



**INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

**UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK TIRANA (UNYT)**

**January 2026  
(Revised)**

## *Summary*

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has consistently developed since its foundation, positioning itself as a leading private higher education institution in Albania. The University's strategic growth has strengthened its national and international visibility, reputation, and impact across education, research, creative activities, and community engagement. Sustained efforts to enhance the quality of teaching, research productivity, administrative processes, and infrastructural resources are acknowledged by students, faculty, and other stakeholders.

UNYT has expanded its portfolio of academic programs and attracted an increasing number of highly qualified domestic and international students and faculty members. The University rigorously aligns its academic, administrative, and quality assurance processes with national legislation, including the Albanian Higher Education Law, as well as international frameworks such as the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for Quality Assurance. UNYT's commitment to internal quality assurance is demonstrated through structured evaluation processes, systematic collection of student and alumni feedback, and continuous improvement initiatives across all institutional levels.

From a financial perspective, UNYT demonstrates prudent management practices, achieving a high degree of sustainability. The majority of operational funding derives from tuition fees, with additional strategic support from the Founder. The University is also expanding alternative revenue streams through research projects and international collaborations.

Internationalization and diversity constitute core elements of UNYT's mission. The University promotes student and staff mobility and participates in international research partnerships.

Through these comprehensive initiatives, UNYT continues to deliver high-quality education, promote research and innovation, and prepare students for professional and civic success, cultivating a culture of academic excellence, institutional accountability, and societal engagement.

### *1. Contact Information*

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## **1. Institutional History**

### ***History of the University of New York Tirana (UNYT)***

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) was founded in 2002 as the first private, English-medium higher education institution in Albania, during a period of major change in the country's educational landscape. The University of New York, Tirana (UNYT) / Universiteti i New York-ut në Tiranë was established by Council of Ministers Decision No. 448, dated 11 July 2012, to meet the national need for a pioneering university that would adopt international academic standards, encourage innovation in teaching and learning, and prepare a new generation of leaders for Albania's democratic and economic development.

Since its establishment, UNYT's mission has been "Educating Tomorrow's Leaders," aiming to create, develop, and protect knowledge and to prepare future professionals and academics through teaching, learning, and scientific research with an emphasis on personal development and community integration, while equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, character, and confidence to succeed in a diverse international environment. UNYT equips students with theoretical, technical, and practical knowledge and skills for career development, fostering holistic thinking, creativity, and social and cultural awareness, and supporting intellectual, creative, and personal growth through critical and analytical thinking, innovation, ethical leadership, resilience, and social responsibility.

A key element of UNYT's international identity is its longstanding partnership with the State University of New York at Empire State University (SUNY/ESU), which enables students to earn dual degrees from UNYT and SUNY/ESU, strengthening academic integrity, global presence, and commitment to international standards, and integrating American liberal arts education models into the Albanian higher education system. In 2018, UNYT joined the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMF), a non-profit educational organisation operating from pre-school to higher education in over 56 countries worldwide; under TMF ownership, UNYT has strengthened institutional capacity, expanded academic offerings, and enhanced its role in intercultural and inter-institutional dialogue.

UNYT comprises the Faculty of Economy and Business (Business Administration; Economics and Finance; Business Informatics and e-Business), the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences (Law; Political Science/International Relations; Psychology and Education), the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (Computer Science; Information and Intelligent Systems; Architecture and Design), and the Institute of European and Balkan Studies (European Research Centre; Balkan Research Centre; Research, Project, and Innovation Centre; Lifelong Learning Centre). UNYT offers all three cycles of study in accordance with the Albanian Higher Education Framework: Bachelor's degrees, Master of Science and Professional Master's degrees, and Doctoral (PhD) programmes, with English as the official language of instruction. Currently, UNYT hosts around 1,448 students from 42 nationalities, and during the 2025–2026 academic year it has registered 477 students.

The University of New York Tirana continues to uphold academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and international excellence, ensuring compliance with Law No. 80/2015 "On Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Institutions of Higher Education in the Republic of Albania" while adhering to international best practices. Through its academic programmes, partnerships, and research initiatives,

UNYT remains dedicated to its mission of educating intellectually curious, socially responsible graduates capable of meaningful contributions to Albanian society and the global community.

## **A. GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY**

### **A.1 Governance and Quality**

#### **A.1.1 Governance model and administrative structure**

The governance framework of the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) is defined in the UNYT Statute, publicly available on the University's official website. The Statute establishes the organisational hierarchy, decision-making procedures, and accountability mechanisms, ensuring compliance with the Albanian Law on Higher Education and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). UNYT's governance structure comprises the Board of Administration, Academic Senate, Rector, Rectorate, Council of Ethics, and Faculty Councils.

#### ***Board of Administration***

Established by the Board of Trustees of the Turkish Maarif Foundation, the Board of Administration is the highest collegial administrative authority of UNYT. It safeguards the realisation of the University's mission, financial sustainability, and institutional effectiveness, operating on principles of transparency, accountability, and strategic coherence. The Board formulates, approves, and monitors the Strategic Plan, approves annual and mid-term budgets, oversees financial management, and authorises the establishment, reorganisation, or closure of university units. It also approves institutional regulations, appoints and dismisses the Rector and University Administrator, reviews annual activity reports and audited financial statements, and approves the Statute, organisational structure, and personnel plan, thereby ensuring alignment with national legislation and international governance standards.

Strategically, the Board aligns institutional decisions with UNYT's long-term objectives, focusing on institutionalisation, internationalisation, digitalisation, and research orientation. Through these priorities, the Board ensures financial integrity, sustainable growth, and continuous improvement, maintaining high standards of academic quality, ethical governance, and institutional effectiveness.

#### ***Academic Senate***

The Academic Senate is UNYT's highest collegial academic authority, operating under the leadership of the Rector. It is responsible for academic, research, and ethical matters, ensuring compliance with national legislation and European quality standards. The Senate meets at least twice per academic year, operates under defined quorum and voting rules, and includes broad representation of the academic community, including a student representative. Members serve four-year terms, with provisions for re-election and replacement to ensure continuity.

The Senate's responsibilities include safeguarding academic autonomy and student rights; defining strategic and structural development; approving the Statute and internal regulations; authorising study programmes and research initiatives; overseeing academic quality and integrity; electing the Council of Ethics; reviewing annual academic and research plans and reports; providing initial approval of budgets;

and jointly reviewing institutional performance with the Board of Administration. Through these functions, the Academic Senate ensures participatory, transparent, and quality-driven academic governance aligned with national and European standards.

### ***Rector***

The Rector is the highest academic authority and legal representative of UNYT in academic and protocol matters. Appointed and dismissed by the Board of Administration through a transparent, merit-based process, the Rector ensures the implementation of strategic objectives, academic policies, and quality assurance processes. The Rector chairs the Academic Senate and Rectorate, prepares and presents the Strategic Development Plan, appoints Vice Rectors and proposes heads of academic units, oversees staff development and student-related processes, and represents the University nationally and internationally. The Rector's mandate is four years, renewable, and subject to early termination under conditions defined by law and institutional regulations.

### ***Rectorate***

The Rectorate functions as the central executive collegial body, led by the Rector and composed of Vice Rectors, Deans, the Director of the Institute, and the University Administrator. It implements the Strategic Plan, prepares annual academic, research, and financial reports, oversees institutional activities and budgets, and reports to the Academic Senate and Board of Administration. The Rectorate ensures coordination between academic and administrative functions, supporting transparent, responsive, and effective governance.

### ***Administrator***

The University Administrator is the highest administrative authority and legal representative in financial and administrative matters. Appointed by the Board of Administration, the Administrator prepares and implements the institutional budget, manages financial and material resources, reports regularly to governing bodies, and implements decisions of the Board and Senate. The Administrator also oversees administrative staffing and may be dismissed by the Board in accordance with internal regulations.

### ***Council of Ethics***

The Council of Ethics is responsible for upholding ethical standards across the University. Elected by the Academic Senate and including a student representative, it enforces the Code of Ethics, promotes academic integrity, and advises institutional bodies on ethical matters.

### ***Faculty Councils***

Faculty Councils operate as collegial governance bodies at faculty level, chaired by the Dean and core unit Chairs. They oversee academic, research, and administrative activities, draft and implement faculty strategic plans, monitor programme quality, review annual reports, and propose academic developments. Decisions are taken by majority vote, with the option to consult external experts.

### **Evidence:**

(3)A.1.1.1.evidence\_Statute

(3)A1.1.2.evidence\_Strategic Plan

(3)A.1.1.3.evidence\_BoA Documents

(3)A.1.1.4.evidence\_Academic Senate Documents

(3)A.1.1.5.evidence\_Rectorate Communications

**Maturity level 4:** UNYT's governance and organisational structure are systematically monitored and continuously improved, ensuring effective, transparent, and quality-oriented institutional management.

### **A.1.2. Governance – Governance and Internal Quality Assurance at UNYT**

The governance framework of the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) ensures the systematic and continuous development of internal quality assurance (IQA) across all institutional activities. IQA is an integral component of the University's strategic management and governance model, supporting academic excellence, transparency, and accountability, and aligning closely with UNYT's mission and vision as an internationally oriented, research-driven institution.

UNYT's IQA system is a deliberate strategic commitment grounded in the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Albania, ASCAL standards, and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG 2015). This alignment guarantees compliance with national regulations while meeting internationally recognised quality benchmarks.

The principles, structure, and procedures of internal quality assurance are defined in the Internal Quality Assurance Regulation, the Regulation of the PCAQS, the Quality Assurance Manual, and the QA Strategic Plan, all approved by the Academic Senate. These instruments clarify institutional responsibilities, monitoring and evaluation processes, and feedback mechanisms, ensuring an integrated and evidence-based approach to quality management covering study programmes, research, student satisfaction, and staff performance.

The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU), composed of four members including an external expert, operates as an administrative unit coordinating QA activities with the PCAQS, Rectorate, Deans, and Department Heads. It collects and analyses data from evaluations, peer reviews, departmental reports, and research outputs, prepares internal and external QA reports, proposes corrective actions, and reports directly to the Academic Senate.

UNYT applies a comprehensive set of QA tools, including student and staff evaluations, peer assessments, individual performance reviews, annual departmental and faculty reports, research monitoring, and grading transparency audits. These mechanisms support systematic performance monitoring, informed decision-making, and accountability at individual, unit, and institutional levels. Evaluation results are analysed periodically every semester and shared with academic and managerial leadership to guide policy adjustments and targeted improvements.

Transparency and public accountability are reinforced through a dedicated Quality Assurance section on the University's website, where regulations, policies, evaluation summaries, and annual QA reports are published and regularly updated.

The integrated governance and QA framework has produced tangible results, including regular curriculum updates, improved student services and academic outcomes, increased graduate employability, growth in research output, enhanced administrative efficiency, and strengthened faculty development. Through the integration of governance and IQA, UNYT promotes a sustainable culture of quality and continuous improvement that supports institutional effectiveness and long-term excellence.

**Evidence:**

- (3)A.1.2.1.evidence\_QA Manual
- (3)A.1.2.2.evidence\_QA Strategic Plan
- (3)A.1.2.3.evidence\_Regulation of QAU
- (3)A.1.2.4.evidence\_Regulation of PCAQS
- (3)A.1.2.5.evidence\_UNYT Regulation
- (3)A.1.2.6.evidence\_Student Evaluations Form and Reports
- (3)A.1.2.7.evidence\_Mechanisms of QA
- (3)A.1.2.8.evidence\_Annual Reports -Departments-Faculty-University
- (3)A.1.2.9.evidence\_Student Participation in Governance (representation in Senate, Faculty Councils, PCAQS, etc.)
- (2)A.1.2.10.evidence\_Job Satisfaction Survey
- (3)A.1.2.11.evidence\_Appointment of an External Expert for QA

**Maturity level 4:** Leadership practices supporting the development of the quality assurance system and quality culture are systematically monitored and continuously improved.

**A.1.3. Institutional Transformation Capacity**

UNYT's Statute establishes a governance framework aligned with international transformation models, positioning the University as future-oriented, strategic, and outward-looking while preserving its mission-driven identity. The normative framework emphasizes institutional autonomy, strategic vision, stakeholder engagement, quality assurance, and a sustained commitment to internationalization and digitalization.

***Leadership and Institutional Culture***

UNYT operates through a balanced governance model involving the Academic Senate, Board of Administration, and Rectorate. This structure safeguards academic autonomy while ensuring administrative accountability: the Senate guides academic development, the Board oversees financial sustainability and risk, and the Rectorate implements strategy across faculties and institutes. Anchored

in Law 80/2015, the revised 2025 Statute, and aligned regulations, this model enables continuous change management and agile adaptation without compromising academic standards or institutional values.

### ***Strategic Vision and Planning***

Transformation is guided by four strategic pillars: institutionalization, digitalization, internationalization, and research, ensuring coherence, measurability, and alignment between modernization and identity. Digitalization is embedded both strategically and operationally, supporting flexible delivery, data management, and service models within established governance structures.

### ***Resources***

Resource governance integrates the Administrator's budgetary authority with dual accountability to the Board and Senate, reinforcing the link between strategy and financing. Decentralized planning at unit level is consolidated centrally, enabling responsive and prudent resource allocation. Admissions, transfer mechanisms, and accreditation cycles function as performance gates, while academic career structures and evaluations embed renewal and staff development as drivers of institutional agility.

### ***Knowledge and Learning Capacity***

UNYT's internal quality system promotes continuous evaluation, self-assessment, and accreditation readiness as tools for learning and improvement rather than compliance. This approach strengthens institutional learning capacity and supports ongoing curriculum reform aligned with labor-market needs, technological change, and global developments.

### ***Stakeholder Involvement***

Stakeholders are engaged through formal representation (students, alumni) and active collaboration with business, public institutions, and research partners. Mission-based platforms—research centers, interdisciplinary units, and lifelong learning structures—support innovation, pilot initiatives, and scalable reforms. International accreditation readiness further demonstrates UNYT's capacity to operate across multiple regulatory and quality frameworks.

### ***External Environment and Institutional Flexibility***

Internationalization is a core competitive advantage, supported by Erasmus+, bilateral agreements, and dual/joint degrees. Governance structures accommodate diverse accreditation requirements, strengthening resilience and global legitimacy. Adaptability is ensured through structured accreditation frameworks that allow organizational and programmatic change while preserving mission and integrity.

### **Evidence:**

(3)A.1.3.1.evidence\_BOA Decision Budget Approval

(3)A.1.3.2.evidence\_Internationalisation Policy

**Maturity Level 4:** Change management practices that are implemented in accordance with objectives, mission and targets are monitored and measures are taken.

#### **A.1.4. Internal quality assurance mechanisms**

The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system at the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) is designed to ensure continuous improvement of academic, research, and administrative activities, in compliance with Law no. 80/2015, the UNYT Statute, ESG, and the University's quality assurance regulations and strategic documents. The system supports excellence in teaching and learning, research development, social contribution, and effective governance.

At UNYT, quality assurance is implemented through a coordinated framework involving:

1. The Permanent Commission for the Assurance of Quality Standards (PCAQS)
2. The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)
3. The Rector, Academic Senate, Deans, and Department Chairs, who supervise and implement QA mechanisms at all institutional levels.

##### ***Permanent Commission for the Assurance of Quality Standards (PCAQS)***

The PCAQS is the central collegial body within UNYT's IQA system, responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and enhancing quality at institutional and program levels, while ensuring compliance with national and international standards. Established by the Academic Senate, it consists of 5–7 members, including one student representative, elected for a two-year mandate.

The Commission oversees internal evaluations, academic and research effectiveness, and student participation in QA processes. It analyses institutional data, identifies strengths and weaknesses, maintains QA documentation, and provides guidance for continuous improvement. The Chair coordinates activities, ensures ethical conduct, and compliance with institutional and legal frameworks.

##### ***Quality Assurance Unit***

The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) coordinates and monitors QA activities across the University in cooperation with the PCAQS, Rectorate, Deans, and Departments. It operates as an auxiliary administrative structure with operational independence and is composed of four members, including one external academic expert. Its work follows the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle.

The QAU monitors academic programs, analyses student and course evaluations, prepares internal quality reports, supports accreditation processes, and follows up on improvement actions. Members are appointed by the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration.

##### ***Roles of Department Chairs, Deans, Rector, and Academic Senate in Quality Assurance***

Department Chairs and Deans ensure quality at unit level through appropriate workload allocation, syllabus approval, compliance with staffing standards, student grievance management, and the use of evaluation feedback for continuous improvement.

At the institutional level, the Rector and Academic Senate oversee the implementation of QA policies, approve regulations and reports, and ensure integration of quality assurance into governance and strategic planning. This shared responsibility confirms that quality assurance at UNYT is an institution-wide function.

## ***Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Processes***

UNYT applies a structured set of quality assurance mechanisms, including:

- Student evaluation of academic staff and course content
- Student evaluation of administrative units
- Grading transparency reports
- Peer evaluation
- Individual assessment performance
- Graduate program evaluation questionnaires
- Departmental and faculty annual reports
- Annual objectives and monitoring
- Scientific data reporting
- Institutional annual reporting

These instruments support systematic monitoring, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making.

***Student Evaluation for the Academic Staff and Course Content:*** Student evaluations of academic staff and courses are conducted regularly and anonymously by the IQAU. Quantitative and qualitative feedback is analysed and shared with academic leadership to support professional development, curriculum improvement, and annual quality reporting. Aggregated results are published to ensure transparency and data protection.

***Student Evaluation for the Administrative Units:*** Students annually evaluate administrative services to assess efficiency and service quality. Results are analysed by the IQAU, reported to management, and used to improve administrative processes. Aggregated findings are published to ensure accountability.

***Grading Transparency Report:*** Grading practices are periodically reviewed through random sampling of exams to verify alignment with syllabi, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria. Findings are documented and used to ensure fairness, consistency, and integrity in student assessment.

***Peer Evaluation:*** Peer evaluation supports professional development through collegial observation and feedback, particularly for newly appointed academic staff. Outcomes are used to strengthen teaching quality and promote good practices.

***Individual Assessment Performance:*** Academic staff complete annual performance assessments covering teaching, research, service, and professional activities. The process supports transparent evaluation, recognition of achievements, and evidence-based decisions on promotion and workload.

***Questionnaire for the Program Evaluation by Graduate Students:*** Graduating students evaluate study programs through structured questionnaires. Results are analysed and used to improve curricula, teaching quality, student services, and program development.

**Departmental Annual Report:** Each department submits an annual report summarising academic activities, quality issues, achievements, and improvement plans. These reports inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and institutional quality enhancement.

**Annual Objectives of Departments and Annual Monitoring:** Departments define annual objectives and action plans aligned with institutional strategy. Progress is monitored to ensure accountability, performance improvement, and alignment with quality standards.

**Faculty Annual Report:** Faculty Deans prepare annual reports consolidating departmental data, QA activities, and improvement actions. These reports support institutional planning and quality management.

**Scientific Data Reporting - Research Contributions and Project Participation:** Academic staff annually report research outputs and project participation. Data are used to monitor research performance, support strategic planning, and recognize academic achievements.

**Institutional Annual Report:** The Institutional Annual Report consolidates academic, administrative, and financial performance data. It is approved by the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports, and published to ensure transparency.

**Evidence:**

- (3)A.1.4.1.evidence\_Student Evaluation Process
- (3)A.1.4.2.evidence\_Grading Transparency Form
- (3)A.1.4.2.evidence\_Peer Evaluation Process
- (3)A.1.4.4.evidence\_Individual Assessment Performance (IAP)
- (2)A.1.4.5.evidence\_Scientific Data Reporting

**Maturity Level 3:** UNYT demonstrates a fully developed internal quality assurance system characterized by structured governance, systematic monitoring, comprehensive evaluation tools, and a strong culture of continuous improvement aligned with national and international standards.

### **A.1.5. Public disclosure and accountability**

#### **Design**

Transparency and accountability are core elements of UNYT's governance and quality culture. In line with Law no. 80/2015, the University ensures continuous public access to accurate and up-to-date information on its mission, governance, academic and financial performance, and strategic objectives. Public disclosure mechanisms are regulated by the UNYT Statute, University Regulation, and Quality Assurance Manual.

Publicly available information includes governance bodies and decisions, study programs and admission criteria, annual and financial reports, QA results, tuition and recruitment policies, institutional regulations and strategies, committee decisions, and research and community engagement activities. Information is disseminated mainly through the official website, social media, and annual reports, in Albanian and English.

Accountability is embedded through annual reporting by the Rector and Administrator to the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, followed by publication. Mandatory reporting to the Ministry of Education and Sports further reinforces external accountability.

### ***Implementation***

Public disclosure is ensured through coordinated action of the Rector's Office, Administrator, Quality Assurance Office, and Administrative Services. Key documents published include governance and legal acts, strategic and quality documents, study program information, financial and administrative policies, ethical standards, and committee decisions.

In addition to continuous ASCAL accreditation processes, UNYT undergoes periodic external audits, including a comprehensive audit by MAS (2023) and independent financial audits, confirming transparent and responsible management. Ethical transparency is ensured through the Code of Ethics and the Ethics Council, in full compliance with national data protection legislation and GDPR.

### ***Monitoring***

The Quality Assurance Office monitors the accuracy and consistency of all publicly disclosed information and ensures regular updates. The Quality Assurance Commission reviews coherence with institutional policies and transparency standards. Annual reports prepared by academic and administrative units are consolidated into the institutional annual report, approved by the Senate and Board of Administration, and published, ensuring reliable and accountable public information.

### ***Improvement***

Continuous improvement is demonstrated through digitalisation (KION Information Management System), wider online publication of QA and accreditation results, and systematic stakeholder communication via newsletters and press releases.

### **Evidence:**

(3)A.1.5.1.evidence\_Scholarship Policy Document

(3)A.1.5.2.evidence\_Code of Ethics

(3)A.1.5.3.evidence\_Program Accreditation Report

(3)A.1.5.4.evidence\_External Audit MES

[UNYT Governance](#)

[Transparency of PhD Thesis](#)

[Quality Assurance Transparency](#)

[Bachelor Study Programs offered at UNYT](#)

**Maturity Level 3:** UNYT operates public disclosure and accountability mechanisms in line with its defined processes.

## **A.2. Mission and Strategic Goals**

### **A.2.1. Mission, vision and policies**

#### ***MISSION***

Since its establishment in 2002, the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has pursued the mission “Educating Tomorrow’s Leaders.” UNYT aims to create, develop, and safeguard knowledge while educating future citizens, professionals, and scholars through teaching, learning, and research. The mission focuses on personal and professional development, ethical leadership, community engagement, and preparing students with the knowledge, skills, values, and confidence required for success in a diverse global environment.

UNYT is committed to:

- Promoting shared human knowledge and universal values;
- Delivering innovative education aligned with international standards;
- Expanding access to high-quality education through international partnerships;
- Creating a multicultural and collaborative academic environment;
- Supporting the intellectual, creative, and personal development of students.

UNYT’s mission is supported by four strategic pillars: **Institutionalisation, Digitalisation, Internationalisation, and Research Orientation**, which guide institutional development, academic quality, technological advancement, global engagement, and societal contribution.

#### ***VISION***

UNYT aspires to become a leading higher education institution in the Balkans and beyond, recognised for excellence in teaching, impactful research, and community engagement. This vision is realised through the four strategic pillars that ensure institutional quality, digital transformation, international reach, and research-driven societal contribution.

#### ***THE OBJECTIVES***

UNYT prepares students for a rapidly evolving global environment by promoting:

- Critical thinking and lifelong learning;
- Communication, teamwork, and digital literacy;
- Research skills and data analysis;

- Awareness of social, cultural, and international issues;
- Ethical conduct, accountability, and professional competence;
- Inclusiveness, accessibility, and global citizenship.

## **VALUES**

UNYT's institutional identity is grounded in core values including:

- Academic freedom and integrity;
- High-quality education aligned with international standards;
- Innovation, creativity, and research excellence;
- Ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability;
- Inclusiveness, merit, and social responsibility;
- Sustainability, collaboration, and global engagement.

## **POLICY AND PRINCIPLES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK TIRANA**

UNYT's policies reflect its student-centred, internationally oriented educational philosophy, drawing from American and European higher education traditions. The University promotes interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, academic integrity, diversity, and professional development. Through internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, UNYT ensures continuous improvement of teaching, research, and institutional performance, while maintaining sensitivity to local context and labour market needs.

### **Evidence:**

(4)A.2.1.1.evidence\_Statute and Mission & Objectives

[Publication of the Statute of UNYT on the website](#)

[Publication of the Strategic Plan 2026-2030 on the website](#)

**Maturity Level 4:** The practices based on the mission, vision and policies are followed up and evaluated with stakeholders in order to take necessary precautions.

### **A.2.2. Strategic goals and objectives**

UNYT develops and periodically updates its Strategic Plan as the primary instrument for institutional development. Both the Strategic Plan 2020–2025 and the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 include the Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Objectives, and an Action Plan with measurable indicators for implementation and monitoring.

The strategic planning process is collegial and participatory. Draft plans are prepared through internal consultation, approved by the Board of Administration, and formally adopted by the Academic Senate (Strategic Plan 2026–2030 approved by Senate Decision no. 110, dated 07.05.2025).

The 2020–2025 Strategic Plan was substantially implemented, resulting in new study programmes, strengthened research structures, expanded partnerships, increased scholarships, improved ICT infrastructure, income diversification through projects, and digitalisation via the KION system.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan consolidates these achievements and introduces refined strategic objectives focused on academic quality, internationalisation, research excellence, digital transformation, student-centred learning, and institutional integrity, supported by a detailed Action Plan and monitoring indicators.

This full strategic cycle ensures coherent, measurable, and sustainable institutional development aligned with internal priorities and external academic and societal needs.

**Evidence:**

(3)A.2.2.1.evidence\_Communication of Rectorate on Drafting the Strategic Plan

(3)A.2.2.1.evidence\_Senate Decision no. 110 (Approval of Strategic Plan and Action Plan)

**Maturity Level 4:** The institution monitors the implementation of its strategic plan and evaluates it with the related stakeholders; the output is reflected in the institution's future plans.

### **A.2.3. Performance management**

UNYT's performance management system promotes continuous improvement and professional development for both academic and administrative staff. The system is coordinated primarily by the Quality Assurance Office and the Human Resources Office, ensuring alignment between individual performance, institutional mission, and strategic objectives.

Performance management is based on principles of transparency, regular evaluation, continuous feedback, and professional development. For academic staff, performance assessment focuses on teaching, research, student advising, and community service, while administrative staff performance is evaluated based on efficiency, service quality, and contribution to institutional operations.

Academic performance is overseen by the Academic Senate, Rectorate, and Heads of Departments/Research Centres. Core evaluation tools include student evaluations of courses and instructors, peer evaluations, academic performance indicators, and individual performance reports. Student evaluations are conducted each semester, anonymously and electronically, and are released only after final grade submission to ensure integrity and confidentiality.

Peer evaluation complements student feedback through classroom observation and review of course design, learning outcomes, assessment practices, and pedagogical effectiveness. Findings are incorporated into the Individual Assessment Performance (IAP) as part of annual monitoring. Internal teaching and research quality is further reinforced through institutional and programme accreditation processes conducted by external bodies, including ASCAL.

Curricula development, programme revision, and reorganisation are discussed and approved through Senate and Rectorate procedures to ensure compliance with internal indicators, external standards, and academic integrity, thereby strengthening overall academic performance.

Administrative staff performance is managed by the Human Resources Office, under the supervision of the Administrator, through structured evaluation procedures, recruitment standards, and professional development mechanisms aligned with institutional needs.

**Evidence:**

(3)A.2.3.1.evidence\_Regulation of the Academic Senate

(3)A.2.3.2.evidence\_Standard Recruitment Procedure Format

(3)A.2.3.3.evidence\_Budgeting Procedure

**Maturity Level 3:** There are performance management practices throughout the entire institution

### **A.3. Governance Systems**

#### **A.3.1. Information management system**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) uses KION, a modular, web-based information management system that constitutes a core pillar of the University's academic, administrative, and financial operations. The system supports UNYT's digital transformation strategy by streamlining processes, reducing manual documentation, and improving data accuracy and institutional efficiency.

Data security is a central feature of KION. Access is strictly role-based, ensuring that students, academic staff, and administrative personnel can only view information relevant to their responsibilities. The system applies secure authentication mechanisms, encrypted communication protocols (HTTPS/TLS), activity logging, and audit trails, ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and traceability of data. KION is hosted on secure cloud servers that are regularly updated with security patches and protected through firewalls, traffic monitoring, and intrusion-prevention mechanisms.

KION significantly enhances academic processes. Students access their personal accounts to complete online course registration according to their study programme and semester status, subject to academic advisor approval. Academic staff view enrolled students per course, enter grades directly into the system,

and finalize assessments securely. The system automatically calculates grade point averages and provides students with real-time access to academic results following grade submission.

The platform is fully integrated with the Finance Office, enabling students to view invoices, payment history, scholarships, discounts, and instalment plans, as well as complete payments online. This integration eliminates the need for physical presence and improves transparency in financial transactions.

KION also supports institutional reporting and evidence-based decision-making. It generates academic, financial, performance, and demographic reports (e.g., age, gender, nationality, and programme distribution), which are used for enrolment management, quality assurance, and strategic planning.

Specialized access rights are granted to institutional units. The Student Affairs Office (SAO) manages demographic and profile data, while the Academic Secretariat (Records Office) has full access to academic and registration data, grade certification, transcript issuance, performance monitoring, and graduation verification.

**Evidence:**

(3)A.3.1.1.evidence\_KION Regulation

(3)A.3.1.2.evidence\_Access and services to KION

(3)A.3.1.3.evidence\_Official Transcript

**Maturity Level 3:** The institution maintains an integrated information management system that supports the primary processes (learning and teaching, research and development, service to society, quality assurance).

**A.3.2. Human resources management**

Human Resources Management (HRM) at the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) is a strategic component of institutional governance, ensuring that staff remain central to academic excellence and internationalisation. HRM operates in line with the UNYT Statute, Strategic Plan 2026–2030, and draft Human Resources Policies and Procedures (2025), and is fully compliant with Law No. 80/2015, the Albanian Labour Code, and relevant sub-legal acts. The approach is transparent, merit-based, and aligned with institutional objectives.

***1. Recruitment and Talent Acquisition***

UNYT recruits staff based on merit, academic qualifications, and international experience, frequently engaging candidates from institutions accredited in the USA, EU, and the region. This supports a globally oriented academic environment and high-quality teaching and research. Approximately 15% of staff are UNYT alumni, contributing to institutional continuity and knowledge retention. International staff are supported with administrative procedures for residence and work permits. Recruitment processes are documented, transparent, and aligned with strategic priorities.

## ***2. Orientation, Training, and Capacity Building***

Each academic year begins with a structured induction programme introducing new staff to UNYT's values, governance, and strategic goals. Continuous professional development is supported through academic seminars, pedagogical and research training, administrative skills programmes, and health and safety sessions. These activities enhance staff competencies and support institutional performance.

## ***3. Staff Evaluation, Performance, and Promotion***

UNYT applies a structured performance evaluation system for academic and administrative staff. Academic performance is assessed through student feedback, peer review, and departmental reporting, while administrative staff are evaluated using standardized appraisal tools. Promotion procedures are merit-based, transparent, and supported by documented performance evidence, ensuring consistency and alignment with institutional goals.

## ***4. Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction***

Staff engagement and well-being are supported through evidence-based mechanisms, including the Job Satisfaction Survey introduced for administrative staff in 2025. This initiative informs improvement actions and is planned to extend to all staff by 2026, institutionalising systematic engagement monitoring.

## ***5. Sustainability and Continuous Improvement***

HR policies and practices are regularly reviewed based on performance data, survey results, and stakeholder feedback, contributing to staff stability and low turnover. In line with national standards, at least 70% of academic staff in each programme are full-time internal members. Planned initiatives include further digitalisation of HR processes to improve efficiency, performance tracking, and internal communication.

### **Evidence:**

- (3)A.3.2.1.evidence\_Job Satisfaction Survey Report
- (3)A.3.2.2.evidence\_HR Metrics (Tenure, Turnover Rate, Alumni, International Staff 21–25)
- (3)A.3.2.3.evidence\_Template Employment Contract FT Academic Staff (Professor)
- (3)A.3.2.4.evidence\_Template Employment Contract, FT Academic Staff MSc
- (3)A.3.2.5.evidence\_Template Employment Contract, FT Academic Staff PhD
- (3)A.3.2.6.evidence\_Template Employment Contract, PT Academic Staff
- (3)A.3.2.7.evidence\_Promotion Administrative employment contract
- (3)A.3.2.8.evidence\_Researcher FT employment contract

**Maturity Level 3:** The human resources management practices are maintained in line with the defined processes throughout the entire institution

### **A.3.3. Financial management**

UNYT manages its financial and physical resources in a structured and transparent manner to support its mission of providing a high-quality academic and research environment. The institution owns and administers real estate assets and continuously invests in their maintenance and improvement to ensure adequate teaching, research, and administrative facilities for students and staff.

The Operations Office and Logistic Support Office are responsible for infrastructure management, maintenance, security, and support services. Asset registers are maintained and reported in the Annual Financial Statements, ensuring transparency and effective monitoring. Infrastructure needs are regularly assessed through internal quality assurance mechanisms, including surveys of students and staff, and addressed through timely maintenance and targeted investments.

Infrastructure development and maintenance constitute a dedicated component of UNYT's annual budgeting and financial planning. The University prepares an Annual Academic Budget, Annual Fiscal Budget, and Three-Year Budget Plan, aligned with the Strategic Plan and implemented according to efficiency and sustainability principles. Budget preparation is coordinated by the University Administrator, based on proposals from all units, and approved by the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration. Budget reallocations during the year follow defined approval procedures.

UNYT applies a structured Financial Management Process, covering planning, implementation, monitoring, control, and evaluation of financial resources. Financial management and reporting comply with national legislation on higher education, accounting, taxation, and commercial companies. The institution uses specialised software systems to support financial and operational management: Financa 5 for accounting and financial reporting, KION for student and tuition data, and VENUT for procurement and purchasing procedures.

Procurement activities are regulated by the Purchasing Policy and supported by dedicated software, ensuring transparency, fair treatment, confidentiality, and a clear hierarchy of approvals. The Finance Office oversees financial transactions, budget implementation, documentation, and compliance, cooperating closely with all institutional units.

UNYT implements strict budgetary and financial control policies, including monthly financial reporting, budget monitoring, cash flow control, and verification of liabilities and payments. Internal controls include general, accounting, and financial controls, supported by segregation of duties, documented procedures, and continuous staff training. External oversight is ensured through annual independent audits conducted in accordance with National Auditing Standards. Audited financial statements are submitted to tax authorities and the National Business Registration Centre, in compliance with legal requirements.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)A.3.3.1.evidence\_Budget Policy

(3)A.3.3.2.evidence\_Finance Regulation

(3)A.3.3.3.evidence\_Finance 5 Contract

(3)A.3.3.4.evidence\_Finance 5 Enterprise

- (3)A.3.3.5.evidence\_Purchasing Policy
- (3)A.3.3.6.evidence\_Login Manual
- (3)A.3.3.7.evidence\_ERP Use Manual
- (4)A.3.3.8.evidence\_Finance Department Staff Training Certificates
- (4)A.3.3.9.evidence\_Division of Duties in the Finance Department
- (3)A.3.3.10.evidence\_Rent Contract East Campus
- (3)A.3.3.11.evidence\_Rent Contract Main Campus
- (3)A.3.3.12.evidence\_KION Contract
- (3)A.3.3.13.evidence\_Student Service Contract Bachelor
- (3)A.3.3.14.evidence\_Student Service Contract Master
- (3)A.3.3.15.evidence\_Tuition Discount Agreement (PhD and Master)

**Maturity Level 4:** The institution monitors and improves its financial resources management processes.

#### **A.3.4. Process management**

Process management at the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) is grounded in the University Statute, which defines responsibilities, decision-making structures, and the operational scope of academic and administrative units. The Statute serves as the core framework ensuring that institutional processes are implemented consistently, transparently, and in compliance with national higher education standards.

Academic processes are governed through Faculty Rules and Regulations. The Faculty of Economy and Business, the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, and the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture apply detailed regulations covering admissions, curriculum delivery, examinations, grading, appeals, and graduation procedures. For example, the Faculty of Economy and Business Rules and Regulations set standardized procedures for course registration, exam administration, student progression, and diploma awarding.

Administrative processes are implemented through defined procedures within each office, including the Finance Office, Records Office, Student Affairs Office, Public Relations & Marketing Office, Human Resources Office, Operations Office, Information Technology Office, and the Library. These offices apply formal procedures for core services such as diploma issuance, degree verification, recruitment, exam administration, and procurement, ensuring accountability and consistent service delivery.

Academic-support and student-support processes are implemented through units such as the Quality Assurance Unit, International Relations Office, Alumni & Career Office, Maths Centre, Academic Writing Centre, Legal Clinic, Student Counselling Centre, and the Office of the Dean of Students. These

units support student experience, integrity, mobility, and quality monitoring through documented procedures.

Together, the Statute, faculty regulations, and office-level procedures form a coherent institutional system that ensures clarity, accountability, and consistent processes for students and staff, supporting effective university functioning.

**Evidence:**

- (3)A.3.4.1.evidence\_Faculty Regulation
- (3)A.3.4.2.evidence\_Examination Procedures
- (3)A.3.4.3.evidence\_Diploma Issuing Procedures
- (3)A.3.4.4.evidence\_Archive Regulation

**Maturity Level 3:** Defined processes are managed throughout the entire institution

**A.4. Stakeholder Involvement**

**A.4.1. Internal and external stakeholder involvement**

*1. Prioritization of internal and external stakeholders based on institutional processes*

At UNYT, the identification and prioritization of stakeholders are defined in the UNYT Statute 2025 and the Internal Quality Assurance Regulation 2024, which codify stakeholder roles and inclusion in governance and quality assurance. Internal stakeholders (academic staff, administrative staff, and students) hold formal participation rights in governance and QA bodies, including student voting representation in the Academic Senate and Faculty Councils.

External stakeholders (employers, alumni, partner universities, public/private organizations) are prioritized based on their relevance to institutional development goals, as reflected in the Strategic Plan 2026–2030. Advisory board reporting demonstrates how employer input supports employability-focused curriculum adjustments and internship cooperation. International partnerships, including SUNY/Empire State University, are governed through MoUs that support joint oversight and benchmarking.

*2. Stakeholder opinion based on data collection tools and methods employed*

UNYT applies a structured system for collecting stakeholder feedback, supported electronically through the KION Academic Management System to ensure traceability and accessibility for analysis. Student feedback is collected through semester evaluations and consolidated in Student Evaluation Reports.

The Career and Alumni Office maintains an employability database, tracking alumni positions, employer alignment, and degree relevance, consolidated into performance documentation prepared with the Records Office. Employer and advisory board consultations are conducted through periodic meetings, supported by the Curriculum Development Policy and Procedures, and supplemented by market studies.

Research stakeholder input is collected through forums, consultation events, and research structures supported by the Institute and research regulations.

### ***3. Stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes***

Stakeholder involvement is embedded in governance through consultation and formal approval processes. Feedback collected by QA structures and departments is summarized and submitted to the Academic Senate, where student and staff representatives participate with voting rights, and decisions are documented in meeting minutes. Approved proposals proceed to the Board of Administration for administrative and financial validation.

Strategic documents, including the Strategic Plan 2026–2030, are prepared through broad consultation coordinated by the Rectorate. Program-level curriculum revisions require involvement of external experts and student representatives, ensuring relevance and alignment with standards. Research governance also incorporates external peer involvement through institutional research regulations.

### ***4. Stakeholder involvement mechanisms***

UNYT applies structured follow-up mechanisms to ensure feedback results in measurable improvement. Action planning tools assign responsibilities, track progress, and verify implementation through QA reporting. Internship partners provide structured feedback on student performance, which is reviewed by academic staff and the Career and Alumni Office. The Employer Portal integrated into KION supports systematic engagement with partner organizations and internship placement processes.

At the research level, monitoring reports show how reviewer input informs research enhancement measures. Follow-up outcomes are consolidated and reported to the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, ensuring accountability and continuity.

### ***5. Institutional practices and legislation***

UNYT's stakeholder engagement practices operate within national legislation while reflecting institutional identity through international benchmarking, advisory boards, and structured partnerships. Collaboration within the Maarif Foundation network supports external benchmarking and shared learning. Industry advisory boards and MoUs for dual/joint degree programs embed external involvement in curriculum design and oversight. The Institute of European and Balkan Studies enables structured societal outreach with ministries, NGOs, and research institutions, linking stakeholder input to policy-oriented projects. KION supports integrated monitoring of stakeholder engagement processes.

UNYT's approach ensures stakeholder participation is structured, monitored, and actively used to inform improvement cycles across governance, academic programs, research, and strategy.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)A.4.1.1.evidence\_Stakeholder Involvement

(3)A.4.1.2.evidence\_Institutional Practices

(3)A.4.1.3.evidence\_Employment Trackability

(3)A.4.1.4.evidence\_Internship

**Maturity Level 4:** The operation of stakeholder involvement mechanisms is monitored and relevant improvements are made.

#### **A.4.2. Student feedback**

##### ***1. Student Feedback Mechanisms***

Student engagement in quality assurance is a core element of UNYT's quality culture. Students contribute to quality enhancement through structured mechanisms, including:

- Course and instructor evaluations;
- Administrative service evaluations;
- Complaint and petition procedures;
- Academic advising and counselling services;
- Participation in student organizations and extracurricular activities.

Feedback is collected through formal evaluation tools, the Student Union, the Dean of Students' Office, academic advising sessions, office hours, and direct communication with academic leadership.

The course evaluation process is a key QA instrument and includes two standardized forms:

- Course and instructor evaluation, conducted twice per year, focusing on teaching effectiveness, course content, and learning methods;
- Administrative service evaluation, assessing student support services and administrative procedures.

Results from these evaluations are analysed and used to support curriculum development, teaching improvements, and administrative enhancements, demonstrating a responsive and participatory governance approach.

##### ***2. Student Participation in Governance***

Since Spring 2013, students have been formally represented in the Academic Senate with voting rights. Students also participate in Faculty Councils, Departments, the Ethics Committee, the Permanent Commission for the Assurance of Quality Standards (PCAQS), and other institutional committees. This ensures that student perspectives are integrated into decision-making at all levels.

##### ***3. Student Advising***

Academic advising provides structured academic, professional, and career guidance while serving as an important feedback channel. Through regular interaction with advisors, students contribute input that informs internal quality assurance processes and supports continuous improvement of academic offerings.

#### ***4. Student Government and Elections***

UNYT supports democratic student representation through annual Student Government elections. These elections are communicated through official channels and ensure broad participation. Student representatives contribute to institutional decision-making on academic and campus-life matters.

#### ***5. Alumni Engagement***

UNYT maintains continuous engagement with alumni through academic units and the Career and Alumni Office. Alumni feedback on program relevance and employability outcomes informs curriculum evaluation, strategic planning, and career services, supporting alignment with labour market needs.

#### **Evidence:**

- (3) A.4.2.1.evidence\_Student Participation in Governance
- (3) A.4.2.2.evidence\_Student Government and Elections
- (3) A.4.2.3.evidence\_Alumni Engagement
- (3) A.4.2.4.evidence\_Student Feedback Mechanisms
- (3) A.4.2.5.evidence\_Student Advising

**Maturity Level 4:** Practices about collecting student feedback are monitored in all programs, and they are improved with student involvement. Feedback results are reflected in decision-making processes.

#### **A.4.3. Alumni relations management**

UNYT applies structured mechanisms to engage alumni as active contributors to institutional quality and development. Alumni engagement is coordinated primarily through academic units and the Career and Alumni Office, ensuring systematic feedback on program effectiveness and graduate employability.

In line with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030, UNYT strengthens the link between academic studies and employability through a structured and cyclical feedback process involving alumni, employers, students, and academic staff. Alumni feedback is systematically collected through graduate tracer studies, alumni surveys, and consultations facilitated by the Alumni and Careers Office. These instruments gather data on employment status, sector relevance, skill gaps, and the applicability of programme learning outcomes to professional practice.

The Career and Alumni Office prepare an annual Action Plan aligned with institutional strategy and quality assurance objectives. Alumni engagement includes mentorship, guest lectures, participation in seminars, and involvement in Career Fairs as representatives of national and international employers.

UNYT systematically collects and updates graduate employment data, including program alignment and employer information. This information is consolidated in the Performance Document, prepared

collaboratively by the Rectorate, Quality Assurance Unit, Career and Alumni Office, and Records Office, supporting evidence-based planning and quality assurance.

Alumni engagement is further reinforced through regular Alumni Gatherings, promotion of alumni achievements via official communication channels, and opportunities for alumni to join UNYT as academic or administrative staff. Currently, alumni are employed across both academic and administrative roles, strengthening institutional continuity.

UNYT also supports lifelong learning through its Scholarship Policy, which includes tuition reductions for alumni pursuing further studies. Additionally, the establishment of a UNYT Alumni Association is under development to further institutionalize alumni engagement.

**Evidence:**

(3)A.4.3.1.evidence\_Alumni relations management

**Maturity Level 3:** There are alumni tracking system practices throughout the programs in the entire institution.

## **A.5. Internationalisation**

### **A.5.1. Management of internationalization processes**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has positioned internationalization as a strategic pillar of its academic mission and institutional development. As Albania's first private English-medium university, UNYT implements a comprehensive Internationalization Strategy aimed at strengthening global engagement, academic mobility, and international research cooperation. Internationalization is further defined as a core objective of the Institutional Development Strategy 2026–2030, particularly Objective No. 2, focusing on international research, partnerships, and visibility.

UNYT is a signatory of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and an active member of international academic networks, including the European University Association (EUA) and the Balkan University Association (BUA). These affiliations support alignment with European higher education standards and international best practices.

#### ***Strategic Vision and Mission***

UNYT defines internationalization as the integration of global perspectives into teaching, research, and institutional governance. The strategic vision responds to global trends such as digitalization, multicultural societies, and international labor markets, with the mission of preparing students and staff for active participation in a globalized academic and professional environment.

Internationalization of scientific research is a key strategic objective. UNYT maintains cooperation agreements with higher education and research institutions from EU and OECD countries and actively participates in national and international research initiatives, particularly in priority research areas defined by the institution.

## ***Institutional Framework: The Role of the International Relations Office (IRO) and the Research, Projects and Innovation Centre (RPIC)***

The International Relations Office (IRO) is the central coordinating structure for internationalization at UNYT. It manages international partnerships, student and staff mobility, Erasmus+ programs, and cooperation with international organizations and embassies, ensuring transparency and compliance with international standards.

The Research, Projects and Innovation Centre (RPIC) supports international research collaboration by monitoring calls, assisting project applications, and coordinating partnerships with institutions from the EU and beyond. Through these structures, UNYT has established collaborations with universities and research centres across Europe and neighbouring regions, supporting academic mobility, joint projects, and research dissemination.

### ***Joint Programs and Projects***

UNYT actively develops joint academic initiatives, including the ongoing process for establishing a Joint PhD Program in “Business Administration” with Izmir Bakircay University. This initiative supports doctoral mobility, shared supervision, and joint research outputs.

UNYT participates in multiple international projects in cooperation with partner institutions from countries such as Spain, Austria, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Italy, Serbia, and others. These projects contribute to the internationalization of research, staff development, and institutional capacity building.

### ***Faculty Selection and Internationalization***

UNYT actively recruits international academic staff to support its English-language instruction model and global academic profile. Selection committees evaluate candidates based on academic qualifications, teaching and research proposals, and international experience. Faculty participation in Erasmus+ mobility and international research funding schemes is actively encouraged.

### ***Strategic Goals and Implementation***

UNYT’s internationalization strategy is structured around four strategic goals:

#### ***Goal 1: International Educational Environment***

Expansion of Erasmus+ and bilateral agreements, recognition of study periods abroad, and promotion of international student mobility.

#### ***Goal 2: Global Mobility***

Internationalization of curricula, increased access to mobility programs, and development of transnational academic cooperation.

#### ***Goal 3: International Student and Staff Recruitment***

Development of joint PhD programs, recruitment of international academic staff, and provision of support services for international students. International staff represent approximately 18–20% of the total staff, while students originate from over 40 nationalities.

#### ***Goal 4: International Campus and Regional Impact***

Promotion of a multicultural academic environment, collaboration with diaspora scholars, organization of international conferences, and increased global visibility.

### ***Metrics for Measuring Success***

UNYT applies key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor internationalization outcomes, including:

- Student Mobility: 36 Erasmus+ student mobilities (2022–2025).
- Staff Mobility: 33 Erasmus+ staff mobilities (2022–2025).
- International Partnerships: 72 active international agreements (29 Erasmus+ IIAs and 43 MoUs).
- Research Collaboration: 6 ongoing international research projects.
- International Recognition: Membership in EUA and BUA.

### **Evidence:**

(3)A.5.1.1.evidence\_Internationalization at UNYT

(3)A.5.1.2.evidence\_IRO Regulation

(3)A.5.1.3.evidence\_HR Metrics (International Staff)

**Maturity Level 4:** The management and organisational structure of the internationalisation processes are monitored and improved.

## **A.5.2. Internationalization resources**

UNYT ensures that resources for internationalisation, financial, physical, and human are planned, allocated, and institutionalised to deliver the Internationalisation Strategy and the Strategic Plan. Resource use is monitored through quantitative indicators (budget execution, mobility flows, project funding) and qualitative reviews (impact and equity of allocation), ensuring transparency, efficiency, and continuous improvement.

### ***Financial resources***

Internationalisation funding is defined annually through the institutional budgeting process led by the Finance Office in coordination with the International Relations Office (IRO) and the Research, Projects & Innovation Centre (RPIC/RPI). The budget includes dedicated lines for Erasmus+ (KA1/KA2), EU-funded projects, bilateral cooperation, international events, staff development, and mobility support. Funds are managed through centralised financial procedures and project-management rules, including budgeting, reporting, procurement, and auditing requirements for externally funded activities. Erasmus+ finances follow the Grant Agreement requirements, including compliance controls and, where applicable, external evaluation/audit arrangements.

Monitoring combines:

- Quantitative tracking (e.g., utilisation rate of Erasmus+ funds, mobilities by faculty/unit, external funding secured, distribution by department/program); and
- Qualitative annual reviews coordinated by the RPI Centre to assess impact and adjust allocations. A recent example of improvement is the use of internal review findings to rebalance resources toward underrepresented departments, operationalised through an open and documented internal call for staff engagement.

### ***Human resources***

Internationalisation is supported through an integrated human-resource structure with clear roles and accountability. Strategic oversight is provided by the Vice-Rector for Research and Internationalisation, while operational delivery is ensured by specialised staff in the IRO (Erasmus+ mobility management) and the RPI Centre (project development, grant administration, reporting, and deliverables monitoring). The Institute for European and Balkan Studies and its research centres contribute academic capacity for international research collaboration. Staff responsibilities are defined in job descriptions and performance objectives, with professional development supported through targeted training (EU project management, Erasmus+ procedures, intercultural communication, and research collaboration).

### ***Monitoring and improvement***

UNYT uses Erasmus+ financial reports, audit findings, internal reviews, and annual performance reporting to adjust allocations and strengthen implementation capacity. Follow-up reporting by the Finance Office and the RPI Centre feeds into the institutional action planning for internationalisation under the Strategic Plan, with measurable targets (budget growth, higher project participation, and broader mobility engagement across departments). Responsibilities and procedures are formalised through relevant regulations (RPI and IRO), ensuring continuity and institutionalisation.

### **Evidence:**

(4)A.5.2.1.evidence\_Financial resources

**Maturity level 4:** The distribution of internationalisation resources in the institution is monitored and improved.

## **A.5.3 Internationalisation performance**

The internationalisation performance of the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) reflects the extent to which international, intercultural, and global dimensions are embedded in teaching, research, and service activities. Internationalisation is treated as a strategic priority to enhance academic quality, foster research excellence, and strengthen global visibility. UNYT's internationalisation processes are guided by the Internationalization Strategy 2020–2025 and the forthcoming Action Plan for the Internationalization Strategy 2026–2030, aligned with the Institutional Development Strategy 2026–2030 (Objective No. 2: “Internationalization Strategy”). Implementation and monitoring are managed

through two core mechanisms: the International Relations Office (IRO) and the Research, Project and Innovation Centre (RPIC). The IRO oversees partnerships, Erasmus+ agreements, and mobility for students and staff, while the RPIC monitors research collaborations, project applications, and participation in international networks. Both offices produce annual reports that feed into the institutional self-evaluation cycle and are reviewed by the Rectorate and Senate, ensuring evidence-based performance management.

UNYT applies structured indicators to assess internationalisation performance, including: the number and diversity of international partnerships and agreements; participation in international projects and networks; staff and student mobility; international student representation; and academic staff participation in international conferences and publications. Results are disseminated internally to support transparency and accountability and to inform improvement actions incorporated into the Internationalization Action Plan 2026–2030.

Internationalisation of research is central to UNYT’s development. UNYT holds the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and is a member of the European University Association and the Balkan University Association. Between 2023 and 2025, UNYT participated in six Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education projects (GITEKA, DUALBA, WEB-NIMBUS, INITIATION, UNIGREEN, TEACHUP), as coordinator or strategic partner. In the same period, UNYT joined COST Action CA21131 and organised international academic events such as the Multi-Eye Hackathon Workshop (April 2025). Over the last two years, UNYT submitted 37 international grant applications, including 25 during the 2024–2025 academic year, demonstrating expanding institutional capacity for international project engagement.

These activities have strengthened collaboration with multiple international partners (e.g., University of Novi Sad, FH Joanneum Gesellschaft MBH, Mondragon University, WSB University, University of Aveiro, Metropolitan College) and supported joint research, curriculum co-development, and academic exchange. UNYT has also organised and participated in regional and European scientific events, including the Symposium on Migration (Tirana, 2024) and “Navigating Complexity and Change in the Balkans” (Istanbul, 2024), reinforcing international academic presence and contributing to UNYT’s positioning as a hub for international dialogue.

International student representation is a further indicator of internationalisation outcomes. For academic year 2025–2026, UNYT reports 196 international students enrolled across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (139 foreign nationals and 57 members of the Albanian diaspora). Since establishment, UNYT reports having welcomed students from 42 countries; in the current academic year, students represent 27 nationalities, supporting a multicultural learning environment and intercultural engagement on campus.

Mobility and exchanges represent an essential dimension of internationalisation performance. As an ECHE holder, UNYT administers mobility via documented and transparent selection criteria. Mobilities are organised through: (i) inter-institutional agreements coordinated by IRO (including Erasmus+ exchanges); and (ii) project-based mobilities managed by the RPI Centre (study visits and focused exchanges linked to project objectives). Selection processes apply clear criteria: for staff, alignment with institutional priorities and the UNYT scoring system; for students, open calls using academic performance, motivation, and language proficiency. Reported outcomes include staff professional development, enhancement of teaching and learning through international practices, and expansion of

research networks leading to joint projects, publications, and new modules. UNYT reports 60 mobilities implemented through IRO and 21 mobilities through the RPI Centre (study visits and research exchanges). Between 2019 and 2025, UNYT reports 16 incoming and 34 outgoing students, and 42 incoming and 67 outgoing staff participating in international mobility programmes, with additional project-based exchanges coordinated by RPIC across partner institutions in Austria, Greece, Spain, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey.

***Evidence:***

(3)A.5.3.1.evidence\_EUA, BUA MoU and Open seminars

(3)A.5.3.2.evidence\_IRO Reports

(3)A.5.3.3.evidence\_RPI Action Plan & Partnership

(3)A.5.3.4.evidence\_Partnership agreement - Funding records for international projects

(3)A.5.3.4.evidence\_Invitation Letter including the information out of ranking

(3)A.5.3.5.evidence\_Academic Staff Fellowship

[External Evaluation Reports](#)

**Maturity level 4:** Internationalisation activities in the institution are monitored and improved.

## **AREA B. LEARNING AND TEACHING**

### **Standard B.1: Program Design, Evaluation, and Update**

#### **B.1.1. Design and Approval of Programs**

The design and approval of study programmes at the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) follow a transparent and structured process aligned with Law no. 80/2015, relevant bylaws of the Ministry of Education and Sports, and EHEA-compatible principles related to learning outcomes, workload, assessment, and ECTS. Programme development is aligned with the Strategic Plans 2020–2025 and 2026–2030, to ensure coherence with institutional priorities such as internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, and labour-market relevance.

UNYT places explicit emphasis on how monitoring, periodic programme reviews, and multi-source evaluation tools are treated as instruments for evidence-based improvement rather than only compliance mechanisms.

**1. Legal and Institutional Framework:** The creation and approval of programmes are governed by UNYT's Statute, UNYT Rules and Regulations, the Curricula Development Policy and Procedures, [DCM No. 41, dated 24 January 2018](#) (updated) on study programme elements, and the Quality Assurance

Manual. These instruments ensure alignment with the [Law 80/2015](#) and the Albanian National Qualifications Framework ([AQF](#)), and the European Qualifications Framework ([EQF](#)), strengthening transparency and recognition across cycles.

Each new or revised program follows a multi-level process:

1. Initiation and drafting by the relevant department(s)
2. Review and endorsement by the Faculty Council
3. Academic evaluation and approval by the Academic Senate
4. Financial feasibility and resource verification by the Board of Administration
5. Licensing or reorganisation approval by the Ministry of Education and Sports

**2. Program Structure According to Albanian Law:** UNYT designs curricula in compliance with national credit and category requirements under DCM No. 41 (updated). Programmes follow the mandatory course-category structure.

For 3-year Bachelor programmes (180 ECTS, level 6 of EQF):

- Category A (Basic): 15–20%
- Category B (Characterizing): 50–55%
- Category C (Interdisciplinary/Integrative): 12–15%
- Category D (Complementary): 10–15%
- Category E (Final Obligations): 3–5%

UNYT ensures that Categories A and B together exceed 70% of the curriculum.

For 2-year Master of Science programmes (120 ECTS, level 7 of EQF):

- Category A (Basic): 5–10%
- Category B (Characterizing): 50–60%
- Category C (Interdisciplinary/Integrative): 12–20%
- Category D (Complementary): 10%
- Category E (Final Obligations): 10–25%

UNYT ensures that Categories A and B together exceed 60% of the curriculum.

**3. Program Design Process:** Departments initiate programme design based on academic and labour-market needs. The process is supported by benchmarking, labour-market analysis, and structured stakeholder consultation involving employers, alumni, students, and professional bodies. Programme missions, graduate profile, and learning outcomes are defined in line with the [AQF](#) and [EQF](#) descriptors. Curriculum composition respects legal percentage ranges and ensures coherent sequencing from foundational to advanced and integrative components. Each course is supported by a syllabus specifying

ECTS, learning outcomes, assessment, grading criteria, organisation, and literature. The Rectorate, supported by the QA Office, verifies compliance before prior to approval.

**4. Approval, Licensing, and Publication:** Following approval by the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, the programme dossier is submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports for licensing or reorganisation. The dossier includes programme rationale/structure, legal compliance, programme regulations, staffing, market research, resources/infrastructure, QA procedures, and learning outcomes. Licensed programmes are published on the UNYT website and registered in KION, ensuring transparency of objectives, learning outcomes, ECTS structure, course lists, and admission criteria.

**5. Quality Assurance and Review:** The Quality Assurance Office and the Permanent Commission for Assuring Quality Standards (with external expertise) ensure procedural compliance and implementation quality. They verify programme coherence (objectives-content-ECTS-LOs), correct programme elements, and the adequacy of staff and resources. Annual monitoring and periodic reviews support evidence-based updates driven by legislative changes, labour-market developments, quality assurance findings, and stakeholder feedback.

**6. Stakeholder and External Input:** Employers, alumni, and student representatives contribute systematically to programme design and revision through advisory meetings, surveys, and consultation rounds. Their input informs curricular updates, elective structures, and internship design, ensuring academic relevance while maintaining regulatory compliance.

**7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement:** UNYT applies a closed-loop quality cycle that connects monitoring directly to programme refinement:

- Student evaluation reports are analysed each semester to identify trends in teaching quality, workload balance, and course relevance. Findings lead to targeted syllabus revisions and assessment adjustments.
- Graduate and alumni surveys are reviewed annually to assess alignment between learning outcomes and professional needs, informing updates to program objectives and applied components.
- Employer feedback guides revisions in applied fields such as Business, Economics, Computer Science, Law, Architecture, etc.
- Departmental Monitoring Reports consolidate evaluation results and propose programme-level actions, including course reorganizations and introduction of new modules.

**8. Documentation traceability and evidence culture:** Programme design, approval, and review documentation is stored in a shared institutional repository (UNYT Share folder), supported by standardised templates to ensure traceability and comparability across programmes.

Through these structured feedback mechanisms, UNYT demonstrates that programme design is a dynamic process in which monitoring, evaluation, and stakeholder input directly shape curricular development and sustainability.

**Evidence:**

(4)B.1.1.1.evidence\_UNYT List of Programs and Procedures for Opening a New Study Program

(3)B.1.1.2.evidence\_Curricula Development Policies and Procedures

(3)B.1.1.3.Procedures for supporting and improving the quality of study programs

*Higher Education legislation in Albania*

*Changes in DCM No.41 of 2018, 2021*

**Maturity Level 4:** The design and approval processes of the programs are systematically monitored and improved by evaluating them with relevant stakeholders.

## **B.1.2. Course distribution balance of the program**

UNYT ensures that course distribution within each programme is governed by clear principles, transparent rules, and documented methods that secure curricular coherence, fair teaching allocation, alignment with learning outcomes, and responsiveness to societal and labour-market needs. The approach operationalises ECTS and study-cycle logic, applies standard course categorisation, relies on participatory staffing procedures, and uses an evidence-based monitoring cycle to link evaluation to curriculum improvement.

### **1. *Principles, rules, and methods***

Course distribution is formalised in programme dossiers, institutional regulations, and curriculum templates. Programmes are structured by cycle and ECTS (e.g., 180 ECTS for Bachelor programmes), with sequencing and credits detailed in lesson plans. A consistent A–E taxonomy (core, characterising, interdisciplinary/integrative, supplementary, final obligations) is used across programmes. Each syllabus includes objectives, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and ECTS workload, and is approved by the lecturer, Head of Department, and Dean before submission to the QA Unit each semester.

### **2. *Staff expertise and workload in allocation***

Heads of Departments and Deans develop semester and annual schedules matching instructors' expertise with course needs, while respecting workload composition (teaching, research, administrative and committee duties). Employment templates define staff profiles and guide workload assignments, safeguarding research time and development. Departmental monitoring reports document workload distribution, exceptions (e.g., part-time specialists), and recommendations, ensuring traceability of staffing decisions.

### **3. *Participatory decision-making and transparency***

Departments propose assignments; Faculty Councils review coherence and resource implications; the Senate and Rectorate oversee new programmes and major revisions. Minutes, decisions, and approved schedules provide an audit trail. Students are informed through published curricula and syllabi (website and first-day distribution). Programme structure is accessible via the UNYT webpage, Diploma Supplement, and KION, and is explained during orientation and advising.

#### **4. *Compulsory/elective and disciplinary/interdisciplinary balance***

Curricula combine compulsory foundations with increased elective flexibility, typically in later semesters. The A–E structure supports balance between disciplinary depth (A–B) and broader exposure/skills (C–D), with final obligations (E). Programme descriptors and the Diploma Supplement document the mix and ECTS distribution to support recognition and employability.

#### **5. *Cultural competence and interdisciplinarity***

Interdisciplinary and cultural competence are embedded through the C-category and integrative modules (e.g., academic writing, foreign languages, social science content in technical programmes). Strategic priorities are implemented through templates and programme maps allocating ECTS for cross-disciplinary learning, enhancing transferable skills, cultural literacy, civic education, ICT competencies, and employability.

#### **6. *Workload management and extracurricular engagement***

ECTS manages student workload (60 ECTS/year, ~1,500–1,800 hours), with balanced semesters (typically 30 ECTS). Credits reflect total workload (contact hours, independent study, assignments, projects, exams), with classroom hours generally 40–50%. Syllabi specify workload components. Predictable load supports strong participation in co-curricular activities (Model UN, EYP, moot courts, clubs, Spring Fest), backed by institutional support and arrangements facilitating participation.

#### **7. *Monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement***

UNYT applies a closed-loop QA cycle: syllabus submission/archiving each semester, student evaluations, peer review, staff self-assessment, departmental/faculty reports, and annual curriculum reviews with Faculty Councils and the QA Office. Inputs feed yearly monitoring reports that guide adjustments to sequencing, electives, and teaching allocation. An example is the evidence-based reorganisation of the MSc in Finance and Accounting to meet ACCA requirements, resulting in accreditation achievements and professional exemptions.

#### **8. *Governance accountability and strategic integration***

Course distribution is integrated into governance and strategic planning through Programme Coordinators, Heads of Departments, Deans, and the QA Unit (timetabling, workload monitoring, curriculum amendments). Annual Monitoring Reports support resource planning and budgeting to ensure academic, financial, and operational sustainability.

#### **9. *Staffing capacity and sustainability***

UNYT maintains a stable full-time/part-time mix and increasing full-time capacity. Institutional reports track staffing proportions, while employment templates show differentiated workloads and protections for early-career researchers and PhD-track staff, supporting continuity, quality, and staff development.

#### **10. *Alignment with international best practice***

Course structure is based on ECTS workload, learning-outcome-focused syllabi, and open access to programme information. The A–E taxonomy, standardised syllabus formats, and QA processes support comparability, recognition, mobility, and external assessment aligned with Bologna/EHEA principles.

**Evidence:**

- (3)B.1.2.1.evidence\_Vice Rector for Internationalization Addendum employment contract
- (3)B.1.2.2.evidence\_Syllabus sample
- (3)B.1.2.3.evidence\_Teaching Load Distribution per Program 2020–2025 (Summary Table FT/PT Load Ratio)
- (3)B.1.2.4.evidence\_UNYT Posts and communication about the event participation

**Maturity Level 4:** The course distribution balance in the programs is monitored and improved.

**B.1.3. The alignment of course objectives with program outcomes**

UNYT guarantees Learning Outcomes (LOs) through a robust, continuous Quality Assurance (QA) system that safeguards academic standards and professional relevance across all study programmes. The link between Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) is ensured through the University Statute and Rules and Regulations, faculty/department/program regulations, and a standardised syllabus template used in all Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Internal QA processes comply with ESG and align with national and regional accreditation requirements (including ASCAL). Department and programme rules require adherence to approved curricula; instructors must prepare syllabi before classes start, share them with students in the first lecture, and ensure they include objectives, content, requirements, and assessment details. Syllabi are reviewed and approved by the Department Chair and Dean, ensuring consistency of objectives, content, teaching methods, and assessment across the institution.

**1. Definition of CLOs and taxonomic progression**

Within the syllabus template, instructors define course LOs specifying what students will know, do, and demonstrate upon completion. LOs follow established taxonomies (Bloom's revised taxonomy for the cognitive domain, and descriptors for affective and psychomotor domains). LOs are written with measurable action verbs and classified across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor/practical domains. Course objectives are sequenced from lower- to higher-order skills, supporting step-by-step development from foundational learning to advanced analysis, evaluation, and creation, ensuring purposeful progression across programmes.

**2. Alignment of CLOs with PLOs**

Each programme defines PLOs aligned with institutional mission, national and European qualifications frameworks, and disciplinary expectations. Programme regulations state graduate objectives and expected knowledge, skills, and competences (Programme Regulations, Article 6(a), (b)). The syllabus template requires instructors to indicate how each course contributes to programme outcomes: each CLO is mapped to one or more PLOs, ensuring meaningful contribution to the graduate profile. At programme level, curriculum maps (courses vs PLOs) are created and reviewed by Faculty Councils with the QA Unit to identify where outcomes are introduced, developed, and mastered, preventing gaps and overlaps.

Programmes and major revisions are developed by departments, approved by Faculty Councils, and ratified by the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, validating PLOs and their curricular coverage (Department Rules and Regulations, Article 6(b)). New and revised courses are approved only when LO–PLO alignment is explicitly stated and verified by the Head of Department and Dean.

### ***3. Alignment of assessment with CLOs (constructive alignment)***

The syllabus template requires explicit assessment design: listing assessment components, weighting, and clarifying which CLOs (and where relevant general competences) each component assesses. Programme regulations provide for diverse assessment methods (essays, reports, presentations, exams, participation, etc.) aligned with course learning outcomes, ensuring transparency and direct measurement of intended outcomes. Teaching strategies and assessment are intentionally aligned with CLOs (e.g., analytical CLOs supported by case-based teaching and assessed through structured case reports/rubrics), enabling tracking of objective achievement through evaluation.

### ***4. Monitoring the realisation of CLOs and PLOs***

UNYT monitors learning-outcome realisation through student feedback, syllabus review, individual assessment, and programme-level discussion within the institutional and departmental regulatory framework:

- Student evaluations: standardised evaluations before final exams for full-time staff; twice per semester for new and part-time staff (midterm and final), with results analysed by Heads of Department and Deans to guide course improvements.
- Annual syllabus updates: instructors revise syllabi annually based on assessment results, student feedback, disciplinary changes, and experience; updates may refine LOs, adjust cognitive/affective/skill demands, modify assessments, update literature, or add learning activities; revised syllabi are approved by the Head of Department and Dean.
- Programme/department meetings: regular meetings review LO achievement through grade patterns, exam results, thesis/project outcomes; decisions for improvement are agreed and recorded (sequencing, methods, assessment patterns).
- Multi-tier evaluation: course evaluations, annual Individual Performance Assessment, programme self-evaluations, internship evaluation reports, and graduate surveys collectively validate LO and PLO attainment and relevance, feeding continuous improvement.

### ***5. Evaluation of general (non-area-specific) objectives***

UNYT systematically develops and monitors transversal skills (communication, teamwork, ethical awareness, digital literacy, critical thinking, lifelong learning). These are embedded in PLOs and operationalised in syllabi through learning outcomes and assessment tasks across both general education and discipline-specific courses. Monitoring uses the same mechanisms (evaluations, syllabus review, programme meetings) and is supported by tools such as project/presentation rubrics, written assignments, case studies addressing ethical/social/sustainability issues, internship/thesis evaluation forms, and external feedback from industry partners, alumni, and accreditation bodies.

Overall, UNYT ensures alignment between course objectives and programme outcomes through a unified syllabus template, taxonomically structured LOs, LO–PLO mapping and curriculum mapping, and constructive alignment of teaching and assessment. Continuous monitoring through student and graduate feedback, staff evaluation, programme self-assessment, internship reports, programme meetings, and external feedback sustain evidence-based improvement. Programmes also benchmark learning outcomes against international directives and professional standards, applying KSV descriptors, I–R–M progression, and LO matrices; the Integrated Master’s Program in Architecture exemplifies alignment with EU Directive 2005/36/EC and RIBA/ARB criteria.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.1.3.1.evidence\_Program Regulation

(3)B.1.3.2.evidence\_Package of Syllabi

(3)B.1.3.3.evidence\_Program self-evaluation report

(3)B.1.3.4.evidence\_LO Matrix Sample

[Bachelor study programs offered at UNYT](#)

[Master Study programs offered at UNYT](#)

**Maturity Level 4:** The alignment of the course objectives with the program outcomes is monitored and improved.

## **B.1.4. Student workload-based course design**

### ***1. Legal and institutional framework***

At UNYT, programme and course design follows Law No. 80/2015, the Albanian National Qualifications Framework, and ECTS principles (ECTS Users’ Guide, 2015). One ECTS credit equals 25–30 hours of total student effort, including contact hours and independent work (lectures, seminars, assignments, laboratory work, projects, self-study). UNYT applies this consistently across cycles: Bachelor (180 ECTS/6 semesters), MSc (120 ECTS/4 semesters), Integrated MSc (300 ECTS/10 semesters), and Professional Master (120 ECTS/4 semesters). In line with Albanian legislation, programmes are delivered in person; while distance/online modes are not authorised, UNYT uses KION, Moodle, and Turnitin to support classroom teaching, academic integrity, workload tracking, and assessment transparency.

### ***2. Principles of workload-based design***

Workload-based design is built on: (i) outcome-oriented structure (outcomes linked to learning activities, assessment, and hours in each syllabus); (ii) activity-based estimation (all learning components counted); (iii) ECTS coherence (credits proportionate to total effort and evidenced in syllabi); and (iv) semester

balance (maximum 30 ECTS per semester). Faculty determine workload during development/revision, with oversight by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) to ensure consistency across courses and programmes.

### ***3. Adjustments to auditorial and laboratory hours***

Between 2022–2024, UNYT revised weekly teaching-hour allocations in selected courses (e.g., Statistics II, General Psychology, Advanced Educational Psychology, and courses in Architecture and MSc Psychology), rebalancing hours (e.g., 3 to 4 hours/week) to better match pedagogical needs and student workload. These adjustments did not change total workload or ECTS values; they refined the balance between contact hours and independent study. Revisions were data-driven (departmental analyses, faculty recommendations, student evaluations), approved by Faculty Council and Senate, and documented in the Course Catalogue, KION, UNYT website, and syllabi repository.

### ***4. Curricular revisions and programme reorganisation***

UNYT has implemented curricular revisions and programme reorganisations to maintain coherence between ECTS workload distribution, sequencing, and disciplinary relevance, including redistributing courses across semesters, merging overlapping modules, and adding applied/interdisciplinary components. Examples include Business Administration, Business Informatics, MSc Finance and Accounting, Computer Science, and Psychology, with sequencing optimised while preserving 30 ECTS per semester.

### ***5. External collaboration and applied learning***

Applied Banking and Finance integrates practical workload through a BKT partnership (MoU), embedding professional training, project work, and case-based seminars within the ECTS workload. UNYT also participates in the DUALBA Project, supporting work-integrated learning and ensuring workload allocations reflect academic and professional components. Beyond these, guest speakers, company visits, and field-based learning across disciplines (e.g., Marketing, Management, Entrepreneurship, Finance, Software Engineering, Computer Science, Law, Architecture) are included in syllabi and workload calculations. Mobility and exchange credits earned abroad are transferable and integrated into the ECTS workload.

### ***6. Internship and final graduation project***

Bachelor programmes include credit-bearing Internship and Graduation Project components. Internships are supervised by academic mentors and host supervisors, assessed through reports and rubrics aligned with learning outcomes, and fully integrated into ECTS workload. The Final Graduation Project (8 ECTS; Category E—Final Obligations per DCM No. 41, 24.01.2018 updated) requires synthesis and application of knowledge and research/analytical skills, completed under supervision and defended/assessed against defined criteria. Together these ensure completion of academic learning, professional practice, and reflective synthesis within the workload-based structure.

### ***7. Approval and oversight***

Workload design and monitoring follow a multi-level governance process: Department Heads coordinate workload estimation; Faculty Councils review/approve changes; QAU monitors consistency using

course-evaluation data, performance metrics, and annual reports; Senate and Board of Administration formalise revisions. This ensures transparency, consistency, and accountability.

### ***8. Monitoring and continuous improvement***

Workload balance is reviewed through student course evaluations (including workload perception) and departmental annual reports identifying gaps between planned and experienced workload. Courses flagged as unbalanced are reviewed and adjusted (e.g., refining teaching hours, reordering content, recalibrating assessment) to better align outcomes with student experience, while maintaining institutional standards and student-centred learning.

### ***9. Transparency and communication***

Transparency is ensured through the Course Catalogue, course syllabi (with workload breakdown), Diploma Supplement (in Albanian and English), and UNYT webpages. Students are introduced to the ECTS model at the start of studies and supported by academic advisors in planning and time management.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.1.4.1.evidence\_Field trips 2021–24

(3)B.1.4.2.evidence\_Duties of the Advisors

(3)B.1.4.3.evidence\_Guiding Preparation Questions and Tasks for Students

(3)B.1.4.4.evidence\_Letter Addressed to the Ethics Committee

(3)B.1.4.5.evidence\_Example of credit transfer

[ECTS User's Guide 2015](#)

**Maturity Level 4:** Student workload in programs is monitored and course design is updated accordingly.

### **B.1.5. Follow-up and updating of programs**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has established a comprehensive and structured framework for the development, approval, implementation, and continuous enhancement of its academic programmes. This framework is aligned with national legislation, institutional strategy, and international academic standards, ensuring that programmes remain relevant, rigorous, and responsive to societal and labour-market needs.

#### ***1. Follow-up and updating of the programs***

UNYT applies a cyclical and systematic curriculum revision and follow-up process aligned with initial programme accreditation. The process begins with the establishment of a Curriculum Revision Ad-Hoc Working Group composed of full- and part-time academic staff, student representatives, and field

professionals. The group conducts needs assessments, analyses disciplinary trends and challenges, and evaluates academic and infrastructural capacities.

Programme reviews assess programme philosophy, objectives, learning outcomes, course structure, teaching resources, and assessment methods to ensure coherent progression of knowledge and skills. Revised programme proposals include a clear rationale and implementation plan, incorporating recommendations from the ASCAL Board of Accreditation where applicable.

Approval follows a transparent, multi-level process: review by the Faculty Council (and international partners for joint programmes), approval by the Academic Senate and Board of Administration, and submission to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) for licensing. Following MES approval, updated curricula are published on the UNYT website. Academic advisors monitor student progress and course registration, while graduation eligibility is based on completion of programme requirements:

- 180 ECTS (Bachelor),
- 120 ECTS (MSc and Professional Master),
- 300 ECTS (Integrated MSc),
- minimum CGPA requirements and mandatory components (internships, graduation projects).

Stakeholder involvement is integral to programme updating. Feedback from students, academic staff, alumni, and external stakeholders informs curriculum updates, learning outcome revisions, and teaching-method improvements.

## ***2. UNYT principles of curricula revision***

Curricula revision at UNYT is guided by principles ensuring alignment with:

- the institutional mission and strategic development plans;
- current and future labour-market demands;
- balanced development of subject knowledge and transferable skills, with clear learning progression;
- Decisions of the Council of Ministers and directives of the Ministry of Education and Sports;
- the Higher Education Law of the Republic of Albania.

## ***3. Statistical monitoring and continuous improvement***

UNYT systematically monitors key indicators to evaluate programme effectiveness, including:

- number of courses offered;
- enrolment and dropout rates;
- grade distributions and GPA trends;
- course diversity and laboratory components;
- balance between undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

These indicators are reviewed across academic years, discussed with stakeholders, and used to guide strategic and quality-improvement decisions.

#### ***4. Accreditation and internal quality assurance***

Programme accreditation is a core component of UNYT's internal quality assurance system. All programmes are subject to accreditation by ASCAL, supporting:

- compliance with national and European standards;
- institutional credibility;
- student mobility and international recognition;
- strengthened internal monitoring and enhancement mechanisms.

Accreditation underpins UNYT's commitment to continuous improvement and academic excellence.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.1.5.1.evidence\_Curricula revision proposal

(3)B.1.5.2.evidence\_Action Plan MSc CS

**Maturity Level 4:** The program outcomes are monitored with these mechanisms and are updated by including the opinion of the relevant stakeholders.

#### **B.1.6. Management of learning and teaching processes**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has established a coherent organisational structure and clearly defined processes for managing learning and teaching, fully aligned with institutional strategy, internal regulations, and quality assurance standards. All academic programmes are delivered in accordance with the UNYT Statute and internal regulations, promoting a student-centred, competence-based, and interactive learning environment. UNYT complies with national higher education legislation and academic quality criteria, fostering critical thinking, multidisciplinary skills, and active student engagement.

##### ***1. Organisational structure, senior management coordination, and defined responsibilities***

The management of learning and teaching is embedded within UNYT's governance framework and coordinated by senior management. The Rectorate and Academic Senate provide strategic oversight and approve academic policies in line with the UNYT Statute. Faculties and departments are responsible for the direct implementation, monitoring, and quality assurance of teaching and learning, including curriculum design, approval, and periodic review. These processes align with the National Qualifications Framework, labour-market needs, and institutional strategic plans.

The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs coordinates activities across faculties, ensuring consistency with academic regulations and the academic calendar. This structured workflow—from departmental initiative to Senate approval—ensures clear allocation of roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

## ***2. Principles, rules, and calendar for programme design, implementation, and evaluation***

UNYT has formalised principles and rules governing the full lifecycle of learning and teaching programmes.

- The UNYT Statute and Academic Regulations define programme structures, study cycles, credit systems, and qualification awards.
- Strategic Plans (2020–2025 and 2026–2030) guide academic development and quality enhancement, directly informing curriculum updates.
- The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system requires systematic monitoring, evaluation, and periodic review of all study programmes, using data on student performance, graduate outcomes, and stakeholder feedback.

The annual academic calendar regulates teaching periods, examinations, and administrative deadlines, ensuring consistency and predictability across the institution.

## ***3. Monitoring compatibility and coordination of learning processes***

Senior management, through Faculty Deans and the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, monitors the coherence between learning outcomes, curricula, teaching methods, and assessment, as a core function of the IQA system.

- **Curriculum–objective alignment:** Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are clearly defined and mapped to curricula. Course syllabi explicitly demonstrate their contribution to programme-level outcomes.
- **Teaching modalities:** UNYT delivers face-to-face programmes and applies blended teaching tools in line with strategic objectives on digitalisation. Teaching emphasises active, student-centred learning through case studies, project-based learning, simulations, laboratory work, field visits, guest lectures, and research-based activities. Supplementary platforms (e.g. McGraw-Hill, Turnitin) support learning, assessment, and academic integrity.
- **Assessment alignment:** Institutional principles require assessment methods to be valid, reliable, and aligned with learning outcomes. All syllabi specify objectives, assessment criteria, grading rubrics, and feedback mechanisms, communicated to students at the start of each semester.

## ***4. Specific institutional approaches and evidence***

UNYT has implemented targeted approaches to strengthen learning and teaching management:

- **Information management system:** A central system manages student records, course registration, grading, and syllabi, supporting effective monitoring and coordination.

- **Research-informed teaching:** Teaching is closely linked to research, particularly through postgraduate theses, research centres, and projects (e.g. IEBS, GITEKA, DUALBA), ensuring curricula reflect current disciplinary and professional developments.
- **Evidence-based improvement:** The Quality Assurance Office monitors teaching effectiveness through student evaluations, staff performance reviews, curriculum reviews, and feedback from alumni and employers. Findings inform action plans and continuous improvement, documented in self-evaluation and annual reports.
- **Dedicated support units:** Teaching and learning are supported through distributed institutional units, including the International Relations Office, Research, Projects and Innovation Centre, Library and IT services, and the Career Office. The Career Office supports employability through career guidance, job fairs, and structured annual action plans.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.1.6.1.evidence\_ABFF Programme Regulation

(3)B.1.6.2.evidence\_Sample Department Regulation

(3)B.1.6.3.evidence\_Faculty Annual Report

**Maturity Level 4:** Practices for learning and teaching management system are followed up and the results of follow-up are used for improvements.

**Standard B.2: Implementation of Programs**

**B.2.1. Teaching methods and techniques**

The institution applies a clearly defined, institution-wide framework for student-centred and competence-based teaching and learning, consistently implemented across all programmes. Teaching practices emphasise active participation, interactive learning, and measurable competence development, supported by documented policies, procedures, and operational tools. Teaching methods, technology, research integration, and quality assurance function in a coordinated manner to achieve intended learning outcomes and ensure graduates' professional readiness.

***1. Pedagogical philosophy, alignment, and delivery modes***

Teaching is guided by a learner-centred pedagogical philosophy that prioritises student engagement, reflection, and performance. All programmes apply constructive alignment between Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs), and assessment tasks. This approach is embedded in institutional Teaching and Learning Strategies and strategic planning documents, which define objectives for student engagement, technology-enhanced learning, and integration of theory and practice.

Course design explicitly recognises delivery modalities. Face-to-face teaching prioritises experiential methods (laboratories, studios, simulations, field visits), while blended formats combine synchronous tutorials with asynchronous, flipped-classroom materials and project-based activities. Course syllabi and information packages clearly specify the delivery mode, participation requirements, assessment methods, and feedback mechanisms, ensuring equivalence of learning outcomes across modalities.

## ***2. Core teaching methods and demonstrable practices***

The institution employs diverse methods aligned with competence development and labour-market relevance:

- **Case-based and practice-oriented learning:**

Law programmes integrate moot courts and simulated trials; Health, Psychology, and Social Sciences use clinical case studies, reflective assignments, and applied interventions as formative and summative assessments.

- **Project-based and research-based learning:**

All programmes require progressive research projects culminating in a Bachelor Project or Master's Thesis, guided by standardised manuals, supervision procedures, and assessment rubrics. Architecture, Interior Design, and Graphic Design apply the studio model, combining iterative project work, critiques, and workshops under close faculty supervision.

- **Experiential learning and internships:**

Internships are mandatory components of first- and second-cycle programmes, including multiple internships in Integrated Master's programmes. Internship portfolios, employer agreements, and MoUs ensure that workplace learning is credit-bearing and aligned with programme ILOs. Dual-learning initiatives (e.g. DUALBA) and applied programmes (e.g. Applied Banking and Finance) systematically integrate professional practice into curricula.

- **Laboratory, studio, and hands-on practices:**

Technical and Computer Science programmes include structured laboratory work. Design disciplines use specialised software and studio-based projects that mirror professional practice. Economics and Finance programmes integrate applied software for data analysis and research skills.

- **Technology-enhanced learning:**

Platforms such as Moodle/Canvas, McGraw-Hill Connect, and Turnitin support flipped classrooms, adaptive learning, formative feedback, and academic integrity.

## ***3. Integration of research, quality assurance, and enhancement***

Research-informed teaching is promoted through student involvement in faculty research, academic seminars, conferences, guest lectures, and international projects. This strengthens critical thinking, methodological competence, and innovation.

The Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), including external expertise, oversees the implementation and effectiveness of teaching methods through:

- student evaluations each semester;
- peer review and staff self-assessment;
- annual syllabus and curriculum review cycles;
- external benchmarking through international projects and accreditations.

Findings are documented in departmental reports, curriculum revisions, and quality assurance records.

#### ***4. Governance, support systems, and evidence of outcomes***

Teaching quality is governed through a clear chain of responsibility involving Heads of Department, Programme Coordinators, Faculty Councils, PCAQS, and the Internal QA Unit. Recruitment and staff development policies support pedagogical excellence through training, research leave, conferences, and workshops.

Course information packages clearly communicate learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and participation requirements. Academic advising, counselling, and support services promote inclusiveness and student success. Strong links between pedagogy and employability are demonstrated through industry partnerships, applied programmes, internships, and dual-learning initiatives, with employer feedback feeding into curriculum improvement.

Teaching innovations are systematically evaluated through QA cycles before being scaled, ensuring sustainability and educational impact.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.2.1.1.evidence\_Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

(3)B.2.1.2.evidence\_Guidelines on Writing a Master's Thesis

(3)B.2.1.3.evidence\_Master's Thesis Proposal

(3)B.2.1.4.evidence\_Stock Market Simulation Game

(3)B.2.1.5.evidence\_Graduate Project Manual

(3)B.2.1.6.evidence\_BKT-UNYT MoU

(3)B.2.1.7.evidence\_DUALBA Project

(3)B.2.1.8.evidence\_McGraw-Hill Connect

(3)B.2.1.9.evidence\_Canvas Usage

(3)B.2.1.10.evidence\_ACCA Accreditation

(3)B.2.1.11.evidence\_EUROPSY Certificate

(3)B.2.1.12.evidence\_Academic Seminars

**Maturity Level 4:** Student-centred practices are monitored and improved with the involvement of relevant internal stakeholders.

### **B.2.2. Measurement and evaluation**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) promotes a student-centred environment that focuses on learning processes, student needs, satisfaction, and academic success during and after studies, in line with the institutional Strategic Plans. Measurement and evaluation practices are designed to assess not only theoretical knowledge but also the effective application of skills and competences in practical and professional contexts.

It is a long-established practice at UNYT that all study programmes integrate activities enabling students to apply acquired knowledge and skills. Teaching and learning components include projects, laboratory work (e.g. Computer Science), case studies (Political Science/International Relations), clinical case studies and reflective essays (Psychology), micro-theses and applied strategies (Business Administration). A representative example is the Integrated Master of Science in Law, which systematically combines theory and practice through activities such as Moot Court Competitions (2024–2025), organised in cooperation with international partners, and other applied legal exercises. Similarly, awareness-raising and training activities, such as the “Drugs and Mental Health” training organised with Aksion+ (May 2025), illustrate applied learning and evaluation beyond the classroom.

Projects constitute a core assessment component across programmes. Students are required to complete individual or group research projects, consultancy projects, micro-theses, final-year projects, and similar applied tasks, as specified in syllabi and programme regulations. These activities are designed to measure students’ ability to solve practical problems using disciplinary knowledge and transferable skills.

Professional Internships are mandatory in first- and second-cycle programmes and conclude with a final internship report assessed against predefined learning outcomes. Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes also require the completion of a thesis under academic supervision. Master’s theses involve independent research, literature review, data collection, analysis, and methodological application. In addition, UNYT’s participation in the DUALBA project strengthens measurement of applied learning through a structured balance between academic study and practical engagement in partner institutions, particularly within the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences.

Teaching methods are aligned with labour market requirements and evaluated through active and applied learning approaches, including guest lectures, academic seminars, simulations, field visits, laboratory-based learning, group work, project-based assignments, and competitions. Digital tools such as Turnitin are used to support academic integrity and formative evaluation of student work. Syllabi explicitly require active student participation, which is assessed through continuous engagement in lectures, seminars, and practical activities.

Internships and professional practice are integral, credit-bearing curriculum components and a prerequisite for graduation. UNYT collaborates with an extensive network of public and private partners to ensure that practical training is relevant, supervised, and aligned with programme outcomes. Credits earned through internships and mobility activities are formally recognised within the ECTS framework.

Where permitted by Albanian higher education legislation, UNYT plans to further develop online and hybrid programme delivery, particularly to address the needs of working professionals and non-traditional students.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.2.2.1.evidence\_Student Activities & Exhibitions

(3)B.2.2.2.evidence\_UNYT AI Policy

**Maturity Level 4:** Student-centred measurement and evaluation practices are systematically implemented, monitored, and improved with the involvement of relevant internal stakeholders.

### **B.2.3. Student admission and the recognition and crediting of prior learning**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) considers student admission a core academic and administrative responsibility. Admission is implemented in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency, merit, inclusivity, and non-discrimination as defined in Article 71 of the UNYT Statute. Admission is guaranteed without distinction based on race, gender, religion, or nationality with the objective of selecting students who demonstrate academic potential while ensuring a supportive environment from application to registration.

The admission framework is formally regulated at the institutional level. Academic Departments propose program-specific admission criteria, which are reviewed and approved annually by the Academic Senate in accordance with Article 19 of the Statute and ratified by the Board of Administration to ensure consistency with institutional strategy and resource capacity. All procedures comply with the regulations issued by the Ministry of Education and Sports, including Joint Order No. 157, dated 03.06.2025, governing application and registration calendars.

The Student Affairs Office (SAO) is the central administrative unit responsible for implementing admissions and recognition procedures in compliance with national legislation and institutional policies, as defined in Article 52 of the Statute and the SAO Annual Plan 2025. SAO retrieves applicant data from the U-Albania state portal, verifies eligibility in cooperation with academic units, prepares admission lists and student contracts, and maintains structured communication with candidates. These procedures ensure traceability, consistency, and compliance with national and institutional requirements.

Dedicated procedures apply to international students and are coordinated by the International Admissions Specialist (a member of SAO) and academic units. International applicants are required to submit recognized academic qualifications, English language proficiency at a minimum B1 level, and comply with legislation, visa, and residence permit requirements. Orientation activities and student support services support academic and social integration.

Recognition and crediting of prior learning are governed by institutional policies aligned with ECTS principles and partner-institution agreements. Credit transfer applies to prior studies completed at recognised higher education institutions, certified foreign language qualifications, and mobility periods.

Decisions are based on curriculum alignment, learning outcomes, and workload equivalence, ensuring consistency and academic integrity.

UNYT promotes access and equity through a structured scholarship and financial aid system regulated by the Scholarship Policy. Scholarships and tuition reductions are awarded based on merit, financial need, social vulnerability, and special achievements. The Scholarship Committee evaluates applications and implements decisions in line with approved criteria.

Admission policies and outcomes are regularly reviewed through institutional performance monitoring, enabling continuous improvement of procedures, criteria, and stakeholder collaboration. Initiatives such as the honour scholarship exemplify UNYT's commitment to merit-based recognition and continuous enhancement of admission practices.

### ***Monitoring and review***

Admission and recognition practices are systematically monitored through institutional data collected and analyzed on an annual basis. The Student Affairs Office, in cooperation with academic units and the Quality Assurance Office, reviews quantitative and qualitative indicators including applicant profiles, admission success rates, enrolment trends, diversity indicators, scholarship allocation, credit recognition and transfer requests, and first-year progression and retention data.

These data are reviewed annually within departmental and faculty monitoring reports and are consolidated at institutional level through the Institutional Performance Document and Quality Assurance reporting. Findings are discussed by Faculty Deans, the Rectorate, and relevant administrative units to evaluate the effectiveness, fairness, and clarity of admission and recognition procedures.

### ***Follow-up and improvement***

The outcomes of monitoring and review lead to documented decisions and concrete improvement actions. Based on identified trends and issues, UNYT undertakes measures such as refining programme-specific admission criteria, clarifying recognition and credit transfer procedures, strengthening applicant guidance and communication, and adjusting scholarship criteria or allocation mechanisms.

Decisions and action points are recorded through Academic Senate decisions, updated administrative procedures, and annual action plans, and are implemented by the Student Affairs Office and academic units. These changes are applied in subsequent admission cycles, and their effects are reviewed through the next cycle of monitoring, ensuring continuity and evidence-based improvement.

### **Evidence:**

(3)B.2.3.1.evidence\_Orientation Day

(3)B.2.3.2.evidence\_Orientation UNYT Transfer Credit Policy

(3)B.2.3.3.evidence\_Orientation List of Winners – U-Albania

(3)B.2.3.4.evidence\_Academic Senate Decision Admission Criteria and List of Winners

**Maturity Level 4:** Student admission and the recognition and accrediting of prior learning processes are monitored and improved and updates are declared.

#### **B.2.4. The certification of qualifications and the diploma**

Eligibility for diploma issuance at the University of New York Tirana (UNYT) is contingent upon the successful completion of all academic requirements within accredited study programmes. UNYT maintains continuous institutional and programme accreditation, ensuring that curricula, assessment standards, and learning outcomes comply with nationally and internationally recognized quality requirements and guarantee the validity and recognition of awarded qualifications.

UNYT has established a clear and legally compliant framework governing graduation approval and the certification of qualifications. These procedures are defined in the UNYT Statute, Faculty and Department Rules and Regulations, Records Office Regulation, and applicable bylaws of the Ministry of Education and Sports. Graduation requirements are formally specified in programme regulations and the Student Handbook. Students must complete the required ECTS credits and meet minimum CGPA thresholds according to the study cycle:

- Bachelor programmes: 180 ECTS and minimum CGPA 2.0/4.0
- Master of Science / Professional Master: 120 ECTS and minimum CGPA 2.33/4.0
- Integrated Master of Science: 300 ECTS and minimum CGPA 2.33/4.0

Academic progress, credit completion, and eligibility for graduation are managed through the institutional information system (KION), which provides real-time tracking of earned credits, remaining obligations, and compliance with programme requirements.

Upon fulfilment of all academic, administrative, and financial requirements, students are awarded a Diploma, Official Transcript, and Diploma Supplement. Diplomas are issued in accordance with national legal standards, signed by the Rector and the Dean, and sealed with the official university stamp. Each diploma is accompanied by a Diploma Supplement describing the programme level, learning outcomes, curriculum structure, and assessment methods. In cases of loss, a Graduation Certificate is issued in accordance with legal provisions.

The diploma certification process follows five defined stages:

1. Identification of graduation candidates by the Records Office and verification by the academic department.
2. Institutional approval of graduate status by the Diploma Approval Committee, composed of the Dean and Heads of Departments.
3. Preparation of the Diploma, Transcript, and Diploma Supplement by the Records Office.
4. Delivery of certified documents to graduates following administrative clearance.
5. Archiving and record keeping in secure electronic and physical formats.

All stages are documented, traceable, and consistently applied across faculties, in accordance with Article 21 of the Faculty Rules and Regulations. Certification procedures are regularly monitored through Records Office audits, internal control mechanisms, and quality assurance evaluations.

### ***Monitoring and review***

Practices related to diploma approval and certification are systematically monitored through administrative controls, internal audits, and quality assurance processes. The Records Office conducts regular verification of graduation files to ensure compliance with programme requirements, accuracy of documentation, and consistency in diploma issuance. Monitoring includes review of processing timelines, error rates, compliance with legal formats, and alignment between academic records and issued certificates.

The Quality Assurance Office and senior academic management review findings through internal audit reports, Records Office reports, and institutional performance documentation. These reviews assess the effectiveness, clarity, and reliability of certification procedures and identify areas requiring refinement or corrective action.

### ***Follow-up and improvement***

The results of monitoring and review lead to documented follow-up actions and process improvements. Based on identified issues or recommendations, UNYT undertakes actions such as clarification of graduation eligibility checks, refinement of certification workflows, updates to Records Office procedures, staff guidance, and adjustments to document templates or archiving practices.

Improvement measures are formally approved where required, implemented by the Records Office in coordination with academic units, and integrated into subsequent certification cycles. The impact of these actions is reviewed through the next cycle of monitoring, ensuring continuity, consistency, and evidence-based improvement of diploma approval.

### **Evidence:**

- (3)B.2.4.1.evidence\_Diploma Format & Diploma Supplement
- (3)B.2.4.2.evidence\_Official Transcript and Clearance Form
- (3)B.2.4.3.evidence\_Internal Audit Procedure and Report

**Maturity Level 4:** Practices are monitored and defined processes are improved.

## **Standard B.3: Learning Resources and Academic Support Services**

### **B.3.1. The learning environment and resources**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) provides a learning environment and academic resources that support the effective delivery of study programmes and student-centred learning. Teaching and

learning activities are supported by appropriate physical infrastructure, digital systems, library services, and learning technologies, in line with institutional strategy and programme requirements.

UNYT offers well-maintained classrooms, creative studios, computer laboratories, library facilities, conference rooms, and offices for academic and administrative staff. All teaching spaces are equipped with essential instructional tools, including computers, projectors, and audio-visual systems, and comply with health, safety, and accessibility requirements. Campus infrastructure ensures inclusive access for students with special needs and supports safe and effective learning conditions.

The UNYT Library provides physical and electronic resources that support teaching, learning, and research. The physical collection includes more than 7,000 academic volumes, while electronic access is provided through international databases such as EBSCO, EBRARY, JSTOR, ProQuest, and Emerald Insight. Campus-wide Wi-Fi access enables continuous use of digital learning resources across classrooms, laboratories, and library spaces.

Learning resources are integrated with institutional digital systems. KION functions as the central academic and administrative information system, supporting student registration, academic tracking, and documentation. Turnitin is embedded in teaching and assessment processes to support academic integrity and formative feedback. These systems contribute to transparency, consistency, and quality assurance in learning and teaching.

Curricula are designed to combine theoretical learning with practical and applied activities. Academic staff extend learning beyond the classroom through seminars, guest lectures, workshops, competitions, field visits, simulations, project-based coursework, and laboratory activities. Course syllabi specify the use of learning resources and are reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with programme learning outcomes and disciplinary developments.

### ***Monitoring and review of learning resources***

The usage, adequacy, and development of learning resources are monitored through institutional quality assurance and operational processes. Academic units, in cooperation with the Library, IT Office, and Operations Department, review resource usage and needs through student feedback, staff input, course evaluations, and annual departmental reports. Monitoring focuses on the availability, accessibility, relevance, and functionality of physical and digital resources in relation to programme requirements and student workload.

Library usage statistics, access to electronic databases, classroom and laboratory utilization, and feedback from academic staff and students are reviewed periodically. These data are discussed within academic units and at institutional level through annual reporting and quality assurance reviews to assess whether existing resources adequately support teaching and learning.

### ***Follow-up and improvement of learning resources***

Findings from monitoring activities inform planning and improvement actions related to learning resources. Based on identified needs, UNYT undertakes actions such as updating library holdings and electronic subscriptions, upgrading laboratory equipment and software, improving digital infrastructure, and enhancing learning spaces. Resource development priorities are integrated into annual operational planning and budgeting processes.

Improvements are implemented by the relevant administrative units in coordination with academic leadership, and their effectiveness is reviewed through subsequent monitoring cycles. This ensures that learning resources evolve in response to programme development, student needs, and institutional priorities.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.3.1.1.evidence\_Student Affairs Office Regulation

(3)B.3.1.2.evidence\_Literature, EBSCO, SCOPUS

**Maturity Level 4:** The usage and development of learning resources are monitored and improved.

**B.3.2. Academic support services**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) provides comprehensive academic support services through an integrated and student-centred system designed to support students' academic development, progression, and career planning from admission to graduation and transition into employment. Academic support services are structured, documented, and coordinated to ensure accessibility, inclusiveness, and continuity throughout the student lifecycle.

***Student Affairs Office (SAO)***

The Student Affairs Office functions as the primary institutional interface for students, ensuring compliance with national regulations and internal procedures while supporting academic progression and student development. From enrolment onward, SAO provides orientation, personalized assistance, and continuous follow-up, with particular attention to first-year and international students. The office coordinates student activities, supports student organizations, and facilitates engagement in academic, social, and career-related initiatives.

***Academic advising***

Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor upon enrolment. Advisors provide continuous guidance on course selection, academic progression, mobility opportunities, and graduation requirements. Advising supports early identification of academic difficulties and timely referral to specialized services. Academic advising procedures are documented and implemented consistently across programmes.

***Records / Registrar's Office***

The Records Office supports academic development by managing registration, semester enrolment, and verification of academic progress and graduation eligibility through the institutional information system (KION). This ensures accuracy, transparency, and traceability of academic records.

***Career and Alumni Office***

The Career and Alumni Office supports students' career planning and employability through career guidance, job fairs, employer engagement, internship coordination, and alumni tracking. Career-related

activities are planned annually and implemented in cooperation with academic departments and external partners.

### ***Support services and specialized centres***

UNYT provides academic and personal development support through dedicated services, including the Academic Writing Centre, Maths Centre, Counselling Centre, and IT and library services. These units support skill development, academic performance, well-being, and digital literacy and work closely with academic staff and advisors.

### ***Monitoring academic development and career support***

Practices related to academic development and career planning are systematically monitored through institutional quality assurance mechanisms and student feedback. Monitoring tools include student surveys, advising records, service usage data, participation in career activities, and feedback collected through the Student Affairs Office, Career and Alumni Office, and specialized support centres.

Students contribute directly to monitoring through course evaluations, advising feedback, surveys, participation in student representative bodies, and consultations organized by Student Affairs and academic units. Feedback focuses on the accessibility, relevance, and effectiveness of academic advising, career guidance, support services, and development activities.

Monitoring results are reviewed annually within departmental and faculty reports and are consolidated at the institutional level through Student Affairs and Quality Assurance reporting. These reviews assess how effectively academic support services contribute to student progression, skill development, and career readiness.

### ***Follow-up and improvement with student involvement***

The outcomes of monitoring and student feedback lead to documented follow-up actions and service improvements. Based on identified needs, UNYT undertakes actions such as refining advising procedures, enhancing career guidance activities, expanding workshops and skills-development initiatives, improving communication with students, and strengthening coordination between academic units and support services.

Students are involved in improvement processes through representation in institutional bodies, consultation meetings, and feedback loops coordinated by the Student Affairs Office and the Dean of Students. Improvements are reflected in updated procedures, annual action plans, and revised service offerings and are implemented by the relevant units. Their impact is reviewed through subsequent monitoring cycles, ensuring responsiveness and continuous enhancement of academic development and career planning support.

### **Evidence:**

(4)B.3.2.1.evidence\_Student Handbook

(4)B.3.2.2.evidence\_Petitions Regulation, Administrative Petition, Academic Petition

(4)B.3.2.3.evidence\_SAO Regulation and Communication with Freshmen

(4)B.3.2.4.evidence\_Academic Advising Procedures and Screen Confirmation of Students' Registration

(3)B.3.2.5.evidence\_Records Office Regulation and U-Albania Registration Sample

(3)B.3.2.6.evidence\_PR & Marketing Office Regulation

(3)B.3.2.7.evidence\_List of Student Card Benefits

(3)B.3.2.8.evidence\_Library Regulation

(4)B.3.2.9.evidence\_IT Support Services

(4)B.3.2.10.evidence\_Software Systems in Use

(4)B.3.2.11.evidence\_Counselling Center Policy and activities

**Maturity Level 4:** Practices regarding the academic development and career planning of students are monitored and improved with the involvement of students in the institution.

### **B.3.3. Facilities and infrastructure**

UNYT's mission is to provide a high-quality environment and professional services that effectively support learning, teaching, and research activities. The institution maintains adequate infrastructure to fulfil its academic and administrative functions, ensuring appropriate working and learning spaces for faculty, staff, researchers, and students.

The Operations Management Department oversees the management and optimisation of UNYT's physical and technical infrastructure, coordinating Procurement, Maintenance, Facility Management, Security, and Logistics through formal internal policies and procedures to ensure efficiency, sustainability, and alignment with institutional objectives.

#### ***1. Laboratories and Equipment***

UNYT operates dedicated laboratories aligned with its study programmes, equipped with modern technical infrastructure and licensed software for teaching and research. Access is controlled through institutional IDs managed by the IT Office.

The university currently operates:

- Eight computer laboratories across both campuses supporting Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Economics, Architecture, Management, and Psychology;
- One internet room with printers, scanners, and shared equipment;
- Technical laboratories, audiovisual rooms, and specialised studios for Architecture and Telecommunications Engineering, equipped with CAD software, technical drawing tools, and 3D printers.

These facilities enable integrated theoretical and practical learning in a secure and contemporary environment.

## ***2. Technological and Digital Equipment***

All classrooms are equipped with PCs, projectors, speakers, audiovisual systems, and Smart Boards to support interactive teaching, alongside campus-wide Wi-Fi access.

Mobile devices and specialised equipment (projectors, cameras, multimedia tools, and architectural instruments) are available for academic and research use. The Support Office manages distribution, maintenance, and technical assistance through structured IT services.

## ***3. Supporting Infrastructure and Campus Facilities***

UNYT operates two campuses:

### **Main Campus (Rruga e Kavajës, Tirana – 3,643.33 m<sup>2</sup>):**

- 148 m<sup>2</sup> computer laboratories
- 1,238 m<sup>2</sup> academic and administrative offices
- 76 m<sup>2</sup> library
- 1,394 m<sup>2</sup> service and technical areas
- 96 m<sup>2</sup> cafeteria
- 860 m<sup>2</sup> courtyard for social and sports activities
- 75 parking spaces
- 980 m<sup>2</sup> green areas

### **East Campus (Autostrada Tiranë–Elbasan, Sauk – 2,864.83 m<sup>2</sup>):**

- 220 m<sup>2</sup> computer laboratories
- 130 m<sup>2</sup> creative laboratories (architecture ateliers)
- 80 m<sup>2</sup> audiovisual room
- 189 m<sup>2</sup> conference hall
- 639.08 m<sup>2</sup> academic and administrative spaces
- 50 m<sup>2</sup> library
- 137.5 m<sup>2</sup> student information office
- 182 m<sup>2</sup> student cafeteria
- 386.12 m<sup>2</sup> service and technical areas
- 980 m<sup>2</sup> open spaces
- 95 m<sup>2</sup> staff canteen
- 20 m<sup>2</sup> healthcare room

- 75 parking spaces

Both campuses provide reliable electricity and water supply, heating, fire protection, safety systems, and full accessibility for persons with disabilities, ensuring a safe and inclusive academic environment.

#### ***4. Other Support Facilities***

UNYT provides comprehensive support services, including maintenance, security, procurement, logistics, IT services, and facilities management.

Transportation services connect the Main and East Campuses according to academic schedules. Student dormitory facilities offer Wi-Fi, shared kitchens, laundry, and study areas. Healthcare rooms on both campuses provide basic medical assistance and first aid.

These services support student welfare and institutional efficiency.

#### ***5. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement***

The Operations Office monitors the improvements of infrastructure and facilities. Maintenance and upgrades are integrated into annual budget planning and follow transparent procurement procedures.

Digital infrastructure, centred on the KION management system, supports coordination, communication, and academic operations. Continuous feedback and quality control mechanisms ensure infrastructure development aligns with institutional growth and technological progress.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.3.3.1.evidence\_Operations Department Regulations

(3)B.3.3.2.evidence\_IT Data Protection Policy

(3)B.3.3.3.evidence\_Manual of Information Security

(4)B.3.3.4.evidence\_Infrastructure

(4)B.3.3.5.evidence\_Literature

**Maturity Level 4:** The usage of facilities and the infrastructure is monitored and improved based on needs.

#### **B.3.4. Disadvantaged groups**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) ensures fair and equitable access to education for disadvantaged, vulnerable, and underrepresented groups, in line with principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion. These commitments are being consolidated through the Social Responsibility & Inclusion Policy, formalising existing inclusive practices.

UNYT provides tailored academic and administrative support to students with disabilities, minority backgrounds, and financial hardship. Accommodation requests are coordinated by the Student Affairs Office in collaboration with academic departments, while faculty implement approved adjustments such as extended examination time or modified assessment methods. Students facing economic difficulties benefit from tuition reductions, merit-based scholarships, and emergency financial support.

Inclusive learning environments are supported through assistive technologies, digital learning tools, learning management systems, and Turnitin. Physical accessibility is ensured across all campuses through ramps, elevators, accessible furniture, and clear signage. Annual accessibility audits assess physical and technological environments, with improvement measures integrated into institutional planning. Student feedback is collected through surveys, academic advisors, and the Student Affairs Office to inform continuous enhancement of inclusion measures. All practices comply with Albanian legislation, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and EHEA principles.

UNYT upholds equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion as core institutional values, ensuring that all students receive the support required to succeed academically and socially.

### ***1. Policies and Institutional Commitment***

UNYT's admission and support policies explicitly promote equal access for students with disabilities, low-income backgrounds, minority groups, and immigrant communities. These policies are grounded in fairness, transparency, and non-discrimination and are embedded within governance, curriculum design, and student support services. Regular reviews ensure alignment with national and international standards on inclusive higher education.

### ***2. Scholarship Opportunities and Strategic Partnerships***

UNYT has formalised partnerships to expand access and provide financial support:

- The MoU with the Shpëtim Cinga Foundation offers full scholarships for orphaned students.
- The MoU with the Ardhmëria Association provides 25% scholarships for students in financial need.

These initiatives demonstrate institutional commitment to reducing financial barriers to education.

### ***3. Dedicated Admission Quotas for Vulnerable Groups***

In accordance with national legislation, UNYT applies dedicated admission quotas for vulnerable groups, including students with disabilities, members of the Roma community, and orphaned youth. Admitted students receive personalised academic advising, financial guidance, and continuous support from the Student Affairs Office to ensure successful integration and progression.

### ***4. Targeted Support for Students from Conflict-Affected Regions***

UNYT implements targeted measures for students from crisis-affected regions, including tuition reductions and administrative support. This includes dedicated assistance for Afghan students through reduced fees and visa facilitation, as well as collaboration with the Embassy of Palestine to support Palestinian students. The university applies flexibility in payment policies for students facing verified hardship to prevent financial difficulties from disrupting academic progress.

### ***5. Structure and Learning Environment***

UNYT provides accessible and inclusive campus facilities, ensuring equal participation in academic and extracurricular activities. Students requiring additional support receive tailored academic assistance and guidance throughout their studies.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.3.4.1.evidence\_Agreement UNYT–IIE “Qatar Scholarships for Afghan Students”

(3)B.3.4.1.evidence\_MoU UNYT–Ardhmëria

[Law “On the inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities”](#)

[EHEA on “Social Dimension in Higher Education”](#)

**Maturity Level 3:** Practices regarding access for disadvantaged groups are monitored and improved through feedback from underrepresented students.

### **B.3.5. Social, cultural, and sporting activities**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) supports social, cultural, and sporting activities as an integral part of student development and institutional life. These activities are organized, supported, and monitored through defined administrative structures and are aligned with the needs and interests of the student community.

#### ***Institutional support: sites, budget, and guidance***

UNYT provides dedicated physical spaces for student social, cultural, and sporting activities, including open campus areas, courtyards, sports facilities, conference rooms, studios, and common areas across both campuses. These spaces are made available to student organizations and activity organizers according to institutional procedures.

Financial support for student activities is allocated through the institutional budget and managed by the Student Affairs Office in coordination with the Dean of Students and senior management. Approved student clubs and initiatives receive logistical and financial support for events, competitions, conferences, social responsibility actions, and cultural activities. Guidance is provided to student societies on planning, budgeting, communication, and compliance with institutional rules.

#### ***Administrative organization and coordination***

Social, cultural, and sporting activities are coordinated through an established administrative structure. The Student Affairs Office has primary responsibility for planning, supporting, and supervising student activities, working in cooperation with the Dean of Students, academic units, and the Student Union. Student clubs operate under approved statutes, with faculty supervision and annual activity plans reviewed and endorsed by the relevant institutional bodies.

The Student Union is formally recognized and operates under approved by-laws and a code of ethics. Student representatives participate in institutional bodies, including Faculty Councils and quality-related committees, ensuring coordination between student initiatives and institutional governance.

### ***Types of activities supported***

UNYT supports a wide range of activities, including social responsibility initiatives, cultural events, academic forums, international youth programmes, student conferences, exhibitions, student clubs, and sporting activities. These activities complement academic learning by supporting leadership, teamwork, civic engagement, intercultural competence, and well-being.

### ***Monitoring of activities and student needs***

The planning and implementation of social, cultural, and sporting activities are monitored through administrative reporting and student feedback mechanisms. Student clubs and activity organizers submit activity plans and post-activity reports to the Student Affairs Office, documenting participation, outcomes, and challenges.

Student feedback is collected through surveys, direct consultation with student representatives, meetings with the Student Union, and feedback received by the Student Affairs Office and the Dean of Students. Monitoring focuses on participation levels, relevance of activities, resource adequacy, and alignment with student interests and needs.

### ***Follow-up and improvement***

Findings from monitoring and student feedback inform improvements in the planning and support of social, cultural, and sporting activities. Based on identified needs, UNYT undertakes actions such as adjusting budget allocations, expanding or prioritizing specific types of activities, improving access to facilities, strengthening guidance to student societies, and enhancing coordination between administrative units and student representatives.

Improvements are implemented in subsequent academic years and reviewed through the next cycle of activity planning and reporting, ensuring responsiveness to student needs and continuous enhancement of student life.

### **Evidence:**

(4)B.3.5.1.evidence\_Student activities

(4)B.3.5.2.evidence\_Sport activities

(4)B.3.5.3.evidence\_Social activities

(4)B.3.5.3.evidence\_Cultural activities

**Maturity Level 4:** The social, cultural, and sporting activity mechanisms are monitored, activities are diversified and improved based on needs and requests.

## **Standard B.4: Teaching Staff**

### **B.4.1. Recruitment, promotion and appointment criteria**

At the University of New York Tirana (UNYT), recruitment, appointment, and promotion of teaching staff are governed by principles of transparency, fairness, merit, and alignment with institutional priorities. These processes are implemented in compliance with national legislation and internal regulations, ensuring the selection, development, and retention of qualified academic staff.

#### ***Policy framework and governance***

Academic staff management is regulated by the UNYT Statute, internal Rules and Regulations, Human Resources procedures, and strategic planning documents. Recruitment and promotion practices comply with Law No. 80/2015 on Higher Education and Scientific Research and relevant labor legislation. Academic staffing needs are identified at departmental level and aligned with programme requirements and institutional development priorities.

#### ***Recruitment and appointment procedures***

Recruitment procedures are publicly announced through institutional and external academic platforms. Selection is based on academic qualifications, teaching competence, research profile, professional experience, and alignment with programme needs. Applications are reviewed by Ad Hoc Commissions composed of academic and administrative representatives. Shortlisted candidates are interviewed and, where applicable, evaluated through teaching demonstrations. Final appointment decisions are approved by the Rector or Board of Administration and formalized through standardized employment contracts.

#### ***Promotion and recognition***

Promotion and career advancement follow institutional and national regulations and are based on documented teaching performance, research output, student evaluations, and service contributions. Performance is reviewed through structured evaluation instruments, including student feedback, individual performance assessment documentation, and departmental annual reports.

#### ***Monitoring and evaluation of recruitment and promotion outcomes***

The outcomes of recruitment, promotion, and appointment practices are monitored through institutional and departmental reporting mechanisms. Monitoring focuses on indicators such as staffing profiles, balance between full-time and part-time staff, alignment between staff expertise and programme needs, teaching load distribution, student evaluation results, and research and service contributions.

Human Resources, in cooperation with academic leadership, reviews recruitment and promotion outcomes on an annual basis through teaching load tables, performance assessment reports, and departmental monitoring reports. These reviews assess the effectiveness, transparency, and sustainability of staffing practices and their contribution to teaching quality and institutional objectives.

#### ***Follow-up and improvement actions***

The results of monitoring and evaluation inform corrective and improvement actions. Based on identified needs, UNYT undertakes actions such as refining recruitment criteria, adjusting teaching load

allocation, strengthening induction and mentoring for newly appointed staff, updating promotion guidelines, and planning targeted professional development activities.

Decisions and action points are documented through management decisions, departmental action plans, and updates to internal procedures. Implemented measures are reviewed in subsequent evaluation cycles, ensuring that recruitment, promotion, and appointment practices evolve in response to institutional priorities, programme development, and quality assurance findings.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.4.1.1.evidence\_Recruitment Policy and Procedure Format

(3)B.4.1.2.evidence\_Employment Contract and Addendum example

(3)B.4.1.3.evidence\_List of documents for foreign staff

(3)B.4.1.4.evidence\_Staff Promotion Procedure

(3)B.4.1.4.evidence\_Teaching Load Distribution per Program 2020–2025; Summary Table of FTPT Load Ratio

**Maturity Level 4:** The results of recruitment, promotion, and appointment practices are monitored, evaluated, and necessary action is taken accordingly.

## **B.4.2. Teaching competencies and development**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) considers the development of teaching competencies a strategic priority and applies a structured approach to supporting, monitoring, and improving teaching quality. Teaching competency development is aligned with the institutional Strategic Plans (2020–2025 and 2026–2030), the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy, and the Internal Quality Assurance framework. The approach promotes student-centred teaching, outcome-based learning, research-informed practice, and appropriate use of digital tools.

UNYT actively supports continuous professional development through internal training sessions, pedagogical workshops, and seminars aimed at enhancing teaching quality, digital skills, and innovation. Academic staff are encouraged to participate in national and international projects, Erasmus+ mobility, and professional networks to strengthen capacity building and institutional quality.

The university has finalised a comprehensive Teaching Staff Evaluation and Promotion Guideline to further standardise performance monitoring, promotion criteria, and career development pathways, ensuring clarity and transparency for all academic staff.

### ***Framework and planning of teaching competency development***

Teaching competency development is regulated by the UNYT Statute, internal Rules and Regulations, the Quality Assurance Manual, and Human Resources procedures. National legislation defines minimum

qualifications and career requirements, which are reflected in recruitment, evaluation, and promotion practices.

Planning of competency development is informed by systematic identification of needs. Teaching performance data are collected through student evaluations, peer evaluation reports, individual performance assessments, and departmental monitoring reports. These instruments provide structured evidence on teaching effectiveness, assessment practices, student engagement, and use of learning technologies.

### ***Training activities and teaching support***

UNYT organizes academic seminars, pedagogical workshops, and training sessions addressing teaching methods, assessment design, supervision, academic integrity, student engagement, and digital teaching tools. Participation in training activities is documented and coordinated through academic units and the Quality Assurance structures.

Teaching competence is further supported through Erasmus+ mobility, participation in international projects, conferences, and professional networks. Academic staff who participate in external training or mobility activities disseminate outcomes internally, contributing to peer learning and teaching improvement.

Teaching and learning support is organized through a distributed structure involving academic leadership, quality assurance bodies, and specialized support units such as the Academic Writing Centre, Maths Centre, Counselling Centre, and IT services.

### ***Monitoring and joint evaluation with teaching staff***

Practices aimed at developing teaching competencies are systematically monitored through multiple sources of evidence. Student Evaluation Reports are collected each semester and analyzed by Heads of Departments, Deans, and the Quality Assurance Office. Peer evaluations and classroom observations provide qualitative feedback on teaching methods, assessment practices, and student interaction.

Findings from these monitoring activities are discussed with teaching staff at departmental meetings, individual feedback sessions, and performance review meetings. Academic staff are actively involved in reviewing evaluation results, reflecting on identified strengths and areas for improvement, and discussing appropriate development measures.

Monitoring results are consolidated annually through Individual Performance Assessment Reports and Departmental Monitoring Reports, which provide an overview of teaching quality trends and development needs at programme and institutional levels.

### ***Precautions and improvement actions***

Based on the evaluation of findings, UNYT undertakes concrete follow-up actions to improve teaching competencies. These actions include targeted training and mentoring, adjustments to teaching assignments, refinement of assessment practices, support in the use of digital tools, and encouragement of participation in pedagogical workshops or peer-learning activities.

Agreed actions are documented in individual performance assessments, departmental action plans, or quality assurance reports and are implemented by academic units in cooperation with the Quality

Assurance Office and senior academic leadership. The effectiveness of these measures is reviewed through subsequent evaluation cycles, ensuring that identified issues are addressed and teaching competencies are progressively strengthened.

**Evidence:**

(3)B.4.2.1.evidence\_Statistics for Staff Exchange

(4)B.4.2.2.evidence\_UNYT Events

(4)B.4.2.3.evidence\_Academic Staff CVs MSc in AI

(4)B.4.2.4.evidence\_Syllabi MSc in Architecture

**Maturity Level 4:** Findings obtained from practices aiming at developing the teaching competencies of teaching staff are monitored, evaluated together with teaching staff, and precautions are taken.

**B.4.3. Incentives and rewards for educational activities**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has established an institutional incentive and reward mechanism that prioritizes teaching and learning quality and encourages creative and effective educational practices. The system is applied university wide and aims to recognize and promote excellence in teaching, student engagement, and educational contribution.

***Incentive and reward mechanism for teaching and research***

UNYT operates a formal Outstanding Teaching Award scheme, granted annually to academic staff who demonstrate high-quality teaching performance and contribution to learning and teaching development. The award recognizes practices such as effective student engagement, innovative teaching methods, quality of assessment and feedback, and contribution to curriculum development.

Eligibility for the award is open to all teaching staff across faculties. Candidates are identified based on documented evidence, including student evaluation results, teaching portfolios, and recommendations from Heads of Departments and Deans.

UNYT also operates a formal Outstanding Research Award, granted annually to academic staff who demonstrate strong research performance and contribution to the advancement of knowledge in their field. The award recognizes peer-reviewed publications, research projects, scholarly impact, and engagement in research activities that strengthen the university's academic profile.

Eligibility is open to academic/research staff across faculties. Candidates are identified based on documented research output and evidence submitted through institutional evaluation processes, with recommendations from Heads of Departments/Research Centres and Deans/Director of the Institute and final approval at institutional level.

***Application, evaluation, and decision process***

The incentive mechanism follows a defined process:

- **Nomination and application:** Academic staff may be nominated by academic leadership or apply directly by submitting documented evidence of teaching performance and educational contribution.
- **Evaluation:** Applications are reviewed by an institutional committee appointed by senior management, using predefined criteria focused exclusively on teaching and learning.
- **Decision:** Final decisions are approved at institutional level and communicated formally to recipients.

The same individual may not receive the same teaching/research award in consecutive years, ensuring fairness and broad recognition across the institution.

#### ***Monitoring and evaluation of the reward system***

The implementation and outcomes of the incentive and reward system are monitored through Quality Assurance reporting and institutional review. Monitoring focuses on participation across faculties, transparency of selection procedures, and alignment of awarded practices with institutional teaching priorities.

Student feedback and academic unit input are reviewed to assess whether rewarded practices contribute positively to teaching quality and student learning experience.

#### ***Improvement and follow-up***

Based on monitoring results, UNYT reviews and refines award criteria, application procedures, and communication of incentives to ensure relevance, clarity, and institutional consistency. Adjustments are implemented institution-wide and reflected in subsequent award cycles, supporting continuous improvement of teaching and research quality.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)B.4.3.1.evidence\_Financial Support and Promotion

(3)B.4.3.2.evidence\_Promotional Appointments

**Maturity Level 3:** Incentive and reward practices are implemented throughout the entire institution.

## **C. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **C.1. Management of Research Processes and Research Resources**

#### **C.1.1. Management of research processes**

In accordance with its Strategic Plan, UNYT's management of the research processes actively promotes and supports research and creative output through targeted initiatives and continuous investment in scientific infrastructure. The Rectorate, the faculties and the Institute for European and Balkan Studies have developed strong practices of support for research output. Such measures include the development of specialised laboratories for architecture and computer sciences, dedicated annual departmental funds for conference participation, support for scientific publications, paid leave for academic staff to attend conferences, projects and research visits, and access to external resources supporting research activities.

UNYT has strongly encouraged publication in reputable scientific journals as a basis for academic promotion. Through the Institute of European and Balkan Studies and its three research centres, the university provides structured support for research initiatives and systematically monitors outcomes to ensure long-term impact on innovation and institutional competitiveness.

Research output, including journal articles, conference papers, books, supervision of master's and PhD candidates, and participation in national and international projects—is integrated into annual academic performance evaluations. The number of project applications and funded projects is monitored, alongside research support obtained through EU programmes and Erasmus+ mobility.

Aligned with its Strategic Plan, UNYT has prioritised the development and modernisation of scientific research, positioning itself as a centre of interdisciplinary excellence. The university has established cooperation agreements with higher education institutions from EU and OECD countries and actively participates in international research networks.

UNYT collaborates with national and international institutions, experts, and research networks to strengthen research quality and impact. Research governance is coordinated through the Institute of European and Balkan Studies, which oversees projects and ensures alignment with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and national research priorities.

Research performance is monitored through annual departmental and research centre reports, using indicators such as publications, active projects, conference participation, funding obtained, academic mobility, and student involvement in research. The integration of research into teaching is actively promoted, enhancing educational quality and fostering a strong research culture.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)C.1.1.1.evidence\_Strategic Plan 2026-2030

(3)C.1.1.2.evidence\_IEBS Annual Report 2024–2025

(3)C.1.1.3.evidence\_Scientific Data Reporting Report

(3)C.1.1.4.evidence\_Research, Projects & Innovation Center Regulation

### (3)C.1.1.5.evidence\_IJBS Instructions for Authors, Policies and Publications

**Maturity Level 3:** The management and organizational structure of the research processes are practised in line with the institutional preferences throughout the entire institution.

#### **C.1.2. Internal and external resources**

UNYT ensures that its physical, technical, and financial research resources are fully aligned with its mission, strategic objectives, and research priorities. The responsible units within the university which are in charge of and mostly contribute to the management of internal and external resources include the RPI Office, the Senate, Department Units and the Finance Office. It is important to highlight that the University has set up a standard procedure for managing internal research funds, which are subject to review, monitoring and further evaluation or improvements. The annual research and development budget is allocated across faculties, institutes, and research centres to support both ongoing and new research initiatives. On a yearly basis, the Rector, Administrator and the Board of Administration review and decide on the allocation of internal research funds. On the one hand, these governance structures determine the criteria that the academic staff, the main units, core units must satisfy to access the internal funds, such as alignment of the projects with institutional goals, significance and impact of research outcomes. On the other hand, through the Annual Individual Assessment and core unit's Annual Reports the same governance structures track the record of individual research units and researchers as well. Strategic partnerships with public and private organisations further facilitate joint research projects, access to specialised equipment, and knowledge exchange opportunities. Grant Agreements, Calls for Tenders for equipment, translators, and dissemination, and Collaboration Project Reports. The management and distribution of internal resources dedicated to research are guided by clearly defined institutional processes, including the RPI Regulation and Internal Resource Usage Policy, which outline procedures for project approval, budget allocation, and resource utilisation; format used for internal funds; and Internal Resource Distribution Reports. The RPI, for projects and research funded by the UNYT, submits reports to the Rectorate, Administrator and Internal Audit. Each project has a Monitoring and Performance Framework to facilitate project implementation assessment. The practice of systematic monitoring is used when monitoring and evaluating internal and external funds. UNYT also provides intra-university research funds for early-career and novice researchers, supporting participation in projects, international conferences, and training events.

Research potential is further enhanced through project-based funding, mobility grants, expert invitations, and the use of personal or external funds. As indicated above, the institution (UNYT) through the RPI Office, Senate, Rectorate, Administrator, and the Board of Administration, due to their official competences in the governance of the University, decides, monitors, and evaluates the distribution and alignment of the internal and external funds to departments, faculties, and Institute's research centres, based on allocation criteria, access to funds, research impact and strategic institutional research goals. The distribution of internal resources across faculties, institutes, and research centres is tracked annually, with yearly changes analysed to optimize allocation and enhance strategic planning. The RPI Center tracks, allocated and monitors the project-based funding in tandem with the Administrator's Office and

the Finance Office. The University maintains a clear set of institutional policies relating to competitive promotion criteria, which emphasise outstanding scholarship and research reputation. Existing document approved in 2019. Specifically, to implement academic staff promotion based on outstanding scholarship and research excellence, and to foster ongoing research engagement and motivation within the educational community, the University applies a structured reward and promotion system grounded on academic merit, publications, and research achievements.

The effectiveness, adequacy, and distribution of internal resources are reviewed annually, with outcomes reflected in the number of publications produced and participation in recognised national and international journals. UNYT actively supports access to external research resources consistent with its mission and objectives. The RPI Centre assists researchers in applying for national and international funding programmes, including Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Jean Monnet, and other grants. Application Records/Annual Report on applied and accepted projects RPI 2024-2025; RPI Centre Guidelines for External Resource Access (Regulation); Project Portfolio Summary; Cooperation Agreements; External Funding Reports; Workshop]. External resources are also supported through cooperation and memoranda of understanding signed with reputable higher educational institutions focused on scientific and joint research.

Therefore, the supporting units responsible for the provision, allocation, and reward of internal and external resources include the RPI, departmental units within each Faculty, the Finance Office, and the Senate, each operating within its specific institutional role. Accordingly, UNYT adopts approaches and practices to ensure the efficient use of resources, aligned with institutional needs, academic standards, and legal requirements. These include internal calls for funding early-career researchers, competitive project evaluation procedures, and structured support for research travel and conference participation. Collectively, these mechanisms ensure that UNYT's research resources, both internal and external, are sufficient, strategically allocated, and continuously refined to meet institutional aims.

**Evidence:**

- (4)C.1.2.1.evidence\_RPI Approved Budget Plan 2024–2025
- (4)C.1.2.2.evidence\_KA1 MoU List
- (4)C.1.2.3.evidence\_Grant Agreement DUALBA
- (4)C.1.2.4.evidence\_Call for Tender
- (4)C.1.2.5.evidence\_RPI International Projects
- (4)C.1.2.6.evidence\_AKKSHI Call for Projects and Projects 2025
- (4)C.1.2.7.evidence\_Report on Applied and Accepted Projects (RPI) 2024–2025
- (4)C.1.2.8.evidence\_Open Lectures (K. Nowrot, E. Kromidha, E. Marku)
- (4)C.1.2.9.evidence\_Award of Excellence in Research
- (4)C.1.2.10.evidence\_Award RPI Project Portfolio – Leaflet

**Maturity level 4:** The institution manages its research and development resources by taking its research strategy and the balance between its units into account.

### **C.1.3. Doctoral programs and postdoctoral opportunities**

The University of New York Tirana offers three levels of study, including doctoral programmes. UNYT's doctoral programmes are structured in accordance with the university's Statute, which provides a comprehensive framework for regulating, implementing, monitoring, and continuously developing the study programmes. For the time being the University does not offer post-doctoral opportunities. Although, faculty members of the UNYT have received post-doctoral offers from external Higher Education Institutions or research centres. The PhD Program in Computer Science is the only program that is currently operating at the University. The criteria of the application process to this program are specified in the institutional website. The criteria for registration and enrolment in this doctoral program have been approved by the Senate Decision No.110, Dt. 07.05.2025, "Admission criteria for doctoral students in Computer Science". Following this, the application process was completed, and the PhD programme commenced in the 2025-2026 academic year.

More specifically, the program requires that the applicants have a CGPA of at least 8.00 out of 10.00 (Albanian grading system), mastery of the English language with a C1 level, successful completion of a cluster of discipline-related courses, and a doctoral research proposal coordinated with a prospective PhD supervisor from the department. It is important to mention that a formal interview with an Ad Hoc Admission Committee is warranted for the final admission of the candidate to the program. Currently, in the PhD Program in Political Science, only two doctoral students with their respective individual doctoral projects, have been enrolled. Since this doctoral program has been recently implemented, it is too early to gauge the outputs of the doctoral program or its development trends and feedback from the alumni of this doctoral program. However, the University, in principle, will use the same quality assurance mechanisms that are implemented at the University with regard to the undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and programs, and adapt these quality assurance mechanisms to its doctoral program(s). The current quality assurance mechanisms that assess the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the degrees offered at the University include annual department and faculty reports, student evaluations, peer evaluations, grading transparency reports.

Two more doctoral programs, such as the PhD Program in Political Science & International Relations, and the PhD Program in Business Administration are undergoing assessment and not yet officially operational.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)C.1.3.1.evidence\_Regulation of the Computer Science Doctoral Program

(3)C.1.3.2.evidence\_MES Order No. 390, dt. 29.07.2024, Opening of PhD in Computer Science

(3)C.1.3.3.evidence\_Admission Criteria for Doctoral Students in Computer Science

(3)C.1.3.4.evidence\_Regulation of the Doctorate in Political Science & International Relations

- (3)C.1.3.5.evidence\_General MoU between UNYT and Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University
- (3)C.1.3.6.evidence\_Specific MoU between UNYT and Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University
- (3)C.1.3.7.evidence\_MES Order No. 348, dt. 09.07.2024, Opening of PhD in Political Science & IR
- (3)C.1.3.8.evidence\_General MoU between UNYT and Izmir Bakircay University, Article 4.c
- (3)C.1.3.9.evidence\_Specific MoU between UNYT and Izmir Bakircay University
- (3)C.1.3.10.evidence\_Regulation of the PhD in Business Administration
- (3)C.1.3.11.evidence\_MES Order No. 112, dt. 23.02.2018, Opening of PhD in BA

**Maturity Level 3:** There are practices for developing the research competencies of the teaching staff throughout the institution.

## **C.2. Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports**

### **C.2.1. Research competencies and their development**

Being an esteemed and reputable centre that attracts researchers from around the world is one of UNYT's primary strategic objectives. In line with its mission and vision, UNYT considers interdisciplinary research an integral part of its institutional identity and academic tradition.

UNYT promotes the development of academic staff research competencies by providing direct funding, access to externally funded projects, and structured institutional support. The relationship between teaching, research, and administrative activities is clearly defined within UNYT's institutional strategy, fostering a sustainable academic environment that encourages research competence and international and regional collaboration. The UNYT Statute (Article 12) identifies internationalisation as a key mechanism for enhancing research competence through international partnerships and joint projects.

The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 further reinforces this commitment by prioritising faculty training programmes, improved research resources, leadership excellence, and structured support for grant writing and research proposal development. These measures ensure that academic staff receive continuous support to perform research activities effectively throughout the academic year.

UNYT's institutional structure, established in accordance with Law No. 80/2015 and the Statute, comprises the Faculties of Economy and Business, Law and Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, and the Institute of European and Balkan Studies, which includes the Balkan Research Centre, European Research Centre, and the Research, Projects and Innovation Centre (RPIC). Each department, in tandem with the Institute and its research centres promotes, coordinates, and manages research activities while respecting academic freedom and access to material and financial resources. Research support is centrally coordinated through the Institute of European and Balkan Studies and its research centres, which facilitate scientific research and cross-border collaboration. The interdisciplinary nature of research at UNYT enables broad staff participation across academic units in both research projects and teaching.

Through targeted programmes, the RPIC encourages research and innovation addressing global and regional challenges. UNYT led the kick-off meetings of three CBHE projects (GITEKA, DUALBA, WEB-NIMBUS) in late 2024 and early 2025 and organised the “Machine Learning Hackathon for the MultipleEYE” under COST Action CA21131 in April 2025. Five international study visits were conducted within CBHE project frameworks, supporting capacity building, interdisciplinary cooperation, international visibility, and dissemination of results.

Research mobility is a core element of competence development. Twenty-one project-based mobilities were coordinated by RPIC, involving study visits and collaborative research across several European countries. In parallel, sixty academic staff members participated in mobility programmes coordinated by the International Relations Office, where development of their research competencies has been a crucial experience at partner universities across Europe. This has happened through establishing new contact points and developing research networks which have benefited several of academic staff members to further develop research projects.

UNYT strengthens its research culture through international projects, mobility, guest lectures, and the publication of the *International Journal of Balkan Studies (IJBS)*. Departments integrate research activities into annual planning, including conferences, publications, and academic seminars. Institutionalised Academic Seminars provide continuous opportunities for staff to present research agendas and engage in scholarly debate, often involving international guests and diaspora academics.

UNYT has hosted and co-organised major international academic events, including the Migration Symposium (April 2024) and the conference “Navigating Complexity and Change” in Istanbul (December 2024). These activities enhance research skills, international visibility, and institutional competitiveness.

Research and innovation are systematically evaluated through annual research plans, departmental and centre reports, and individual performance assessments. Academic staff submit annual research activity records, which are consolidated into institutional reports. Monitoring includes publication output, project participation, mobility, and academic impact, ensuring continuous quality assurance and strategic improvement.

UNYT supports short-term research engagement and sabbatical opportunities for eligible academic staff. The institution has also integrated the READ (Research Expertise from the Academic Diaspora) programme into its strategy, supported by partnerships with organisations such as AADF and EU4Innovation/GIZ. These initiatives strengthen diaspora engagement, distance mentoring, and international research collaboration.

Departments, in cooperation with the Institute of European and Balkan Studies, establish working groups to organise conferences and contribute to IJBS publications. Overall, the continuous development of research competencies fosters long-term institutional innovation, increases participation in funded projects, and enhances UNYT’s visibility and competitiveness in the international academic community.

**Evidence:**

(3)C.2.1.1.evidence\_Researcher FT Employment Contract

(3)C.2.1.2.evidence\_Attendance List Kick-off Meeting Web Nimbus

- (3)C.2.1.3.evidence\_COST Workshop Agenda – MultipleEYE Conference/Hackathon Tirana
- (4)C.2.1.4.evidence\_RPI Report on Study Visit
- (4)C.2.1.5.evidence\_RPI Open Call for Staff Involvement
- (3)C.2.1.6.evidence\_Visit from Ibn Haldun University through Erasmus+Job Shadowing Program
- (3)C.2.1.7.evidence\_Azerbaijan: From Regaining Its Independence to Restoring Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity
- (3)C.2.1.8.evidence\_UNYT Events
- (4)C.2.1.9.evidence\_Migration International Conference Proceedings
- (4)C.2.1.10.evidence\_Navigating Complexity and Change in the Balkans
- (3)C.2.1.11.evidence\_Confirmation of Academic Staff in Projects 2024–2025
- (3)C.2.1.12.evidence\_Academic Staff Support in Academic Growth

**Maturity level 3:** There are practices for developing the Research competencies of the teaching staff throughout the institution.

## **C.2.2. National and international joint programs and joint research units**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) emphasises both national and international collaboration as a strategic approach to enhance academic excellence, research productivity, and global engagement. These partnerships are established and systematically managed through institutional mechanisms that ensure they align with the University’s mission and strategic goals. UNYT promotes inter-institutional and interdisciplinary cooperation primarily through its Institute of European and Balkan Studies and its three research centers: the European Studies Centre, the Balkan Studies Centre, and the Research Project and Innovation Centre (RPI Centre). The RPI Centre serves as the primary hub for developing partnerships, managing projects, and engaging in research networks, coordinating and supporting the realization of joint academic and research initiatives. The Research Project and Innovation (RPI) Centre exemplifies UNYT’s research approach by actively participating in international collaborations. The projects developed and managed by the RPI Centre, and executed by UNYT academic staff, are funded by the European Union. Through these projects, the University can make a meaningful contribution to staff and student mobility, as well as to the development of institutional capacity. These initiatives not only elevate UNYT’s international profile but also strengthen its research environment and interdisciplinary cooperation across faculties. Through this structure, UNYT has established mechanisms that actively promote inter-institutional and interdisciplinary collaboration. The university provides institutional support for the preparation and implementation of joint research proposals at both national and international levels. It also encourages the development of joint postgraduate programmes and co-supervised theses, strengthening academic integration across partner institutions. UNYT maintains membership in international research networks, including Erasmus+, Jean Monnet, COST

Actions, and TIKa partnerships, to foster collaborative research and mobility. Furthermore, the university has built strategic alliances with universities, research institutes, and industry partners in Albania and abroad to enhance knowledge exchange and innovation.

To ensure a coherent and transparent process, UNYT has established formal procedures and internal regulations governing the initiation, evaluation, and monitoring of partnerships. All joint initiatives must be approved by the Rectorate and the Senate to ensure compliance with institutional quality assurance standards and strategic goals. UNYT's collaboration mechanisms are supported by a strong network of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Erasmus+ Inter-Institutional Agreements, covering a broad range of academic disciplines and partner institutions across Europe, the Balkans, and beyond. Joint research and postgraduate activities are regularly monitored by the Institute for European and Balkan Studies through annual reports, performance indicators, and impact assessments submitted to the University Senate and Quality Assurance Office. Feedback and results from these collaborations are used to improve research support services, enhance interdisciplinary cooperation, and expand the network of strategic partners.

The effectiveness of UNYT's national and international collaborations is systematically assessed through various institutional processes. Each year, the University reviews joint research outputs and mobility data, ensuring that collaborative activities meet established performance indicators. The outcomes of collaborative projects are evaluated through detailed project completion reports and external review assessments, which confirm alignment with institutional priorities and strategic objectives. Additionally, regular feedback from partner institutions and academic units is gathered to identify areas for improvement and enhance cooperation. The results of these assessments are incorporated into institutional planning and quality assurance cycles, supporting evidence-based decision-making and ongoing improvement of collaboration. All findings and recommendations are reviewed by the University Senate and included in the annual Quality Improvement Plan.

Between 2020 and 2025, UNYT consistently engaged in international and national research activities within its priority areas. It organised and co-organised annual conferences and symposia in fields such as Balkan studies, migration, regional security, economics, finance, and artificial intelligence. Notable examples include the joint international conference "*Navigating Complexity and Change in the Balkans*" (Istanbul, December 2024) with Turkish-German University and Ibn Haldun University and the co-organisation with AAB College (Pristina) of the conference "*Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Age of Transformation: Opportunities and Challenges*" (May 2025).

**Evidence:**

- (3)C.2.2.1.evidence\_Bilateral Agreement AKKSHI-TÜBİTAK
- (3)C.2.2.2.evidence\_Template MoU IRO
- (3)C.2.2.3.evidence\_Template Inter-Institutional Agreement IRO
- (3)C.2.2.4.evidence\_Senate Meeting Minutes

**Maturity Level 3:** National and international joint programs and joint research activities are carried out throughout the institution.

### **C.3. Research Performance**

#### **C.3.1. The follow-up and evaluation of research performance**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has established comprehensive and methodical procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and improving research performance at institutional, faculty, and departmental levels. UNYT is organised into four primary units: three faculties and the Institute for European and Balkan Research, which includes three specialised research centres: European Research Centre (ERC), the Balkan Research Centre (BRC), and the Research, Projects and Innovation Centre (RPIC). This organisational structure is designed to address labour market needs and key challenges of contemporary scientific research. All research centres and departments operate in accordance with the UNYT Statute, organisational chart, and their respective regulations and policies.

At the institutional level, research performance is systematically monitored through the RPIC, which coordinates internal research meetings and the preparation of annual research plans. Evaluation findings are documented in RPIC reports and are used to inform strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and improvements to research policies, under Rectorate oversight and alignment with EU and national research strategies.

At the faculty level, Deans and the Director of the Institute, together with Research Centre Heads, prepare, monitor, and report annual research plans, ensuring coherence between institutional objectives and faculty priorities. Periodic monitoring of publications and projects supports transparency and benchmarking across faculties.

At the departmental level, Heads of Departments oversee research implementation through individual performance reports and annual departmental summaries. Departments integrate research with teaching, student engagement, and international cooperation, submit annual research performance reports to the Rectorate, and propose dedicated research budgets within their annual financial plans to support conferences, publications, and student involvement in research, projects, and exchange programmes.

Departments are fully committed to achieving the objectives of the UNYT Strategic Plan 2026–2030, which emphasises innovation and excellence in research in line with national and regional priorities. Each department prepares SWOT analyses covering programmes, academic staff, enrolment trends, and individual research contributions. Annual research duties of academic staff are defined, monitored, and documented through Individual Performance Documents and Departmental Annual Reports, contributing to institutional-level evaluation and continuous improvement. RPIC conducts SWOT-based performance assessments, while the Institute for European and Balkan Studies coordinates research themes aligned with EU socio-economic development priorities. ERC, BRC, and RPIC jointly oversee research initiatives and promote collaboration with international, industry, and civil society partners.

Institutional evaluation of research and innovation includes:

- (i) drafting and implementing annual research plans at faculty and research centre levels;
- (ii) periodic monitoring through publications, projects, collaborations, and academic/social impact;
- (iii) evaluation of individual academic contributions linked to promotion criteria and annual performance assessments; and
- (iv) evaluation activities such as forums, workshops, and annual meetings to identify good practices and areas for improvement.

Monitoring data are used to refine internal policies, guide financial support, and develop new academic and innovation strategies. As a result of these systematic processes, UNYT has been recognised as a leading higher education institution in Albania for EU-funded research projects in 2023–2024 and was selected by the National Erasmus Office to organise a national information session on effective project strategies.

UNYT applies a structured and transparent planning framework whereby faculties, departments, and research centres prepare Annual Research Activity Plans aligned with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and the Scientific Research Pillars 2023–2027. The planning process is participatory, involving academic staff through collective discussions. Research centres prepare annual work plans with measurable deliverables, monitored through Annual Research Reports and RPI Bulletins. Individual academic contributions are evaluated annually using standardised performance assessment tools and the “Best in Research” template, supported by workshops and assessment forums.

Stakeholder feedback is systematically incorporated through collaboration with partner universities, research centres, policymakers, industry representatives, civil society organisations, and diaspora academics. ERC, BRC, and RPIC facilitate consultation through conferences, workshops, joint projects, focus groups, and industry-linked initiatives such as GITEKA, DUALBA, and WeB-Nimbus. Partnerships with organisations such as the Albanian American Development Foundation and EU4Innovation/GIZ further strengthen alignment with international development priorities. These mechanisms ensure that external perspectives directly inform institutional strategies, programme development, and research performance evaluation.

UNYT integrates research with teaching and administrative duties through annual planning, clearly defined workload norms, and institutional support mechanisms. Academic staff engaged in international projects, mobility, or grant preparation may receive reduced teaching and administrative loads. Continuous professional development in research methodology, project design, and grant management strengthens institutional research capacity.

Research dissemination at UNYT is achieved through indexed publications, conferences, academic seminars, institutional reports, digital platforms, and social media. UNYT publishes the peer-reviewed International Journal of Balkan Studies (IJBS), maintains a centralised research database, and requires annual CV updates for transparency. Research excellence is supported through institutional funding schemes rewarding high-quality publications and participation in international scientific events. Results are published in institutional reports and used systematically for planning and decision-making.

High-quality publications in leading journals and reputable monographs have strengthened UNYT's international research profile. During the 2024–2025 academic year, UNYT academic staff published 46 articles indexed in SCOPUS and/or Web of Science, along with several monographs. Research activity also expanded through participation in 8 EU-funded projects (2023–2025) and two nationally funded projects supported by AKKSHI, enhancing research capacity and global visibility.

Academic and student mobility is a strategic priority supported through Erasmus+, Open Exchange, and Mevlana programmes, coordinated by the International Relations Office and the RPIC. Sabbatical leave is granted to eligible staff based on academic excellence and international engagement. All practices comply with Albanian Law No. 80/2015, the UNYT Statute, and relevant regulations, ensuring alignment with national standards and the European Higher Education Area.

Through benchmarking, international memberships (EUA, BAU, ECHE), participation in Erasmus+ CBHE and COST networks, and sustained international collaboration, UNYT continues to strengthen its research visibility and performance at national, regional, and European levels.

**Evidence:**

- (3)C.3.1.1.evidence\_Departmental Annual Report
- (3)C.3.1.2.evidence\_Institute of European and Balkan Studies Regulation
- (3)C.3.1.3.evidence\_Department Budget Plan
- (3)C.3.1.4.evidence\_1st Balkan Turkology Workshop
- (3)C.3.1.5.evidence\_Aims and Scope IJBS
- (3)C.3.1.6.evidence\_Balkan Center Regulation
- (3)C.3.1.7.evidence\_European Centre Regulation
- (3)C.3.1.8.evidence\_Sabbatical Contract
- (3)C.3.1.9.evidence\_PSIR SWOT Analysis Report
- (3)C.3.1.10.evidence\_BUA Rectors Conference
- (3)C.3.1.11.evidence\_EUA Call for Papers
- (3)C.3.1.12.evidence\_Meeting Minutes IJBS
- (3)C.3.1.13.evidence\_Agenda Kick-off meeting GITEKA
- (4)C.3.1.14.evidence\_Workshop RPI Centre Presentation
- (3)C.3.1.15.evidence\_MoU GERMIN–UNYT\_DiasporaEU4Innovation
- (3)C.3.1.16.evidence\_Partner Feedback Forms (example)
- (3)C.3.1.17.evidence\_Focus Group GITEKA
- (4)C.3.1.18.evidence\_Selection criteria for academic and administrative staff exchanges
- (3)C.3.1.19.evidence\_IRO Annual Plan

[Albanian National H-index Ranking 2026](#)

[National Info Day Erasmus+ on Higher Education](#)

[International Conference: “Navigating Complexity and Change in the Balkans”](#)

[UNYT's Ongoing Projects](#)

[UNYT H-index Ranking 2026](#)

**Maturity Level 4:** The institution monitors its research performance and makes improvements with input from relevant stakeholders

### **C.3.2. Performance evaluation for the teaching staff/researchers**

One of the main objectives and a key element of UNYT’s tradition is to support interdisciplinary research as an essential aspect of the University’s identity. The University Statute (Article 7) affirms that research orientation represents a core area through which the university contributes to broader society via research and innovation. In addition to faculty research, UNYT has established the Institute for European and Balkan Research, which, pursuant to the Statute (Article 30, point 2), conducts research, development, innovation, and other activities as defined in its regulations. The Institute’s research centres—the European Research Centre and the Balkan Research Centre—prioritise facilitating scientific research that addresses regional and global challenges by fostering collaboration among researchers and partners beyond national and regional borders (Statute, Article 32).

This research-focused dimension is supported by clearly defined institutional practices, aligned with international standards, to assess the research performance of teaching staff and researchers. The UNYT Strategic Plan 2026–2030 highlights research output and the management of educational processes related to research as central to institutional goals, including faculty training and improved resources to support teaching and research excellence. Research performance assessment is also supported through infrastructural development, including expanded access to e-libraries and online academic resources, as well as training initiatives (e.g., Scopus AI Training Information Session under UNYT/Elsevier cooperation), and financial incentives such as funding participation and presentations at national and international events.

UNYT has established an internal policy for evaluating research performance using a coherent set of criteria recognised across the global academic community. The policy emphasises research publications indexed in Scopus or Web of Science, as well as publications in ranked academic journals, reputable publishing houses, and regionally and locally indexed journals. In line with best practices, the official performance evaluation document recognises multiple types of research output: (i) monographs/edited volumes; (ii) research articles/book chapters; (iii) conference papers; (iv) book/article reviews; (v) working/policy papers; and (vi) project proposals. Each output is assigned score points, with internationally published outputs receiving higher scores to encourage publication beyond local contexts.

A further mechanism for annual evaluation is the Individual Assessment Form and the Individual Annual Objectives, administered and assessed by Heads of Departments. As a core unit under the Statute (Article 12), the department promotes, coordinates, and administers teaching and research while respecting academic freedom and enabling staff to use available material and financial resources for academic activities. Scientific activities, projects, and study programmes form part of annual work planning. Departments therefore play a central role in defining and assessing yearly research obligations, aligning research priorities with institutional strategy, and promoting publications and projects with local and international partners.

At the end of each academic year, academic staff submit to their departments a list of publications and research activities. The institution then collects and processes research data and officially includes outcomes in the annual report. Institutional evaluation of research and innovation includes: (i) drafting and implementing annual research plans at faculty and research centre level; (ii) periodic monitoring through reports on publications, projects, international collaborations, and academic/social impact; and (iii) evaluation of individual contributions in line with promotion criteria and annual performance assessments.

UNYT's evaluation framework is complemented by mechanisms that enhance research skills and expand research opportunities and outputs. The university provides an effective support system for research, knowledge transfer, and innovation through international staff exchanges, training, and participation in seminars, workshops, and open lectures. The Research Project and Innovation Centre (RPI) organises research evaluation activities (forums, workshops, annual meetings) to identify best practices and improvement areas. UNYT also organises and participates in national and international scientific conferences with local and international partners, supporting dissemination, academic exchange, scientific visibility, and new collaborations. National and international research projects funded by AKSHI, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and Mevlana further expand opportunities for staff engagement in teaching, training, and research collaboration with partner universities.

***Evidence:***

- (3)C.3.2.1.evidence\_Individual Assessment Performance (IAP) and Scientific Support
- (4)C.3.2.2.evidence\_Academic Staff Support in Academic Growth
- (3)C.3.2.3.evidence\_Scientific Academic Staff 2023–2024
- (3)C.3.2.4.evidence\_Research on Corruption Tolerance in Public Administration Open Lecture
- (3)C.3.2.5.evidence\_Intellectual Property Regulation
- (3)C.3.2.6.evidence\_Annual Budget IEBS, BRC, IJBS

**Maturity level 3:** Established mechanisms for follow-up and assessment of the research and development performance of teaching staff are used throughout the institution.

## D. SERVICE TO SOCIETY

### D.1.1. Management of service to society processes

The service-to-society policy, the management of service-to-society processes, and their organisational structure are established as formal standards. The management and organisational structures of these processes align with the institution's service-to-society policy. The structures' operation is monitored and necessary improvements are implemented.

#### *1. Service to Society Policy and Governance*

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) regards service to society as a fundamental component of its mission, vision, and strategic objectives, and conducts activities that support social, cultural, and economic progress in Albania and the region. Service to society is an institutional obligation integrated across teaching, research, and administrative operations. UNYT's mission, "Educating Tomorrow's Leaders," emphasises the preparation of responsible citizens and professionals. The University fosters ethical awareness, civic responsibility, social sensitivity, and personal development alongside academic excellence. Its vision to become a leading higher education institution in the Balkans reinforces its commitment to societal engagement.

Through research projects, academic partnerships, student and staff volunteering, and public events, UNYT aims to:

- address real-world challenges in Albania and the region;
- raise awareness of social, cultural, and environmental issues;
- promote inclusivity, diversity, and ethical conduct;
- strengthen collaboration between academia, local communities, and industry.

Service to society at UNYT is therefore:

- **Strategic:** aligned with the mission, vision, and strategic plan;
- **Integrated:** involving faculties, research centres, and administrative units;
- **Inclusive:** engaging students, staff, alumni, and external partners;
- **Impact-oriented:** emphasising measurable contributions to societal well-being.

The Strategic Plan 2020–2025, along with the upcoming Strategic Plan 2026–2030, outlines several objectives that clearly support service to society. These include aims related to graduate employability, aligning research with national and regional priorities, fostering inclusivity, and enhancing student and staff engagement.

UNYT has implemented a structured governance framework to manage service-to-society (STS) activities, ensuring alignment with strategic goals and accountability. University leadership (Senate, Rector, Rectorate) sets direction, approves key STS policies and annual plans, and allocates resources. Faculties and departments implement STS initiatives by integrating service activities into curricula, research projects, and community engagement, coordinating student participation in competitions,

volunteering, research, and awareness campaigns. The Institute and research centres conduct regionally focused research, manage projects, and organise workshops, seminars, and public events. Multiple academic and student support units advance STS activities, including the International Relations Office (IRO), Career & Alumni Office, Student Counselling Centre (SCC), Academic Support Units (Writing & Math Centres), the Legal Clinic, and student representative structures (Student Union and Student Clubs).

## **2. Organisational Structure and Roles**

Organisational charts of units involved in service to society processes.

The management and organisation of service-to-society activities at UNYT are institutionalised within the governance and quality assurance framework, with responsibilities clearly defined and distributed across academic and administrative units. STS activities are jointly implemented by faculties, departments, institutes, and research centres, in collaboration with support units (IRO, SCC, Career & Alumni, Writing and Math Centres, Legal Clinic, Student Union, Student Clubs). Each unit operates under an articulated mission and mandate related to societal engagement. The performance and functioning of units are monitored through annual activity reports, supporting alignment with university objectives and continuous improvement.

Faculties and departments integrate teaching, research, and community engagement through structured planning. Faculty Councils develop strategic plans and allocate resources to sustain academic programmes responsive to societal and market needs, while departments embed experiential learning and practical components (e.g., academic writing, clinical practice, internships, community-based projects). The Institute of European and Balkan Studies supports the university's third mission through regionally focused research and dialogue on European integration and socio-political transformation. The Research, Projects & Innovation Centre (RPI) supports interdisciplinary collaboration by managing national and international projects, organising training and scientific events, and strengthening partnerships with public institutions, civil society, and industry.

UNYT promotes student involvement in competitions, awareness campaigns, exhibitions, open lectures, and other cultural initiatives. Competitions and student participation include architecture and innovation initiatives and moot court activities. Awareness campaigns address social, health, and digital safety issues, while exhibitions, study trips, open lectures, and cultural initiatives support public engagement, knowledge exchange, and social and educational development.

Key support units contribute to service to society through defined roles:

- a) **International Relations Office (IRO):** manages Erasmus+ and other exchanges that build intercultural experience, global skills, volunteerism, and civic participation.
- b) **Career & Alumni Office:** supports career guidance, professional development, internships, and alumni involvement to promote social responsibility and community initiatives.
- c) **Student Counselling Centre (SCC):** provides well-being support, guidance, and awareness activities that strengthen students' social-emotional development and responsible societal engagement.
- d) **Academic Support Units:** Writing Centre strengthens communication and academic writing; Math Centre supports learning equity and includes the e-MATURA initiative supporting secondary school pupils' transition to higher education.
- e) **Legal Clinic:** provides practical opportunities for law students and basic legal support to marginalised

and vulnerable groups, supporting social justice and community well-being. f) **Student Union & Student Clubs:** support representation, leadership, and participation through social, cultural, philanthropic, and educational activities. The Dean of Students oversees student matters, coordinates and evaluates support centres, and encourages student clubs and Student Union activities.

Staff involved in planning, managing, and monitoring STS activities operate under defined responsibilities aligned with strategic objectives. Academic staff plan, implement, and monitor service-to-society activities integrated into teaching and research, and Heads of Departments report annually. Administrative offices support coordination and monitoring of unit-specific initiatives and report through annual administrative activity reports. Students lead and implement community and campus initiatives, supported by the Dean of Students, and submit annual reports summarising participation and outcomes.

This governance model ensures that Service to Society at UNYT is strategically guided, systematically implemented, and impact-driven, integrating leadership oversight, faculty coordination, research engagement, and active participation of students and staff. It demonstrates UNYT's institutional commitment to embedding civic responsibility, social engagement, and ethical practice into university life.

**Evidence:**

- (3)D.1.1.1.evidence\_Job Description Administrative Units
- (3)D.1.1.2.evidence\_Student Clubs
- (3)D.1.1.3.evidence\_ICT Awards
- (3)D.1.1.4.evidence\_Counselling Centre Regulation and Annual Report 2024–2025
- (3)D.1.1.5.evidence\_Math\_Center annual report for 2024-2025
- (4)D.1.1.6.evidence\_Student Participation in Competitions and Events
- (4)D.1.1.6.evidence\_Matura Exam for Free
- (4)D.1.1.7.evidence\_Enhancing Cybersecurity in the Financial Sector (FEB)
- (4)D.1.1.8.evidence\_Counselling Centre Social Events
- (4)D.1.1.9.evidence\_SU Policies and Activities

**Maturity Level 3:** The management and organisational structure of the service to society processes are practised in line with the institutional preferences throughout the institution.

**D.1.2. Resources**

At the University of New York Tirana (UNYT), Service to Society is regarded as an integral part of the institution's mission and strategic direction, rather than a standalone function. Although UNYT does not

have a dedicated formal policy or unit explicitly titled “Service to Society,” societal engagement is incorporated across broader institutional documents, operational practices, and budgeting processes.

From a resource perspective, this integrated approach is reflected in UNYT’s financial planning. The institutional annual budget includes categories for organising events, outreach activities, and initiatives that serve the broader community. In addition, faculty- and department-level budgets allocate funds for guest lectures, workshops, exhibitions, and other public-facing activities, indicating that resources are planned and aligned with institutional priorities rather than allocated on an ad hoc basis.

### ***Organisational Units***

UNYT has no single central unit responsible for Service to Society. Instead, responsibility is distributed across academic and administrative units, depending on the activity, reflecting the university’s size, governance, and collaborative approach.

Key units include the PR and Marketing Department (communication, promotion, and public visibility of events); the Dean of Students’ Office (oversight of student clubs and student-led initiatives); the Career and Alumni Office (employability-focused and youth-oriented activities); and the International Relations and Projects Office (Erasmus+ and international capacity-building projects). Academic units and faculties contribute through discipline-specific outreach. The Institute of European and Balkan Studies holds a distinct role through research and public events focused on the Balkans.

Student clubs, while not formally part of the organisational or human resources structure, are also important contributors. In particular, the UNYT Charity Club has consistently organised humanitarian and community-focused initiatives. Oversight and coordination are ensured through existing academic and administrative leadership frameworks to maintain alignment with institutional values and available resources.

### ***Resource Planning and Allocation Mechanisms***

UNYT has established clear procedures for planning and allocating resources for Service to Society activities. A key instrument is the Event Request Form, submitted to the administration at least two weeks prior to any scheduled event. The form includes defined sections for estimated budget, catering, gifts, transportation, accommodation, and other logistical needs.

Once submitted, requests are processed through the institutional ERP system, where approvals are routed to relevant administrative units, including finance, facilities, and senior management when required. This ensures allocation decisions are documented, traceable, and aligned with budgetary constraints, while enabling institutional oversight of approved events and related expenditures.

At faculty and departmental levels, budgets allocate funds for outreach and public activities, typically supporting open lectures, workshops, exhibitions, and community engagement initiatives related to teaching and research. At institutional level, additional resources support larger or cross-unit initiatives, including social responsibility campaigns and externally visible events. This combination of planning, formal approval procedures, and integration into budgeting processes enables UNYT to provide appropriate financial, physical, and human resources for service-to-society activities and to use them efficiently.

### ***Examples of Service to Society Activities***

UNYT supports a range of service-to-society initiatives that demonstrate effective use of resources. These include humanitarian actions (earthquake relief campaigns, charity and donation drives) and health and inclusion-oriented projects. Educational and capacity-building activities include open public lectures, career fairs accessible to non-UNYT participants, youth employability workshops, and academic events open to the broader community.

Support also extends to cultural and environmental initiatives, including exhibitions, sustainability campaigns, and awareness events. The Institute of European and Balkan Studies addresses societal issues in Albania, the Balkans, and beyond through research workshops, conferences, and public discussions.

UNYT's participation in Erasmus+ capacity-building projects also contributes indirectly to society by supporting educational development, institutional strengthening, and knowledge transfer at national and regional levels. Project budgets provide an additional resource stream that supplements institutional funding.

Resource planning and allocation are managed institution-wide and reviewed through budgeting cycles, administrative oversight, and post-event reflection. While financial monitoring is established, UNYT recognises that more systematic mechanisms for assessing long-term societal impact and documenting best practices are still in development.

Future improvements may include more structured post-activity evaluations, improved internal reporting on service-to-society outcomes, and more precise internal guidance to promote consistency across units. These potential updates are being considered within the broader context of institutional quality assurance and strategic planning.

Overall, UNYT demonstrates a consistent and responsible approach to managing resources for Service to Society, characterised by careful planning, shared responsibility, and alignment with strategic objectives, while acknowledging areas for further institutionalisation and refinement.

#### **Evidence:**

(3)D.1.2.1.evidence\_Social Responsibility Campaigns

(3)D.1.2.2.evidence\_Workshop RPI Centre Presentation

(3)D.1.2.3.evidence\_Education Without Borders

(3)D.1.2.4.evidence\_Scholarship Exam, Free Architecture Courses, and Free Matura Courses

(3)D.1.2.5.evidence\_Free Sanitary Pads

(3)D.1.2.6.evidence\_IJBS Publications

**Maturity Level 3:** The institution manages its service to society resources by taking the service to society strategy and the balance between units into account.

## **D.2 Service to Society Performance**

### **D.2.1. The follow-up and evaluation of service to society performance**

The University of New York Tirana (UNYT) has incorporated the third mission of higher education, community engagement and societal contribution, into its institutional identity and strategic planning. This mission extends beyond traditional teaching and research to include lifelong learning, social innovation, cultural development, and regional economic growth. UNYT's dedication to this mission is reflected in its statutory mandate and strategic direction, combining academic excellence with societal impact.

UNYT's mission is to prepare future leaders by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, character, and confidence needed to succeed in a diverse and international environment, while emphasising personal development, intellectual growth, and community engagement. Its vision to become the premier higher education institution in the Balkans is supported by four strategic pillars, institutionalisation, digitalisation, internationalisation, and research focus, highlighting the aim of cultivating a globally engaged and socially responsible academic community. The university's core values, academic freedom, innovation, entrepreneurship, inclusivity, sustainability, and ethical integrity are reflected through its educational programmes, governance structures, and partnerships, guiding its engagement with society and ensuring students are both academically prepared and civically involved.

UNYT's strategic plans for 2020–2025 and 2026–2030 outline a clear trajectory for increasing societal influence. The 2020–2025 plan established a foundation for community engagement through a curriculum that promotes global awareness and ethical reasoning, innovative teaching methods that encourage active learning and debate, international partnerships that support cross-cultural exchange, and social responsibility through evidence-based research to inform policymaking. The 2026–2030 plan builds on this foundation with more targeted initiatives, including the establishment of the Interdisciplinary Study Centre (ISC) to address societal challenges through collaborative, applied research; alignment of the research agenda with national and regional priorities (including sustainability and digital transformation); and a student-centred approach focusing on inclusivity, career readiness, and community engagement. UNYT's commitment to excellence, resilience, and adaptability is reinforced through responsiveness to societal needs and continuous improvement based on stakeholder feedback.

Digital transformation is a key part of UNYT's strategic vision, supported by investment in IT infrastructure, smart classrooms, and access to electronic libraries and academic databases. These developments enable engaging learning experiences and 24/7 access to scholarly resources, while collaborations with other universities to share digital resources further enhance the learning environment. Digital platforms also facilitate flexible and authentic assessment methods that allow students to demonstrate skills in practical, digitally driven contexts. Vocational education is also prioritised in the 2026–2030 strategy to bridge academic study and practical skills, through programmes aligned with Albania's labour market needs and stronger collaboration with employers to ensure curriculum relevance.

UNYT has developed teaching, learning, and assessment strategies for 2020–2025 and 2026–2030 that reflect a commitment to academic excellence and societal impact, grounded in the socio-economic

context of Albania and the Balkans. Labour market trends, employer feedback, and student aspirations inform curriculum development, ensuring graduates have relevant skills to address societal needs. Teaching methods encourage active learning and community participation through guest lectures by industry experts, educational field trips, and real-world research projects that link academic knowledge to societal issues. Blended and online learning platforms broaden access, promoting inclusivity and lifelong learning, while helping students develop civic awareness and practical skills for community contribution. UNYT's quality assurance system supports continuous enhancement in teaching, learning, and assessment through regular evaluations, feedback mechanisms, and adherence to accreditation standards, strengthening accountability, public trust, and institutional credibility.

Faculties and departments advance the university's societal mission by integrating teaching, research, and community engagement. Faculty Councils develop plans and allocate resources to maintain academic programmes that respond to market needs and societal priorities, while promoting ethical standards and civic responsibility. Departments design curricula incorporating practical and clinical activities such as academic writing and community-based projects, supported by academic advising aligned with personal growth and social impact. Electives and interdisciplinary initiatives promote engagement with urgent social issues, and collegial governance reinforces transparency, inclusiveness, and quality assurance in line with democratic values, social justice, and sustainable development within UNYT's Third Mission.

Beyond core units, UNYT strengthens societal contribution through institutional mechanisms including the Institute of European and Balkan Studies, research centres, and the Research, Projects & Innovation Centre (RPI), which manages EU and local projects, organises conferences, and collaborates with civil society and government bodies. Students participate in development projects as part of experiential learning and civic responsibility, and UNYT has led EU-funded Jean Monnet projects addressing democracy promotion, refugee law, health issues, and EU enlargement in the Western Balkans. Student Union and clubs promote civic engagement and leadership, while the Alumni and Careers Office connects graduates with opportunities that support societal development. The Counselling Centre provides direct services, including legal aid and psychological support for marginalised groups, and student clubs engage in technology-focused community projects, digital literacy workshops, and innovation challenges. Erasmus+ and other exchanges further support intercultural dialogue and volunteerism by enabling students to gain international experience and apply global perspectives to local challenges.

UNYT's service-to-society performance is positioned within a European higher education context through reference to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG 2015) and the use of multidimensional indicators commonly applied for societal engagement (partnerships, outreach, continuing education, employability, alumni engagement, volunteerism, reporting on societal impact, and alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals). In Albania, societal service evaluation is still evolving, with collaboration often informal and innovation not systematically tracked, though EU-funded initiatives support development. UNYT is presented as distinctive by aligning research and projects with SDGs and by engaging in partnerships and networks that strengthen societal contribution.

UNYT's projects implemented during 2016–2022 demonstrate Third Mission engagement across quality assurance, democracy and human rights, migration and inclusion, SME innovation, countering

extremism, Jean Monnet networks, health and refugee law, and national partnerships. These initiatives collectively link to SDG priorities (including SDG 4, 8, 9, 10, 16, and 17). Result-oriented research is described as aligned with SDGs, including outputs reported for 2017–2020 and engagement through Scopus-indexed work. In teaching and curriculum development, UNYT integrates sustainability and civic engagement principles via structured curriculum development policies, embedding labour market responsiveness, interdisciplinary development, and stakeholder feedback, and promoting active learning methods such as problem-based learning, simulations, and community projects. Lifelong learning and partnerships extend impact beyond the traditional student body, while governance and campus practices support environmental responsibility and stakeholder participation.

**Evidence:**

(3)D.2.1.1.evidence\_Research Pillars 2023–2027

(3)D.2.1.2.evidence\_UNYT Mission and Objectives

(3)D.2.1.3.evidence\_Ev. 4.24 UNYT Internationalisation

(3)D.2.1.4.evidence\_Statistics for Mobility Data of Students Exchange

(3)D.2.1.5.evidence\_Career Office Policy

(3)D.2.1.6.evidence\_Career Fair 2023-2025

(4)D.2.1.7.evidence\_Career & Alumni Office Action Plans and Annual Report

(4)D.2.1.8.evidence\_Student Internship Portfolio

**Maturity Level 3:** Mechanisms established for follow-up and evaluation of the service to society performance are used throughout the institution.