



Institutional Review of Higher Education Institutions in Albania

**Report of the Institutional Review of
Agricultural University of Tirana**

December 2016

Contents

About this review.....	1
The context of this review	2
Summary report	3
Summary of findings	4
Summary judgement.....	6
Detailed report	7
Evaluation Area 1: The Organisation and its Management.....	7
Evaluation Area 2: Resourcing.....	12
Evaluation Area 3: The Curriculum.....	17
Evaluation Area 4: Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research	22
Evaluation Area 5: Students and their Support.....	27

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 the Albanian Public Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (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 inform the HEIs, Albanian government, the public and students 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 student learning is supported).

The Albanian State Quality Standards have been grouped under five 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 fully met**
- **State Quality Standards are substantially met**
- **State Quality Standards are partly met**
- **State Quality Standards are not met.**

As part of the report-writing process, 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.

Review team

Mrs Mandy Hobart Lead Reviewer

Professor Mark Hunt Reviewer

Professor Juliana Latifi Reviewer

Dr Terence Clifford-Amos Reviewer

Dr Diturije Ismaili Reviewer

Dr Janthia Taylor Reviewer



The context of this review

The Agricultural University of Tirana was founded in 1951 and is the oldest university in Albania. It was initially set up as a Higher Agriculture State Institute and then received government recognition as the Agricultural University of Tirana in 1991. The University is made up of five faculties: the Faculty of Agri-environment; the Faculty of Economy and Agri-business; the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food; the Faculty of Forestry Sciences; and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and the Research Centre for Genetic Resources. The University offers programmes which are supported by its research activities, particularly in the fields of applied biological sciences; agriculture and the environment; economic agri-business sciences; forestry sciences; consumer welfare; animal health and husbandry; biotechnology and food and veterinary science. The Research Centre for Genetic Resources is also a key part of the University.

The University has developed a wide range of agreements with professional associations including the National Environment Agency, and local businesses to establish and promote effective relationships between research and business and community interests. The University pursues an active policy of participation in international projects with institutions in Europe and beyond, which reflect the University's mission and vision to support and improve high-quality food production through the management of soil, water, air and green technologies. A Veterinary Medicine Clinic, Botanical Garden Centre and Nursery are operated by the University as part of teaching and community provision.

Summary report

The Agricultural University of Tirana is a public institution with facilities located in and around Tirana. The University offers first cycle, second cycle and third cycle programmes delivered in Albanian. Five faculties and one research centre make up the University: the Faculty of Agri-environment; the Faculty of Economy and Agri-business; the Faculty of Bio-technology and Food; the Faculty of Forestry Sciences; and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and the Research Centre for Genetic Resources. The University's mission is to support professional and scientific research and the development of modern agricultural practices. In 2015-16 the University had 14,373 students enrolled on full-time and part-time programmes.

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

The visit took place over three days on 14, 15 and 16 September. The review team was made up of four senior higher education reviewers from the UK and two experienced higher education members of staff from Albanian institutions. The review team was supported by the Review Manager and a note-taker provided by 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 as requested. In all, some 193 documents enabled the team to familiarise themselves with the structure, policies, management procedures and nature of teaching and research activity undertaken by the University. Evidence included the Statute of the University, Academic Regulations, Annual Reports, admission and orientation procedures, list of external agreements and memoranda, examples of programme information and evidence of deliberative meetings.

The review team met senior managers, students, lecturers, administrative and support staff, as well as external partners and employers during the review visit. Discussion supported the clarification of procedures, responsibilities and viewpoints. Notes were taken at all meetings. As part of a tour of the main campus the review team viewed the library, teaching areas, laboratories and offices, and were provided with a demonstration of the University's online and electronic information systems.

The University fully meets the quality standards for management and its organisation. The effective organisation structure and transparent elections for senior posts illustrate the collegiate strategy of the University. The robust preparation and evaluation of internships and the agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MARDWA) and the National Food Authority (NFA) inform curriculum development and support student employability, and are good practice. The Strategic Plan informs and guides future developments which include the growth of the Alumni centre, which should continue to be developed. Action plans linked to key institution reports would further support the monitoring and evaluation of new initiatives and progress review.

The responsibilities for management of resources substantially meets the quality standards. Good practices are identified in: engagement with external projects to enhance the knowledge base; the development of an integrated information system to enhance communication; and the knowledge transfer work particularly in the area of soil, food production and water quality. Further support for social activities would help to promote student social integration, and the introduction of surveys would inform the development of services to meet local and regional market needs. Job descriptions are not available for all roles, and the team recommends the University address this weakness.

The standards for management of the Curriculum are fully met. The University's Mission is focused upon a curriculum which serves the national requirements to produce graduates

focused on professional education in agriculture, agricultural economics, food and the environment. The review team identified good practices in the preparation of students for professional practice, the joint academic working at Master's level with European institutions and in the thoroughness of faculty self-evaluation reports which support self-reflection and enhancement of the University's curriculum. The review team affirms that the University develops a consistent approach to the analysis of employability data to aid future curriculum developments, and the preparation of students for employment.

The standards for the management of teaching, learning, assessment and research are substantially met. Good practices include staff and student involvement in a number of national and international projects and publications, as well as research which supports agricultural and eco-developments related to national economic interests. Engagement in international conferences which promote research also represents good practice. The team recommends the quality of teaching laboratories is improved to support practice-based learning and that issues raised by the Student Survey on their assessment experiences are investigated. The University is also recommended to promote its research profile to optimise opportunities for staff and students.

The University fully meets the support needs of students. Good practices include: an effective admission processes and system of managing appeals; study abroad information produced by the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department and Student Career Office; library resources; and annual employment fairs. The review team affirmed the consolidated work of the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department and the Student Careers Office that support students to settle into the University, and the value of the first year guides in helping students to achieve this.

The review team concludes that the Quality Standards are fully met in three areas and substantially met in two areas.

Summary of findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the effective preparation and management and evaluation of internships which support student employability (paragraph 1.10)
- cooperation with MARDWA and the National Food Authority which supports curriculum development and student employability and reflects the vocational orientation of AUT (paragraph 1.14)
- the engagement of the University in national and international projects including staff exchanges which support staff mobility and the development of expertise (paragraph 2.3)
- the development and application of integrated information systems helps the University to function as a community and support effective use of resources (paragraph 2.10)
- specialised services support knowledge transfer and development of enhanced systems management (paragraph 2.13)
- the guidelines for the Programme of Professional Practice provide students with information to support their work experience and practical skills development (paragraph 3.4)
- the international Joint Master's in Plant Medicine exemplifies the value of interdisciplinary research which the University undertakes with other European institutions to build currency of knowledge and practice (paragraph 3.8)

- the thoroughness of Faculty self-evaluation reports which support curriculum review and development (paragraph 3.12)
- the contribution of research staff to projects and research which supports agricultural and eco-developments which relate to national economic interests (paragraph 4.8)
- the engagement of the University in international conferences which promotes key areas of research (paragraph 4.9)
- university staff and student involvement in and contribution to a large number of national and international projects and publications (paragraph 4.9)
- the University's clear and fair admissions process which supports student applications (paragraph 5.1)
- convening of ad hoc commissions as needed, to review admissions appeals and to confirm student data for admission to programmes (paragraph 5.3)
- the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department, and Student's Career Offices provision of information about study abroad opportunities especially linked to the Erasmus project (paragraph 5.7)
- the wide range of books and journals available in Albanian and other languages accessible to students (paragraph 5.10)
- annual employment fairs which bring students into contact with the job market and support employability (paragraph 5.13).

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weaknesses:

- the lack of job description for each function in the Institution (paragraph 2.7)
- limited resources in teaching laboratories (paragraph 4.1)
- the implementation of assessment procedures and feedback (paragraph 4.4)
- the further development of the promotion of the University's research profile (paragraph 4.11).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- the University continues with the development of job descriptions for all roles (paragraph 2.7)
- address the quality of teaching laboratories to support practice-based learning (paragraph 4.1)
- investigate assessment issues raised by the Student Survey to further assure assessment processes (paragraph 4.4)
- promote the University's research profile in order to optimise opportunities for its research staff and students (paragraph 4.11).

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team affirms the following actions already in progress:

- the development of the Careers and Alumni Centre and its growth which support student employability (paragraph 1.11)
- take forward analysis of graduate employment data and information in order to ensure study programmes remain relevant to future employability needs (paragraph 3.14)
- the consolidation of the two offices (Student Orientation, Information and Career

- Development Office) supports the coherent management and production of information for new students (paragraph 5.1)
- the value of first year guides prepared by the Student Careers Office in helping new students settle in to the University (paragraph 5.1).

Summary of judgements for each Evaluation Area

- 1 The Standards for the Organisation and its Management are fully met.
- 2 The Standards for Resourcing are substantially met.
- 3 The Standards for the Curriculum are fully 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 review team recommends to the Accreditation Council that at the Agricultural University of Tirana the State Quality Standards are substantially met.

Detailed report

Evaluation Area 1: The Organisation and its Management

1.1 The University has evidence of clear mechanisms to support organisation and management functions. The review team found the following: that the Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT) operates as a public higher education institution, according to 85 articles of its internal legal statute. **[118, The statute of AUT]** AUT complies with the provisions of Law no. 80/2015 of 22.7.2015 'On higher education and scientific research in the Institutions of Higher Education in Republic of Albania', article 104. **[1 SER - Self-Assessment Report, p.1; Chapter III Standard I.1]**

1.2 The internal management bodies are the Academic Senate, the Rectorate, the Board of Directors, the Council of Ethics and the Faculty Councils. The University management authorities consist of the Rector, Deans and Heads of Department. **[118 The Statute of AUT, Article 9]** The Regulation of University Studies sets out a coherent operational academic framework, **[100 Regulation of University Studies]** and a clear and helpful organisational flowchart illustrates the organisation and management arrangements. **[60 AUT Organisational Chart]** Additionally, AUT has internal functioning regulations at faculty level. **[98, Internal Regulation of the Faculty of Economy and Agribusiness]** Five faculties and 21 departments operate in a spirit of academic freedom. **[118 the Statute of AUT, Articles 28, 5]** The councils of each faculty are decision-making bodies. Academic staff, support staff and students have membership. These collegial bodies act on behalf of academic departments in their decisions on programmes, the deployment of faculty resources and other major areas of operation, such as curricula, teaching plans, research programmes, cooperation at national and international levels, expenditure and investment. For example, in 2015, the Faculty Council for Agriculture and Environment approved the study programme in the field of Immovable Property Valuation for Agricultural Land, Forestry, Pastures and Unproductive Soils and forwarded the proposal to the Senate. **[118 The Statute of AUT; 140 Decision of the Faculty Council; Chapter III Standard 2.3]** The review team found the University has detailed and effective organisational management structures. The University believed that the new law should help it to further its priorities in teaching, research, employability and knowledge transfer. **[M1 Self-Assessment Group; Meeting 2 Rector; Chapter III Standard I.2]**

1.3 The University regards the internal statute as a 'living organism' and responsive to its legal, institutional and socio-economic environment. Ongoing amendments to the institutional statute were cited as evidence of new viewpoints, influence and the necessity for change. **[150, Decision on Amending the Internal Regulations of the AUT Statute; M3 Senior Staff]** Senior University staff stated that the new law had recently stimulated changes to the internal statute. The influence of the new law was also referred to admissions and support staff. **[M3 Senior Staff; M9 Admissions and Support Staff; Chapter III Standard I.2]**

1.4 Efficiency in financial management is principally achieved through the commission established by the Rector's office for initiating the budget, which, following departmental and faculty involvement, is ultimately submitted to the Senate for approval. **[62, Budget Drafting Activity Plan; 147 Approval of the Draft Medium -Term Budget; M 3 Senior Staff]** The Rectorate is also responsible for drafting the long-term development plan for which an AUT working group has been established. **[1 SER, p.6]** The new strategic plan for 2016-25 has objectives and means to achieve expected outcomes according to AUT's mission and purpose, in line with national priorities. **[61 Development Strategy of AUT, 2016-2025; M2 Rector]** As a means towards enhancing practice, the review team also suggests the

development of action plans linked to key reports including major institution reports, which may enhance evaluation of progress and future development.

1.5 The Administration Council controls all economic and administrative functions, including matters pertaining to the level of salaries for the academic and non-academic staff as well as fees for study. **[118 The Statute of AUT, Article 14]** The Council of Ethics has its own set of regulations (23 Articles) pertaining to the general conduct of all staff. **[96 Regulation of the Council of Ethics]** The Councils for each of the five faculties oversee the work of the faculties, departments and their academic programmes, **[118, The Statute of AUT, Articles 34-36]** and each faculty has a Council of Professors, whose functions are: to approve the commissions for the selection of the chiefs of education and research groups; to take responsibility for PhD programmes; and to make proposals for candidates seeking academic titles. **[118, The Statute of AUT Article 26; 97, Regulation of the Council of Professors, Articles 8-10]** The minimum number of professors for these Councils to operate is seven. Deans, as heads of faculties, are democratically elected for a four-year term. **[118, The Statute of AUT, Article 37]** Likewise, the Rector and Heads of Department are also democratically elected. **[M 3 Senior Staff]** Students, academic and non-academic staff can take part in elections for the Dean. There is fairness and transparency in the elections for senior posts in accordance with the regulation of elections approved by the Ministry of Education and Sport. **[Chapter III Standard I.2]**

1.6 Constructive discussion across the institution is a valued activity and the Academic Senate and Faculty Councils are convened regularly each semester, with a calendar of dates published for the meetings of the Academic Senate. **[118, The Statute of AUT Article 359, Senate Meetings Calendar]** Departmental meetings are also regularly convened. **[M3 Senior Staff; Chapter III Standard I.3]** There are several internal mechanisms which ensure the efficient function and monitoring of the University within its autonomous limits including: the management functions of two Vice-Rectors and two Vice-Deans; the Sector of Curricula, Career and Institutional Assessment; Alumni Centre; the special units, which are the Institute of Plant Genetic Resources; Institute for Economic Studies and Transfer of Knowledge; the National Centre of Agriculture Training and finally the Sector of Projects. **[118, The Statute of AUT articles 17, 20, and 31 para. f; article 28; article 29]** The Chancellor of AUT monitors all legislation. **[Article 20]** The review team confirmed that the University monitors its effectiveness within the range of its autonomous limits. **[Chapter III Standard I.4]**

1.7 The review team also found the AUT Strategic Plan well aligned with the institution's vision. AUT has a strategic vision of engagement with regional and European partners and is working towards a foreseeable goal of global integration of the higher agricultural education. **[61, the Development Strategy of AUT, 2016-2025]** Research strategies, staff and student development, quality assurance and internationalisation are among the priorities expressed in AUT's strategy and planning. **[10 Agreement with Berufsbildungswerk in Munich; 11 Cooperation Agreement with China Agricultural University Beijing; 51 List of Projects in past 3 years]** There is also a separate document fully outlining AUT's research strategy. **[63 Scientific Research Strategy of AUT; Chapter III Standard I.5]**

1.8 AUT's annual report is composed and reviewed by a range of senior personnel and forwarded to the Ministry of Education and Sport. The report which reviews the teaching process provides a comprehensive analysis of delivery and is debated across the institution. **[7 Teaching Process Analysis Report, 2014- 2015; M3 Senior Staff]** In addition, AUT's mission and purpose has a clear profile for all of its operational units, **[118 The statute of AUT Article 8]** encouraging debate and delegating decision-making, particularly at Faculty Council level, which are large, active collegial bodies. **[SER, p.8; 118 The Statute of AUT, Articles 34, 36]** Institution bodies also work collegially, including taking decisions about the

progress and welfare of the entire academic and administrative organisation. [118 **The Statute of AUT, Articles, 3-4; 34, Decision of the Faculty Council FAE; SER, Conclusion and Assessment, p.14; Chapter III Standard I.6]**

1.9 The aim of the University is to achieve excellence across the entirety of its work in undergraduate and postgraduate fields of study, research and training, throughout a range of agricultural and food-related activity and enterprise. There is a stated priority that students should develop into responsible citizens in the service of society. [1, **SER, pp.4, 10; M2 Rector**] AUT has an official website. [www.ubt.edu.al; **M9 Admissions and Support Staff; Chapter III Standard III.1**]

1.10 The University is actively engaged with regional and national business development dynamics and uses information to monitor the curricula and initiate new study programmes. [**M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; Institution profile data; 43 List of Business agreements**] To support the unique and vocational nature of its curriculum in Albanian higher education, AUT is sensitive to the needs and demands of the local economy and its dependence on agriculture and food products. [**M5 Employers & External Partners; M3 Senior Staff; M7 Academic Staff; 193 Membership of Curriculum Advisory; Chapter III Standard 3.1**] External partners and employers confirmed that students on placement and those who find employment have good theoretical knowledge and are well placed for gaining practice-based knowledge and experience. Students on placements have also suggested areas for improvement to support the businesses with whom they have worked. [**M5 - Employers and External Partners; M4 & M8 Students; 191 Professional Practice files**] The review team was made aware of detailed formal agreements, bespoke facilitation of students' needs, induction and supervision, and also the preparation undertaken by the University. Overall, the due diligence taken with internships, health and safety management and evaluation led the review team to regard this exceptionally well-developed facility as **good practice**. [**Chapter III Standard III.1 and Standard III.3**]

1.11 The review team found evidence of a developing Career and Alumni Centre to support engagement with employability. [**148 Decision of the AUT Senate on the Establishment of the Career and Alumni Centre; 46 List of Agreements with Businesses and Public Institutions on Students' Professional Practice, Career and Alumni Centre; Meeting 7 Academic Staff and Tutors**] The review team **affirmed** the development of the Career and Alumni Centre and its growth which supports student employability. The process of establishing the interactive portal of the Career and Alumni Centre is at its beginning stages. Without completion of this process there would be a risk to *Standard III.1*.

1.12 Regional cooperation is mainly with the Albanian-speaking areas of the Balkans and Eastern Europe and there is considerable national cooperation. [**SER, p.11; 47 List of AUT agreements with foreign institutions**] Internationally, the University cooperates with more than 40 higher education institutions and also cooperates with many international organisations and networks. [**61 Development Strategy of AUT 2016-2025**] AUT has formalised agreements for joint or double degrees with Italy, Serbia, Greece, Kosovo, Bulgaria and Macedonia. [**12 Cooperation Agreement for the Mutual Recognition of the Master Degree in Plant Medicine IPM European Programme; 76 Implementation Protocol of a joint degree between the University of Perugia and AUT; Meeting 3 Senior Staff**] A number of the University's special research units including the Institute of Plant and Genetic Resources, Institute for Economic Studies and Transfer Knowledge and the National Centre of Agriculture Training are successful in receiving European funding. [**1 SER, pp.8-9; the Statute of AUT, Article 29; 50 List of research projects; Chapter III Standard III.2**]

1.13 Work with external institutions includes cooperation agreements with small and medium-sized business, national government organisations, private companies, scientific research institutions and those with the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MARDWA) and Regional Directorates. Internships range from one to three months in cooperation with the National Food Authority (NFA). **[SER, pp.12-13; 43 List of Business with cooperation agreements; 55 Cooperation agreement with the National food authority]** Agreements are essentially built around developing skills and interests, which match students to particular posts, for example, around a diploma based on fruit drink production. Other students look for commercial opportunities, for example, in insurance and in technology. Students benefit from learning about technological applications. National Training Centres are also used. **[M5 - External Partners, advisers and Employers; Meeting 7 - Academic staff and tutors; Chapter III Standard III.3]**

1.14 The University's Memorandum of Agreement with MARDWA informs the development and introduction of study programmes linked to sustainable economic and social development and practice developments. **[43, List of Businesses having Cooperation Agreements; 46, List of agreements with Businesses and Public Institutions; 55, Cooperation Agreement between the AUT and NFA; 54, Cooperation Agreement with MARDWA]** The review team regarded the cooperation with MARDWA and the NFA, which supports curriculum development and student employability and reflects the vocational orientation of AUT as **good practice**. **[Chapter III Standard III.3]**

1.15 Mobility is evidenced and supported through the international agreements between the University and foreign higher education institutions, and also through engagement with international programmes such as CEEPUS and ERASMUS+. To date, these have mainly involved academic staff, with student mobility being more limited. However, the University has followed a policy for the integration of foreign students from neighbouring countries through the CEEPUS programme, as prioritised by the Office of Foreign Affairs, and who are able to undertake their studies in the Albanian language. **[83 Regional Joint Doctoral Programme in SME Management for WBC; 127 Tempus, Using Local Resources; 128 Tempus, Developing Information Literacy; 14 Developing Third Mission Activities in Albanian Universities; 72 Project CEEPUS CII-SK-0505; 32 Inter-institutional Agreement, 2014-2020; 73 Project CEEPUS Network CEEPUS CII-HU-0003; 74 Project Network CEEPUS CII-PL-0114; Chapter III Standard III.4]**

1.16 The review team considers that the University meets the quality standards for management and its organisation. The clear and effective organisation structure complies with election procedures for senior posts. The robust preparation and evaluation of internships and the agreement with MARDWA and the NFA support and inform curriculum development and support student employability, as well as identified as **good practice**. The Strategic Plan informs and guides future developments which include the growth of the Alumni Centre, which the review team affirms as a key ongoing development and key University resource. Action plans linked to key institution reports would further support the monitoring and evaluation of new initiatives and progress review.

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the due diligence and evaluation of internships which support student employability (paragraph 1.10)
- cooperation with MARDWA and the National Food Authority which supports curriculum development and student employability and reflects the vocational orientation of AUT (paragraph 1.14).

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Recommendations

The review team did not make any recommendations in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team affirms the following action already in progress:

- the development of the Career and Alumni Centre and its growth which supports student employability (paragraph 1.11).

Judgement

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

Evaluation Area 2: Resourcing

2.1 The University has an open policy of employment and recruitment of staff that meet Standard requirements. The University publishes its organisation chart approved by the Rector, and which is amended by the Administration Council as needed. **[120 Organisation Chart; 95 Regulation of AUT Administrative Council]** Employment criteria for full-time, part time, contracted and invited academic staff are drafted in accordance with legal requirements. **[34 Employment contract with job description; 35 Employment contract for invited professors; M3 Senior Staff; Chapter III Standard IV.1]**

2.2 The University has established procedures for recruitment of academic and non-academic staff. **[145 Decision No.11;155 Decision of the Rectorate No. 48]** Vacancies are agreed by the Rector and advertised through a public announcements bulletin as well as on the website. **[59 Job-Offer No. Prot., 1538, and the criteria; M9 Administrative Staff]** The University operates an open, competitive and objective process for all appointments, which has been recently reviewed. **[61 Development Strategy; 27 www.ubt.edu.al/sq/article/organigrama-0; 120 Organisational chart; 144 employment contract; M9 Administrative Staff]** The selection process is based on primary, preferred and complementary criteria which are allocated points, and candidates with qualifications gained abroad are given preference. A criminal record check is required for all employees. **[129 Order No. 102; 136 Decision No.15; of the Academic Senate of AUT;155 Decision of the Rectorate No. 48]** AUT actively follows an open policy of recruitment which is fair and transparent. Temporary contracts are issued for specialist lecturers and practitioners who also work for other organisations. **[34 Employment contract with job description; Chapter III Standard IV.1]**

2.3 The University is involved in arranging international scientific projects which enable the mobility of academic staff, and increase academic capabilities and the level of expertise. **[64 The annual and strategic plan; 51 List of projects]** The framework of agreements with foreign universities and research centres enables staff to undertake exchange visits and to study for further qualifications abroad, and represents **good practice**. **[47 List of AUT agreements with foreign institutions; M3 senior staff; Chapter III Standard IV.3]**

2.4 Staff training plans are developed in accordance with University policies. Participation in activities in western universities is encouraged, and research experience abroad is a legal requirement and condition for staff being awarded the title of Professor. **[5 Agreement between the university and the academic staff doing the PhD abroad; 46 Decision of a faculty promotion jury for the title 'Professor']** Promotion decisions are considered by the Evaluation Committee which is composed of seven members, including a representative from a foreign university. **[146 Decision of a faculty promotion jury for the title 'Professor';187 titles awarded]** International experience gained by staff informs and supports staff development. Doctoral mobility in partner institutions is also encouraged. **[17 SER; M8 postgraduate students]** Guest lectures are held by Emeritus Professors who are still engaged in academic life. **[35 Employment contract for invited professors (example); Chapter III Standard IV.3]**

2.5 AUT organises social activities including celebrations/ceremonies linked to awards, book promotions and retirements. A limited range of social activities such as student clubs and societies are also organised, and mainly rely on individuals to take forward any initiatives. **[M4 Meeting with undergraduate students; M8 students postgraduate]** More proactive support from the University towards social activities such as student clubs and societies would enhance the student experience and social integration. **[Chapter III Standard IV.4]**

2.6 The University has a hardship policy, and Deans can put forward the case of staff requiring financial assistance as a result of serious illness, surgery or other serious circumstances. **[133 Order No. 5, dated 11.01.2016 of the Rector of AUT; 134 Order No. 92, dated 02.06.2015T]** Safety in the workplace and life insurance are also seen as important facets of social welfare. **[135 Order Nr.132; Chapter III Standard IV.4]**

2.7 The University uses individual employment contracts. **[34 Employment contract with job description No 3; 36 Employment No. 176; 35 Contract for invited professors; SER p 18]** Employment contracts set out the duties and responsibilities for roles, the duration of employment, paid holidays, hours per week, and other conditions of employment. AUT through its SWOT analysis has identified that more work needs to be undertaken to develop clear job descriptions for each function including for non-academic staff. **[Strategic Plan of AUT 2016-2025]** The review team identified a **weakness** in the lack of job descriptions for each function in the Institution, and **recommends** that the University continues to develop job descriptions for all roles to further support ensuring standards. **[Chapter III Standard IV.1 and Standard II.2]**

2.8 The University sets and manages funds allocated from the state budget in accordance with statutory regulations. The development of the University's budget is undertaken in two phases. **[114 Paperwork No.10 dated 05.01.2016; Budget of 2016 sent from MAS to AUT]** Budget requirements are identified at departmental level, approved by the Dean and submitted to the Rector. **[115. Paperwork No.10/2; Request for 2016 budget breakdown, 113 Paperwork No. 10/4]** The Rector's Office is responsible for developing the institution budget which is submitted to the Academic Senate and Academic Council for approval. **[138 Decision of Administration Council No.1; 'On the detailing of the grant for 2016'; 192 Financial Activity Report]** Responsibilities for financial management are defined within the remit of the University Senate. **[118 Statute of AUT; M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff]** The University also operates a Strategic Management Group with responsibility for oversight of budget management. **[139 Decision of Administration Council No.3; 131 Order No. 20, dated 20.01.2015, 85 Self-Assessment Questionnaire for 2015, no. 81/1]** The annual budget balances both income and expenditure, and supports those that generate more income, without discriminating against those that generate less. **[138 Decision of Administration Council No.1 'On the detailing of the grant for 2016'; Chapter III Standard VI.2]**

2.9 The University submits an annual budget return to the Ministry of Education and Sports which includes a statement on risk management. **[86 Report on realization of the budget for 2015 and 2016 breakdown, no. 10/20]** As a public institution, all financial activities are managed in compliance with the law. **[86 Report on realization of the budget for 2015 and 2016 breakdown, no. 10/20; 139 Decision of Administration Council No.3 on 'Approval of the structure of AUT academic staff for 2016; 192 Financial Activity Report; Chapter III Standard IV.2]** Financial indicators are reported to the Council of Administration on a regular basis and at the end of the nine-month period. **[116 Paperwork No.1683'Realization of financial indicators for the first 9 months of 2015; 88 Report on Mid-Term Draft Budget 2016 to 2018 dated 07/20/2015]** The University is subject to financial audits carried out by internal auditors (currently being implemented), as well as the High State Audit. All reports are examined by the Rector and the Academic Council. **[64 The annual and strategic plan approved by the Rector nr.1587/1]** The financial activity report is widely discussed in the University and disclosed to all staff and students. **[M3 Senior Staff; M4 & M8 Students; Chapter III Standard VI.3]**

2.10 The University has engaged with computerisation. It has cooperated with the National Examinations Agency (NEA) by registering students from NEA on to the Office for Students and Studies (OSS) system, and continues use of the Matriculation Number. **[117 State (matura.akp.gov.al - technical guidance AKP) (MAS Instruction no. 27; Chapter**

III Standard VII.2] An integrated information system based upon the RASH project, provides systems management, a comprehensive information security strategy, administrative applications, student learning information, research, human resources and accounting functions. **[15 ESSE3 (Operating system of the university teaching office), IRIS (Research management system)]** The development and application of the integrated information systems help the University to function as a community, supports the effective use of resources and represents **good practice**. The official website provides information on faculties, cycles and programmes, the information security strategy, and a range of administrative applications, including the Statute, regulations and institutional data. **[159 Website of AUT: <http://ubt.edu.al/>; M4 students undergraduate; M10 IT demonstration]** The ongoing development of the University website and online systems supports the communication of key messages, programme information and data to students and staff. **[Chapter III Standard VII.1 and Standard V.2]**

2.11 The University owns its own campus and buildings which are located on sites across Tirana. The University's buildings were constructed between 1957 and 2010, and have undergone considerable renovation and development. **[3 Commissioning act of reinforcement of soils of the old building of FEAs; 48 List of AUT teaching facilities]** Its five faculties offer a range of facilities including cultural lecture halls, didactic laboratories and scientific research laboratories. **[SER p24; Side visit]** All buildings offer sufficient insulation, with most buildings having double-glazing, central heating, and in some areas air conditioning. **[22 Situation of AUT properties and facilities, M7 Academic staff and tutors, M4 undergraduate students; Student Survey; Chapter III Standard VII.3]** Space requirements and facilities satisfy state standards (3.8 m² minimum, 8.0 m² maximum), have sufficient light, and ceiling heights of not less than 3.0m in teaching areas. **[70 Buildings plans; 81 Internal quality assurance reports of the AUT faculties 2014; 126 Summary table of spaces 2016; M7 Academic staff and tutors, M4 undergraduate students]** All premises are equipped with systems of fire-fighting equipment, except for Building B which is equipped with a central fire-protection plant. **[70 Building Plans]** All senior staff and professors have an individual office, and shared offices are provided for lecturers and administrative staff. **[81 Internal quality assurance reports of the AUT faculties 2014; site visit]** The review team confirmed that the value of the continued upgrading of facilities, including those linked to hygienic conditions, will ensure a safe environment for the delivery and management of teaching and research. **[M4 Undergraduate Students; M8 Postgraduate Students; Staff Survey; Student Survey; Chapter III Standard V.1]**

2.12 The University maintains a complete record of its estate assets, which are articulated in the annual financial statements, forming part of the tangible asset base. **[37 Copies of certificates of AUT Assets; 65 AUT Campus and buildings plans; 125 Summary table of university facilities]** The University manages its assets effectively, including oversight of construction projects that follow a standard procurement process. **[2 Commissioning act of the object 'Construction of external sanitary facilities of FEA's; 87 The final relation of the works, November 2015, for the object 'Construction of toilets external FEA-s; 67 Commissioning acts; 89 Reconstruction of Experimental Wine Centre, April 2013. Commissioning act; Site visit]** A policy for preserving its heritage in terms of academic, cultural and scientific assets is also in place. **[24 The history of FEA, 2014]**

2.13 Third party services are offered to meet the requirements of public and private organisations, particularly in areas of soil, food and water analysis, based on the acknowledged expertise of faculties and ongoing research including through collaborative projects. **[28 online links to screen shots; 50 List of research projects; 43 List of businesses having cooperation agreements]** Such specialised services support knowledge transfer, and development of enhanced systems management and represent **good practice**. **[51 List of projects; 43 List of business having cooperation**

agreements; M5 Employers; M3 Senior staff] Work currently only takes place with key agencies and larger businesses. The University may like to develop a survey to enable evaluation of the broader services offered to support local and regional market needs. **[Chapter III Standard VII.6]**

2.14 The Office for Studies and Students is responsible for maintaining a paper-based central archive and record of student enrolments and matriculation. **[91 Regulation of Directorate of Human Resources Management; 92 Regulation of Students and the Studies Office]** The University has recently developed electronic systems for data collection, and the storage of documents in electronic form. **[84. Electronic registries at SSO; 94 Regulation of DIOKS; 91 Regulation of Directorate of Human Resources Management]** The student record system includes information on student enrolment, study programmes, lesson plans and credits. **[84 Electronic registers at oss;198 M6a website and online system demonstration]** Essential records are held in print and in electronic form in permanent storage, including grades and final awards. **[SER p 30; M6a website and online system demonstration; Chapter III Standard V.2]**

2.15 The responsibilities for resourcing are clearly set out in the University Statute and internal regulations and meet the quality standards. The review team identified good practices in engagement with external projects, the development of integrated information systems to enhance communications and the knowledge transfer work particularly in the areas of soil, food production and water quality. The review team recommends that the University continues with developing job descriptions for all positions to further support the University to ensure standards.

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the engagement of the University in national and international projects including staff exchanges which support staff mobility and the development of expertise (paragraph 2.3)
- the development and application of integrated information systems helps the University to function as a community and support effective use of resources (paragraph 2.10)
- the specialised services support knowledge transfer and development of enhanced systems management (paragraph 2.13).

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following weakness:

- lack of job descriptions for each function in the University (paragraph 2.7).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendation:

- the University continues with the development of job descriptions for all roles (paragraph 2.7).

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Judgement

The Standards for Resourcing are substantially met.

Evaluation Area 3: The Curriculum

3.1 The University offers study programmes in accordance with its mission which is focused on professional education in agriculture, agricultural economics, food and the environment. Information about the academic provision is provided through the website **[159 Website - www.ubt.edu.al]** and through an informative guide. **[23 AUT guide 2012]** Market intelligence is undertaken in order to support the development of new academic programmes, matched to national labour market requirements. **[M 4& M8 Students&M9 Administrative Staff; Chapter I Standards I.1; ESG 1.8 Public Information]**

3.2 The University maintains contact with institutions of secondary education through school fairs and open days which are supported by graduates. **[19 Fair photos - June 2016]** Open days provide prospective students with an overview of the study programmes and the facilities the University can offer. **[100 Regulations of University Studies, article 23]** Student admission numbers are managed centrally by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MES), and are dependent upon each student's high school academic results. The University indicates to the Ministry the number of students it would wish to admit; however, the final decision rests with the Ministry. **[M9 Administrative Staff; Chapter I Standard I.1; ESG 1.4 Student Admission]**

3.3 Academic studies at the University can be pursued by Albanian nationals, ethnic Albanians and non-Albanians, based on MES criteria and quotas adopted by the Council of Ministers. **[100 - Regulation of University Studies articles 72, 73, 74& 75; 131 Regulation of University Studies article 10]** In 2015-16, the University had a total student population of 14,373, 10,234 full-time and 4139 part-time students. **[188 Student numbers in Faculties; Chapter I Standard I.2]**

3.4 Study programmes are offered both within the University campus and externally in order for students to undertake a period of structured professional practice which is integral to the curriculum of each study programme. **[100 Regulation of University Studies articles 32,33,34,35,38,39,40 & 83]** The University ensures that all first-cycle programmes include a mandatory professional practice period or internship to enable the development of practical skills. The University has 19 signed cooperation agreements with a range of enterprises to support this activity. **[43 List of business with cooperation agreements; 100 Regulations of University Studies article 38/39/40]** All practice periods are formally assessed and attract European credits, the regulation of which is operated at faculty level. **[Evidence 98 Internal Regulation of AUT Faculty; 100 Regulations of University Studies article 61]** The programme of professional practice for the students of the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food provides a useful example of the guidance available to students. The guidelines for the Programme of Professional Practice provide students with information to support their work experience and practical skills development and is **good practice**. **[66 Procedures for carrying out professional practice]** In discussion with first cycle students, the review team confirmed that the Programme of Professional Practice was useful in preparation for employment and the development of practical skills. **[M4& 8 Students; M5 Employers]** Programmes are evaluated and tested through continual evaluation, final module examinations and professional practice examinations **[66Procedures for Professional]** including a micro-thesis and state examination. **[68 Record of micro thesis defence and state examinations; Chapter I Standard I.3 and Standard I.4]**

3.5 The University aims to offer study programmes which prepare students for employment. Modules are of a professional nature, and include knowledge of both the economic and social fields. **[69 Study Programme in economics and agribusiness]** Programmes include knowledge of entrepreneurship, internships and exchange projects realised in cooperation with local businesses. Programmes of study in veterinary medicine, agriculture, forestry and biotechnology offer professional laboratory work practices that meet

the practical training needs of students. **[M4, & M8 Students; M5 Employers; M,7 Academic Staff]** Students frequently take part in cultural and educational activities, such as the participation in 'fairs' **[Happy Day - SER pg. 35]** or in a marathon. **[World Kidney Day - SER pg. 35; Chapter I Standard 1.5]**

3.6 Part-time programmes have now closed to new entrants, and are being taught out for third year students of the first cycle. **[100 - Regulation of studies AUT, article 41]** The University confirmed that a Government decision had been made to halt the recruitment of part-time first cycle students to programmes, and senior managers confirmed that for continuing students the programmes were being delivered as planned. **[M3 Senior Staff]** The government decision has had a financial impact on the University and in mitigation the University is offering other programmes to fill the financial gap. **[M 3 Senior Staff; M7 Academic Staff; Chapter I Standard I.2]**

3.7 The University's strategy is unique as it is in line with the national agricultural strategy which is an important sector of the national economy of Albania. **[119AUT Strategy 2005-2012]** The University strategy 2005-12 governs the academic offer of each faculty, and each faculty offers study programmes in all cycles, Bachelor, Master's and Doctoral. The structure of programmes is aligned with the Bologna Process, **[119AUT Strategy paragraph 4.5.1]** and outlines the professional competences to be acquired by students, with an emphasis on 'learning by doing'. **[119AUT strategy paragraph 4 and 4.4.1]** On completion, students receive a diploma and diploma supplement. **[M 2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; M5 Employers; Chapter I Standard I.3]**

3.8 In respect of the University's interdisciplinary research programme, the 'International Joint Master's Degree in Plant Medicine is undertaken with 11 higher education institutions in Europe. The programme aims to build research capacity, knowledge and practical applications. The International Joint Master's in Plant Medicine exemplifies the value of interdisciplinary research which the University undertakes with other European institutions to build currency of knowledge and practice, and is **good practice**. **[58 Model of a the Msc Plant Medicine & Evidence 12]** Students who complete studies in Professional and Scientific Master's provision also undertake a compulsory foreign language examination. **[153Senate Decision June 2016; M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; Chapter I Standard I.9]**

3.9 The University operates a work-load planning model for its academic staff, the guidelines being determined and planned by the MES base unit. **[SER p. 30]** All planning is undertaken prior to the start of the academic year. The workload is calculated on the basis of three components: Teaching (auditorium and teaching preparation - 750-1,050 hours), activities related to research, development and technology transfer (300 hours) and support activities (150-300 hours). **[106 Example approve teaching plan; M7 Academic Staff]** Academic staff are permitted to exceed their annual teaching contact time by up to 30 per cent after having completed their full-time obligations; payment is made by the University as secondary income. **[149 Decision of the AUT Senate for overtime payments]** In discussion with academic staff, they confirmed that those who exceed their annual teaching allocation do not tend to be as active in research, so have capacity to undertake an additional teaching load. Staff confirmed that the quality of teaching is being maintained in these areas of additional teaching. **[M7 Academic Staff; 183 Academic Staff Workload]** The review team would advise the University to keep annual teaching contact time under review in order to avoid impacting on teacher performance and to maintain high quality teaching. **[Chapter I Standard I.5]**

3.10 Study programmes and their objectives are clearly defined and can be found on the University website which provides students with the content of their programmes, including detailed syllabuses. **[30 Website]** Modules are prepared in Albanian and in English, and are approved and deposited in each department. **[121Complete syllabus for each faculty]**

2015-16] From the review of materials provided by the University, the module syllabuses are detailed and include knowledge and practical applications. **[121 Complete syllabus for each faculty 2015-16; 82 A syllabus of a module with professional practice, Erosion Control]** The quality and detail of the module syllabuses as illustrated by Biochemistry and Erosion and Watershed Management demonstrate that study programmes are easily understandable and that objectives are clearly defined. Each programme offered by the University is licensed by the Council of Ministers or Minister of Education Orders. **[75Proposals for quotas and tariffs 2015-16; M4 Students; Chapter I Standard I.6; ESG 1.2 Design and Approval of programmes]**

3.11 Study programmes at the University for the first cycle provide students with subject knowledge, scientific methods and principles for the relevant study field. There is a focus on special skills including foreign language, computer knowledge and teamwork skills. **[38 Curricula of study programmes]** First cycle programmes are designed to support future employment. Employment contexts are reflected in the curricula of each programme and in the faculties' study guides. **[69 Study program in economics & agribusiness - Rural Tourism Management]** The Office of Studies and Students provides information on programme transfer and credits and the Career and Student Offices in each department provide local support. **[92 Regulation of OSS; Chapter I Standard I.7]**

3.12 The Career and Students Office facilitates the familiarisation of each student with the environment of the University, and additionally monitors student performance, for example through grade point average analysis reports. **[148 Senate decision on the AUT and faculties career centres; 92 Regulation of OSS; M10 IT Demonstration]** All full-time staff are committed to the implementation of programmes in the first cycle. A variety of alternative teaching methods are deployed by teaching staff in response to the interests of students. **[82 Ref to syllabus & 81 Faculty self-assessment report]** The faculty self-evaluation reports provide a detailed assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the faculties' academic provision. The thoroughness of faculty self-evaluation reports which support curriculum review and development represents **good practice** and demonstrate the thoroughness by which the faculties consider the health of the provision. However, the reports and outcomes could be improved by developing a clear action plan which is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The review team considers that the development of action plans which link department, faculty and teaching analysis reports may enhance the evaluation process and future development. **[81 Faculty self-assessment report; M7 Academic Staff; M9 Administrative Staff; Chapter I Standard I.8]**

3.13 The University operates a range of cooperation agreements with the private sector and with state owned companies, for example between the Faculty of the Veterinary Medicine and the Food Safety and Veterinary Institute, and between the University and the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water administration. **[53 & 54 - Cooperation agreements]** The University conducts research activities through full-time professors and visiting staff from overseas institutions. The majority of staff are full-time as indicated in the Teaching Process Analysis 2014-15. **[7 Teaching process analysis report]** Master of Science programmes are designed in accordance with the Universities research policy, **[100 Regulations - article 32/90; 98 Internal Regulation of AUT Faculties]** and more than 70 per cent of teaching staff on second cycle programmes are full-time staff. **[7Teaching process analysis report; M3 Senior Staff; M7 Academic Staff; M8 postgraduate students; Chapter I Standard I.9]**

3.14 The Alumni Career Centre aims to collect information about the employment of the graduates of the University. **[e 93 - Regulation of the CAO; M9 Support Staff]** However, at present the University is at an early stage of development in the consistent collection of employability data which it plans to use to underpin and improve its academic provision. **[M10 IT Demonstration; M9 Support Staff]** The review team identified the inconsistent

collection and analysis of employability data to inform curriculum development and the preparation for employment as an area for enhancement. The University is clear that more work on the analysis of employability data is required. The review team **affirms** the University is working to take forward the analysis of graduate employment data and information in order to ensure study programmes remain relevant to future employability needs. **[M7 Academic Staff; Chapter I Standard I.12]**

3.15 In order to increase student mobility, all study programmes at the University (first cycle, second cycle and third cycle) are organised in accordance with the Bologna process. Each programme is valued in European credits under the ECTS system. **[100 Regulation of Studies, definitions, article 19]** All diplomas upon completion receive a Diploma Supplement which enables the mobility of students via the Tempus programme. **[Evidence 100 regs 68 ®s 60]** The University fosters the learning of foreign languages in order to meet its policy on internationalisation. Students in the second and third cycles undertake an English examination as required by the higher education law; **[no 80/2015; 153 - Senate Decision]** study programmes are all taught in Albanian. The University does not have a process in place for the review and transfer of credits earned in foreign institutions of higher education, and currently credits are transferred without review. **[100 Regs article 60/72/73/74; Chapter I Standard 1.10; Chapter I Standard I.11]**

3.16 The University's mission is focused upon a curriculum which serves the national requirements to produce graduates focused on professional education in agriculture, agricultural economics, food and the environment. The review team identified good practices in the preparation of students for professional practice, the joint academic working at Master's level with European institutions and in the thoroughness of faculty self-evaluation reports which support self-reflection and enhancement of the curriculum. The review team affirms that the University develops a consistent approach to the analysis of employability data to aid future curriculum developments, and the preparation of students for employment.

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the guidelines for the Programme of Professional Practice provide students with information to support their work experience and practical skills development (paragraph 3.4)
- the international Joint Master's in Plant Medicine exemplifies the value of interdisciplinary research which the University undertakes with European institutions to build currency of knowledge and practice (paragraph 3.8)
- the thoroughness of Faculty self-evaluation reports which support curriculum review and development (paragraph 3.12).

Weaknesses

The review team did not identify any weaknesses in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Recommendations

The review team did not make any recommendations in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team affirms the following action already in progress:

- take forward the analysis of graduate employment data and information in order to ensure study programmes remain relevant to future employability needs (paragraph 3.14).

Judgement

The Standards for the Curriculum are fully met.

Evaluation Area 4: Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research

4.1 The University has clear procedures for the management of its provision including research. The University's faculties use a system of lesson plans and module syllabuses to underpin systematic coordination of teaching and staff workload. **[135 Regulation of University Studies, Article 92 (d) and (e); SER, pp.30-31]** Lesson plans and module syllabuses follow a standard template that covers ECTS credits, learning objectives, duration, teaching hours and assessment. **[18 Detailed Format of a Teaching Plan] 135 Regulation of University Studies, Annex 2; 158 Lecturer website]** Coherence is also derived from the annual teaching review carried out by departments across the University. **[7 Teaching Process Analysis Report]** This leads to the updating of lesson plans and module syllabuses at the beginning of each academic year following an approval process. **[16 Detailed Format of a Teaching Plan, p.1; 158 Regulation of University Studies, p.1; SER, p.36; M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; M9 Admissions and Support Staff]** University policy specifies maximum student numbers for lectures (80), seminars (40) and laboratory activities (15) to ensure physical resources are deployed effectively. **[135 Regulation of University Studies, Article 33]** However, the annual teaching review for 2014-15 reports some issues, for example, under-investment in teaching laboratory resourcing owing to a budget shortfall, **[Teaching Process Analysis Report pp.15-17]** and that more technicians are needed. **[SER p.35]** Further, although the APAAL Student Survey had a low response rate (8 per cent of those who received a questionnaire who represent 3 per cent of the total student population) it indicated that over 25 per cent of respondents believed the quality of teaching rooms and laboratories was poor or very poor. **[Student Survey, p.16]** This was confirmed at meetings with staff and students who indicated that resources, especially teaching laboratories, could be improved. **[M4 Undergraduate Students; M7 Academic Staff]** The review team considered the resourcing of teaching laboratories, an essential part of practice-based learning, to be a **weakness**. The review team **recommends** that the University makes improvements to the quality of teaching laboratories. **[Chapter I Standard II.1]**

4.2 The University employs effective protocols for articulating internships and assessment requirements, **[135 Regulation of University Studies, Articles 38-40; SER, p.36]** which are overseen by faculty-based Internship Commissions. **[132 Regulation of a AUT Faculty (FEA), Article 92; 95 Procedures for Carrying out Professional Practice, p.5]** Employers offering internships enter into an agreement with the University. **[95 Procedures for Carrying out Professional Practice, p.7; M5 Employers and External Partners; E51, List of Agreements]** Staff and students confirmed that professional practice opportunities are mainly available for undergraduates. **[M4 Undergraduate Students; M7 Academic Staff; M8 Postgraduate Students]** The University sets out clearly how Master's and Doctoral degrees are assessed by thesis. **[135 Regulation of University Studies, Articles 61 and 64; 116 Regional Joint Doctoral Programme in Entrepreneurship, Articles 22-26; Chapter I Standard II.1]**

4.3 Academic staff are responsible for ensuring students have access to appropriate literature. **[100, Regulation of study programmes, Article 92 (h)]** Learning resources are available from the University Library (including e-books and e-journals), faculty libraries and the virtual learning environment. **[site visit; M10 IT demonstration]** Students and staff consider that these meet study and research requirements. **[M4 Undergraduate Students; M8 Postgraduate Students; Chapter I Standard II.1]**

4.4 The University has clear regulations on assessment which are published on the University website and accessible to students. **[135 Regulation of Studies, Articles 44-60; SER p.37; M4 Undergraduate Students; M7 Postgraduate Students]** Examinations are

marked anonymously and results are published confidentially through an examinations portal accessed through a personal log-on. **[M10 IT Demonstration; Student Survey]** Students are provided with interim feedback and, following publication of grades, they receive end-of-semester feedback. **[M4 Undergraduate Students; M10 IT Demonstration]** Students are aware of the appeals procedure. **[135 Regulation of Studies, Article 52; M4 Undergraduate Students]** Any changes to grades have to be formally notified to the relevant Head of Department, thus ensuring transparency. **[135, Regulation of Studies, Article 55 (e)]** Notwithstanding the low response rate, the APAAL Student Survey conveys a less positive picture of assessment with around 25 per cent of students dissatisfied with the degree of transparency in assessment **[Q5.iv]** or its accuracy. **[Q5.vi]** In addition, almost 30 per cent recorded that their grades were published without advance warning **[Q9.iv]** and around 37 per cent believed there is copying in examinations. **[Q9.iii]** These factors are not highlighted by the internal surveys which do not explicitly cover assessment. **[108 Students Survey Results Analysis Report]** These issues point to a **weakness** in the implementation of assessment, though they were not corroborated by students at review team meetings. The review team **recommends** that the University investigates assessment issues raised by the Student Survey to further assure assessment processes. **[Chapter I Standard II.2; ESG 1.4, Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification]**

4.5 Departments and faculties engage in detailed annual monitoring to improve the quality of learning and teaching. **[110-114 Internal Quality Assurance Reports]** Evaluation of teaching uses self-assessment and end-of-semester student feedback. **[173 Professional Evaluation AUT; 8 Teaching Process Analysis Report 2014-15; M7 Academic Staff; 9 Questionnaire for the Evaluation of Teaching Process by the Students; 109 Students Survey Results Analysis Report Questionnaires]** Departments and Faculties also review student progression and completion, employer engagement and internship opportunities. **[7 Teaching Process Analysis Report 2014-15]** As outlined in paragraph 3.14 above, employability data collection is at an early stage and not yet sufficient to inform curriculum development, although some departments have mature relationships with employers who actively contribute to curriculum development. **[M5 Employers and External Partners; Chapter 1 Standard II.3]**

4.6 Academic staff confirmed that a range of developmental opportunities are available to them, including achieving higher degrees; the Erasmus exchange programme; sharing best practice at open lectures, and participating in innovative pedagogical projects with European partners. **[M 7 Academic Staff]** The annual Teaching Process Analysis Report evidences a clear commitment to continuous improvement of teaching and curriculum. The report includes improvements already made to teaching practice and infrastructure, identifies improvement themes, and includes an action plan signed off by the Senate. **[8 Teaching Process Analysis Report 2014-15, pp.26-28] [E8, Teaching Process Analysis Report 2014-15, pp.15-17; 8 Teaching Process Analysis Report 2014-15, Action Plan, item 9]** However, it is unclear how and where in the committee structure implementation is monitored and reviewed. As an enhancement, the review team therefore suggests the University addresses the issue of monitoring progress in action plans. Although staff and students are generally aware of the annual monitoring process and students recognise that their feedback informs improvements, dissemination of outcomes is informal and based on email and word-of-mouth. **[M3 Senior Staff; M4, Undergraduate Students]** The review team suggests that the University reviews communication of key actions to enhance the systematic dissemination of information to staff and students. **[Chapter I Standard II.4; ESG 1.3, Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment]**

4.7 The department is the main teaching and research unit. Departments are responsible for the development and management of research and the organisation of cross-departmental collaborations. **[155 The Statute of AUT, Article 38]** University research activity is focused on national economic and social development areas. **[SER,**

pp.40-41; M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; 6 Research Activity Analysis Report] Research funding is received from the State and apportioned according to Senate-approved priorities. **[155, The Statute of AUT, Article 61]** Research performance is monitored and reviewed annually with a focus on education-research groups, scientific laboratories, research publications and Doctoral programmes. Although recommendations for improvement are identified, it is not clear how implementation is monitored. **[6, Research Activity Analysis Report, 2014-15]** As an enhancement, the review team suggests that the University considers a clear and transparent process for monitoring identified areas of improvement in professional research. **[Chapter I Standard II.5]**

4.8 That the University has a strong commitment to scientific research is confirmed by the number of funded research projects. **[55 List of Research Projects, AUT 2015; 56 List of Projects realised in the past three years]** Major projects include National Agency of Research and Innovation (NARI) and Ministry of Environment-sponsored projects, and bi-lateral programmes with European partners such as FP7 and European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST). **[55 List of Research Projects]** Research is well-supported by modern research laboratories specialising in analysis of soil, water and refuse, and phytosanitation. **[50 List of Research Laboratories; site visit; M4 Employers and Partners; SER, p.43; E70 Scientific Research Strategy of AUT 2016-25, p.16]** The contribution of research staff to projects and research which supports national agricultural and eco-developments relating to national economic interests is **good practice**. **[Chapter I Standard II.6]**

4.9 The University supports the internationalisation of staff research through the Foreign Relationship Office which processes international research bids and information about national and international scientific conferences, **[SER, p.45;49 List of Conferences Organised by AUT, p.2]** for example a Biotechnology in Agriculture (2014) conference organised jointly with Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany, with a second conference planned for 2017. **[SER, p.45]** The engagement of the University in international conferences promotes key areas of research and is an example of **good practice**. Since 2012, there have been annual staff-student conferences/seminars organised by the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine and Forest Science to enable students to engage in independent scientific research. **[49 List of Conferences Organised by AUT, p.3]** Staff research has been published in-country and internationally in referenced journals, and more articles are being published abroad. **[SER, pp.45-6; E31, AUT Publication List 2013-16' Chapter I Standard II.7]** Additionally, the University supports staff to study for higher degrees from foreign universities. University staff and student involvement in and contribution to a large number of national and international projects and publications represents **good practice**. The University welcomes visiting professors and supports its own staff in reciprocal activities. It also encourages co-mentoring of PhD candidates by professors from partner institutions abroad, **[SER, p.49; M8 Postgraduate Students]** thus supporting the internationalisation of learning and teaching. **[133, Regulation of the Study Programmes of the Third Cycle, Article 30.6; Chapter I Standard II.10]**

4.10 Sustainable research areas have been prioritised to support research continuity through the University's extensive partnership agreements with national and international research institutions **[SER, p.48]** Along with education and knowledge transfer, scientific research is a key priority of the University's main Strategic Plan. **[E68, Development Strategy of AUT 2016-25, p.4]** The University's Scientific Research Strategy provides a detailed review of research capacity and potential areas for development. **[70 Scientific Research Strategy of AUT 2016-25, pp.41-43; 68 Development Strategy of AUT 2016-25, SWOT, pp.15-17]** For example, the SWOT analysis identifies falling participation rates in national and international research projects. **[SER p.42 & p.42]** The review team would encourage the University to address falling project participation in order to sustain the development of key areas of work. AUT recognises that young researchers are a key part of

the research community. **[SER p.49; M8 Postgraduate Students]** The University's Development Strategy highlights that more should be done to involve second cycle students in scientific research, **[68 Development Strategy of AUT 2016-25, SWOT, p.16]** and to increase the quality of the third cycle student intake and the fit of their research topics to institutional priorities. **[68 Development Strategy of AUT 2016-25, SWOT, p.17]** The team therefore suggests that the University prioritise the development of young researchers and the improvement of second and third cycle research practices in order to expand the University's research community. **[Chapter I Standard II.8; Chapter I Standard II.9; Chapter I Standard II.12]**

4.11 The University facilitates the publication of scientific research through the use of its website and the development of its own scientific journals (*Economics and Agribusiness* and *Albanian J.Agric.Sci*). **[SER, p.52]** The University recognises that further developments are needed to promote its research profile, including exploiting all academic contacts for collaborative network building; legal compliance with the requirement for a national research database; and increasing the quality of Doctoral dissertations. This represents a **weakness**. **[SER, pp.50-51]** The review team **recommends** that the University prioritises the promotion of its research profile in order to optimise opportunities for its research staff and students. **[Chapter I Standard II.11]**

4.12 The University substantially meets the quality standards for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research. Teaching and research approaches are clearly set out in the Regulation of University Studies and the Scientific Research Strategy. The review team identified a number of good practices including: staff and student involvement in and contribution to a large number of national and international projects and publications; the contribution of research staff to projects and research which supports national agricultural and eco-developments interests; and the engagement in international conferences which promote key areas of research. The following weaknesses were identified: the resourcing of teaching laboratories; the implementation of assessment; and promotion of the University's research profile. The review team recommends that the University addresses the quality of teaching laboratories, investigates assessment issues raised by the Student Survey, and promotes its research profile.

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the contribution of research staff to projects and research which supports agricultural and eco-developments relating to national economic interests (paragraph 4.8)
- the engagement of the University in international conferences which promotes key areas of research (paragraph 4.9)
- university staff and student involvement in and contribution to a large number of national and international projects and publications (paragraph 4.9).

Weaknesses

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- limited resources in teaching laboratories (paragraph 4.1)
- the implementation of assessment procedures and feedback (paragraph 4.4)
- further developments needed for the promotion of the University's research profile (paragraph 4.11).

Recommendations

The review team identified the following recommendations:

- address the quality of teaching laboratories to support practice-based learning (paragraph 4.1)
- investigate assessment issues raised by the Student survey to further assure assessment processes (paragraph 4.4)
- promote the University's research profile in order to optimise opportunities for its research staff and students (paragraph 4.11).

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team did not affirm any actions already in progress in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Judgement

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

Evaluation Area 5: Students and their Support

5.1 The University has in place a range of systems for managing the student learning experience and providing support to students from pre-admissions through to graduation. The University website provides information for prospective students and other stakeholders. **[AUT Website: <http://ubt.edu.al/> M4 & M8 Students, M6 Institution Coordinator]** The Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department is responsible for the management of student admissions. **[141 Rectorate Decision nr. 14, date 1.4.2013]** The University has a clear and fair policy for the admission of students to first, second and third cycle programmes which supports students' applications and represents **good practice**. The Students' Careers Office function operates under the direction of the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department and the review team **affirms** that the consolidation of the two offices supports the coherent management and production of information for new students. **[93 Regulation of Curriculum Development, Careers & Institutional Assessment Office; M7 Support Staff]** Each academic year, the Students' Careers Office prepares information packs to help orientate new students, as well as providing information on the University's website and information to support the brief induction process. **[166 Rectors Decision no 14; 93 Regulation on Organisation & Operation of Student Information; 150 AUT website]** Student Careers Offices (SCOs) are installed in each faculty, working alongside the faculty offices, and are responsible supporting students, and providing advice and guidance. **[141: Point 4, of Rectorate Decision no 14; M9 Support Staff]** Student Careers Office staff also assist in preparing the University's guide and leaflets, for the first, second and the third cycle provision. More detailed programme information is made available online through pages managed by individual lecturers. **[158 Lecturers Website; M10 IT Demonstration]** The review team **affirms** the value of first year guides prepared by the Student Careers Office in helping new students settle in to the University. **[Chapter I Standard III.1]**

5.2 Prospective students are able to receive support and advice through the Careers Counselling Office which also serves to inform applicants about programmes offered. **[93 Regulation on Organisation & Operation of Student Information; M4 Students]** Students are also able to access support from the Students Counselling Centre which supports students in settling in to the University. **[93 Regulation on Organisation & Operation of Student Information]** Student files are managed by the Secretariat and track individual student progress from registration to graduation. **[M9 Support Staff; M10 IT demonstration; Chapter I Standard III.1]**

5.3 Based on proposals from the University, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) approves the number of students to be admitted each year to Bachelor; Master of Science, and Professional Master's programmes, based on proposals from the University. The MES quotas are based on previous year returns by universities and level of demand. **[75 Proposals for students quote and tuition fees 2015-2016]** Criteria for the admission of first year students to Bachelor provision are established and managed by the Ministry. **[117 State (matura.akp.gov.al)]** Until the current academic year, decisions on student admissions to first cycle programmes was exclusively managed by the National Agency of Exams. **[M2 Rector; M9 Admissions Staff]** An ad hoc Commission for Professional and Science Master's ranks the student applications based on the previous academic qualifications, and similar selection processes are applied for the admission of students to PhD programmes. **[160 Additional evidence log and statements; M8 Postgraduate Students]** Results of candidate admission decisions are made public on the University website. **[124 Number of student by faculties and courses]** Faculties convene ad hoc commissions as needed, to review admissions appeals and to confirm student data for admission to programmes which represents **good practice**. **[Meeting 4 & 8 Students; Chapter I Standard III.1]**

5.4 Lecturers are responsible for the management of their personal webpages which are accessible to students through the University's website. Academic and administrative staff email accounts are provided through the online communications system ESSE3, which provides an effective means of communication with students and with university staff. **[158 Example of lecturer website; M7 Academic Staff; M10 IT demonstration; 107 ESSE3 link, M7 Academic Staff]** Staff are responsible for ensuring that information provided to students is clear and up-to-date. **[108 Example lecturer website; M4 & 8 Students; M6 Institution Coordinator; M7 Academic Staff]** The system also supports communications on broader activities across the University, with administrative staff, mainly secretaries, managing information related to student assessment, displaying scientific research and projects as well as the financial management of the Institution. **[M10 IT Demonstration; M9 Support Staff; M4 & 8 Students]** The electronic communications system further serves as an effective means of internal communication among lecturers, students and support staff, including providing formal and informal feedback to students as appropriate. **[M7, Academic Staff; M9 Support Staff; Chapter I Standard III.2 & Chapter I Standard III.6]**

5.5 The University has in place effective mechanisms for supporting students' academic progress. Students are provided with feedback on their assessments, **[158 Example of lecturer website; M7 Academic Staff; M4 & M8 Students]** and academic staff provide study guidance through materials published on their webpages, including relevant literature for each module. The Office for Studies and Students and the Alumni and Careers Centre provide information and guidance including on employability matters. **[44 EAF Student Mentoring Information; 93 The Regulation on 'Organization and functioning of the Curriculum's Development, Career and Institutional Assessment Department'; 121 Syllabus of the Faculties; 99 Regulation of the 'Doctorate' study programs of the third cycle; M4 & 8 Students; M6 Institution Coordinator; M7 Academic Staff]** Students are also able to access tutorials and can request meetings with teaching staff for additional support. **[7 Teaching process analysis report; 106 Example of teaching plan and teaching module workload]** The relationship between students and academic staff enables effective formal and informal communication and support. **[Chapter I Standard III.3 & III.6]**

5.6 Student information is effectively managed and linked to provision of support. Student folders covering the period from registration to the award of a qualification are managed and stored by the Office for Studies and Students. Student electronic contact and phone details are registered to facilitate ongoing communication. **[92 Regulation of Students and Study offices; M6 Institution Coordinator]** To further support students, the Senate approved the establishment of the Alumni and Careers Centre, which provides advice and guidance on career development and employability issues. **[148 Decision of AUT Senate on the establishment of the Alumni and Career Centre]** This office collaborates with the Students' Information, Orientation and Career Department, and Students' Career Offices to provide information, guidance and counselling services to all students, and more recently alumni. **[141 Rectorate Decision nr. 14, date 01.4.2013; site visit; M9 Support Staff; M4 & 8 Students; Chapter I Standard III.2]**

5.7 The University provides information and guidance to students wishing to change their study programme. The University also provides clear assistance to second and third cycle students to enable them to take part in exchange programmes and study periods abroad. **[M8 Postgraduate Students; M9 Support Staff; 51 List of projects]** The Student Information, Orientation and Career Department, and Student Career Offices provision of information about study abroad opportunities, and in particular those linked to the Erasmus Project, **[M8 Postgraduate Students & visit to Career Offices]** represents good practice. **[Chapter I Standard III.3]**

5.8 Students from minority groups are provided with support in accordance with national statutory requirements, as set out in the Council of Ministers Decision No 911. **[22**

Situation of AUT properties and facilities; 71 Project of ramps and toilets] This support is focused on students from low income backgrounds and those from minority groups such as Roma and Balkan-Egyptian students. **[SER p56; 118 Statute; M3 Senior Staff]** Registration quotas are provided which exempts special groups from paying tuition fees. Ramps are provided in some buildings to facilitate the mobility of disabled students **[71 Project of ramps and toilets; 75 Proposals for student quotas and tuition fees]** There is little specific provision for students with physical or other problems, other than that provided within the local community. Further cooperation with local health care providers would enhance welfare provision. **[site visit; M7 Academic Staff; Chapter I Standard III.8]**

5.9 The University provides some support for students to engage in sporting activities. The Faculty of Forest Sciences has set up a sports hall for 'ping-pong', for example, and at the start of the academic year a faculty football championship is organised. In 2014 and 2015 the University students team competed against 12 other institutions in an event sponsored by the Student club in collaboration with the Directorate of Sports at the Ministry of Education and Sports. **[17 Pictures from sport activity; 21 Pictures of Ping-Pong Hall; 137 Decision of payment of students participating in sports activities; M3 Senior Staff; M9 Support Staff]** Chess matches have taken place, and one student achieved third place in a national competition. **[M3 Senior Staff; SER pp 61-62; 79 Report on career fair 2015]** The University also seeks to support students' cultural life through fairs, conferences, occasional leisure tours and as well as sporting activities. **[79 Report on the career fair of 2015, AUT; Chapter I Standard III.8]**

5.10 Students are provided with a suitable range of online materials, textbooks and other hardcopy materials through the main University library, which has a resource of around 20,000 titles and 5,000 periodicals and journals. **[M2 Rector; M9 Support Staff; site visit; 32 List of real estate]** Smaller subject specific libraries are also provided. **[65 Campus Buildings and Plans; 125 Summary table of university facilities]** The new Faculty of Agri-environment building, for example, has its own library providing modern amenities including an internet connection via 12 computers with access to 'The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library' (TEEAL), a database of 200 of the best journals in the world on agriculture and the environment. Access is a product of the cooperation with University of Hawaii, USA. **[52: Agreement with Hawaii University; site visit; 125 Summary table of university facilities]** Contacts are maintained and developed with national and international libraries to enhance available resources. **[M2 Rector; M3 Senior Staff; M9 Support Staff]** The wide range of books and journals accessible to students available in Albanian and other languages effectively supports student learning and represents **good practice. [Chapter I Standard III.5]**

5.11 Each course has a list of reference materials which are kept updated by the Department of Standards and Curricula. **[M7 Academic Staff; M3 Senior Staff; SER p 57]** New literature is purchased annually based on scientific research proposals from individual departments. **[42 Document on the UE Budget]** Students are provided with guidance by supervisors, particularly in relation to their research work. **[M8 Postgraduate Students; M7 Academic Staff; 121 Syllabus of Faculties]** Further materials are available through lecturers' websites. **[30: materials screenshot; M4 Students, M6 Institution Coordinator]** However, the library is only open between 08.00 and 16.00 which restricts access for staff and students outside of lecture times. The University may like to consider extending the opening hours to facilitate greater access for staff and students. **[Chapter I Standard III.5 & Chapter I Standard III.6]**

5.12 The University complies with the legal framework for higher education. Students are represented on the functional structures of the University including the Senate, Management Boards, Teaching Committee and the Committee of Ethics, and are able to provide feedback on the curriculum, teaching and study support. **[118 Statute, decision of IEC and of FEC;**

100 the University Statute, Chapter V/Article 57; M4 & 8 Students; Chapter I Standard III.7]

5.13 The Alumni and Career Centre (ACC) provides materials on career options, and maintains data on student employment. The office works to strengthen links with private and public companies in the agricultural and food production sector, and to develop signed agreements with employers that support internships and practice-based skills. **[93 The Regulation on 'The Organization and operation of the Department of Curriculums development, Career and Institutional Assessment'; M3 Senior Staff; 104 Example of agreement with businesses]** The ACC organises an annual employment fair, inviting employers from related industries, particularly from the agribusiness field, to meet with students. **[79 The assessment report on the career fair: Evidence 103: Example of an invitation of Career and alumni centre for businesses]** The review team identified the employment fair which brings students into contact with the job market as **good practice**. Employability skills are also developed through a Career Management Module offered by the faculties and delivered by professors to first cycle students. The module provides students with the skills and understanding needed to help them find work and build a career. **[45 Syllabus for Career Management Module; M. 7 Academic Staff & Tutors]** The signed agreements with local businesses help to provide first cycle students with opportunities for work experience. **[104 Example of an agreement that is signed both from AUT and businesses; M5 External Partners, Advisors and Employers]** Extension of employer engagement to include internships and opportunities to support postgraduate provision would further enhance student employability.

5.14 The University has effective systems and offices in place to provide students with support and advice from pre-registration to finding employment. Good practices identified include: clear and fair admissions processes which support student applications; the ad hoc commissions which review admissions appeals; opportunities for students to study abroad; the wide range of library resources; and annual employment fairs which support student employability. The effective practice in supporting first cycle students with placements and internships based on signed agreements with employers could be extended to include postgraduate provision. Extension of library opening hours would enhance access to resources. The review team affirmed the range of information materials provided including guides for new students produced through the consolidated work of the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department and the Student Careers Office which support students to settle in to the University.

Findings

Good practice

The review team identified the following features of good practice:

- the University's clear and fair admissions process which supports student applications (paragraph 5.1)
- convening of ad hoc commissions as needed, to review admissions appeals and to confirm student data for admission to programmes (paragraph 5.3)
- the Student's Information, Orientation and Career Department, and Student's Career Offices offer information about study abroad opportunities especially linked to the Erasmus project (paragraph 5.7)
- the wide range of books and journals available in Albanian and other languages effectively supports student learning (paragraph 5.10)
- annual employment fairs which bring students into contact with the job market and supports employability (paragraph 5.13).

Weakness

The review team did not identify any weaknesses in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Recommendations

The review team did not make any recommendations in relation to this Evaluation Area.

Affirmation of action being taken

The review team affirms the following actions already in progress:

- the consolidation of the two offices (Student Careers Office and the Student Information, Orientation and Career Department) supports the coherent management and production of information for new students (paragraph 5.1)
- the value of first year guides prepared by the Student Careers Office in helping new students settle in to the University (paragraph 5.1).

Judgement

The Standards for Students and their Support are fully met.