



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**STUDY FIELD of ARCHAEOLOGY**  
**AT KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY**

**Expert panel:**

1. Prof. dr. Jean-Luc Lamboley (panel chairperson), *member of academic community;*
2. Raquel Piqué Huerta, *member of academic community;*
3. Sigita Mikšaitė, *representative of social partners;*
4. Tautvydas Gaižauskas, *students' representative.*

**Evaluation coordinator – Dr. Ona Šakalienė**

Report language – English

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## Study Field Data\*

Title of the study programme	Archaeology and History
State code	6121NX062
Type of studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	First
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Permanent session (4 years)
Credit volume	240
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Humanities
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary education
Registration date of the study programme	-2018

*\* if there are **joint** / **two-fields** / **interdisciplinary** study programmes in the study field, please designate it in the foot-note*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order [No. V-149](#).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to 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 prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *site visit of the expert panel to the higher education institution*; 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 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 was evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

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

### 1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 [Order No. V-149](#). *The visit to the Klaipeda University was organized on the 28 of October, 2022.*

**Prof. dr. Jean-Luc Lamboley**, *professor at the University of Lyon 2;*

**Prof. Dr. Raquel Piqué Huerta**, *professor at Autonomous University of Barcelona(UAB);*

**Sigita Mikšaitė**, *senior museologist at National Museum of Lithuania, Department of Prehistoric Archeology Collections;*

**Tautvydas Gaižauskas**, *1<sup>st</sup> year graduate of Creative Industries at Vytautas Magnus University.*

### 1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	New plan for the study programme (annex 1) : renewed version
2.	
...	

### 1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD POSITION/STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HEI

The Klaipeda University (KU), where about 2500 students are enrolled, is composed of three faculties and two institutes. The History and Archaeology programme is managed by one of these institutes, the Institute of History and Archaeology of Baltic region (BRIAI).

This first cycle programme was born in 2018 from the fusion of two separate study programmes in History and Archaeology. So, it is the first time that this new bachelor programme is evaluated. It is the only first cycle programme belonging to the study field of archaeology field at KU. It contributes to the implementation of one of the priorities of the KU research strategy “Cultures and societies on the Baltic Coast”.

This new study programme is innovative and original because it gives students the possibility to get a teacher’s qualification in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, but it should be pointed out that a first cycle programme in archaeology exists also at the University of Vilnius.

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## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

**Archaeology field study and first cycle** at **Klaipėda University (KU)** is given 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	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	5
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	3
7.	Study quality management and public information	3
	Total:	27

\*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

*3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)*

*(1) Factual situation*

One of the main objectives of the programme is to make students able to understand the links between past and present - consequently, they become lightened citizens who can meet any kind of job in tertiary sector and services.

The combination and integration of history and archaeology offers a larger range of competences. Students can find jobs in archaeology, cultural heritage, memory institutions, but also in comprehensive schools thanks to the optional module of study in pedagogy.

The programme is the one that exists in the KU in this study field.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The integration of two previous study programmes in history and archaeology is a very good initiative, firstly because the number of students is not very high, and then because students can modify their choice of studies in time, switching easily from one subject to the other.

The learning outcomes of the study programme are oriented to develop both scientific and social competences. In this way, graduates can respond to specific needs of local and regional labour market, and they can find easily a job after graduation if they do not want to continue their studies in second cycle. It is noteworthy the effort to adapt the programme to the labour market in the case of teaching needs.

*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*

The study programs is synchronised quite well with the mission, objectives and strategies of KU, fulfilling the main aims, especially because one of the priorities in research activities is the study of cultures and societies on Baltic Coast.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The general and specific competences of the programme are well-designed and are clearly aligned with the mission and objectives of the HEI.

Strong emphasis is made on and sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region which is really a strong point of the programme. This contributes to a good anchoring of the HEI in the regional cultural, social and economic context.

There is a good balance between private and public funds to finance archaeological research programmes.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

The first cycle study programme is performed in compliance with the Description of Study Cycles (Order No. V-1012 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of

Lithuania, 2015) and the Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies (Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education, Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2016) and *Descriptor of the Study field of Archaeology* (Order No V-1991 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 3 November 2021).

Table No. 1. Compliance of the program Archaeology and History and history with the general requirements for first cycle study programs.

Criteria	Legal requirements	In the Program
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	240 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	172
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	37
ECTS for internship	No less than 15 ECTS	16
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 15 ECTS	15
Contact hours (including distance contact hours)	No less than 20 % of learning (unless otherwise stated in the descriptor of study field)	Option A : 1875 /6031 = 31 % Option B : 1560h/6029 =26 % <sup>1</sup>

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

ECTS are allocated in a correct way taking into consideration the student workload. 1 ECTS is around 26,5 hours which fits with the European average (between 25 and 30 h).

The degree corresponds to the level VI of the Lithuanian qualification framework and the level VI of the European Qualification framework.

Thereby, all legal requirements are observed and the programme fit the main standards of the Bologna process. The compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements is fully demonstrated.

### *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 study aims and intended outcomes are listed in a very precise way, so there is no doubt that in such a broad programme, multiple teaching learning techniques are applied and most of the intended outcomes should be successfully met. Each course is described in terms of learning outcomes and all the results of the courses cover the expected results and goals of the whole study programme. The study methods are diversified and adapted to the study subjects. The assessment method based on a cumulative grade system, is always selected according to the specificity of the study method. Practical courses in field archaeology, archives, post-excavation practices and pedagogical practices are included.

<sup>1</sup> Option B is the module of study in pedagogy which gives more room to practice respect to the module A



## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

There is a good balance between knowledge and skills and a good attention is paid to professional and personal competences. The assessment cumulative system allows students to check to measure their progress all along the curriculum. There is also a good balance between final exam, mid-term exam and continuous assessment. The diversity of the assessments reflects the diversity of the teaching/learning methods that appear well adapted to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes. However, in the case of the bachelor thesis, it is not well described how the assessment process guarantees transparency and unbiasedness.

Professional skills in the field of archaeology are very well covered in the study programme which together with the historical approach guarantees students' competences. According to the SER the aim of the study programme is to prepare specialists with fundamental knowledge of archaeological sciences (p. 7 paragraph 17); consequently, practical skills are focused mainly on those related to the archaeological practice. Little information is provided in the SER with respect to how practices are organized, but during the visit satisfying information has been provided. The methodological aspects of History seem somewhat under-represented.

Thereby, the study programme is coherent and consistent, with good attention paid to interdisciplinarity and internationalisation.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The study programme is composed of two main sets of course: the first deal with prehistory and history of Europe and the Baltic Region (spatial and chronological approach), the second encompasses the theory and methodology of archaeology (theoretical approach). At the beginning of the programme, the core courses are combined with courses of general studies and students have the possibility to learn English and German. Students can also choose from the optional second-year modules to specialize in archaeology (alternative A) or teaching (Alternative B).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

At the end of the programme students have acquired the basic competences to practice archaeological activities or teach history in schools. The information given in the SER does not allow to check the progression of the level of competences all along the 8 semesters, but globally the field study is quite coherent and consistent.

According to the self-evaluation the programme is periodically reviewed and improved considering the students' needs and other academic circumstances. The fact that the study programme has included the optional pedagogy module demonstrates the HEI's capability and flexibility to introduce changes in the study programme. However, the mechanism for monitoring the study programme development and improvement is not detailed, but during the visit the students did not express any reservation about this aspect.

### *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*

The students have the possibility to choose foreign languages for professional purposes, to select general courses from the list established annually by the university, to choose alternative and/or free elective courses. They can choose the semester, include more or less courses in the semester, participate in mobility programmes and make internships. The programme offers the possibility of an optional module of parallel studies in pedagogy.

## *2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The programme is not too much prescriptive, so the students have the freedom of choice, thereby making them more self-sustained. The introduction of the pedagogical module is a very good initiative, which is demonstrated by the fact that almost all the students choose this module.

It should be recommended that applicants can seek help from a tutor (such a possibility is not provided in the SER). The personalisation should take into consideration different categories of students whose learning needs are not always the same: disabled students, part-time students who are likely to constitute a major part of the cohorts, students who have already a diploma and look for additional qualifications, students who want to enrol joint honours study programmes.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The list of the five theses is linked to the previous programme of archaeology launched in 2014. No thesis linked to the present programme has been yet defended.

According to the SER, the topics of the thesis are strongly linked to the research areas of the BRIAI and the speciality of the supervisors. The theses are defended in public meetings of the qualification Panel of the study programme which is formed by order of the KU Rector. This panel is chaired by a professor or a senior researcher/lecturer and two other members. Before the defence, the theses are also evaluated by a reviewer.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is not possible to evaluate this item because the first theses of the present programme will be defended only next year.

The intended learning outcomes and competences are clearly defined in the § 29 of the SER and meet the requirements of the 8<sup>th</sup> level of the European Qualification Framework. When choosing the topic, student's interests are taken into consideration and the supervisors pay a good attention to the right progress of the papers.

The assessment of the final theses follows a ten-point grading system but little detail is provided about the criteria in order to ensure equality of the assessment process.

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

#### *(1) Strengths:*

1. The study programme is well adapted to the regional context of the Baltic Coast.
2. The two options of the programme, archaeology and pedagogical module, offer a large range of competences that should allow students to find easily a job.
3. Thanks to the BRIAI there is the possibility of strong links between science and study activities.

#### *(2) Weaknesses:*

No weaknesses

### 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*

The Study programme is supervised by the Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology, which focuses its activities on research. The Institute is internationally recognized and is one of the strongest archaeological research centres in Eastern Baltic Region. Three research groups from the Institute are involved in archaeological research topics relevant to the study programme. According to the SER, 20 lecturers who delivered courses for students in 2021–2022 were BRIAI researchers.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The implication of the Institute researchers in the study programme guarantees the research profile of the teaching staff. The centre is internationally recognized and its lines of research are relevant to the study programme. The quality of publications of the lecturers is very good, they have been published in very recognized international journals of the field of study. However little information is provided about the ongoing research projects, collaborations with other national and international institutions, awards, social impact, the attraction of visiting scientists or position in the national rankings of the field in the last years.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

Most of the lecturers that designed the study units are active in the respective field research and they are working on topics directly related to study programmes. Some of the new courses included in the Study programme are based on the research carried out by the lecturers.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The information provided on the research activity of the lecturers demonstrates they are internationally recognized researchers. The publications of the teaching staff demonstrate the lecturers are active in research and their profiles and their research strongly related to the courses. The link between the content of studies and the latest development in science is well demonstrated.

*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*

Students have the opportunity to approach archaeological research through practical courses (fieldwork and laboratory work) and lectures that involve specialized equipment (underwater archaeology, osteology, experimental archaeology). The practical laboratory work can be used in course papers and bachelor theses.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The mandatory practices and lectures assure the first approach to scientific research; however, it is desirable to increase the possibilities of involvement in scientific work beyond the study programme. For example, promoting participation in archaeological fieldwork, summer schools, etc. It is not clear enough how students are involved in the research activities of the BRIAI. The SER identifies adequately the involvement in research as an area to be improved.

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

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

1. The studies are managed by a Research Center (BRIAI), researchers are also teachers.
2. The research groups from the Institute are involved in archaeological research topics relevant to the study programme.
3. Most of the lecturers that designed the study units are active in the respective field research.

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

No weaknesses

### **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 admission process for the first cycle studies is carried out within the LAMA BPO system by authorization by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (hereinafter, the Ministry). The minimum admission indicators are approved by the Ministry and the established competitive scores are used to determine the competitive queue for state-funded study places.

Every autumn, the KU Senate approves the specific admission requirements for the study programmes. These requirements are immediately published on the KU website and the LAMA BPO website. The required competitive scores and criteria for setting the score are published on the KU website. The information about the study programme in this study field on KU website is in Lithuanian only.

##### ***(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis***

The requirement to at least meet the minimum admission requirements for state-funded and non-state-funded study places ensures equal opportunities during the admission process. The overall admission process is on par with experts' expectations for a first cycle study programme.

#### ***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***

During the admission process, various points are added to the competitive score based on previous academic achievements. Students who have participated in Erasmus+ or international volunteering projects are also awarded separate (parts of a) point towards their competitive score. KU recognizes further previous education according to the orders of the

Ministry, the Rules for Admission of Foreign Citizens to KU and the KU Study Regulations, which are all in Lithuanian. The crediting of foreign study results is decided by the director of the Institute and under the procedure for crediting study results at KU. To ensure student mobility, KU uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

Applicants who have prior qualifications in the same or other higher education institutions can have their study results credited, if the previously studied programmes' study fundamentals scope is equal to at least two-thirds of the scope of the current study programme and is in line with the objectives and course content of the current study programme. Previous non-university qualifications credited cannot take up more than half of the current study programme's volume.

In theory, KU has established an assessment procedure to credit education acquired in a non-formal education environment, though during the existence of the only study programme in this study field, there was no person seeking this kind of recognition.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The procedures for recognizing prior qualifications are clearly listed in the relevant documents and are approved by the Ministry and by the University Senate. The outlined rules ensure a fair prior qualification evaluation and equal opportunities for the applicants to engage in further academic activity.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

KU offers the opportunity to study or have an internship under the Erasmus+ Exchange programme. The information regarding selection competitions is widely spread on social media, newsletters and other Institute's communication channels.

During various events, the Erasmus+ Mobility Coordinator, students and teachers who have participated in the Exchange programme share their experience and interested students are offered the opportunities to get their questions answered. KU is also a member of the Erasmus Student Network and thus is dedicated to providing foreign students all the necessary information and helping them integrate smoothly.

All selected students must enter the Erasmus+ Tripartite Agreement by which KU commits to give credit for the courses taken and passed at the foreign HEI.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

KU does provide opportunities to enjoy the Erasmus+ exchange programme. The University is also member of the EU-CONEXUS university network. Having more possibilities to gain knowledge outside of KU and Lithuania is a chance for developing a more holistic understanding of European history. Considering the low number of applications for the exchange programmes, more attention should be paid to promote efficiently students' outgoing mobility. The SER states that "lack of confidence in their foreign language skills" is one of the reasons why students are reluctant to go abroad. Consequently, foreign languages learning, especially English should also be looked into and possibly more included in the educational process.

### *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 have access to multiple databases and search engines. They are regularly consulted by the lecturers and supervisors and have the opportunity to participate in KU and other institution organised training and seminars.

Apart from state-funded loans/benefits, the University offers a variety of financial incentives, awards and scholarships, ranging from a reduction in tuition fees, to Senate-, Rector- or Institute Director-appointed scholarships for outstanding academic performance.

Social financial support is offered to all students meeting certain criteria. The University encourages students to also attend various events and take part in other social activities outside of KU to improve their social skills and competences.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The University provides a number of forms of student support. In general, the support provided meets expectations. During the visit, students indicated that the provided accommodation meets their needs. The grants and scholarships that the students can get also meet their expectations.

Career assistance could be expanded to live career counselling or CV writing workshops. The faculty readily recognizes the field work that students do when being employed. Students indicate that they don't mind working in their field already during their studies, since they both get experience and make money for living.

Students have a close-knit relationship with each other and with the lecturers, as students get enough academic support from the lecturers, the communication is good.

More attention should be paid to students with mobility disabilities to facilitate their movements on Campus.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

In the SER, the University states that it provides all the necessary information related to studies in a centralised system. The students are welcomed with introductory events and lectures, overviewing the essential information about the University, its systems and the study programme's courses, the evaluation process, upcoming tasks and other relevant information.

Students are also able to consult with staff of the Institute whenever they need guidance on who to contact regarding specific topics. Lecturers are available by email or at an agreed meeting time.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

A centralised system with a single sign-on solution is a welcome solution that provides the ease of use for students and prevents the emergence of "informational black holes" which can happen when using multiple platforms and tools.

Students seem to communicate well with each other, with the lecturers and the faculty staff, so everyone has up-to-date information.

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

#### *(1) Strengths:*

1. Centralised system for providing information to students.
2. Staff is always ready to support students.

#### *(2) Weaknesses:*

1. The participation rate in student mobility programmes should be increased.



### 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*

The Archaeology and History programme is implemented in a full-time form of studies but individual study plans can be drawn up given that most students have jobs. Students can attend lectures freely with the consent of the lecturers. The study units' objectives are updated annually taking in consideration feedback from students, attention is paid to the implementation of the most effective teaching/learning and assessment methods that are always based on a student-centred approach.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The cumulative point system with the high percentage of weighting on the intermediate assessment enables teachers and students to evaluate the progress, and identify problems occurring during the course of the semester. The usage of the web-based platforms is a really modern way of interaction between students and teachers which is likely appreciated by the students.

Most of the approaches in teaching and learning still value the relationship between the teacher and the students, which discourages the students' creativity when applying their skills in circumstances other than University environment. Fostering the motivation and interest of the students is a very valuable practice, usually leading to best possible study results, new ideas, and even the students' engagement in pursuing further academic goals.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

If necessary, students can temporally suspend their studies (no more than one year) ; the defence of the final thesis may be also postponed. Given the small number of students and the importance of the pedagogical staff, each student can be individually supervised.

Special courses are organized for the lecturers to teach them how to deal with students with special needs.

The SER gives a complete list of facilities and software available for students with physical impairments.

Students have a wide range of financial support - a possibility for a reduction of the tuition-fee, applying to scholarships or grants. Social scholarships are available to all students of socially vulnerable groups.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The facilitation of the studying process for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs is being carried out at the University as well as at BRIAI level. As the difficult pandemic situation with Covid-19 has taught many new things relating to online

teaching/learning, this new experience should also be taken into consideration to facilitate successful integration of such students into the study process.

There is little information how institution ensures an adequate social and financial support for refugees from a war zone or being persecuted for civil or political reasons, how the quality of studies is ensured for these students.

### *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*

The Head of the Study programme is in charge of the monitoring of student study progress in collaboration with the lecturers. He/she is also responsible for the analysis of the feedback from students; all suggestions for improvement are submitted to the Committee of Study fields in Archaeology and History for implementation.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is obvious that the Institute takes good care of the students' learning process as students are not left alone with their failures. If all what is written in the documentation also works in practice, the situation is very good.

### *3.4.4. Evaluation of the feedback provided to students in the course of the studies to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress.*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Various forms of feedback are practised throughout the semesters and after the exams. Thanks to formative assessment methods students can check and improve their progression. Students' representatives in the Committee of Study Fields in Archaeology and History can report the results of the different feedback and analyses.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The whole impression from SER as well as of the visit is that Institute fosters a close relationship between students and teachers who seem to be ready to help students throughout their study process constantly. Such positive cooperation is helpful in maintaining student motivation.

The interviewed students do not seem to be eager to receive personal feedback. It is important to analyse this situation closer to understand the reasons for this. Feedback and constant monitoring of progress are very important, especially when more than 60% of the learning time is dedicated to self-study time.

Discussing the tasks of applied practice with the supervisor, analysing and discussing the outcome of it, provides strong feedback to all stakeholders and helps the student to continue the research in the right direction.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

All the graduate students in Archaeology (2018 and 2019) have found a job in the study field or have continued their studies in 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle. The next cohort will graduate only in 2022.

The SER does not indicate if the employers of the graduates have been interviewed and there is no mention of the Government's Strategic analysis Centre.



Students have an additional opportunity to get a qualification of the teacher.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

There is no information in the SER if surveys of Alumni/graduate employment give any data on the situation of graduates. As Archaeology is a very specific subject, a more thorough analysis of employment of the graduates should be carried out. This would give more information for current students to assess their future career opportunities and possibilities, taking into consideration the idea of conducting an analysis of internship institutions in regard to possible employment areas. Getting more information in this field may help to improve study programmes, as well as foster students' motivation. Close communication with the Alumni and social partners as well as having places for internships is very important.

According to SER only one graduate has been employed in the institution of cultural heritage, other graduates chose private sector, carrying out contracted archaeological research.

The motives to involve students in labour market are not clear. During the learning period graduates should develop motivation for continuing professional development, according to professional requirements and needs of local labour market.

The fact that bachelor students can apply for the national certificate that allows archaeologists to lead fieldwork projects is a very positive aspect.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

There is a code of academic ethics established in 2015 with new recast in 2019 and a Description of general requirements for KU students' Written works. On entering the KU, each student has to sign the Declaration of integrity of a student. Impartiality and confidentiality have to be observed by the lecturers.

No cases of violation have been noted over the last three years.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Globally the situation is good. Continue practice in the same way.

For a wider dissemination of information, student community could be more actively involved in the process of maintaining academic integrity, by launching different campaigns devoted to the themes of academic integrity. Creating a system of anonymous reports about violations of academic ethics or the principles of tolerance and non-discrimination could encourage transparency.

During the visit the expert panel has been informed that two students have been dismissed because of plagiarism. That shows that plagiarism is a crucial issue which is to be taken in consideration by the HEI as a matter of urgency.

*3.4.7. 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 Student Dispute Resolution Commission is in charge of the appeals and complaints of students who do not agree with an exam or final thesis assessment. The director of the Institute must notify the response of the Commission within 3 working days from the date of the receipt of the appeal.

Only one student complaint has been received in 2021-2022. No appeals.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The situation is good. Continue practice in the same way.

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. Since students' groups are not large, lecturers can easily monitor students' progression and performance. All problem may be solved quickly.
2. Studies and applied practice directions are oriented to the local labour market, opening the possibilities to all the students in Archaeology to find a job in their field of studies.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. More attention should be paid to plagiarism.

### **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***

The teaching staff is composed of 40 members; 87,5 % are PhD researchers and 9 of them are researchers at the BRIAI; 7 are members of the Faculty of Social sciences and Humanities and teach in the pedagogical module. There are 10 Research Professors whose two are habil., 4 Professors, 11 research fellows, 5 senior lecturers, 3 Junior research fellows or junior lecturers. 5 lecturers, and two teachers under temporary contracts. The five teachers who are not doctors teach secondary subjects like foreign language, psychology or digital methods in humanities. The average age is about 52 years. The average teaching experience is around 17 years.

The research interests of the teaching staff are closely linked to the content of the course they teach.

*Table No. 3. Archaeology field lecturers' compliance with the requirements for the first cycle studies*

<b>Requirement stated in Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies</b>	<b>In the <i>Archaeology and history</i> study program of the first cycle</b>
No less than 50% of the first-cycle university level subjects of study field must be taught by scientists/researchers or renowned artists (art subjects).	87,5 % of the teachers involved in the study programme are PhD researchers.

***(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis***

The teaching-research staff meets all the legal requirements. The public process of appointment and promotion of the teaching staff is strict and rigorous which guarantees that the best people are recruited and re-certified. All the members of the teaching staff may be considered to be active researchers, as is shown by the list of the publications. Even the five lecturers who are not yet doctors, have recent publications and many papers in the archaeology field are published in English and in international reviews. Four of the five most cited Lithuanian archaeologists in the world according to Google scholar in 2021 are members of the BRIAI and give lectures.

The visiting team laments the lack of tables with statistic data in the SER; consequently, it is not possible to have a good idea of the composition of the teaching staff in terms of origin, age, gender, rotation. Fortunately, during the visit some more information could be given and confirmed the feeling of a dynamic team. It seems that good attention is paid to young people so that they can start an academic career. It means that the Department ensures the continuity of research and has sufficient human resources to replace professors when they retire. As statistical data is missing, it is not possible to check if the number of contact hours and the amount of financial support allow all the teachers to have sufficient time and means to conduct research.

As the number of students enrolled in the study programme is not very high (around 30 students), the current ratio between the number of teaching staff of the field subjects and the number of students actually studying is very positive.

Thanks to the good attention paid to interdisciplinarity and employability, the qualifications of the staff certainly correspond to the aims and learning outcomes of the programme as it is presently constituted. The incorporation of young lecturers ensures the continuity of the programme and the inclusion of new topics according to the current research.

### *3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile)*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Mobility has strongly collapsed because of the covid pandemic. However, in-going mobility seems good: in 2019, 6 lecturers came from the Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology in Shleswig (Germany) in the framework of Erasmus+ Teacher Exchange. Three researchers from the BRIAI could go abroad in 2019 and 2021 (USA, France, Finland, Germany, Hungary and Latvia).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The international research programmes of the BRIAI and the possibilities offered by the Erasmus+ teacher exchange allow lecturers to enjoy some mobility. Teaching staff academic mobility is considered by the KU as a good way for the improving of lecturers' qualification and this is stipulated in the regulations, specific funds are provided for in the annual budget of the University. Unfortunately, the SER does not give sufficient data to check how many teachers can benefit of these funds and if they are sufficient.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The main incentive to improve the qualification is the attestation that is given each 5 years when the lecturer has to be renewed for a new term. Every five years the lecturers may be exempted from pedagogical activities for a maximum period of one year if they conduct research or want to improve their own qualification. A variable part of the remuneration

depends on the lecturer's achievements over the past three years. Specific funds can be granted by the research centre or the University to help the lecturers to participate to international scientific events. Specific courses are organized for lecturers to teach them how to work and deal with students with special needs.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The process of appointment and promotion of the teaching staff is strict and rigorous which guarantees that best people are recruited or promoted. The University offers good possibilities to improve the competence of the lecturers, but the SER does not give sufficient data to check how many teachers are engaged and if there is an efficient feedback loop.

Detailed information of the specific courses offered by the University to improve the pedagogical competences of the teaching staff is not provided, neither the information of how these courses are planned.

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. The teaching staff is highly qualified, especially because most of them belong to a research centre (the BRIAI).
2. Young researchers are involved in teaching activities.
3. The ratio teachers/students is excellent.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

No weaknesses

### **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***

The Institute has 4 auditoriums with multi-media projectors, laptops and interactive whiteboard, language classrooms with audio-visual equipment, laboratories and its own specialized library with 34000 publications. The KU Library provides also publications related to the archaeology and history of Central, Eastern and Northern European countries. Students can use online resources (KU Virtual library, electronic catalogue) as well as publications available from national and international databases, like the Virtual Cultural Heritage System of Lithuania very useful for archaeologists. Reading rooms of the libraries have computerized workstations and access to the wireless internet service (Eduroam) is free for all the customers. Virtual learning environment can be used for any kind of teaching/learning activities. Students can order rare books if they are necessary for the final thesis.

Students in archaeology participate to regional excavations (Bilionai and Medvegalis hillforts, St. John's Church I Klaipeda). The BRIAI has all the necessary equipment for excavations (including underwater activities), recording and conservation of the materials (especially bone remains). This equipment is continuously updated and allows the use of both conventional and modern recording techniques. Sometimes students can carry out archaeological internships in foreign institutions.

Students of the pedagogical module undertake pedagogical practices in local and regional educational institutions, they can also participate in the educational process as teaching assistants.

The campus is small and the buildings are at distance of 50-450 m from each-other.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Most buildings are old (beginning of the XXth century) and the last refurbishment took place in 2009. All the premises meet the requirements of work safety and hygiene standards but lifts are still missing and for students with reduced mobility.

The campus is small but offers a good environment for the social life of the students who can live in a good familial atmosphere.

Premises are more than enough given the small number of students in the study field. The means and equipment used for the field study, especially those provided for by the BRIAI, are quite suitable to achieve the intended learning outcomes and all the modern means of communication are available.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

A technical staff is in charge of the monitoring of the equipment, by this way technical problems can be quickly solved.

The update of scientific literature is carried on by the Faculty and KU library staff working on a collaborative basis. The study units are directly monitored by the lecturers who have in charge to update the bibliographies with the latest publications on the subject. There is not a specific planification for improving learning facilities and resources but the focus is on a timely response to problems that arise.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

This item is not very developed in the SER where the financial aspects are not visible. However, the planning and upgrading of the resources needed to carry out the field of studies are managed in a concrete and pragmatic way that seems efficient according to the students interviewed during the visit. The fact that students have not to pay when participating to excavations is a very good point.

*Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

*(1) Strengths:*

1. Good databases and modern equipment for the archaeological studies.
2. The teaching/learning tools are well adapted to practical activities and applied research.

*(2) Weaknesses:*

1. Internships in foreign countries should be encouraged.
2. The Institute's facilities should be more accessible for students with reduced mobility.

### **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*

The internal quality assurance system of the studies complies with the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015.

Quality assurance system of the studies is guaranteed through various processes and procedures related to the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the study programme.

The Committee of Study Fields in Archaeology and History is responsible for the quality and constant improvement of the programme. The head of the study programme is responsible for the implementation, and updating, and submitting to the BRIAI Governing Body of the changes proposed by the stakeholders. The committee cooperates with KU Study Quality Commission, Vice-Rector for Studies, the Study Service, KU Student Union and other administrative units.

The study programme is reviewed and updated annually and evaluated every three years ensuring the coherence between aims, competences, methods, etc.

The changes are approved by BRIAI Governing Body. Since 2020, the Study Fields Committee is the responsible for the approval of the study units in the programme.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The internal quality assurance system is well established and accomplishes the objectives of monitoring and improving of the study programme.

The competences of the Study programme committee are clearly presented. However little information is provided on their composition, how representatives convey the opinion of the different collectives, the periodicity of meetings and the mechanism they use to solve conflicts.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

Students are represented by Klaipėda University Students' Union.

The stakeholders include lecturers, graduates, employers, and practitioners from public and private sectors. Social partners are involved in the assessment and organization of the student practices. The stakeholder representatives are included in the Study Fields Committee and/or self-assessment development groups

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Possibilities of participation of stakeholders, including students in the internal quality assurance are well demonstrated, they are represented in the Study Field Committee, working groups, meetings.

Representatives of the pedagogical area are underrepresented, stakeholders come mainly from the archaeological and historical area.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

The University collects and analyses feedback from students, graduates, teaching and administrative staff. The opinion of students is collected in anonymous surveys at the end of each semester. The results of the surveys are analysed by the Committee of Study Field and the Head of Study Programmes. Considering the results measures to improve the quality of studies are proposed.



Information about resources and other general relevant data for the students are available on the website of KU.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is clearly detailed how the feedback of students is collected however it is unclear how the University collects and analyses feedback from, graduates, staff or employers and social partners. The surveys should be compulsory for all students.

The information on the study programme on the web page is not accessible in English, despite it is mentioned the results of the external evaluation are available on the web page it has not been possible to get access.

*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*

According to the information collected from feedback, students are satisfied with the quality of their studies.

The SER provide several examples of the changes implemented in the study programmes because of the feedback from the surveys.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Insufficient data is provided with respect to the students' participation in the surveys, although the surveys are mentioned, the results are only partially described.

The changes made in the study programme as a response to the students' opinion during the years 2018-2021 demonstrate the good performance of the quality assurance system, in general, and in particular the effectiveness of the Study Programme Committee to detect and solve the problems as soon as it rises.

During the visit students could express their satisfaction with the quality of their studies.

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. The internal quality assurance system of the studies complies with the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015.
2. Students are satisfied with the quality of their studies and their opinion is considered for the improvement of the study programme.
3. Possibilities of participation of stakeholders and students in the internal quality assurance are well demonstrated, they are represented in the Study Field Committee, working groups, meetings.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Information on studies and results of the evaluation and improvement processes is not easily accessible on the web page.
2. The collection and analyses feedback from, graduates, staff or employers and social partners should be improved. The management of the full process should be operated by a specific office at the level on the University because the BRIAI does not have competent technical staff.

#### IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

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

The study programme is directly managed by a Research Centre (the BRIAI), consequently, all the teachers in archaeology are also full researchers. Researchers in such rare specializations like subaquatic archaeology working as lecturers widens and enriches the students' knowledge in archaeology.



## V. RECOMMENDATIONS\*

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	Give more space to foreign languages and include windows of mobility in the plan of studies to encourage and improve mobility.
Links between science (art) and studies	Try to reinforce the involvement of students in the research activities of the BRIAI. For instance, the best final thesis could be presented during a specific seminar or conference. The topics of the thesis might be directly connected to a research programme of the Centre.
Student admission and support	Outgoing mobility should be improved, especially, students who have chosen a career in archaeology should participate to excavations abroad. Students have to break the BRIAI “cocoon” and risk some adventure outside the Baltic Coast.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	A special event could be organized to comment the content of the Declaration of integrity, with a special focus on plagiarism which seems a real problem.
Teaching staff	The average age of the team is more than 52 years. Try to increase the turn over by recruiting young PhD people. The outgoing mobility should be increased to so that internationalization become more effective and more value is added to the research activities.
Learning facilities and resources	All activities take place inside the BRIAI that is not a modern building - some laboratories are very small. It is recommended to enlarge the place using the new buildings available on the campus.
Study quality management and public information	The collection and analyses of feedback from, graduates, staff or employers and social partners should be improved and information on studies should be more accessible, especially, the English version of the University website has to be reviewed and completed. The monitoring of quality assurance should be left not to the lecturers but to specialists in the field.

\*If the study field is going to be given negative evaluation (non-accreditation) instead of RECOMMENDATIONS main **arguments for negative evaluation** (non-accreditation) must be provided together with a **list of “must do” actions** in order to assure that students admitted before study field’s non-accreditation will gain knowledge and skills at least on minimum level.

## VI. SUMMARY

### **Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of the Archaeology study field at Klaipėda University (KU):**

In introduction, the expert panel wants to thank cordially the BRIAI in preparing the SER and organizing the site-visit. The experts have been positively impressed by the warm and familial atmosphere of the BRIAI and the quality of the dialogue between all the participants. No discrepancy has been observed between what is written in the SER and the situation observed during the visit. All the points which were not explicit or were missing in the SER could be checked and clarified during the visit.

First at all, the experts can certify that this first cycle study programme fully complies with all legal requirements and that the teaching-research staff meets also all the legal requirements.

The first positive point that has been observed is the strong local and regional anchorage of the KU. This situation offers many advantages: the links with employers are strong and students can be easily employed, the archaeological activities linked to the research programmes take place in the region and contribute to the valorisation of the regional cultural heritage. There is a good balance between public and private funds to finance these activities. However, there is a risk in living withdrawn into oneself: globalization, whether it is a good thing or a bad thing, is a reality, and consequently internationalization is an obligation. It seems there is a lack of contacts with social partners in other regions of Lithuania, with main cities and main cultural institutions of the whole country.

The same observation also applies to the BRIAI. The main strength of this study programme lies in the fact that it is directly managed and monitored by the Research Centre. This is the second positive point. In fact, the BRIAI constitutes a small community with many advantages: all lecturers are highly qualified, face to face meetings is the main channel to have information and problems may be resolved as soon as they are detected, the administration tasks are reduced and teachers-researchers can save time, students feel at home and have a direct contact with their professors. The testimony of the students auditioned during the visit is unanimous - they feel very comfortable and happy in which appears as a familial cocoon. However too much care deprives the students of the opportunity to work independently and to achieve competences on their own.

This justifies the main recommendation made by the expert panel: make effective the outgoing mobility for both students and lecturers. Remember the famous Montaigne's statement (Essais I, XXV): children have to go abroad «pour froter et limer notre cervelle contre celle d'autrui», a sentence very difficult to be translated, that have been summarized as "travel shapes the young"! The possibilities to do it exist: there is a lot of international agreements, but these agreements are not implemented and remain dead letters. Undoubtedly, the Covid pandemic is the main responsible for this bad situation, but it is time to start again with more energy. In the same perspective, it is recommended to valorise some

specialities of the BRIAI, especially the subaquatic archaeology: summer universities, international conferences could be organized. It is a good way to give more international reputation to the researchers, to increase the added value of the research programmes, to be more attractive for foreign students, but also for the local students who, paradoxically, do not seem very interested by this activity.

The third positive point is the quality of the study programme which demonstrates a good balance between history and archaeology and gives a complete overview of all the disciplines linked to the archaeological field, included archaeometry. The module of study in Pedagogy (alternative B) is also a good example of flexibility, very appreciated by the students and the social partners, and the collaboration with the faculty of social sciences and humanities is excellent. This alternative module offers a large range of competences that should allow students to find easily a job. However, the expert panel wishes to point out a risk: the balance between the number of students who choose the pedagogical module and those who choose archaeology is a concern, very few students choose the alternative A. It is true that students with pedagogical profile have wider skills and can also work in the field of archaeology. Nevertheless, it may be a problem for the training of the new generation of Lithuanian archaeologists and the attractiveness of this study programme might be depreciated. It is very important that the graduates of this study programme who have chosen the alternative B, can apply to the national certification that allows archaeologists to lead fieldwork projects. If there is a soft competition between the BRIAI researchers and the lecturers of the faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, the last word should go to the archaeologists.

Finally, some minor observations can be made about the learning facilities and the study quality management. All the activities take place inside the BRIAI building. This situation reinforces the cohesion of the community, but the building is old and some rooms are small: for instance, the place dedicated to the laboratories is too much reduced. It could be good to go outside the BRIAI building and use some modern facilities on campus. As far as the management of the quality assurance process, it is recommended to leave this activity to technicians specialized in the field at the level of the University.

In spite of these minor observations, the global evaluation is very positive and most of the statements indicated in the box “weaknesses” are not real weaknesses *stricto sensu* but should be understood as “how to be more efficient”.

**Expert panel leader**  
**Prof. dr. Jean-Luc Lamboley**