



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**STUDY FIELD of Management**  
at Panevėžio kolegija

**Expert panel:**

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2. **Prof. Dr. Christian Schachtner**, *academic member*;
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4. **Assoc. Prof. Dmitrijs Kravčenko**, *academic member*;
5. **Ms Dalia Švelnytė**, *representative of social partners*;
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Report language – English

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## Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	<b><i>Business Management</i></b>
State code	6531LX062
Type of studies	Professional bachelor college studies
Cycle of studies	First
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (3 years) Part-time (4 years)
Credit volume	180
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Professional Bachelor of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary education
Registration date of the study programme	3 September 2002

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluations of study fields in Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are based on the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport on 17 July 2019, Order No. V-835, and are carried out according to the procedure outlined in the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) on 31 December 2019, Order [No. V-149](#).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions constantly improve their study process and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report (SER) prepared by HEI; 2) site visit of the expert panel to the HEI; 3) production of the external evaluation report (EER) by the expert panel and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field, SKVC takes a decision to accredit the study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

The study field and cycle are **not accredited** if at least one of the evaluation areas is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

## 1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC on 31 December 2019, [Order No. V-149](#). The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the expert panel on 11 May 2023.

1. Prof. Dr. Steffen Roth (Germany-France), panel chair - academic member, Professor of Management at Excelia Business School La Rochelle, President of the Senate at Kazimieras Simonavicius University;
2. Prof. Dr. Christian Schachtner (Germany), panel member – academic member, Professor and Head of Public Management at IU University of Applied Sciences;
3. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Adam Jabłoński (Poland), panel member – academic member, Professor and director of the Institute of Management and Quality Sciences at the WSB University in Poznań, expert of the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA);
4. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dmitrijs Kravčenko (Latvia), panel member – academic member, Professor and Director of Entrepreneurship at Stockholm School of Economics in Riga;
5. Ms Dalia Švelnytė (Lithuania), representative of social partners, co-founder and Deputy Director at Litprint Ltd.;
6. Ms Ieva Porutyte (Lithuania), students' representative, third-year Professional Bachelor's student of study programme Creativity and Business Innovations at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences.

## 1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the SER and annexes, the HEI provided the following additional documents before, during and/or after the site visit:

No.	Name of document
1.	Examples of final theses, course works and examination material
2.	Course descriptions of Sustainable Development, Management and Development of Research Competencies study modules

#### **1.4. BACKGROUND OF MANAGEMENT FIELD STUDIES AT PANEVĖŽIO KOLEGIJA**

A public institution, Panevėžio kolegija, or Panevezys College (hereafter, PK or the College), respectively, is a Lithuanian public institution of higher education. PK was established in 2002 and conducts first-cycle study programmes awarding a professional bachelor's degree, non-formal education programmes, and engaged in applied scientific research. As of 2022, PK offers studies to 1604 students, 51 of whom are in the Management field programme. PK is composed of three faculties: Biomedical Sciences, Social Sciences, and Technological Sciences. Each faculty is headed by a Dean. There are a total of 20 accredited study programmes across 7 study areas.

The present assessment is for the study field of Management. PK offers one programme of study in the field of management - Business Management. The programme is conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences, alongside 5 other programmes of study. The Business Management programme has been running since the inauguration of PK in 2002 and has fostered close collaborations with a range of public and private partners, including Panevezys Chamber of Commerce, and local industry and professional associations.

The latest external evaluation of overall activities took place in 2021 and PK was accredited for 7 years. The Business Management study programme underwent its last evaluation in 2013 and received a positive assessment. There were three rounds of updates to the Business Management programme since 2020 - following recommendations from social partners in 2020, following activities and lessons learned on the international 3LoE project in 2021, and once again in 2022 in response to the implementation of the Management Study Field Descriptor by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The **first cycle** of the **Management** study field at Panevėžio kolegija is given a **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	2
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	2
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	2
6.	Learning facilities and resources	3
7.	Study quality management and public information	3
<b>Total:</b>		18

\*1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies.

2 (satisfactory) - the area meets the minimum requirements, and there are fundamental shortcomings that need to be eliminated.

3 (good) - the area is being developed systematically, without any fundamental shortcomings.

4 (very good) - the area is evaluated very well in the national context and internationally, without any shortcomings;

5 (excellent) - the area is evaluated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally.

### III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

*Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:*

*3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of society and/or the labour market*

(1) Factual situation:

There is one programme of study in the field of management offered to students: Business Management. The Business Management programme is a generalist management studies programme, which aims to develop a broad range of management skills and competencies ranging from economics and sociology to HRM and leadership.

The fit of the programme to the needs of society and/or the labour market is not clearly demonstrated. The SER highlights macroeconomic trends in Lithuania and draws on data from the Lithuanian employment service to show the need for warehouse and marketing specialists, but does not make an evidence-based case for there being a demand for generalist management graduates in the city or in the region. Indeed, the overall design of the programme, which lacks focus on any particular domain(s) of management, may reflect the lack of natural fit between the programme and the needs of the job market. Sessions with students and employers and social partners corroborated this issue - students reported perceiving little to no employment prospects for them in the region, whereas employers confirmed that the market is growing and attracting significant foreign direct investment, which is creating jobs and driving demand for qualified graduates (graduates are in demand by employers but employers are not in demand by graduates). Similarly, social partners reported not being as involved in the curriculum design as they would like to be. Given the generally high rates of employment in the Panevezys municipality and county (71% and 67% of 15-64yo respectively (Official Statistics Portal of Lithuania, data for 2022)) and the role of colleges of applied science in the Lithuanian system of higher education, the expert committee considers the contrasting reports of students and employers to be a consequence of a drift between the design of the study programme and the needs and wants of the market that it is meant to address.

(2) Expert judgement:

The programme in the study field does not meet the requirements of society and of the local job market well.

*3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI*

(1) Factual situation:



According to the SER, the strategic goal of PK in relation to the study programme is to offer innovative study activities and to train qualified business management specialists with competencies that meet the needs of modern society and the labour market (SER, p. 7).

In terms of the above, the expert committee is pleased to confirm that PK is, indeed, offering students at least three innovative modules developed in collaboration with international partners within the framework of the 3LoE project. These are: social media marketing, digital photography, and circular economy. The presence of these modules, and the way in which they were developed and introduced, is highly appreciated by the expert committee. Training on social media marketing and, especially, circular economy and entrepreneurship can be counted towards the goal of training students able to meet the needs of modern society. But, as was outlined in the previous section, the programme does not succeed well at training management professionals to meet the needs of the labour market.

On balance, the expert committee observes positive trends in the curriculum design and innovation, as well as existing collaboration with the local chamber of commerce and professional associations. The expert committee did witness evidence of high pedagogical competence among the teaching staff and was impressed by the high level of technological support offered to students and staff by the IT services. The expert committee is, however, concerned with divergence between what is being taught and what is in demand on the labour market, and appraises the current programme design as fundamentally divergent from the strategic goals of the HEI.

(2) Expert judgement:

Programme in the field of study fails to correspond to the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of PK.

### *3.1.3. Evaluation of the compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements*

(1) Factual situation:

The Business Management study programme is compliant with the legal requirements. The structure of the programme is based on the legal documents regulating the conduct of higher education in Lithuania. International frameworks on higher education and quality assurance requirements (ECTS Guide 2015 and the 2022 AACSB's business accreditation standards), as well as sessions with the SER team, teachers and students have been consulted by the expert committee to validate data presented in the SER.

The SER did not provide precise information on the exact ratio of contact hours but samples of module descriptions requested from and provided by PK indicate that the share of contact hours is between 40% and 60%, depending on the module. The average rate of contact hours calculated by the expert committee came out to 46.6%.

(2) Expert judgement:

The Management study field programme is compliant with the legal requirements.

**Table No. 1** Study programme's Business Management compliance to general requirements for the first cycle study programme of College level (professional bachelor).

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programme
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	180 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	141 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by College or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	33 ECTS
ECTS for internship	No less than 30 ECTS	36 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 9 ECTS	9 ECTS
Practical training and other practice placements	No less than one third of the programme	33%
Contact hours	No less than 20 % of learning	~46%

#### *3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programmes*

##### (1) Factual situation:

The compatibility is achieved by fulfilling the requirements of the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. Five categories of aims and learning outcomes at the programme level are defined: Knowledge and its application, Research skills, Special abilities, Social abilities, and Personal abilities. Each category has specific learning objectives which are related to individual modules of the study programme (SER, Annex 1). The expert committee finds that the learning objectives used to describe each category of aims and learning outcomes properly reflect essential elements of knowledge, skills, and abilities expected from the graduates of first cycle study programmes in management.

A range of teaching and assessment methods is used to facilitate more interactive teaching, including, but not limited to, oral presentations, group work, practical presentations and demonstrations. During the evaluation visit, students confirmed to the expert committee their satisfaction with assessment methods and the expert committee finds these in line with accepted practices.

One area of concern for the expert committee with respect to this area of evaluation is the high risk of grade inflation. Sessions with students and teachers highlighted a tendency where the grading scale is, in practice, used following the pass/fail principle, where all students capable of passing a module of study attain the highest grades (both students and teachers reported an

average grade to be in the 80% percentile). The expert committee is alarmed by this tendency both at PK and in many other similar institutions in Lithuania, where grading scales are not used to promote internal competition and the pursuit of academic excellence within the student body. The expert committee considers this to be a minor limitation of the study field at PK.

(2) Expert judgement:

Aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods in the study programme are generally compliant with expectations and practices in the study field, albeit grade inflation is a concern.

*3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competencies of students*

(1) Factual situation:

The Business Management programme follows a coherent structure typical of similar programmes elsewhere in the region and in accordance with international practices. The quality of delivery is evaluated as good on average, but there is some variation between the modules. The expert committee, for example, received many positive comments about the new modules introduced during and as an outcome of the 3LoE project.

In order to gain better insight into what is being taught in the study programme, the expert committee requested module outlines for a selection of modules. Outlines of modules requested were: Basics of Management, Social Research Methodology, and A3 Sustainable Development/CSR. Insights gained from a close examination of these modules present a picture of variable quality. The expert committee found the A3 Sustainable Development/CSR module to be of good quality by international standards. Topics covered in this module are discriminantly selected to attain learning outcomes and the workload allocation per topic is generally sufficient to develop relevant skills in students. The Basics of Management modules, on the other hand, is evaluated as poorly designed on account that it attempts to cover 40 topics (some of which are either technical (eg. the ISO 9000 quality standard; to be mastered within 1h lecture and 4h of seminars/workshops) or complex (eg. management of innovation and change; both grouped under 1h lecture and 2h of seminars/workshops)) within 18 ECTS, which is evaluated by the expert committee to be an example of poor professional practice both on behalf of teaching faculty who designed a module in this way and of senior management who approved it.

(2) Expert judgement:

Study field programme facilitates consistent development of competencies in students, although these competencies do not match the needs of the local job market well.

*3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes*

(1) Factual situation:

Opportunities for students to personalise the structure of the Management field programme are evaluated as limited. In addition to the core modules on the programme of study, in their final year of study, students have the ability to choose between two optional modules (3 ECTS each) determined by the College, two specialisations: marketing management or trade management (12 ECTS each) and either a sustainable development module (3 ECTS) or a second foreign language (6 ECTS). PK does not offer any free elective modules to students in the management field of study.

The expert committee evaluates the presence of specialisations in the programme design as positive but is critical of PK not offering any free electives. Also, all opportunities for students to personalise the structure of their studies are in the final year of study only (5th semester), which is considered to be quite late. The expert committee recommends the introduction of free electives into the study programme, as well as the opening up of opportunities for personalisation earlier in the study programme. The desire for a greater diversity of modules was also confirmed during the session with students.

The expert committee is also surprised to find that given 53 bilateral Erasmus+ agreements, PK is highly unsuccessful in engaging inbound or outbound students in international mobility. Sessions with students revealed limited interest and awareness of these, so more effort should be invested to make use of all these agreements as international mobility is a powerful tool for enhancing the diversity of the student body and the experience of the study process.

(2) Expert judgement:

Opportunities for students to personalise the structure of their studies is evaluated as inadequate.

### *3.1.7. Evaluation of compliance of final theses with the field and cycle requirements*

(1) Factual situation:

The procedure that regulates the final thesis covers all necessary aspects (guidelines for the topic selection, writing issues, ethical conduct, mentoring process, defence, and grading criteria). The thesis is written in the final semester, although this is done in parallel with other modules. Students can offer a topic of their own choice or select one from a list provided by the PK. Social partners are involved in the final evaluation of the theses.

Theses are written in Lithuanian language and primarily focus on the challenges of local businesses. Theses appear to comply with the requirements of the study field descriptor.

(2) Expert judgement:

Theses are compliant with the cycle descriptor and field of management practices and expectations.

### *Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

**(1) Strengths:**

1. Innovations to the curriculum that resulted from PK's participation in the 3LoE project are considered as innovative and interesting.
2. Overall level of pedagogical competencies appears to be high.
3. Overall level of technological support for the delivery of the study programme is high.

**(2) Weaknesses:**

1. Programme of study does not meet the requirements of the local and regional job market well.
2. Grade inflation is an area of concern as it undermines academic excellence among students.
3. Limited opportunities for students to personalise their studies; no free electives and choices that are available are confined to the end of the programme.
4. Inconsistent quality of how modules are designed - e.g. Sustainable Development/CSR is fit for purpose and modern, whereas Basics of Management attempts to cover far too many topics (some of high technical complexity) in insufficient time.

### **3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES**

***Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:***

***3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study***

**(1) Factual situation:**

As per the PK SER, research at PK is defined and measured almost exclusively in terms of applied research projects and the revenue generated by these. Content-wise, some of the such-defined research activities are related to core disciplines of the management field, whereas a considerable share of the listed projects relates to more general issues of e-learning, digitalisation, communication, didactics, or social inclusion and poverty prevention. As per the order of the PK College director from September 2019, there is one research group on "Business and Public Management, Law" at PK. Research income is reported to have increased from less than EUR 7'000 in 2019 to about 37'000 in 2022. One scheduled research project is reported to have been postponed to 2022 due to the coronavirus crisis.

**(2) Expert judgement:**

Section 3.2.1. of the PK SER consists of hardly more than lists of titles of research projects run at PK and conference talks given by selected faculty members. In looking deeper into the Annexes, it becomes apparent that research in terms of publications in well-established (e.g., SSCI- or Scopus-indexed) international journals or presentations at prestigious or well-established conferences in the field of management (such as AOM, EGOS, EURAM, or CEEMAN) is virtually absent at PK. One reason for this critical lack of internationally or at least nationally

competitive research output is the complete absence of a dedicated research strategy and research support infrastructure. Upon closer request by the expert panel, several PK employees confirmed that they do not receive dedicated support for improving the quality of their research and that there is no dedicated research-focused incentive system that would reward over-average achievements in research either. On one occasion, the expert panel was told that the research strategy at PK boils down to the simple formula: You either meet the standard set by the government, or you get fired. When asked how to improve the quality of research at PK, PK members in more than one meeting with the expert panel failed to provide even the most basic ideas or visions of how this critical goal could be achieved. To the opinion of the expert panel, a substantial change of the organisation culture away from a culture of orders and punishment (including getting fired) and towards a culture of trust, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation has to be performed as early as possible, for otherwise PK is highly to fail again at achieving the level of research quality required by an institution of higher education entitled to award academic titles that are valid everywhere within the European Union.

### *3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

PK's elaborations on the science-study link are very brief, consisting mainly of short references to examples of new modules that have been integrated into the study programme or how students participate in field trips to a closed joint-stock company.

#### **(2) Expert judgement:**

The expert panel's impression that the link between the under-developed research activities at PK and its study programmes is virtually absent is as firm as PK's elaborations are short. Again, the first step towards a solution to this problem consists in the establishment of a research culture including an incentive system where internationally competitive research performance is rewarded in a fair and transparent way.

### *3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

PK is organising an annual student conference on "Trends of science and studies in the conditions of globalisation". This conference has been attended by partners from a total of 20 different institutions from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Turkey, and Denmark. PK's Student Scientific Society is also reported to organise a conference labelled "Mokslo saknys". Moreover, PK publishes the journal "Applied Research in Studies and Practice", which is indexed in some international databases such as CEEOL, DOAJ, or Index Copernicus.

#### **(2) Expert judgement:**

PK's initiatives aimed at including students in applied research are, in principle, adequate to an institution of its kind; yet, some reservations apply as, during the on-site visit, particularly PK's students have confirmed that PK's Student Scientific Society does not play an important role in

their student life. Whereas students knew of the existence of this Society, none of the gathered students knew a member of that Society or could give examples of this Society's activities. The expert panel, therefore, concludes that the role and importance of that Society must be redefined and strengthened.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. Some evidence that students participate in applied research projects.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Overall poor research performance. Absence of a focused research strategy and supportive research infrastructure.
2. An almost complete absence of a connection between the research activities at PK and its Management study programme.
3. Prevalence of a culture of fear and absence of a culture of trust and achievement in which staff members are given the autonomy to perform their own missions and over-average performance is rewarded (rather than under-performance penalised).

## **3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT**

### ***Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

#### ***3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process***

##### ***(1) Factual situation:***

The College's admission procedures align with the Ministry of Education's guidelines. Minimum requirements for applicants are established two years in advance. Student dropout rates have been impacted by weak preparedness and personal circumstances, primarily occurring in the first year of studies (SER, p. 20-22).

##### ***(2) Expert judgement:***

Rules for admission to studies, qualification criteria and recruitment procedures have been developed and applied. They are transparent and selective and allow the selection of candidates with initial knowledge and skills at the level necessary to achieve learning outcomes. The admission criteria are impartial and provide candidates with equal opportunities to study in the field of study. Low and falling admission numbers are an area of concern for the longevity and sustainability of the HEI.

#### ***3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application***

##### ***(1) Factual situation:***



The College provides information about the recognition procedures on its website and informs first-year students during orientation. Students seeking recognition of previous learning or competencies must submit relevant documentation, and the requests are reviewed by the faculty. During the evaluated period, all 17 requests for crediting partial or previous study results from management students were approved (SER, p. 23-24).

(2) Expert judgement:

Methods of confirming learning outcomes obtained outside the system of studies are used. They ensure the possibility of identifying the learning outcomes obtained outside the study system and assessing their adequacy in the scope corresponding to the learning outcomes specified in the curriculum.

### *3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students*

(1) Factual situation:

The College supports student academic mobility through the use of ECTS credit transfers, Erasmus+ programme promotion, financial aid, and virtual learning options. However, during the evaluation period, management students did not participate in Erasmus+ exchanges, and no foreign students joined part-time studies under Erasmus+. Challenges students face include financial constraints, language proficiency, lack of confidence, and reluctance to leave their current workplace. To address these challenges, the College offers optional intercultural communication courses (SER, p. 24).

(2) Expert judgement:

Principles of recruitment and implementation of student mobility under the ERASMUS+ programme have been precisely described and applied. However, overall mobility numbers are highly inadequate.

### *3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field*

(1) Factual situation:

Students receive academic information through the College's website and personal email accounts. The institution assigns group curators and has implemented a mentoring programme for freshmen, while also offering flexible scheduling options for working students and accommodating changes for reasons like illness. Additionally, high-performing students in state-funded places receive scholarships in accordance with government regulations, and the Study, Career, and Employment Center ensures students have access to various forms of financial support, including social grants, loans, and dormitory accommodation (SER, p. 25).

(2) Expert judgement:

The College has a system of granting social scholarships, scholarships for the disabled, grants, and scholarships financed for academic or sporting results. Students can receive additional support for their individual personal situations by reaching out to the institution's



administration and examples of student need accommodations were presented during interviews.

### *3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

Folders about the fields of study have been prepared and are made public. Information about study opportunities is provided through various marketing tools. Applicants can engage with the College prior to application to receive further support and guidance and admitted students have access to counselling on academic matters from teaching staff and general support from the administration.

#### **(2) Expert judgement:**

Provided by the College study information and student counselling is sufficient. There is a welcoming atmosphere, characterised by a close-knit student community where students feel at ease approaching the staff, creating an environment conducive to optimal student integration.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. Close community with students feeling comfortable to approach the staff makes for a very accommodating environment for the student to achieve the best integration.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. International mobility is very scarce in the institution with little student exchange happening.

## **3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT**

***Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

### ***3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes***

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

Various forms (permanent, permanent sessional and extended) and methods (lectures, workshops, projects, case studies, etc.) are used to organise the teaching and learning process. It is fully prepared for remote work with students. This is implemented in the form of video transmissions.

The evaluation of student achievements is clearly defined in the Description of the Procedure for Assessing study achievements. Students are introduced to this procedure when they start studying a new subject. The College uses cumulative assessment.

The organisation and evaluation of student' individual work is regulated by the Description of the Procedure for Organising Students' individual work. The model of independent work organisation and assessment methodology is prepared by the module teacher.

Students who have obtained a Professional Bachelor's degree may continue their studies in higher education institutions according to the requirements of these institutions in first and second-cycle university study programmes in the field of management.

(2) Expert judgement:

The forms and methods of study meet the needs of students. This was confirmed by the students during the visit. The flexible schedule was mentioned as the factor that most suited their needs. A strong commitment to supporting students in achieving the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by all those involved in the learning process. Students recognise and appreciate this support as well as the feedback they receive.

#### *3.4.2. Evaluation of conditions ensuring access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs*

(1) Factual situation:

The study process is adapted for students with special needs. The College has facilities for students with mobility disabilities and visual impairment. These students have the opportunity to study and report according to individual needs. Conditions have been created for distance learning and alternative modes of reporting. The College has a counsellor for students with special needs. During the analysed period no students with special needs were enrolled in the study field of management programme.

(2) Expert judgement:

The conditions ensuring access to study for students with special needs are adequate. There are opportunities to individualise the study process. There are special programmes and equipment in the library.

#### *3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress*

(1) Factual situation:

Student study progress is monitored systematically. The results are analysed twice a year, at the end of the semester in the Dean's Office. Student surveys are conducted after the module is completed. They determine the level of satisfaction and areas for improvement. The AKADIS information system is dedicated to recording results, monitoring and evaluating students' achievements. Only individual feedback is provided there. There are several ways of providing

feedback: by e-mail and during consultations, verbally and in writing, individually and in groups.

(2) Expert judgement:

Students have the opportunity to self-assess the results of their progress. There is a clear process. Students are fully supported to plan their further development. Students who attended the meeting were satisfied with the level of support and feedback on offer to them. If necessary, students can get help from curators and mentors.

#### *3.4.4. Evaluation of employability of graduates and graduate career tracking in the study field*

(1) Factual situation:

Graduate employment and career-monitoring is carried out by the staff of the Study, Career and Employment Centre. For this purpose, data is collected in several ways. The information used is obtained from official sources, as well as data from student surveys. Official sources do not have data on the employment of graduates abroad.

The information provided by the Activity Report shows that the employment rate of management graduates 12 months after graduation differs from 40% to 100% depending on the year.

(2) Expert judgement:

Graduates of the College are in demand in business companies of the Panevėžys region. Employers' representatives responded positively about the graduates' knowledge and employability. All the graduates who participated in the meeting with the expert group are working in the field of management. The low number of graduates makes it difficult to draw conclusions about employability.

#### *3.4.5. Evaluation of the implementation of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination*

(1) Factual situation:

The Ethics Commission of the College has been formed to examine issues of academic ethics. The Commission supervises the Code of Academic Ethics. Every member of the College's academic community is introduced to the code when starting work, holding a position or studying at the College. In the introduction to studies, students are introduced to the Code of Academic Ethics, and the principles of academic honesty, tolerance and non-discrimination are discussed throughout the study process. In the period under review, there is no information about the cases of academic dishonesty and unethical behaviour of students considered by the commission.

(2) Expert judgement:

Ethical and honest behaviour is expected of all members of the academic community. The Ethics Commission consists of various representatives – employees, students and social partners. In

the meeting with the panel of experts, students confirmed that they are informed about the requirements of academic ethics, that they are constantly reminded of the intolerance of plagiarism and that they understand the importance of honest and ethical behaviour.

The Code of Academic Ethics provides for the publication of reports on the activities of the Ethics Commission, but such information has not been available on the College's website since 2020, so there may be doubts about its effectiveness.

#### *3.4.6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies*

##### **(1) Factual situation:**

The procedures for submitting and considering appeals relating to the study process are set out in the Appeals Regulation. It provides that appeals shall be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty. An Appeals Commission consisting of 5 persons is formed to consider the appeal. During the analysed period no written appeals or complaints regarding the study process were submitted.

##### **(2) Expert judgement:**

The appeal procedure regarding the study process is described, students are informed about the right to appeal but there is allotted only one working day for submitting an appeal. Since the time for submitting appeals is very short, the procedure for submitting appeals should be clearer and more detailed.

#### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

##### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. Flexible schedules meet student needs.
2. Positive feedback from students.

##### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Only one day is for filing appeals.

### **3.5. TEACHING STAFF**

#### ***Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:***

##### ***3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes***

##### **(1) Factual situation:**

PK's self-evaluation pertaining to the assessment of the adequacy of the number and quality of its teaching- and research-related workforce consists mainly of tacit reiterations of

governmental requirements and minimal standards for teaching staff at Lithuanian colleges. To this, there are added blocks of de-contextualised information such as the paragraph on some Nigerian students who were scheduled to arrive at PK but failed to do so due to visa issues. Further, the report provides line after line of accounts of what faculty member teaches which module or subject.

(2) Expert judgement:

Neither the report nor the on-site interactions provided any evidence for the existence of a faculty management policy that is aligned with the organisation's own strategic goals and standards of teaching- and research quality. The main concern of both the top management and the SER team seems to be a mere demonstration that PK complies with the minimum requirements set by the pertinent branches of the Lithuanian government. Unfortunately, however, it turns out that the existence of a dedicated, quality- (and not penalty-) oriented faculty assessment and development strategy is the minimum prerequisite for achieving the just-mentioned minimum requirements.

### *3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staff's academic mobility*

(1) Factual situation:

This section of PK's SER refers to a document entitled "Operational strategy and strategic operational plan of Panevezys university of applied sciences, 2017, 2021", according to which increased international staff mobility is one of PK's key strategic goals. Information on international mobility opportunities is disseminated top-down from the top levels of the PK management team. A selection committee then decides on the allocation of the required resources. According to the report, all pertinent requests have been granted so far. As a result, 30% of PK's teacher-researchers have had the opportunity to gain work experience in countries such as "Latvia, Spain, Poland, etc.". Moreover, a total of five incoming scholars seem to have been invited to PK.

(2) Expert judgement:

In line with the above SER statements and the feedback from the on-site visit, there is evidence of some serious ambition and effort to internationalise PK. The expert panel recommends that this momentum is intensified. Moreover, teaching staff is strongly encouraged not only to deliver lectures abroad but also to learn about the working conditions and faculty management policies abroad. The resulting knowledge ought to be shared with colleagues back at PK and used not only to compare conditions and policies at home and abroad but also to stimulate change and empower faculty at PK. Additionally, there is little foreign staff mobility going to or from foreign institutions to teach in the College.

### *3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competencies of the teaching staff*

(1) Factual situation:

In a bid to improve the competencies of its teaching staff, PK has devised and launched a series of plans and programmes as well as a "Qualification Improvement and Study Fields Monitoring

System”. There is also a “Procedure for compiling and accounting the full-time workload of the lecturers of Panevezys university of applied sciences (2021)”. There is ample evidence of initiatives aimed at improving PK’s teaching staff competencies, some of which have been organised and financed by national and EU funds or funded projects. According to the SER, the financial support for professional development and further education amounted to little more than EUR 300 per teacher-researcher over the entire evaluation period.

**(2) Expert judgement:**

From both the reading of the SER and the on-site meetings with the different PK communities, the expert panel concludes that quality management at PK is implemented top-down and strongly. One critical recommendation for the future is that research- and teaching-quality management and improvement initiatives be driven more by teacher-researchers and particularly those who are not both teacher-researchers and members of the PK top management team at the same time. The scale and scope of plans, programmes, initiatives, and modules targeted at improving the competencies of PK’s teacher-researcher staff reads impressive, yet there is a certain discrepancy between the apparent level of sophistication and the sheer number of these efforts and the reported dedicated annual budget of about EUR 100 per faculty member.

***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. Some evidence of a serious push towards internationalisation.
2. Some evidence of serious efforts to actively manage the competencies of PK’s teacher-researcher staff.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. No proof for faculty management, assessment and development policy at PK that aligns with the organisation’s strategic objectives and standards for teaching and research quality.
2. Internationalisation and staff mobility are not yet strategically harnessed as a chance to analyse and compare working conditions abroad and at home as well as to embrace the internal change that necessarily results from such analyses and comparisons.
3. Competence management is strongly top-down driven.
4. Incongruence between the scale and scope of competence management initiatives and the reported amount of budget allocated to this purpose (about EUR 100 per person and year).

### **3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

***Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:***

### *3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

Panevezys College does have sufficient educational space with a total area of almost 10.000 m<sup>2</sup> with more than 50% in use for educational training. This includes four auditoriums with a capacity for 60 students, an amphitheatre with 45 seats and from 2022 further eleven more auditoriums for group work. All rooms are equipped with an interactive whiteboard and audio-visual equipment. Because of the history of the main building a lot of renovations have been done in recent years, also the functional new tract has a new modern look with interactive usable furniture.

In the fifth building additionally, an elevator has been installed for students with disabilities to access the auditoriums or laboratories on the second floor.

The College also provides student accommodation for 203 students. Thus, the premises for studies are adequate both in size and quality.

The Information Technology Centre is covering modern IT infrastructure with the communication network “WindowsLive@edu” for faculty members and students. Microsoft Dynamics NAV as a specialised solution for warehousing and accounting as well as Microsoft CRM for customer relationship management. The data centre managed by the IT centre also provides a virtual learning environment “Moodle”, based on access via VMware. three individual distance education auditoriums are available with the specialised software mentioned before. The strategy of the College to provide full distance education, as it is onsite should be extended and modern platforms with artificial intelligence use might be a bonus on that.

Specialised robotics laboratories for smart factory process chain management are also established to achieve technology management learning goals. Thus, speciality study fields like transportation and logistics are also possible, while cooperation with social partners for using specialist software solutions in real-industry conditions could be a plus in a virtual classroom. To summarise, the learning equipment and software are adequate.

The College has set cooperation agreements with over 200 business companies as social partners for giving the possibility for internships to the students. Even opportunities for lecturers to perform a practical internship in companies are available.

Indoor practical training courses are simulating two business companies with 20 computerised workplaces, working with the computer programs “Rivilė”, “Stekas” and “Biujetas VS” in preparing reports in different subjects like accounting, personnel planning, or business management.



The College library owns 45 working places, 39 of which are computerised. Additionally, three reading rooms exist. Also, the library is equipped with two workstations for disabled persons with the software Dolphin SuperNova to enlarge the image on the screen and JAWS for audio-capturing text for any kind of application.

The library has a stock of over 68.000 copies and 45.000 titles. Because of cooperation with VGTU University, further supply of textbooks are available. The library is a member of the LSLA (Lithuanian Scientific Library Association) providing since 2022 international databases in business management such as EBSCO eBook Academic Collection, Taylor & Francis, Emerald Management, several Open Access Journals (e.g., OAPEN) and Open Access Books (e.g., doab). It is also connected to the Lithuanian academic electronic library (eLABa). For the final theses, students must use the latest international publications of the last two years, because a former expert panel mentioned that students do not use international electronic databases frequently enough. Against this backdrop, the limited use of international electronic databases for the final thesis, is an issue that may be addressed by regulations such as the academic guidelines of practical and theoretical seminar papers.

#### (2) Expert judgement:

The educational infrastructure and resources at Panevezys College are systematically developed, and there appear to be no fundamental shortcomings. The college boasts ample educational space, modern IT infrastructure, specialised software, and robust facilities, including student accommodations and well-equipped libraries. Additionally, the establishment of specialised laboratories and cooperation agreements with business partners for internships contribute positively to the educational environment.

### *3.6.2. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies*

#### (1) Factual situation:

The College has regulations about updating the library annually by asking the Dean of the faculty to procure resources in all study and research directions by the needs of the academic community, and changes in study programmes. Also, internally organised national conferences with their own publication series for over 20 years are helping to add local content to the research resources. However, a stronger inclusion of social partners into an institutionalised committee of study conditions and a systematic review of students' evaluations would be a further step towards achieving the learning outcomes.

Till the year 2020, there were also several projects for updating the IT hardware of over 200 stationary desktop PCs and laptops. Also, 8 interactive whiteboards, multifunction printers, and audio and video recording studio equipment were updated over several years.

The list of social partners with more than 32 companies and organisations just for the Business Management study programme and the economic growth of the area are chances for further planning in the local development strategy to find a mindset of collaboration with different stakeholders of the region to identify needs to go a further step to improve the good facilities



and learning resources for the Business Management study programme. Also, new competencies for the staff specialists in contemporary marketing and design are foreseen in the future, so new sources to develop investment strategies into the College would be an additional value.

(2) Expert judgement:

The college demonstrates a proactive approach to resource management, including updating both library resources and IT hardware and actively engages with social partners to identify and meet the needs of the academic community and its study programme.

***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. Infrastructure modernisation and renovation investment projects focused on improving the quality of studies have been implemented.
2. Own local publications as conference proceedings are an add-on to the stock of literature.
3. Facilities are prepared for students with disabilities.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Distance education classrooms are equipped but the usability and variety of usage for creating a full experience of educational distance service could rise.
2. International students could not use all the infrastructure or topics in the English language.

### **3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**

***Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

***3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies***

(1) Factual situation:

As announced on the College's website, the College gives top priority to the quality of study. The College has an internal Quality Assurance System for Studies, the purpose of which is to ensure the quality of studies and the implementation of the strategic objectives set for studies in order to promote a culture of quality. It presents the model and quality policy of the internal quality assurance system, regulates the development, implementation, monitoring, updating and evaluation of curricula, the organisation of student-centred teaching and learning, teaching progress, learning resources, professional development requirements for teachers, information management and public information processes, and establishes evaluation criteria.

The College operates a formal quality and environmental protection management system, which consists of a description of the Quality and Environmental Protection Management System, a manual of the Internal Study Quality Assurance System, descriptions of 20 procedures, which contain requirements for processes, responsibility for actions performed, and interfaces with other internal and external documents.

The management of the educational process and decision-making is carried out at the level of the College (council, director, academic council, deputy directors, training/study and career centre, quality management representative) and the faculty (dean). The main institution responsible for the quality assurance of the Business Management programme is the faculty (Dean) and its Curriculum Committee. Every year the Academic Council reviews and approves the report on the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in the college.

(2) Expert judgement:

The College has a certified and compliant study quality management system. The College's Quality Management System is certified according to the requirements of international standards LST EN ISO 9001:2015 and LST EN ISO 14001:2015. The studies' internal quality assurance system works correctly.

### *3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance*

(1) Factual situation:

The scope (from the programme's self-analysis to the organisation of internships) and forms (activities in committees and working groups, employer forums, round table discussions, consultations, etc.) of cooperation between the College and institutions of the socio-economic environment, including employers, and its impact on the concept of education, learning outcomes, the study programme and its implementation, were defined.

Students understand well the purpose and scope of their studies. They are involved not only in the process of studying for exams but actively participate in lectures, exercises and seminars. In addition, they are involved in the College's events and engage in extracurricular sports, culture and art activities as well as activities of mutual national and international integration.

The methods, frequency and scope of monitoring, evaluation and improvement of forms of cooperation and the impact of its results on the study programme and improvement of its implementation were defined.

(2) Expert judgement:

Students are involved in the activities of all College institutions dealing with study issues. Social partners are also actively involved in the programme management. The inclusion of both of these groups in internal quality assurance is sufficient. Meanwhile, the involvement of graduates in these activities is not appropriate. Alumni whom the expert panel met during the on-site visit were not members of the PK Alumni Club. In fact, these Alumni met for the first

time after graduation during the on-site visit. A more inclusive and strategic approach to Alumni management is therefore required.

### *3.7.3. Evaluation of the collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

All information related to the implementation of the study course is available on the College's website. This includes the study programme and its evaluation reports, admission requirements, study documents, performance reports, student survey results and student feedback. All necessary information is readily available in Lithuanian. The English version of the programme site does not provide all relevant information.

In addition to the Internet, other channels are used to disseminate information: the intranet, various events, training and meetings.

The published information is reviewed at the relevant meetings to make decisions on how to improve the quality of studies. Improvement plans are drawn up for a specific area, depending on the nature of the information.

#### **(2) Expert judgement:**

The order of collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes meet the basic criteria. To increase internationality, more attention should be paid to presenting information in English.

### *3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI*

#### **(1) Factual situation:**

Student surveys are conducted in accordance with the College's established procedures. Summarised results are published online. The most recent results of the specialism survey were published in May 2023. The results show that 96% of students in the Business Management programme have a positive view of the module and its teaching. After evaluating the opinions of the students, a programme improvement plan is prepared which is also made public.

#### **(2) Expert judgement:**

The results of student surveys show that students have a positive assessment of the educational process and believe that the study climate and organisational culture of the College are suitable. This was also confirmed during the students' meeting with the experts through questions about various aspects of studying, relations with lecturers and the College's administrative staff which was indicated as positive. Methods of education and didactic methods were also discussed.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. According to the students, the culture of studying is positive and the College is open to students' needs.
2. Friendly relations with lecturers and good service for students by the administration.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. The English version of the programme site does not provide all relevant information.
2. The involvement of graduates in internal quality assurance is not appropriate.

#### IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

***Core definition:*** Excellence means exhibiting exceptional characteristics that are, implicitly, not achievable by all.

International cooperation within the framework of the 3LoE project that introduced improvements and innovations to the management studies curriculum is commendable.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<p>The study programme fits poorly with the needs of the local and regional markets. There is not a single module within the study programme that cannot be studied elsewhere. PK must find a way to clearly differentiate its study programme and to work with the market, social partners and employers to redesign the programme in a way that confers with the needs of local and regional businesses.</p> <p>The expert committee has identified a considerable risk of grade inflation at PK. The committee therefore recommends the use of a standard normal distribution scheme to avoid situations where 3/4 of the students get grades equal to or higher than 8 points.</p> <p>Opportunities for students to personalise their studies are limited. Free electives should be offered earlier and in greater quantity and broader use of specialisation tracks should be considered.</p>
Links between science (art) and studies	<p>PK must develop a dedicated research strategy. The outcome of this strategy must be a research policy that defines and rewards high-quality publications and acceptance for participation in well-established management conferences. The policy development process ought to be driven by the very teacher-researchers who are supposed to produce the desired research outcomes. The currently prevailing culture of fear and “error avoidance” must be changed into a culture of trust and (self-) motivation, lest PK will fail again to meet national and international quality standards, particularly in the field of research. Where there is no high-quality research, there cannot be the requested transfer towards high-quality teaching.</p>
Student admission and support	<p>On the one hand, PK claims its programmes are tailored to the needs of the local and regional economy. On the other hand, PK reports on low student intakes for several years in a row now. This contradiction needs to be addressed, preferably in cooperation with representatives of this very local/regional economy and other social partners.</p> <p>More effort should be invested in increasing opportunities and motivation for inbound and outbound student mobility. With 53 bilateral agreements under Erasmus+, significantly higher levels of student mobility should be achieved.</p>

Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<p>It may be difficult to decide whether to appeal and to do so in one day. More than one day is recommended to give students a realistic opportunity to appeal.</p> <p>The HEI should do better to engage with the local employers to ensure that students graduating from the study field programme meet the current and future needs of local industry. To this end, a greater range of local industry stakeholders should be more actively engaged in the process of curriculum design and alumni should be put in closer contact with the current student body (by means of, for example, events, seminars, field trips).</p>
Teaching staff	<p>Internationalisation and staff mobility must be strategically harnessed to a) analyse and compare working conditions abroad and at home and b) embrace the internal change that necessarily results from such analyses and comparisons.</p> <p>A research incentive system must be implemented that is fair, transparent, and independent of “case-based” decisions from the senior management team.</p> <p>True to the SER, the PK’s vision is to educate entrepreneurial students. Entrepreneurial students can be trained only by entrepreneurial teachers. Entrepreneurial teachers require and deserve an entrepreneurial organisational environment. This, in turn, requires the transitions from a top-down governed institution focussed on rule-compliance and error-avoidance to a more bottom-up governed learning organisation.</p>
Learning facilities and resources	<p>Enhance the usability and diversify the usage of distance education classrooms to provide a more comprehensive educational experience for remote learners.</p> <p>Expand the availability of infrastructure in the English language to better accommodate international students' needs.</p> <p>The strength of the economic growth could be used to expand the cooperation with companies for new innovations in topics to reach educational outcomes.</p> <p>Internationalisation as a goal could be supported by regulations for the final thesis to use English-written resources.</p>
Study quality management and public information	<p>The Alumni the expert panel met during the on-site visit were not members of the PK Alumni Club. In fact, these Alumni met for the first time after graduation during the on-site visit. A more systematic and strategic approach to Alumni management is required.</p>

## VI. SUMMARY

The expert committee would like to thank PK for their efforts in preparing the self-evaluation report and for organising a site visit.

The expert committee found PK in a state of struggle, both internally and externally. Externally, the HEI is struggling to attract students in sufficient numbers, is experiencing difficulties with renovating facilities in historic buildings, and is largely disengaged from its own alumni and social partners. Internally, the expert committee found a widespread culture of blame, a stiff research culture with little room or tolerance for innovative work, and a poorly motivated student body.

The Business Management programme of study is undifferentiated and, in many aspects, generic. This is an issue for the College because these types of HEIs are supposed to be much closer to local industry and social partners and thus be able to train specialist graduates capable of delivering ready value to local and regional public and private organisations. In this respect, the expert committee witnessed a clash of worldviews. On the one hand, because the Business Management programme lacks a clearly defined scope and focus, it is not able to attract students - even existing students do not see attractive post-graduation employment opportunities and the expert committee repeatedly heard a sentiment that those who can leave the region to seek more attractive economic opportunities have either already done so or are planning to. The programme of study is inflexible and incorrect grading practices impair students' ability to try harder. On the other hand, employers and social partners reported that business is booming and that there is a significant and rising demand for qualified graduates. The local chamber of commerce complained that local and foreign businesses that invest in the region have to resort to sourcing employees from Kaunas, Vilnius, or even Latvia. The course of action here is clear - PK needs to re-engage with social partners and local employers (as well as their own alumni) in earnest to design a programme of study that can address the needs of the local job market.

PK is also severely lagging behind the expectations of the expert committee in terms of its research performance. A healthy research culture at the institution is non-existent and research outputs are driven by threats of termination. An institutional research strategy that is formulated in close collaboration with the faculty from whom these research outputs are expected is missing but is badly needed. This research strategy must also include a clear and transparent system of research incentives. Currently, decisions on the allocation of financial or non-financial rewards for successful outcomes of research are made on an ad-hoc basis by senior management, which is a textbook way of driving morale into the ground by fostering perceptions of procedural and distributive injustice among the workforce.

The expert committee was pleased to see real efforts and consequences of internationalisation. The 3LoE project resulted in tangible improvements to the study programme and the expert committee saw evidence of international mobility having a positive impact on the competencies of faculty. However, the development of competencies needn't be so top-down driven and a



higher degree of autonomy should be entrusted to faculty members to develop their own networks and academic capabilities.

Despite PK residing in buildings of historical significance, the overall state of facilities is appraised as good. Accessibility is thought through so as to not disadvantage people with disabilities. The library is equipped with specialist equipment for those with visual impairments. In terms of other aspects of accessibility, scheduling practices at PK have been praised as very friendly to those with jobs or family circumstances that prevent regular attendance during regular hours.

Internal Quality Assurance systems are in place and are compliant with the necessary standards. Still, some gaps remain as the alumni are largely absent from the QA process.

**Expert panel chairperson signature:**  
**Prof. Dr. Steffen Roth**