

Summary of an evaluation of Lithuanian transport management and economics study programmes - personal impressions of the expert team's leader

1. Date of assessment: May 28th - June 4th, 2013

2. Visited higher education institutions:

- a. SMK Kleipeda
- b. SMK Vilnius
- c. TTVAM Vilnius
- d. VGTU Vilnius

3. Team members:

- a. Experts group: Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Andreas Knorr (group leader)
Prof. Dr. Terence Clifford-Amos
Vanja Kenjic
Dainius Petravičius
Lekt. Monika Kavaliauskė
- b. Evaluation coordinator: Dovilė Stonkutė

4. Organization of the visit

The visit was very well organized by SKVC. All documents were made available to the peers long enough before the site visits began. The schedules of the site visits were also adequate for the team to perform its task.

5. Areas for improvement in the evaluation process

- a. Introduction of a SKCV team secretary

The entire team work process – especially report writing - could be substantially facilitated if a member of SKVC acted as the official team secretary. The main task would be to prepare a draft report based on feedback by the team during the on-site visit. Team member would then critically assess the draft and prepare joint the final version which then would be double-checked again by the team secretary. The main advantage would be more consistency regarding the quality of the reports. All German accreditation agencies follow this model more or less (most require the secretary to prepare the draft; some require peers to do it, but the draft will then be revised and edited for content and formatting by the secretary before it will be returned to the team members for their final review).

- b. Enhancing the SKVC Checklist/questionnaire

SKVC might consider certain changes to its existing checklist when the next internal review is due (and if the following proposed revisions are compatible with Lithuania's legal requirements.

Most of all the existing “points system” should be abolished and replaced by a more appropriate marking scheme. Points are never fully objective due to the large number of qualitative items on the checklist anyway. Moreover, the “points system” begets a “haggling attitude” on the part of the HEIs.

A better alternative would be to replace the points system with a system of staggered marks which is centered on minimum standards for every single criterion – which, in turn, would have to be clearly defined by SKVC before to reflect both legal requirements and SKVC’s own quality targets. This modified system might consist of the following scale (from worst to best): “Standards not met”, “Standards met”, “Standards exceeded”, “Excellent/State of the art (at the international level)”. Again, this approach would ensure more consistency regarding the quality of individual teams’ reports and also facilitate discussions among team members but also between university representatives and the teams during on-site visits.

Also on behalf of my other team members I would like to conclude that we enjoyed the exercise very much and would take this opportunity to thank our evaluation coordinator, Ms. Dovilė Stonkutė, one more time for a truly outstanding job at all stages of the accreditation exercise.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andreas Knorr". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Speyer, 04/09/2013

(Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Andreas Knorr)