the Council of Ethics,**[2, Article 15]** and the monitoring of Quality and Standards is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Committee.**[2, Article 16]** Student-related matters are resolved in Academic Council,**[2, Article 17]** and the governance of the Doctoral School is by the Council of Professors. The review team could not confirm governance of the third cycle of studies by the Council of Professors. **[2, Article 14; C19.1; M12]** Faculty matters are discussed in Faculty Assembly. **[2, Article 13]** Student input is by their representation on all senior collegial decision-making

bodies.[SER p.7; 19.3; 19.1; Clarifications 2; B1.2.1;Meetings;B1.2.2][Chapter III Standard I.2]

1.5 UNYT fosters constructive debate, as evidenced by budgeting discussions between Senate and the Rectorate, and by UNYT managers and the Board of Shareholders. Agendas of meetings at all levels are forwarded in advance, together with relevant materials.[3.1; 19.8; 24; 26.1]Senate holds meetings at least twice in the academic year, depending upon issues to be resolved. [2, Articles 11-12] The Rectorate monitors the completion of actions approved by Senate, and reports periodically back to the Senate and the Board of Shareholders. [2, Article 19] The Rector, as Head of Senate, represents the academic community. The decisions made at Senate are communicated by conversation, hard copy and email. [M2]Teaching staff contribute to, and are informed of, the decision-making process informally via their Chair of Department and formally by email from the Rector's secretary. They also contribute to annual reports. [M13]One set of minutes from departmental meetings is copied to the Rector's secretary to be archived, and another remains in the departmental archive and outcomes are copied to staff, as well as the student representative. [M11][Chapter III Standard I.3]

1.6 The review team was informed that the Administration Council had not yet been appointed, nor approved by the new law. Consequently, strategic decisions continue to be made by the Board of Shareholders, and only minutes of the Board of Shareholders affecting academic matters are disseminated.[M14] For example, the final decisions regarding the allocation of resources are made solely by the Board of Shareholders, but the minutes recording such strategic decisions are not circulated.[M1; M11] The review team noted the comment[SER p.7] that the operation of the Board of Shareholdersrequired more systematic records and transparency of minutes of meetings once the new Statute is approved. [2.2] However, the lack of transparency of decisionmaking at the most senior management level of UNYT is a **weakness** because it means that corporate decisions that could directly affect all UNYT staff are not circulated. The review team**recommends** for immediate attention that UNYT publishesall the minutes of the Board of Shareholders meetings. [Chapter III Standard I.3]

1.7 A number of supervisory structures operate at UNYT.[SER p.7] For example, the Finance Office is supervised by the Senate,[2, Article 35] internal auditors[12 Internal Auditing Report] and external auditors.[13]Staff have made bids for external European funding, [3.2; 3.3] but UNYT hopes to compete more effectively for European funding as a result of the decision by Senate to establish a Research and Development Office [24] and the decision of the Board of Shareholders to establish the UNYT Foundation.[30][Chapter III Standard I.4]

1.8 The UNYT Strategic Development Plan for 2013-2017 was approved in 2012,[3] and a Research Strategy for 2014-17 was developed in 2014 [9] in accordance with the mission statement, aims and values of the institution.[SER p.8] UNYT is currently in the process of renewing its five-year strategic plan following the decision of Senate on 23 March 2017 to appoint a Review Committee.[3.1, Topic 5, bullet point 4] The review team heard that the Review Committee will be led by a research head and an academic head.[M2; M4;M5]It will initially establish a new vision for UNYT, includingthe need for a new campus and a new faculty, the Faculty of Informatics, to address local market needs.[M1]The new five-year strategy 2018-2023 will incorporate a new institutional Research Strategy that will include the research aspirations and outputs of the new faculty. [M3] It will concentrate heavily on second-cycle provision based on the American model.[M2][Chapter III Standard I.5]

1.9 The UNYT Annual Report is the culmination of an annual process of self-evaluation. Its preparation involves the Offices of Finance, Registry, Marketing and Public Relations,

faculties, departments, the Council of Professors and Student Support Services. **[SER p.8; 3.2; 3.3]**. The Annual Report is widely circulated and discussed, then approved at Senate. The final report is forwarded to the Ministry of Education and Science, academic staff and students. The Annual Report also informs annual objectives and decisionmaking in subsequent years, such as raising the quality of new student admission **[3.3]** and departmental staffing issues. **[28.1]** The Quality Assurance Committee administers quality assurance with the support of the Quality Assurance Unit in collaboration with academic and administrative staff. **[8, p.8-10]** The University tasks academic departments with the oversight, monitoring and improvement of their academic programmes. This is done in annual monitoring reports, which include responses to action plans from the previous year's report and contain a reflective overview and a self-critical strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats analysis. **[28; 28.1]** The Annual Report for the University notes progress towards the strategic goals in the Strategic Plan 2012-2017 and includes an action plan for new objectives in the coming year. **[B4.1]** **[Chapter III Standard I.5; Chapter III Standard I.6]**

1.10 The mission of UNYT is to prepare future professionals, through teaching, learning and research, with an emphasis on personal development and integration into the community. **[2, Article 1]** It is delivered in two faculties, each with two departments and a research centre. **[1]** A third, the Faculty of Informatics, will open in late 2017. The decision to establish this new faculty was approved by the Board of Shareholders and by the Academic Senate decision No. 28, dated 26 September 2016. **[B2.1.2; B2.1.3; B2.1.4]** Administrative units also facilitate the achievement of the mission and the full exercise of autonomy, within the law. **[M14]** Academic freedom in teaching, learning and research is guaranteed by Statute and monitored by the Senate, the Council of Ethics, faculties and academic departments. **[02, Article 2]** UNYT has an official website, which is currently being updated **[www.unyt.edu.al]**. **[Chapter III Standard II.1]**

1.11 UNYT facilitates decisionmaking by encouraging debate in its governing bodies, including Academic Council, Academic Senate and departmental meetings. A good example is the communication and debate on the setting of budgets between the academic departments beginning on 6 May 2016, **[11.3]** then discussion at Academic Senate on 26 September 2016, **[11.4, Topic 6]** and finally the approval decision by Academic Senate on 5 December 2016. **[11.5]** This transparency was supported and reiterated in meetings throughout the review visit. **[M1; M2; M4; M5; M11; M13]** Students also participate in senior, collegial decision-making bodies. **[B1.2.1; B1.2.2; B1.2.3; B1.2.4]** However, UNYT acknowledges that it needs to develop a training programme to support their efficient participation in meetings. **[Clarifications 2]** **[Chapter III Standard II.3]**

1.12 UNYT monitors regional socio-economic developments to inform its operations and to achieve its strategic plan. **[SER p.10; 35]** Partner universities, Chambers of Commerce and the Foreign Investors Association are important sources of information. The Career and Alumni Office has 26 contacts with the business community and maintains an annual database of graduates at each study cycle. Of 436 first-cycle graduates in the period 2012-2016 sent questionnaires, 56 per cent were employed, although 34 per cent did not reply. For 279 second-cycle graduates over the same period, 57 per cent were employed, although 39 per cent did not reply. If the no responses are excluded from these calculations, the 2012-2016 average employment rates for first-cycle graduates is 86 per cent and 94.5 per cent for second-cycle graduates over the same period. **[68; Clarifications 6; B1.6]** Data for the employment of third-cycle graduates is not yet available. Data from questionnaires and surveys feeds into annual reports. **[B4.1]** A systematic review and use of market research is an ongoing objective to ensure that the decisions and operations of UNYT are based on evidence. **[Clarifications 7]** UNYT has recently participated in a meeting entitled 'From Education to Employment: What Universities Provide and What Labour Markets Expect'. **[B1.7.1]** The review team could find no evidence of a market research strategy. **[M3;**

M4;M5; M14]The absence of a market research strategy to inform the development of UNYT's strategic plan is a **weakness**. The review team **recommends** for attention in the near future that UNYT writes and implements a market research strategy to inform the development of its strategic plan. **[Chapter III Standard III.1]**

1.13 UNYT is an internationally orientated university. It has partnerships with State University of New York Empire State College, University of Greenwich and University of Bolton, which lead to awards of those institutions. **[SER p.10; 02, Article 6; M8]** In addition, as part of the New York College Educational Group, UNYT collaborates with New York College in Athens, Thessaloniki and Prague. UNYT is pursuing an internationalisation strategy with respect to the student body **[3, Strategic Goal 4.1]** and the faculties **[03, Strategic Goal 4.2]** through a network of international partnerships **[3, Strategic Goal 6]** and through exchange programmes of students, staff and researchers. **[3, Strategic Goal 4.3]** UNYT has partnerships both nationally and regionally. A list of past and present agreements and memoranda of cooperation cites 26 partnerships, of which nine are in Albania, six are in the region and 11 are international. **[10.1; 35.1][Chapter III Standard III.2]**

1.14 The Career and Alumni Office and UNYT management maintain close links with the Directorate of Public Administration and international organisations operating in Albania for the benefit of UNYT graduates, particularly for their internships. Of 26 memoranda of collaboration, 22 are for internship programmes in Albania, including government ministries, private and public organisations. Alumni, external partners and employers were pleased with the students they had employed on internships and, in some instances, had selected UNYT graduates for further employment. **[M8]** Second and third-cycle students also informed the review team that internships had led to employment. **[M7]** See also paragraph 3.13 below. **[SER p.11; 35; 35.2][Chapter III Standard III.3]**

1.15 An International Relations Office was established in 2016 to actively facilitate staff and student exchanges in which English is the official language of communication. **[SER p.11; 10]** Initial targets were very modest. Three students, two faculty members and one administrative member of staff have now been involved in exchanges. **[Clarifications 9; B1.9]** The International Relations Office is currently promoting exchanges in the Czech Republic, France and Turkey. Selected participants will also act as visiting professors and participate in doctoral programmes. **[Chapter III Standard III.4]**

1.16 UNYT financially supports outgoing faculty exchanges with paid leave, travel expenses and conference costs. **[SER p.12; 09]** Incoming international staff receive a comprehensive handbook to aid their stay and integration in Albania. **[14]** Academic departments welcome and support them appropriately. **[M13]** The Admissions, Marketing and Public Relations Offices actively pursue student international mobility, especially within the region. **[36]** The Student Union and the International Relations Office assist students in their integration into life in Tirana. **[19.6]** The Student Union and its Council actively promote student exchanges and international mobility. **[M3; M7][Chapter III Standard III.4]**

Findings

Good practice

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

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weaknesses:

- the lack of transparency of decisionmaking at the most senior management level of UNYT (paragraph 1.6; **Chapter III Standard I.3**)
- the absence of a market research strategy to inform the development of UNYT's strategic plan (paragraph 1.12; **Chapter III Standard III.1**).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- for immediate attention, that UNYT publishes all the minutes of the Board of Shareholders meetings (paragraph 1.6; **Chapter III Standard I.3**)
- for attention in the near future, that UNYT writes and implements a market research strategy to inform the development of its strategic plan (paragraph 1.12; **Chapter III Standard III.1**).

Affirmation of action being taken

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

Judgement

The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are substantially met.

Evaluation Area 2: Resourcing

2.1 UNYT has a detailed policy document for the selection of new faculty, with appropriate procedures and examples that are aligned with the laws and by-laws in force in Albania. The selection of academic and administrative staff is based on merit. Academic staff from internationally recognised universities are given preference. [SER p.12; 7.3; 7.2; 7.2.1] Students attend guest lectures by candidates and provide feedback on them. An Organisation Chart is published, according to the Statute. [4; 4.1][Chapter III Standard IV.1]

2.2 UNYT strives to create a culture and environment of inclusion and collaboration that includes academic, scientific, administrative and social activities. [26.2 Preparation & Agenda for First Cycle Meeting; 43 Evidence for Social Events] Detailed guides fully describe the integration of newly appointed staff and the comprehensive new faculty induction programme. [14; 14.1; 14.3] Researchers give seminar presentations of their work and invite feedback from staff and students. [SER p.44; 44][Chapter III Standard IV.2]

2.3 All faculty staff compile an individual development plan as part of their annual objectives, which is assessed at the end of the academic year. [33; 28.3] UNYT encourages the international experience of staff through exchanges and attendance at conferences. While the criteria for instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and full professor are clearly defined, [15] the review team could not find evidence of a promotion process. A meeting took place between two members of the self-evaluation group and the Human Resources Manager on 27 March 2017 about UNYT's promotion policy and how it is implemented. The response given was that no complete policy existed and that a process of updating and revitalising the 2008 Internal Academic Work Procedure Rules, which contains policies and provisions of promoting staff, had been initiated. [20.1; 20.2; 07] The absence of a promotion policy is a **weakness** because staff do not have access to a written policy for career advancement. The review team **recommends** for immediate attention that UNYT writes and implements a complete promotion policy. Administrative staff are also encouraged to participate in their personal development by attending courses or study programmes at discounted fees. [M14] A policy to formalise the periodic assessment of administrative staff is planned for August 2017. [15.1; 27][Chapter III Standard IV.3]

2.4 UNYT pursues a social development policy by extending some of the services of its faculty, administrative staff and students to the wider social community. For instance, it raises awareness of the national cultural heritage. An updated research pillar is cultural heritage management, centred on the Onufri Museum, which hosts some of the most important cultural treasures in Albania. One objective is to develop a pedagogical cross-disciplinary pilot module for students, based on the exhibits. [9.1, Project 2.1 p.12-14] The Student Union also organises a Charity Club. [46] UNYT pays for staff medical insurance by withholding money from staff's gross salary and paying its own contribution, according to local legislation. It also assists staff in finding private schemes of medical insurance. [15, Section B5][Chapter III Standard IV.4]

2.5 UNYT is currently reviewing a document which sets the tone and expectations of the rights and duties of academic staff in accordance with its Statute. [SER p.14; 02, Articles 55 -59; 7; 7.1] The review came out of preparation work for this Institutional Review. The initial work demonstrated that, although UNYT manages its human resources effectively, with the exception of academic staff promotions (see paragraph 2.3 above), it needed to update other areas of human resources management. Those other areas include the employment policy for administrative staff and the guide for international faculty. [20.1] The initial work also included a six-point action plan to feed into the review of the internal work procedures. [20.2][Chapter III Standard II.2]

2.6 UNYT drafts its budget in accordance with defined procedures. **[11.2]** The Finance Office also operates according to a Code of Practice. **[11]** The process begins in April or May when all organisational units and departments complete an electronic template. This includes funding requests for personnel, computing, IT, research and development. Each item supports the priorities of the Strategic Plan. The Chief Financial Officer prepares a draft of a master budget for the Board of Shareholders to consider. Their decision is passed to Senate for discussion and approval. **[11.2; 11.5]** The Rectorate, Board of Shareholders and the Finance Office resolve any disagreements. **[SER p.15; 11.4][Chapter III Standard VI.1]**

2.7 The Finance Office implements the UNYT financial policy. The information generated is strategically utilised to support the development and costing of programmes. In addition to ensuring the stability and sustainability of the institution, the Finance Office follows accounting practices in accordance with national accounting standards, prepares timely financial statements, monitors budgets, prepares cash flow projections, forecasts year-end revenues, reconciles cash accounts on a monthly basis and monitors accuracy of information. Accounting practices conform with national accounting standards. **[SER p.15; 11.2; 12; 13]** Financial statements are prepared for the Board of Stakeholders, University Administrator and managers. Budgets are monitored monthly, with cash flow projections and year-end forecasts. This process is reviewed internally to ensure accurate financial information. UNYT pursues a policy of transparency for the distribution of financial resources from Academic Senate downwards, but the operations of the Board of Shareholders is not transparent (see paragraph 1.6 above). **[Chapter III Standard VI.2]**

2.8 As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Finance Office is subject to internal and external audit each year. The Board of Shareholders appoints internal auditors, and UNYT appoints an independent company in Tirana to do the external audit. **[13]** The internal audit report aims to provide reasonable assurance regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, the reliability of financial and management reporting, and compliance with policies and regulations. The annual audit plan is developed on significance and risk, based on financial review, compliance review, operational review and review of Management Information Systems. **[12]** Review of Management Information Systems considers controls, back-up, recovery plans, and system security. The annual external audit consists of a monthly review of accounting and fiscal documentation to identify tax implications, and to verify that the transactions performed by the Finance Office are in accordance with fiscal laws and accounting legislation in Albania. **[13]** Both audits assure responsibility in the expenditure of funds, including research supported by external grants. **[13.1][Chapter III Standard VI.3]**

2.9 UNYT has an integrated information system which is also utilised by its sister institutions in Prague and Athens. It provides students with access to a range of information related to their study programmes. This information is also available to departments and the Rectorate for reporting needs and decision making. The Finance Office uses specialist software for its records and reporting needs. UNYT's website is also used as a public information system. **[SER p.16]** The IT Support Office operates to rules and regulations that are currently under review, and produces a comprehensive manual for IT security. **[47; 47.2][Chapter III Standard VII.1]**

2.10 All the activities at UNYT are fully computerised. There are eight computerised laboratories for teaching, learning and research. **[SER p.17; M10]** A digital database, Gnomon Database Systems, holds all information related to students (see paragraph 2.20 below). This data is available to departments, faculties and the Rectorate for reporting needs and as evidence for decision-making. The Finance Office also uses specialist software, ALPHA Business, for its records. All computers are regularly backed up. **[47]** The IT Support Office also maintains the IT Security Manual and the IT Office Work Documents, **[47.1]** which list the services, policies and agreements. **[47.2][Chapter III Standard VII.2]**

2.11 UNYT maintains a record of its fixed assets and real estate, which is certified by external audit.[13.2]Fixed assets are also managed by the Code of Practice of the Finance Office.[11]A new, modern campus has been planned,but postponed for 'objective reasons'. [SER p.17; 13.3]The Board of Shareholders had decided on a new, modern campus on 14 July 2006. Official permits from all the national government authorities are currently being sought.[B2.1 and B2.1; B2.1.1][Chapter III Standard VII.3]

2.12 UNYT stores, maintains and develops its academic, cultural and scientific heritage. All staff are provided with computers that are regularly backedup. The library is the archive for all staff and UNYT publications, including master's and doctoral theses, which are stored in both paper and electronic forms. [SER p.17; <http://unyt.edu.al/facilities-3/>; M10][Chapter III Standard VII.4]

2.13 UNYT has adequate infrastructure to pursue its teaching activities and to provide working space for academic, research, auxiliary and administrative staff. [01; M10]The Operations Management Office has a masterplan of all UNYT premises to optimise the use of the building. All operations are regulated by the policies and procedures of the Operations Management Office. [SER p.17; 48; 49] [Chapter III Standard VII.5]

2.14 The UNYT Operations Management Office coordinates and manages the logistics of the administrative structures for the purpose of performing operations of institutional interest.[01, Section C] It uses surveys to evaluate its effectiveness and that of all logistical services at UNYT, including student feedback surveys (see paragraphs 4.3 and 5.7 below).[SER p.18][Chapter III Standard VII.6]

2.15 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 (see also paragraph 5.5 below). The classrooms are noise-proof, temperature controlled and well equipped. It meets the usable space norm beyond minimal requirements. Fire and hygiene certificates are renewed before the start of each academic year.[49.1] A central heating and cooling system creates a comfortable environment for teaching, learning and research. UNYT has its own generator and water tanks in case of power failure or water shortage. The teaching facilities are appropriate and well equipped. The building has a modern, airy and business-like appearance. Noticeboards are strategically located throughout the building and contain useful notices, including the use of the athletic facilities, details of the Graduation Ceremony and a bank award for the best student.[M10]The review team saw a range of other facilities: an example of a computer laboratory with 24 stations; an example of a large lecture room with seating for 90 people; several medium-sized classrooms with 24 to 36 seating capacity; a rooftop cafeteria with seating for 50 people; an indoor cafeteria with seating for 24 people; a covered sports pitch in part of the building with an artificial surface used for football, volleyball and basketball; and a table-tennis area. All classrooms have white boards and projectors. Students mentioned their use of the sports facilities and were pleased with them.[M6; M10]While the senior staff have separate offices, departmental offices are staff rooms with six desks and computers. The review team did not see any dedicated rooms for researchers or research centres, nor did they observe a doctor's office. One open-plan office housed the Quality Assurance Office, Office of Student Affairs and the Careers Office. Confidential discussions were conducted in private in adjacent rooms.[M10] [Chapter III Standard V.1]

2.16 All information related to students, their studies and tuition fees is maintained in a digital database, the Gnomon Database System, which is backedup both in a local bank and in Athens. 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.[93; 93.1; 93.2]Students use the system to access their grades, timetables, absences and financial detail. They also receive messages of advice on it. [78; 78.1;

94]UNYT uses its technology to maintain both internal and external information services, which are constantly updated to preserve heritage and institutional memory. Hard copies of all essential academic activities are also archived and regulated by a policy document.
[22.3][Chapter III Standard V.2]

Findings

Good practice

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

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weakness:

- the absence of a promotion policy(paragraph 2.3; **Chapter III Standard IV.3**).

Recommendations

The review team identifiedthe following recommendation:

- for immediate attention, that UNYT writes and implements a complete promotion policy(paragraph 2.3; **Chapter III Standard IV.3**).

Affirmation of action being taken

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

Judgement

The Standards for Resourcing are substantially met.

Evaluation Area 3: The Curriculum

3.1 UNYT's mission is to offer students the opportunity to obtain a university degree at bachelor's, master's or PhD level in a variety of academic and professional specialisations, which will provide them the knowledge, skills, openness and confidence necessary to succeed in a diverse, international work environment, and prepare them for life as contributing, productive citizens of the global community. **[3 p.2]** UNYT offers study programmes in three study cycles and provides information to the public and prospective students regarding its study programmes through various communication channels, such as its website, face-to-face meetings, open days, direct contact with high school directors and visits to high schools. <http://unyt.edu.al/programs/>; **50;5.1; M6]** All tools utilised are complementary and provide accurate information about the study programmes. UNYT offers study programmes in Economics and Business Administration, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Computer Science. It has created its own profile based on its mission, and its study programmes are aligned to the needs of the labour market. **[51.1, 51.2; 51.3; M2][Chapter I Standard I.1]**

3.2 UNYT applies clear application procedures and admission criteria for Albanian and foreign students, which are approved by Academic Senate. The admissions process and criteria are published on UNYT's website. It also applies additional criteria for admission for enrolment. The Academic Senate has decided to admit only students with a grade point average above 6.5, which is above the criteria set by the Ministry of Education and Sport. **[32.1.1; 32.1.2; 32.1.2; C9.1; C9.2;** <http://unyt.edu.al/admissions/undergraduate/application-process> **]** These criteria are easily accessible to prospective students because they are included in promotional materials, **[60; 60.1]** declared at the Ministry of Education and its agencies, and published on UNYT's website <http://unyt.edu.al/admissions/undergraduate/application-process/> and on the U-Albania portal. Study programmes are organised for the purpose of integrating all components set forth in the programmes' aims and objectives. The Statute and the regulations clearly define the rules for assessment. **[SER p.19; 02, Article 61, p.27][Chapter I Standard I.1; Chapter I Standard I.6]**

3.3 UNYT offers short-term courses for subject specialisation, knowledge supplement or updates in the form of lifelong learning to address the particular needs of different group of students. Some short-term courses and seminars offered by UNYT are Microeconomics of Competitiveness, Business Analysis through Financial Statements, Starting a Small Business and Impulsive Wave Trading. They are offered occasionally in response to market demand. **[52; 52.1; 52.2; 52.3; M13]** The law on higher education in Albania does not permit part-time studies. However, the institution offers graduate programmes as evening or weekend classes to accommodate student needs. **[39; 53; 53.1, point 2.5 p.6; 53.2, p.23]** UNYT has procedures in place to evaluate gained experience. UNYT and State University of New York Empire State College have developed mechanisms to transfer credits and accredit prior experiential learning. The number of students transferred in the academic year 2016-2017 increased by 53 per cent from the previous year. **[01, p.5; 54; B3.1; B3.1.1; B3.1.2; B3.1.3; B3.1.4; B3.1.5][Chapter I Standard I.2]**

3.4 Study programmes offered at UNYT are aligned to its mission and institutional development strategy 2012-2017. **[SER p.20]** This is best illustrated by the integrated five-year Master of Science in Law study programme, which provides a distinct international flavour and attracts international students, as per UNYT's stated strategic objective. **[3, Strategic Objective 4.1 p.9; 51.3]** UNYT aims to further improve its offering. It has considered the competition from other universities and intends to start new programmes in information systems, psychology, tourism and perhaps nursing. It hopes to cooperate with international partners, such as University of Toulouse, to deliver a hospitality study programme. There are also plans to open a third faculty on October 2017 in order to comply

with the law on university status. **[M2; M4; M5]** Student qualification requirements match the objectives set out in UNYT's strategic development document. For example, there is a research component which matches strategic development goals in all UNYT curricula. **[53.2 p.43; 3Goal 1, p.5]** All study programmes coherently integrate the information about diplomas issued at the completion of studies. **[51.2 p.4; 51.3][Chapter I Standard I.3]**

3.5 UNYT offers study programmes in line with national and international trends. It thus intends to produce future professionals through teaching, learning and research with an emphasis on personal development and integration into the community, as well as providing knowledge, skills, character and confidence necessary to succeed in a diverse, international environment. **[02 Article 1, p.3]**. UNYT updates its syllabuses and revises its curriculum to ensure that all its study programmes are current and contemporary. **[55; 55.1; 55.2]** The international dimension of study programmes is ensured in several ways: through instruction in English language; through the appointment of international faculty; **[01 Section F.1]** through the selection and utilisation of international textbooks; through the awarding of credits free of charge for foreign languages learning; **[56; 56.1]** and through awarding double degrees to students opting to study with both UNYT and a partner institution, such as the State University of New York Empire State College, the University of Greenwich or the University of Bolton. **[SER p.21; B3.2; B3.2.1; B3.2.2; B3.2.3; B3.2.4; C18.1; 18.2][Chapter I Standard I.4]**

3.6 UNYT takes into account its human resources, infrastructural and financial capacity at the stage of drafting new programmes. For instance, the institutional decision to launch a new Faculty of Informatics for the purpose of maintaining the status of a university **[24.1]** was preceded by a feasibility study conducted by the Computer Science Department. **[57; M4; M5, SER p.21]** The University assigns lecturers' workloads annually in accordance with the criteria set out in law and the institutional regulation. The teaching load of lecturers is distributed based on schedules either per semester or per year and written into full or part-time staff contracts. **[58 Appendix 1]** The teaching load of full-time academic staff is different from the teaching load of researchers. Academic staff who primarily conduct research have a smaller teaching workload, 56 per cent teaching and 44 per cent research. Their teaching is usually blocked into one semester, which frees the remaining time for research. The workload of teaching staff is roughly two thirds teaching and one third research. **[59; M12]** UNYT also hires part-time staff to meet its additional teaching needs. The departmental costs for additional part-time faculty are covered by the main budget. **[11.3; 58.1]** The overall balance between teaching, research and services is sound and pertinent to the different expectations of UNYT academic staff and researchers. **[07.6; 07.6.1]** The annual reports dictate the ways in which departments and research centres negotiate with academic staff and researchers to allocate the working time for the next academic year. **[SER p.21; 28; 28.1; 28.3]** Study programmes are organised in ways that allow the effective harmonisation of the teaching load. **[B3.3.3; SER p.21][Chapter I Standard I.5]**

3.7 Information about all study programmes is available on the University's website and is also published in the Student Handbooks. <http://unyt.edu.al/programs/bachelor-degrees/>; <http://unyt.edu.al/programs/graduate/>; <http://unyt.edu.al/programs/phd/>; **38; 53.2]** The University gives handbooks to students and discusses the handbooks with them during induction. Abbreviated forms of the curricula are also available at UNYT reception. Syllabuses are given to students in hard and electronic copy in the first week of classes. **[61]** Departments, faculties and Senate define and approve study programmes, objectives and learning outcomes, in accordance with the UNYT regulations. All Msc study programmes have clearly defined objectives at the time of adoption and students confirmed that these were clear to them (see also paragraph 3.2 above). **[M6; 51.1, p.3; 51.2, p.1; 51.3, p.3]** UNYT offers double degree programmes and students receive two diplomas (see paragraph 3.5 above). However, for exactly the same study programme, UNYT issues a Bachelor of Science ('Professional Master's in the Major) diploma and the partner institution, State

University of New York Empire State College Empire State, issues a Bachelor of Science diploma. [01; B3.2 ; B3.2.3; C14.3; C14.1] The Albanian bachelor's (professional master's) does not guarantee successful completion of the first cycle and admission to the second cycle. The study programmes are offered as integrated bachelor's and professional master's degrees and the institution issues a second-cycle diploma. The Law on Higher Education Nr.80/2015 considers the professional master's programme as a second-cycle programme which should be offered separately from the first-cycle study programme (bachelor's). The recognition of a US bachelor's diploma as an Albanian bachelor's and professional master's is a **weakness** because the study programmes and their objectives are not clearly defined, in this case differentiated, at different levels. The review team **recommends** for immediate attention that UNYT reorganises the US bachelor's diploma and the Albanian bachelor's and professional master's study programmes as first and second-cycle programmes and offers them separately. [Chapter I Standard I.6]

3.8 Bachelor's study programmes provide students with the knowledge and skills to facilitate progression to the second cycle. Study programmes have been designed to allow for smooth progression of knowledge, skills and competencies. For example, the curriculum in Finance [<http://unyt.edu.al/programs/bachelor-degrees/finance/>] demonstrates a clear progression of knowledge, skills, competences and learning outcomes. [SER p.22; 38 p.29] The completion of 128 academic credits is required to obtain an integrated bachelor's and professional master's degree, and 60 academic credits to obtain the Master of Science degree. [69] Information about the transfer of credits is published on UNYT's website. [<http://unyt.edu.al/admissions/undergraduate/transfer/>] The International Relations Office provides students with information about exchange programmes, transfer opportunities and calls for applications for international credit mobility. [1Section C; 42 ; <http://unyt.edu.al/applications-for-international-credit-mobility/>] UNYT first-cycle study programmes prepare students for the labour market and provide them with a variety of opportunities for employment during their study. These include field visits, internships and job fairs. Students confirmed the importance of these activities for entering the labour market. [M7; 61.1; 35.2; 61.2; 23.1 ; 23.2][Chapter I Standard I.7]

3.9 UNYT has an Academic Support Centre whose role includes monitoring and supporting student progress. The Centre provides a variety of services to help undergraduate students' transition from a high school to a university environment. The Student Handbook provides students with a reference manual. [38] UNYT organises an induction session at the start of the academic year for the purpose of familiarising students with UNYT processes and practices. [62; M6] The University assigns a faculty advisor to each student from the beginning of their studies. [92] They are required to consult with their advisor at least once per semester. Students confirmed the crucial role of advisors in helping the transition from high school to university and from university to the labour market. [63; M6] UNYT has a system of academic probation in place for underperforming students, [38, p.67-68] which is monitored by an Academic Progression Commission. [64] The University refers students facing other issues to various student support services. [38, p.72-75] UNYT also organises the following student orientation activities: orientation day, freshman seminar, student services open day and foreign languages fair. [62; 65; 42; 42.1] The University tailors the delivery of the curriculum to the individual needs of various types of learners, including those with disabilities such as visual impairment. [1, Section H.1; 60.3 point 5 under General Policies; M6; M7] Student numbers in class are on average 25 to 30. The curriculum is delivered by full-time and part-time staff who are recruited on the basis of the merit of their qualifications, teaching experience and research output (see paragraph 2.1). Full-time faculty and researchers deliver at least 70 per cent of the curriculum. [B3.3.1; B3.3.][Chapter I Standard I.8]

3.10 Second-cycle study programmes are designed and delivered by research-active faculty who hold a PhD degree. [SER p.23; 18.2] For example, one of UNYT's researchers

who was recently awarded funding to develop Jean Monnet modules at UNYT has contributed to undergraduate and graduate curricula. [66] Students are also involved in research projects, [9.1] and at the end of their studies they are required to produce a master's thesis in line with UNYT's Research Pillars. [72] The business and professional communities contribute to the curriculum design and revision of UNYT study programmes. [45 ; 55.1; 31; M8] UNYT employs part-time lecturers to bring fresh insights from the industry and professional communities into the classroom. The review team heard examples from them of proposals in finance and marketing that were accepted. [SER p.23; M8] The University collects graduate employment statistical data, and statistics from the Career and Alumni Office indicate that UNYT links with the professional community contribute to graduate employment rates. [SER p.23; 68] Some part-time staff teach at UNYT also for the purpose of identifying and recruiting young talent. [M8] Over 70 per cent of the second-cycle programmes are taught by full-time faculty. [B3.3.3] [Chapter I Standard I.9]

3.11 UNYT uses the American credit system for all study programmes. The system is convertible to Bologna standards. [SER p.24; M6] Study programmes provide information about the programme structure, such as the course schedule, grading policy and credits under the American system. The design of study programmes allows and facilitates the transfer of credits to other universities. [53.1; 53.2] 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). [69] Graduates also receive a diploma supplement at the end of their studies. The information contained in the diploma supplement is presented in both Albanian and English. [69.1] One alumnus mentioned that she was able to progress successfully to a foreign master's degree after finishing her first-cycle studies at UNYT. [M8] English proficiency at a score of 550 or above is an entry requirement. UNYT accepts the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test or its equivalent. [32.1.2] UNYT has a transfer credit policy in place, which enables the transfer of credits awarded abroad or at home. It also has a foreign language transfer policy. UNYT encourages its international students to learn Albanian for better integration into life in Albania. Students who are not native Albanian speakers can gain credits for Albanian as a foreign language. [54; 56.1; 56.2] [Chapter I Standard I.10]

3.12 Study programmes aim to balance theory and practice through the inclusion of practical exercises and laboratory classes to support lectures. The teaching also exposes students to real business world environments through internships and/or projects related to real-world problems. The Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises module is designed to provide students with essential practical tools for new or existing businesses. [SER p.24; 61.2; 61.3] Start-up weekends provide additional opportunities for students to combine theoretical knowledge with its application. [70; 70.1; 70.2; M1] UNYT organises cultural, social and educational activities beyond the classroom and students have participated in various community activities. [SER p.24; 11.5; 43; 71] [Chapter I Standard I.11]

3.13 UNYT prepares students for employment with, for instance, special modules, learning enhancement activities, career fairs, internships, and theses and consultancy projects dealing with real-world issues. [SER p.24; 61.2; 61.3; 23.3; 23.1] Students must complete a mandatory professional practice or internship. Internships expose students to working in a business or an institution. They have clear expectations defined by learning outcomes, activities and evaluation. [B1.8.1-B1.8.4] Students prepare a final report, which describes the host organisation, analyses lessons learned during the internship and offers personal reflections and advice for further interns. The report is presented in the final class of the appropriate module. [B1.8] UNYT has agreements with both public and private sector organisations that offer internships and placement opportunities (see also 1.14 above). [SER p.24; 35; 35.2] [Chapter I Standard I.12]

Findings

Good practice

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

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weakness:

- the recognition of a US bachelor's diploma as an Albanian bachelor's and professional master's is a weakness because the study programmes and their objectives are not clearly defined, in this case differentiated, at different levels (paragraph 3.7; **Chapter I Standard I.6**).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendation:

- for immediate attention, that UNYT reorganises the US bachelor's diploma and the Albanian bachelor's and professional master's study programmes as first and second-cycle programmes and offer them separately (paragraph 3.7; **Chapter I Standard I.6**).

Affirmation of action being taken

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

Judgement

The Standards for the Curriculum are substantially met.

Evaluation Area 4: Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research

4.1 UNYT applies announced study programmes appropriately. It organises its studies as stated in its Statute and documents them in the Student Handbook, in various schedules, on the website and in individual syllabuses. [SER p.25; 02, Articles 50-54; 38, 6.3; 39; <http://unyt.edu.al/>; 61] The University manages staff workloads appropriately by balancing teaching, research and administration. For instance, research centre staff, deans and department chairs receive teaching remission in order to carry out research and management responsibilities. [SER p.25] All staff have contracts and/or job descriptions. [SER p.25; 7.5; 7.6; 7.6.1; 58; 58.1] UNYT staff maintain oversight over general projects, internships, senior projects, consultancy projects and research work at all levels and through all of their phases, as outlined in the course syllabuses and programme specifications. [SER p.25; 51; 51.1; 51.2; 51.3; 61; 61.1-61.7, particularly 61.2 and 61.4] Senior projects, such as the micro-thesis at bachelor's level and the final thesis at master's level, are supervised. [61; 61.2, 61.5; 72] The library provides adequate supporting literature (see paragraph 5.5 below). [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 and Sport. [SER p.25; 38, p. 59; 74] Prior to the final assessment for the diploma, students will have completed a number of other assessments. The forms of summative and formative assessment are outlined in the curriculum. The forms selected for use is a choice left to individual lecturers in the spirit of academic autonomy, but under departmental oversight. These assessment forms are publicised in the curricula [51.1; 51.2] and in course syllabuses. [61] Examination protocol does not include anonymity. [SER p. 26; 14.2, p.75-58; Clarifications 4.7] Grading fairness and comparability is, however, ensured through random sampling by the chairs of department and through the departmental audits, which are conducted every semester. [76; 76.1; Clarifications 4.5 and 4.7; B4.5.1; M4; M5] There is a student honour code, which includes UNYT's policy on cheating and plagiarism. [75] UNYT has a student complaint procedure, outlined in the Student Handbook, which includes appeals against examination scores. The complaint is handled initially by the Chair of Department (where appropriate) and thereafter by the Academic Petitions Committee. [SER p.26; 387.10, p.69; 77] Lecturers give students exam scores individually by hand in class and post a list with scores identified by student number, not name. Midterm and final grades are electronically recorded and students can access them confidentially on the information system. Final exams and final coursework are stored in the Records Office. [SER p 26; 78; 78.1; M6] [Chapter I Standard II.2]

4.3 UNYT ensures that its study programmes are continually improved. It has a range of mechanisms to facilitate quality control and enhancement of its provision. It regularly monitors the performance of instructors through a number of evaluations, including course student evaluations, peer evaluations, faculty performance evaluations and departmental evaluations in annual reports on teaching, learning and related quality standards. [SER p.26; 17.1; 17.1.1; 17.2; 17.2.1; 17.3; 28.1, J, p.7-10] All courses are evaluated every semester, and those taught by new professors twice per semester. [Clarifications 4.9; B4.9.1; M6; M7; M13] In addition to course student evaluations, students provide feedback through an exit survey and through Academic Council meetings. [SER p.26; 79; 19.7] The outcomes of staff and student evaluations are considered in curriculum revisions. Academic staff gave examples of changing their modules to include more problem solving and more practical work. [55.1; M13] Feedback and statistical data from businesses and communities in which UNYT graduates have been employed [68] is not systematically used to inform the revision of the curriculum. However, UNYT includes part-time faculty from the business community on the Curriculum Revision Committee and has held one business roundtable

meeting. [Clarifications 4.2; B4.2.3; M3; M11] UNYT has created a database of student employment in the Career and Alumni Office. It has also created an advisory board composed of company representatives and distinguished academic and political figures, but the advisory board has not met. [Clarifications 4.2; B4.2.1; B4.2.2; M3; M4;M5] [Chapter I Standard II.3]

4.4 UNYT has a clear policy to improve teaching quality. Responsibility for quality assurance and for continuous teaching improvement rests with the Quality Assurance Office, in collaboration with the Deans of Faculty. The evaluations of staff and programmes are mentioned in the previous paragraph. Additional measures include faculty development workshops, syllabus revisions and mentoring. [SER p.27; 02; 8; 16; 14.3; 55.2; M4;M5; M13; M14] The Quality Assurance Manual [8] is a useful document. Its sections include: Quality Assurance Framework; Assuring the Quality of Staff; Procedures for the Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes; and a Summary of the Main Activities Carried Out by the Quality Assurance Bodies at UNYT 2015-2016. UNYT has also invested in a book and audio-visual library resource on teaching and learning. [SER p.26] UNYT lecturers blend fieldwork into their Intercultural Management course, and their real-world research project may be genuinely innovative. [61.6; 61.7] UNYT has established a CoLab which will eventually operate as a business incubator. [SER p.27] Although the initial conception was March 2014 and the deadline for operation was January 2016, [81, WP5, 5.1 and WP7, 7.1; M1] there is as yet no evidence of premises of a functioning business incubator. [M10] UNYT encourages the enhancement of its faculty staff qualifications in teaching and research by supporting conference participation, by providing paid leave for staff to participate in research activities abroad, by providing staff mobility via Erasmus+ projects and by conducting its own in-house open lectures. [80; 18; 18.1; 44] [Chapter I Standard II.4]

4.5 UNYT departments and research centres are the basic academic units. Staff in both are co-located, so there is no physical locus for the centres. 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. [SER p.27; 02, Articles 23, 27-33, 39 point 5; 04.1; 28.1; 28.3; B4.4; Clarifications 4.3; B4.3; M10; M12] The sample departmental annual reports do not specifically highlight strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research. Neither contains a separate section for research, although one notes 'small scale research' under weaknesses [28.1, p.3] and a second lists research achievements in individual report tables containing individual action points. [28.3] There is a list of activity which includes some out-of-date action points and a list of research outputs, but no strengths or weaknesses. [B4.4] That departments do not highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research is a **weakness**. The review team **recommends** for immediate attention that all UNYT departments highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research, with realistic plans to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses. The departments and research centres feed their financial requests into the Finance Office, which drafts the budget. Research centres are mainly involved in funding research groups, but departments also fund research. [11.3, 2.1, F1] The research centres monitor research closely, with action points for their individual members, but departments sometimes only note staff activities without action points. [28.1; 28.3] Academic staff and researchers are hired to support UNYT's overall mission and strategic development. Year-end evaluations determine contract renewal or termination. SER p.28] [Chapter II Standard I.1]

4.6 UNYT encourages development, dynamism and scientific research. It supports new research initiatives, especially of an interdisciplinary nature, and encourages them in three ways: by employing academic staff in research centres, by employing doctoral students, and by supporting small-scale research projects promising to transform to larger-scale projects via a specific budget provision. [SER p.28; 9; 9.1; 7.6; 7.6.1; M12] UNYT has partnerships

with other institutions whose scope of activities includes research, such as the University of Finland and the Western Balkans Regional Research Programme. It also participates as a partner in projects funded by various European Union entities, such as The European Centre and the Civil Rights Defenders. [SER p.28; 9; 9.1; 10.1; 35; 37.1] [Chapter II Standard I.2]

4.7 UNYT concentrates on scientific research internationalisation in a number of ways. It created a Research and Development Office, which opened last year, and an International Relations Office, which opened in April 2017. [SER p.28; 01 Section C, p.3; 29; M2; M3] In addition, in December 2016, it established the UNYT Foundation for the purpose of facilitating bids for projects. [30] The Research and Development Office has made several European bids and it advises staff on the bidding process. [37.1; M12] UNYT has also been 'moderately active' [SER p.28] in organising international conferences. It organised two international conferences in November 2015, [82; 82.1; 82.2; 86; M11] co-organised one in Skopje earlier in this academic year [84] and intends to organise another international conference via the Jean Monnet grant in the future. [37.2; 37.2.1; 37.2.2; 37.2.2.1] Academic staff supervise master's theses and doctoral theses, some of which contain international research. [83; 83.1] UNYT has signed a number of partnership agreements. While many of these concentrate on internships (see paragraph 1.4), [35] others are more international, such as those with the Institute of Political Studies Rennes, Herzing University and the Middle East Technical University. [10.1] UNYT researchers and academic staff publish in national and international academic journals, but the University recognises that not enough of its staff's research output is placed in prestigious peer-reviewed, indexed and well-cited journals. [SER p.28; 18.2] [Chapter II Standard I.3]

4.8 UNYT's research priorities are not clearly defined. Its Research Strategy is a four-page document that does not state priorities, but lists four general 'ambitions' and seven general 'measurable objectives-indicators', which do not contain specific measurable targets. [9] Its priorities relate to the research pillars and staff expertise. For instance, the fifth research pillar of UNYT (European Integration, Reform and Governance) matches staff expertise and a European priority area. [SER p.29; 9.1; Clarifications 4.11; B4.11.1; B4.11.2; B4.11.3; B4.11.4; M12] None of the 'ambitions' appear in the departmental annual reports, and how the priorities or the pillars were established remains unclear (see paragraph 4.5). Staff mentioned some of the general priorities and confirmed that they were related to their expertise. [M12] UNYT intends to draft a new Institutional Strategic Development Plan for the period 2017-2022 in which it will make particular reference to priority research areas as they have now emerged, but this is still in the planning stages. [SER p.29; 9.1; 31, Topic 5, point 4] The absence of a clear vision with specific priorities for the future development of scientific research is a **weakness**. The review team **recommends** for immediate attention that UNYT establishes a clear vision for the future development of its scientific research with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound targets. [Chapter II Standard I.4]

4.9 UNYT invests resources for the implementation of its research. Research centres employ staff with a track record of research who will complement the existing research pillars. [Clarifications 4.11; B4.11.1; B4.11.2; B4.11.3; B4.11.4; C2.1; C2.2; C2.3; C2.4; M3; M12; M13; M14] Doctoral students are part of the academic and research staff, but there are no dedicated places for them to use unless they are employed lecturers. [SER p.29; M11] Funding for research accounts for 14 per cent of UNYT's annual budget. [01; M2; B4.12; C3; M3; M4; M5; M11; M12] This includes staffing, but, since research staff also teach, it is impossible to determine how much of the staffing cost is research and how much is academic teaching. [C3] [Chapter II Standard I.5]

4.10 UNYT provides continuity in the scientific research field. It focuses on its scientific research priorities (see paragraph 4.8 above) and will continue to do so in its new Strategic

Plan 2017-2022 (see paragraph 4.8 above). [SER p.29; 9.1; 31, Topic 5, point 4] Another example of UNYT's research continuity is the incorporation of research objectives across the institution as outlined in its most recent 'Annual Objectives' document. This document contains action plans and targets for all areas of UNYT, but targets are general rather than specifically measurable. [33, p.20] UNYT also implements some national and regional scientific research policies. It was a partner in the ADRIATInn project, which focused on regional policies 'for advancing research development and innovation towards the creation of new policies for sustainable competitiveness and technological capacities for SMEs'. [SER p.30; 37, third on table; <https://www.facebook.com/unyt.edu.al/posts/599712900096937>] UNYT is part of the Erasmus+ project in Quality Assurance in private higher education institutions in Albania, which fits under the priorities of two key policy documents also related to research: 'Increasing the impact of EU Development: an Agenda for Change' and 'European Higher Education in the World'. [<http://unyt.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Project-Fact-Sheet-QAinAL-1.pdf> - on 28/04/17] UNYT employs international academic and research staff and hosts Fulbright scholars. [01, Section F; 40; M12] It fully integrates all international researchers into university life in Albania. [14; C5.1; M3; M13] UNYT's International Relations Office provides mobility opportunities for academic staff and researchers by funding conference participation and paid leave to participate in research activities (see also 1.15 and 1.16 above). [18.1; 80] [Chapter II Standard I.6]

4.11 UNYT publicises its outcomes in scientific research. It has conducted a few international conferences, seminars and scientific symposia, and intends to organise more, (see paragraph 4.7 above). It keeps an updated record of its research output, which includes publications. [09.1] There is a budget line for the organisation of scientific conferences. [9, Action Plan for Research Objective No. 1; C3, Item 4; M14] The University incorporates the past funding for the policy document on incentives, all of which relate to publications, back into the budget to encourage larger scale scientific research projects. [SER p.32; 87; 9, Action Plan for Research Objective No. 1] UNYT also publishes its own scientific journal (Global Outlook: A Journal of Global Affairs and International Comparative Development). [SER p.31; 82.3] [Chapter II Standard I.7]

4.12 UNYT does not evaluate the outcomes of its scientific research. The Research Strategy does not have an action plan, and its 'Measurable objectives-indicators' are aspirational without targets or completion dates. [9, B; M4; M5] The Annual Report includes a section on research, but instead of evaluation, it mainly records completion, progress or non-completion. [B4.1, p.9, p.12-16] Research outputs are recorded elsewhere as well. [01, Sections G and H, p.6-7; Clarifications 4.10; B4.10; M11] Academic Senate approved an assessment form to measure individual research output in October of 2016, but none has been completed to date, so research output remains unmeasured. [C11, Topic 11; C11.1; C11.2] UNYT hopes to develop research outcomes quality indicators after the completion of the Erasmus+ project on Quality Assurance. [SER p.31; <http://unyt.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Project-Fact-Sheet-QAinAL-1.pdf>] The absence of the evaluation of the outcomes of UNYT scientific research is a **weakness**. The review team **recommends** for immediate attention that UNYT writes and implements a policy for the evaluation of research outcomes. [Chapter II Standard I.8]

4.13 The transfer of scientific research outcomes from UNYT occurs in three ways: by the integration of young and junior researchers into UNYT's research groups, [9.1] by contacts with the business and professional communities, [35] and by a number of institutional scientific publishing activities, including the book of abstracts for the 'Transition in Retrospect' international conference; [82; 82.1; 82.2] the peer-reviewed international journal Global Outlook; [82.3] the recent approval of UNYT Press; [82.3] and the UNYT in-house publications. [01, Section H,2] [Chapter II Standard I.8]

4.14 Research at UNYT is emerging but is yet to mature, which it will with the generation of more meaningful outputs from realistic and prioritised targets, particularly in relation to the research centres, and a policy for detailed monitoring and evaluation of research outputs that includes realistic and achievable key performance indicators agreed in advance. The new offices (the Research and Development Office, the International Relations Office and the New York Foundation) should also help, but the management skills of the Vice-Rector Research will be crucial.

Findings

Good practice

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

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weaknesses:

- that departments do not highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research (paragraph 4.5; **Chapter II Standard I.1**)
- the absence of a clear vision with specific priorities for the future development of scientific research (paragraph 4.8; **Chapter II Standard I.4**).
- the absence of the evaluation of the outcomes of UNYT scientific research (paragraph 4.12; **Chapter II Standard I.8**).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- for immediate attention, that all UNYT departments highlight their strengths and weaknesses in the field of scientific research with realistic plans to maximise strengths and minimise weaknesses (paragraph 4.5; **Chapter II Standard I.1**)
- for immediate attention, that UNYT establishes a clear vision for the future development of its scientific research with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound targets (paragraph 4.8; **Chapter II Standard I.4**).
- for immediate attention, that UNYT writes and implements a policy for the evaluation of research outcomes (paragraph 4.12; **Chapter II Standard I.8**).

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 partially met.

Evaluation Area 5: Students and their Support

5.1 UNYT recruits first-cycle students in a variety of ways. It designs mid-term development projects as reflected in its Annual Objectives and Developmental Strategy. [SER p.32; 33, 1.3, p.3; 03, p.7-8] Primary responsibility for the implementation of the projects, which this year focused on student recruitment, support and retention, rests with UNYT's Admissions Office. [SER p.32; 02, Article 37] The Admissions Office works with the national enrolment system, administered by the National Examination Agency, and is currently coordinating the admission plan of activities through the U-Albania Portali i Maturantit (High School Graduate's Portal). [SER p.32; <http://ualbania.arsimi.gov.al/Universitet/Info/55-as> on 26/04/17] This portal is a central communications tool for prospective students and allows them to access UNYT information on, for instance, the academic offer and individual study programmes. It also enables prospective students to ask questions about UNYT, which are answered by the online portal management working group. [SER p.32; Clarifications 5.7; B5.7; B5.7.1; M14] The Admissions Office also visits high schools and study fairs across the country. [SER p.32; 89; 89.1] Prospective students' reception at UNYT, information sessions, admissions and enrolment are all handled according to the Statute. [02, Articles 36-38; C1.3] UNYT is an English speaking and teaching university, which welcomes international students. [SER p.32; 01, D3] It works with its Student Union to facilitate and accommodate new Albanian and international students. [SER p.32; 19.6; 62; 99; 19.6; C4.4; M3] Students spoke highly of their contact with the University, from first contact through induction. [M6] The full-time academic staff to student ratio is 1 to 15.6 and the total academic staff (full-time and part-time) to student ratio is 1 to 9.9 [Clarifications 5.1; 1.1, E.1 and 2; F.1;] [Chapter I Standard III.1]

5.2 UNYT informs and communicates with its students and academic staff in a variety of ways. It uses UNTY email addresses, personal email addresses, text messages, social media, posters, and electronic and hardcopy announcements. [SER p.33] The Admissions Office handles, among other things, information related to applicants for consideration by the Admissions Committee. It is also responsible for the management of personal student files and continuous communication with graduate, undergraduate and doctoral students. [SER p.32; 02, Article 37; M14] The Registrar's Office is responsible for, among other things, the maintenance of student data in electronic and written form and the maintenance of 'effective links between students, Program Director and invited academic staff'. [SER p.32; 02, Article 36] The Records Office inputs and maintains existing students' data in the UNYT system and issues official transcripts and documents. The Records Office is responsible for maintaining students' personal files during the study periods and submits them to the Archive Office upon graduation. The individual departments also keep the database up to date throughout the student study period. [SER p.32-33; 22; 22.1; 22.3; M11] The Records Office prepares the Academic Calendar and coordinates student guidance and advice services. [SER p 33; 59; 88; 90; 91; 92; 93; 93.1; 93.2] All University staff and students have UNYT email addresses. [SER p.33; M3; M6; M7] Clarifications, 5.9; B5.9; B5.9.1; B5.9.2; B5.9.3 [Chapter I Standard III.2]

5.3 UNYT orientates, mentors and guides its students in a number of ways. It provides a comprehensive 78-page Student Handbook, which covers, for instance, the structure of academic programmes, academic regulations, student services, student life and the Student Union. [38; M6] UNYT's Student Handbook is a feature of **good practice** because it ensures that students have easily accessible and detailed information in one place about their study programmes and all other aspects of student life at the University. Students said that they find the Student Handbook useful. [M6] At induction, the Records Office provides initial guidance and advice to students. [Clarifications 5.8; B5.8; B5.8.1] Freshmen also attend information sessions, Open Days and a Freshmen's Day organised by the Student Union. [SER p.33; 99] Students receive further details at their first enrolment in their courses.

[Clarifications 5.8; B5.8.2; B5.8.3; B5.8.4] All students are assigned a faculty advisor who mentors them (see paragraph 5.6 below). Second-cycle students agree supervisors in their area of specialisation and usually meet with them once a week, when, among other things, they receive advice on essential literature for their research. **[M7; M5]** UNYT also offers a variety of student support services to guide and advise students, including a Coordination Office, an Office of Student Affairs, the library, a Career Centre, a Counselling Centre and an Academic Support Centre. **[2, Articles 41-49]**. All staff and students have a UNYT email address. **[SER p.33; M6; M7][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. **[SER p.33]** It has an elevator to help students with mobility problems. **[SER p.33; Clarifications 5.10]** UNYT adapts its teaching accordingly, on the advice of its Counselling Centre, when a student is physically or psychologically in need. A recent example concerns a visually impaired student. He received a special syllabus for a visual arts course and lectures were recorded for him. **[SER p.33; 60.3; M11; M6]** The University intends to apply for an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project to build infrastructure to help students with disabilities studying at UNYT and other universities. **[SER p.33; Clarifications 5.10]** There are no part-time students, but UNYT makes special timetabling allowances for students when necessary, such as scheduling 20 hours over weekends to deliver the MBA. **[M7][Chapter I Standard III.4]**

5.5 UNYT provides basic literature and support for its students. Its library provides adequate textbooks, supplementary literature and guided support to deliver its curriculum. It has a book stock of 7,317 titles and an e-library service. **[SER p.34; 95; M10]** It is housed in two rooms, one of which has seating at two-seat desks for 48 people and houses the hard copy materials, and another room, which has 14 individual seating computer terminals for electronic materials access and two group work rooms for up to eight students each. **[M10]** The library keeps records of its holdings. **[SER p.34; 13.2 (example translates pp. 1-2 and pp. 127-129 at end of document); M10]** McGraw Hill Higher Education Publishing supplies students with reasonably priced electronic course-packs, which, if they cannot afford the purchase, is also kept in the library for free access. **[SER p.34; 73; Clarifications 4.6; B4.6]** The library updates its holdings through regular ordering. The budget has a line for library purchases. **[SER p.34; 11.3, 2.7; M14]** The library provides additional literature through existing electronic databases, such as ProQuest, EBRARY, JSTOR, and Emerald Insight, **[<http://unyt.edu.al/facilities-3/-as> on 26/04/17; M10]** which are accessible from the library, from other laboratories on campus and some from off campus. The library is open every working day from 09.00 to 21.30 and on weekends from 09:00 to 17.00. The hours are posted on the entrance and on the website. **[<http://unyt.edu.al/facilities-3/-as> on 26/04/17; M10]** Students can borrow books on their identification cards, and said that the library resources are adequate for their study needs. **[Clarifications 5.11; M6; M7]** A student with visual impairment said that he has adequate access to lectures using audio facilities. **[M10; M6][Chapter I Standard III.5]**

5.6 UNYT offers first-cycle students support through its university services to help them progress. All students are assigned a faculty advisor. Each advisor works with about 20 students and guides them throughout their study during meetings which occur at least twice per semester. **[63; 92; B5.8.3; M6; M11]** Advising sessions are minuted and preserved on UNYT's GNOMON database system. **[94]** Transferable skills are introduced early to facilitate student study. For instance, freshman course learning objectives include the development of key transferrable skills related to the use of learning resources through guided, semi-guided and independent searches. **[Clarifications 5.8; B5.8.2; 60.3, Learning Objectives, 3, point 4]** Module leaders and the librarians help students when searching for literature. **[SER p.34; M10]** UNYT also support students' needs via the various centres, such as Counselling

Centre, Academic Support Centre, Writing Centre and Math Centre. [02, ArticleS 45, 49, 47; 46; 38 p.73-74; <http://unyt.edu.al/facilities/counseling-center/>; <http://unyt.edu.al/facilities/academic-support-center/>; <http://unyt.edu.al/facilities/writing-center/>; <http://unyt.edu.al/facilities/mathematical-center-2/> as on 26/04/17] UNYT has drafted, and is currently revising, a Student Retention Strategy to enhance student support and to maximise student retention. [98] When students are in difficulty they usually go to their personal advisors or to the Registrar's Office, who either address the problem or refer them to the appropriate person or office. [M11] See also paragraph 5.3 above. [Chapter I Standard III.6]

5.7 UNYT encourages its students to participate in university life. They participate primarily through their own Student Union. [19; 19.1; C13; 19.2; 19.3; 19.4; 19.4.1; 19.5; 19.6; 19.7; 19.8; C4.1 p.92-93] They are represented on key governing collegial bodies, such as Senate and Faculty Council, where their voice has led to changes including improved information at induction and representation at the European Youth Parliament in Flora. Incoming student officers receive informal training from previous office holders, but UNYT recognises the need for a formal training programme. [02, Articles 11, 24; B1.2.1; B 1.2.2; 1.2.3; 1.2.4; 1.2.5; Clarifications 1.2 and 5.2; C6; M2; M4; M5] Students spoke highly of their personal experiences of the Student Union. [M6; M7] Students were also heavily involved in the production of the self-evaluation report. Their contribution was led by five student representatives and included participation from 71 students in, for instance, mini-group discussions, whose conclusions fed back into the report. The self-evaluation group included one student as an official member. UNYT supports student initiatives and finances their activities. [11.5; M2; M3] [Chapter I Standard III.7]

5.8 UNYT attempts to assure the cultural and sports quality of the students' lives. It has recently enhanced its student support services with the creation of a new post of Dean of Students, dedicated to student matters and issues. [02, Article 17; 02.2, Article 56 (in Albanian)] Its premises contain 648 square metres of sports facilities, including a covered pitch for football, volleyball and table tennis, and 2,762 square metres of rest areas for student socialisation. [01, L. 1; B5.3.1; M6; M10] UNYT has arrangements with a gym and a local trainer who trains students and regularly organises championships. Student Union Clubs also organise various social and cultural activities, such as an event with an American writer. [96; M6] Other examples of UNYT contributions to the cultural life of its students are the Berat project exhibition catalogue and a request by a student at a departmental meeting for the introduction of cultural heritage management. The request was met and provided more proactive fieldwork. [SER p.35; web link checked 02/05/17; 97; M4; M5; M11] The Counselling Centre supports student health and wellbeing by offering, for instance, ethical counselling, assistance on time management skills, psychological testing and referral to long-term clinical services. [B5.3; 5.3.2; Clarifications 5.3] The review team did not see a doctor's office or medical facilities on site. [M10] [Chapter I Standard III.8]

5.9 UNYT assists in students' employment. It actively collaborates with business and professional communities to provide its students with employment opportunities (see also paragraphs 1.14 and 3.13 above). [SER p.35] These include field visits [61.2; 61.3], internships [35; 35.2; M6; M8], and job fairs [23.1; 23.2; M7]. Examples of internships include work experience in: the UNYT International Relations Office, a printing press in Tirana, a peace project at the British Council in Greece, a UNCR project on refugees, a project on US presidents and the Central Bank. [M6] Several students mentioned that they and others whom they knew were subsequently employed by the company where they completed their internship. [M7] Start-up weekends blend theory and practice. [70; 70.1; 70.2] The Career and Alumni Office prepares graduates for the labour market through its activities linking students with business. [3.3, Table 7, p.47-50; 23.3] These activities are reported to Academic Senate for inclusion in the annual report and linked into the development strategy. [3, Strategic Goal 5, Objectives 3] The contacts generated from

[35.2]them directly inform UNYT about national and regional socioeconomic developments. The Career and Alumni Office also prepares statistics on graduate student employment, which include, for each graduate, name, year of graduation, email, current job, address and further studies. [M8; M14] For graduate employment rates, see paragraph 1.12 above.[*Chapter I Standard III.9*]

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following feature of good practice:

- UNYT's Student Handbook, which ensures that students have easily accessible and detailed information in one place about their study programmes and all other aspects of student life at the University(paragraph 5.3; *Chapter I Standard III.3*).

Weakness

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

Documents provided in the self-evaluation phase

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

01 General Information Data -GID

01.1 Self-declaration

02 UNYT Statute - 2015

02.1 Decision on Approval of the Statute 2015

02.2 UNYT Statute 2017 - in process

02.3 Correspondence with MES on Statute

03 Institutional Development Strategy (IDS)

03.1 Evidence of meetings for IDS

03.2 Annual Report 2014-2015

03.3 Annual Report 2015-2016

03.4 Correspondence on Unit's input

04 Organizational Chart (as per Statute 2015)

04.1 Organizational Chart (as per Statute 2017)

05 Public Information Policy & Procedures

05.1 Evidence of Correspondence across units

06 Market research for the Albanian Programs (2013)

07 Internal Work Procedures and Rules

07.1 Evidence of Communication for Update

07.2 Case of full procedure of recent (international) faculty appointment

07.2.1 Case of full procedure of recent faculty appointment

07.3 Policy on Faculty Hiring

07.3.1 Employment of Administrative Staff

07.4 Vacancy Announcement in Greece

07.4.1 Vacancy Announcements

07.4.2 Published Vacancy Announcements

07.5 Job descriptions

07.6 Contract Research Center Member

07.6.1 Contract Research Center Member - Doctoral Student

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- 1.5.1 Licensing Ordinance of Doctoral Programmes
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- 1.6 Employment percentage
- 1.7.1 Joint Statement-The Higher Education in the Western Balkans
- 1.8 Evidence of organising internships - Guidelines for Final Report
- 1.8.1 Evidence of Organising Internships -Syllabus-Internship Spring 2017
- 1.8.2 Evidence of Organising Internships - Final Form for signature by three parties
- 1.8.3 Evidence of Organising Internships - Letter asking for placement
- 1.8.4 Evidence of Organising Internships - CV Format
- 1.9 Evidence of target of International exchanges
- 1.9.1 International Relations Office - Strategy 2016-2017
- 1.9.2 Learning Agreement for Studies [A. Cakmashi]
- 1.9.3 Evidence of Denard Vashti Mobility
- 1.9.4 Certificate of Participation in ERASMUS+ Training - K. Giacomo
- 2.1 New Campus Architectural & Engineering plans
- 2.1 New Campus- Shareholders Meeting -Approval of New Campus
- 2.1.1 New Campus - Reply of the Roads Authority
- 2.1.2 Decision of Faculty & Department for the new faculty
- 2.1.3 Decision of the Senate for the reorganisation of the UNYT
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- 2.2.1 Transcript with one credit special topics course
- 2.2.2 Syllabus, Intro to Mobile Application Development
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- 3.1 - Evidence of implementation of Transfer Credit Policy (TCP)

- 3.1.1- Evidence of implementation of TCP - Transfer of Foreign Language Credits Form
- 3.1.2- Evidence of implementation of TCP- Sample foreign language credit transfer
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- 3.1.4 - Evidence of implementation of TCP- Degree Approval's Check List
- 3.1.5 - Transfer credits procedure
- 3.2 - Evidence for double degrees - UNYT - Diploma
- 3.2.1 - Evidence for double degrees - UNYT - Transcript
- 3.2.2 - Evidence for double degrees - ESC - Letter
- 3.2.3 - Evidence for double degrees - ESC - Diploma 1
- 3.2.4 -Evidence for double degrees - ESC - Congratulation letter
- 3.3.1 First Cycle Work Load Covered by Full-time Faculty. Fall 2016
- 3.3.2 First Cycle Work Load Covered by Full-time Faculty. Spring 2017
- 3.3.3 Second cycle Work Load distribution
- 3.3.4 Doctoral Schedule
- 3.4 Students training for participating in CME -2017
- 3.4.1 Financial Support-Moot-Court-Team
- 4.1 Annual Report of University of New York Tirana 2015-2016 - English Version
- 4.2.1 Advisory Board [UAB]
- 4.2.2 Senate Decision on creation of UAB
- 4.2.3 Round table conference [photo1; photo2]
- 4.3 Constitution of Research Groups
- 4.4 Cross-Departmental Research- Institute for Studies on Democracy and Development
- 4.5.1 Grading Transparency and Comparability Reports, HSS Department
- 4.6 Correspondence with Librarians
- 4.7.1 Example of student assessments in a course
- 4.9.1 Evaluation of courses - Performance Report - Fall 2014
- 4.9.1.1 Evaluation of courses - Performance Report -New Instructors - Fall 2014
- 4.9.2 Evaluation of courses - Performance Report -New Instructors - Fall - 2015
- 4.9.2.1 Evaluation of courses - Performance Report - Fall 2015
- 4.10 Measurable Objective -Annual Objectives Form CEBR F2015- S2016 Progress Report
- 4.11.1 CV Fatos Tarifa
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- 4.11.4 Jean Monnet Modules Curricula Revision
- 4.12 Budget funding for research -UNYT budget 2016-2017
- 5.3 Student Health & Wellbeing
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- 5.7 Online Portal management
- 5.7.1 Working group responsible to answer questions generated through portal
- 5.8 Records Office delivers guidance and advice to the students
- 5.8.1 Record Office's Guidance to students - Induction Day 2016
- 5.8.2 Registration -FALL- 2015
- 5.8.3 Student ADVISING Form + Add and Drop
- 5.8.4 Honor Code
- 5.9 Internal email addresses
- 5.9.1 Evidence of internal email addresses
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- 5.9.3 Evidence of internal email addresses
- 5.10.1 Helping students

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*List of documents and explanations.

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 Appendix 2.4 Vacancy announcement in Doctoral Fellowship and research position
 in Economics and Business Research Center.
 Appendix 3 Research Fund Budget for the last three years
 Appendix 4.1 Student Handbook Chapter 8.1.1, (page 90) shows the mission of the
 International Relations Office
 Appendix 4.2 Visa and Residency Permit Guide
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 M2- Meeting 2 Rector
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