



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD of MANAGEMENT
at Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija

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Report language – English

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Study Field Data

| | |
|--|---|
| Title of the study programme | <i>Administration of Institutions and Companies</i> |
| State code | 6531LX008 |
| Type of studies | College studies |
| Cycle of studies | First cycle |
| Mode of study and duration (in years) | Full-time (3 years) |
| Credit volume | 180 |
| Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification | Professional Bachelor's Degree in Business Management |
| Language of instruction | Lithuanian |
| Minimum education required | Secondary education |
| Registration date of the study programme | 2002-08-30 |

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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 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 (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 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 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 *23rd of May, 2023*.

Prof. dr. Teresa Paiva (panel chairperson) *Professor of Management and Economics Department of Polytechnic University of Guarda, Portugal;*

Prof. dr. Erik Reimer Larsen, *Professor of Management, Department of Management, Aarhus University;*

Assist.Prof. dr. Tomi Solakivi, *Assistant Professor of Maritime Business and Policy, Department of Marketing and International Business, University of Turku, Finland;*

Mrs Dovile Alijosiute, *Senior Project Manager, a/s Danske Bank, Lithuania;*

Ms Joana Jasilionytė, *student at Vytautas Magnus University.*

1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the SER 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. | Description of study subjects; |
| 2. | Examination paper Tasks and Student's answers; |
| 3. | Examples of Final Theses; |
| 4. | Internship methodology and report examples; |
| 5. | Answers; |
| 6. | Answer to 8 question; |

1.4. BACKGROUND OF MANAGEMENT FIELD STUDIES AT KLAIPĖDOS VALSTYBINĖ KOLEGIJA

Klaipeda State University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter KVK) is a state higher education institution for college studies, based on professional practice and applied research, and experimental development, provides higher college education and lifelong learning.

It is organised in three collegial government bodies: KVK Council, KVK Academic Council and the Director. The advisory bodies are the KVK Management, the Directorate and the Dean's Office (also the Collegiate Advisory), the Research Council and the Labour Council. Regarding the administrative units, KVK has several departments: Public Relations Department, International Relations Department, Projects Department, Library, Finance and Accounting Department, Information Technology Centre, Personnel Department, Law and Public Procurement Department, Infrastructure Service, Quality Centre, Study and Career Centre (SKC), Centre for Applied Research Activities, and Training and Service Centre. KVK, established in 2009, has three faculties (Business, Technology, and Health Sciences) and ten departments that administer the implementation of twenty-three study programmes in 21 fields of study.

It is located at Klaipeda and has 2506 students, of which 34 % are in the Faculty of Business, 39 % in the Faculty of Health Sciences and 27 % in the Faculty of Technology. The KVK Business Faculty, through its Business Administration Department, has offered and implemented the Administration of Institutions and Companies (hereinafter AIC) study programme since 2002, which was previously evaluated positively and accredited for 6 years by external experts appointed by SKVC on 13 December 2016 (SKVC certificate of 28 July 2017, N.SV5-75) and some recommendations were made and answered during this period.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Management study field and *first cycle* at Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija 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 | 3 |
| 3. | Student admission and support | 4 |
| 4. | Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment | 3 |
| 5. | Teaching staff | 3 |
| 6. | Learning facilities and resources | 4 |
| 7. | Study quality management and public information | 4 |
| | Total: | 25 |

*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 the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)

The aim and outcomes of AIC (Administration of Institutions and Companies) study programme is demonstrated in SER, and was supported by the results of the field visit, and they are accordingly adjusted with the labour and society needs. It is recognised by the expert panel that the KVK administration's effort to seek business and social entities' opinions and KVK promotes their incorporation into the study programme. The social partners, students and graduates suggestions are collected from the annual roundtable meetings, surveys and the Final Thesis Qualification Commission. Graduates and Social Partners demonstrated their satisfaction with the student's work integration and performance, feeling that KVK was able to develop their competences and skills in a practical approach and in tune with the real and actual context in the job market. It is expected that the AIC graduates will be able to put into practice their management knowledge and their capability in applied research and critical thinking. In this regard, the expert committee advises increasing the research competencies of students' by being involved more effectively in projects with businesses and or other social entities.

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

The KVK mission to train specialists in the labour market is achieved in the management field and first-cycle AIC study programme. This mission is pursued through the strategy of being near the market and assessing their needs. In this way, they seek to contribute to the western region of Lithuania, helping with knowledge and applied competencies and skills. The external committee assesses that there is an effort on applied research to answer social partner's problems. However, there is space for improvement in terms of student's participation in the process and the number of projects developed.

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

There is an alignment with legal requirements, presented in SER, by listing all important rulings and regulations upon which the study programme rests. General requirements for the first-cycle study programmes are presented in Table No. 1.

Table No1. Administration of Institutions and Companies Study programmes' compliance to general requirements for first cycle study programmes of College level (professional bachelor)

| Criteria | General* legal requirements | In the Programmes |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------|

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Scope of the programme in ECTS | 180, 210 or 240 ECTS | 180 ECTS |
| ECTS for the study field | No less than 120 ECTS | 169 ECTS |
| ECTS for studies specified by college or optional studies | No more than 120 ECTS | 6 ECTS |
| ECTS for internship | No less than 30 ECTS | 45 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 | 40,52% of the study programme |
| Contact hours | No less than 20 % of learning | 49,56% |

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

It is possible to observe the interrelation between the learning outcomes, teaching/learning methods and the courses of AIC study programme in SER. The courses in the programme seem to rely on a wide array of teaching methods and assessment methods that are tied to the nature of the courses. There are guest lecturers and company visits, and most teachers hold significant business experience in the courses they teach. Proximity between teachers and students was observed, which helps the teaching and learning process achieve good results. Nonetheless, the expert committee's assessment advises the pursuit of greater implementation of innovative pedagogies throughout the subject courses to continue effectively promoting critical thinking, creativity, and innovation.

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

The study programme is provided in full-time and sessional studies (for students already working) forms. There is a balance of credit layout by semester, and the contact hours are complemented by students' consultation whenever they need. The internships, at the end of each year, are monitored by the Head of the study programme and supervisor that, along with the social partner, ensures the learning outcomes. Still, it was observed by the external expert committee that a need for the student's learning outcomes would impact more in their ability of entrepreneurship and analytical skills. The entrepreneurship competencies must be developed within the courses by applying innovative pedagogical methods. The simulation context for the entrepreneurship competences development regarding business creation is an overall procedure in the HEI of Lithuania in the management field but should be complemented with acceleration and incubation partnerships to translate the impact of the innovation and entrepreneurship promotion of the learning process. Also, it is important to note that not all students from the AIC programme are sufficiently exposed to the offers of the social partners.

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

KVK provides conditions for an individual study plan, which is composed of individual subjects/modules according to the college AIC study programme. Students choose their optional subjects in the Moodle platform, from a list provided, which has been changing every year. They are allowed to do it in the second in a total of 6 ECTS. Although the external committee praises students' opportunities to choose, it assesses that there should be a more impactful process for individual choice, with more fixed options and/or specialised options defined by the market needs.

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

The procedures and regulations underlying the final thesis preparation, writing and defence are in place and transparently listed in SER. The students undertake real projects for a specific company and directly involve social partners in the process of envisioning the final thesis. This is positive and is aligned with the KVK learning outcomes and professional profile. Although the final thesis analysed by the external committee complies with what is expected in terms of structure and content, there is a need to incorporate a more analytical and empirical approach by using SPSS or other software or another tool, more often to incorporate a wider contribution to the study results achieved.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Good integration pursuit of the labour market needs and internships at the end of each year, that allow a practical and real context approach.
2. The study programme complies with the learning outcomes and professional profile pursuit.
3. Teaching and assessment methods adequate to the courses diversity

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Improve the optional courses into a more transversal skills development with a wider impact on the individual student path and weight in the curriculum.
2. Need to spread the innovative pedagogies into the different courses to ensure a more applied and entrepreneurial teaching and learning process.

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

The research carried out by the faculty at KVK is focused on applied research, some of which is sponsored by external organisations, as part of “commissioned” studies useful for the external partner (2020 - 11 projects; 2021-11 projects; 2022 - 4 projects). The SER highlights a number of interesting and successful projects, many of which have direct impact on practice. There is also a growing number of publications from the college (2020 -11 publications; 2021 - 16 publications; 2022 - 11 publications). Likewise, there is a reasonable level of participation / publications in conferences (2020 - 22 papers; 2021 - 27 papers; 2022 - 23 papers). All indicating that the faculty is active in the research field.

The College has a policy that gives bonuses for publications and completion of applied research, which is commendable, as it provides an incentive for the faculty to participate in this academic activity.

While the college has a number of policies to promote research, it would be desirable to (slowly) begin to focus more on international journals and possibly more central subject conferences, e.g. the Academy of Management Meeting, as well as international publications. While this might take a considerable amount of time, it is important that the change be initiated as soon as possible. This might require changes in the reward system, e.g. recognition for submitting, or revise or resubmit, as it is likely that the publication time will increase.

While we acknowledge that this is a college of applied science, faculty should consider separating the supervision of student projects from their own research, i.e., to a lesser degree teachers should not base their research on projects where the student’s work has been the primary driver.

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

The link/match between the content of study /subject taught can be observed as satisfactory. There is a reasonable wide scope of publications /projects among the teaching faculty. The topics within the degree seem to be in line with what can be expected at a degree at that level. It might make the degree more attractive if some of the course names were more in line with “normal practice” e.g. *Human Resource Management* instead of *Personal Management* – however, this might be more of a translation issue. It is commendable that there are courses like Professional Ethics. Overall a reasonable link between the studies and the latest development in the field of management, with some minor possibilities for improvement.

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

The students are involved in applied research projects and have the possibility to participate, and there seem to be sufficient opportunities for the students to get involved in research projects, e.g., with social partners. The college seems to have an overall good performance in this area.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Incentive system for research.
2. Relatively good coverage of the scientific area in relation to the study area.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. It would be beneficial to focus more on international publications in the longer term and major international conferences in the medium term.

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

Students are admitted to the study field through joint admission to state-funded or state non-funded places. The admission process for AIC (Administration of Institutions and Companies) study program is carried out using LAMA BPO (Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for the Organization of General Admissions). Students are admitted to the study program based on their admission grades.

For non-state-funded study places, students are required to have at least upper secondary education and have passed at least one state exam. The requirements for admission to state-funded places are determined by the legislation of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of Lithuania. The competitive entrance score is calculated from the following state exam results: mathematics, history/IT/geography/foreign language, Lithuanian language and a third subject which does not coincide with other mentioned subjects. The majority of students (2020 - 32 out of 54, 2021 - 21 out of 35, 2022 - 18 out of 34) in the management program have signed study agreements for state-non-funded places.

Between 2020 and 2022, the number of signed agreements decreased (2020 - 54; 2021 - 35; 2022 - 34), while the average competitive score of admitted students remained stable (2020 - 4,49, 2021 - 4,45, 2022 - 4,48) . During the period analysed, the admission of foreign students to full-time studies in the field of Management did not take place.

The admission requirements were made available to the public through various channels, including the KVK website (www.kvk.lt), study exhibitions such as “Studijų regata” and “Studijos”, events organised by Gymnasiums, open days at KVK, magazines like “Kur stoti” and “Reitingai” the Tamo virtual class register, and the social media platforms of the Business Administration Department and KVK (LinkedIn, Facebook), among others.

The expert panel has recognized that KVK follows a specific procedure for the selection and admission of students. The declining student enrollment has raised concerns. Introducing the

admission of foreign students at KVK is seen as a potential measure that could contribute to stabilising the student numbers.

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

There are defined procedures for the evaluation of foreign qualifications and partial studies. During the period being reviewed, 32 recognition cards were prepared. Most often, the learning outcomes are recognised for students in the AIC (Administration of Institutions and Companies) study program who have participated in the Erasmus+ exchange program, returned after an academic leave of absence or studied in other higher education institutions.

At KVK higher education institution, the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning achievements are carried out. However, during the period under review, individuals did not avail themselves of this opportunity.

The expert panel group identified that KVK has a defined procedure for recognizing foreign qualifications, study periods, and prior non-formal and informal learning.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

Students have the opportunity to study at foreign higher education institutions and undertake internships in foreign organisations under an exchange program. Detailed information about mobility opportunities, selection criteria, and competition conditions is provided through organised events held twice a year during the spring and autumn semesters.

In the academic years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022, foreign students from Turkey, Albania, Austria, Romania, Italy, Hungary, Germany, Portugal, and Georgia enrolled in the AIC study programme for part-time studies and internships. During the period under review, the total number of incoming students for part-time studies was 18, and for internships, it was 5

Outgoing students show a preference for internships over studying abroad, which can be attributed to the shorter duration of internships and the desire to gain practical experience. During the period under review, the total number of outgoing students for part-time studies was 4, and for internships, it was 9. The expert panel noted that there is an insufficient number of students participating in academic mobility programs. KVK should increase its efforts to encourage students to engage in these mobility programs. During discussions with the student panel, it became evident that students lack motivation to take part in mobility programs for part-time studies abroad because it requires them to leave their obligations, such as jobs and families, for an extended period of time.

The expert panel group identified that students have various opportunities to participate in academic mobility programs, but they lack motivation, especially for long-term programs. KVK needs to put in more effort to encourage student participation in mobility programs.

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

The KVK students are provided with academic, psychological, financial, and social support.

Academic support is provided through consultations with teachers, access to study materials on the Moodle platform, and monitoring of attendance and performance.

KVK offers psychological assistance to students facing various difficulties, including communication and interpersonal issues, emotional challenges, lack of motivation, academic struggles, and more. Additionally, a seminar on communication skills was conducted by a KVK psychologist specifically for students in the Administration of Institutions and Companies study programme.

KVK provides financial and social assistance to its students. This includes scholarships, study loans, social benefits, and targeted support for disabled students. In addition, students with special needs receive additional financial and academic support, and the university is equipped with facilities to accommodate their needs.

Students are informed about the support system. However, students feel that financial support, such as scholarships, is not sufficient for their needs.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

KVK offers a first-year students' adaptation program, which includes organising lectures on Introduction to Studies. These lectures provide essential information about the study program, study schedule, support services, and opportunities for self-expression. The program involves a diverse group of staff members and includes interviews with students to assess its effectiveness. Additionally, students have the option to seek consultations with teachers if they face challenges during lectures or experience other academic difficulties.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The admission processes are clear and well communicated.
2. There are clear procedures for the evaluation of foreign qualifications, partial studies, and prior non-formal and informal learning.
3. Students are well-informed about the various support systems provided by KVK.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The participation rate of students in mobility programs is low, and there is also a lack of motivation to explore these opportunities.
2. Scholarships are not sufficient to meet the needs of students.

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

In the Administration of Institutions and Companies study programme students' study in a full-time form of studies (full time and sessional studies). If there is a need, students can also request a flexible study schedule. After the pandemic, KVK continued to have lectures online (about 30 % of lectures, mostly theoretical). All subjects of the Administration of Institutions and Companies study programme in the field of Management are taught by distance learning and account for about 30 percent of the content of the study subject. Also, all subjects are available online, so if a student, for different personal reasons (illness, psychological conditions), cannot attend the lectures, he/she can join lectures online.

Study and assessment methods are selected based on Bloom's taxonomy (remember, understand, apply, analyse, evaluate, create). The teaching process includes lectures and active study methods (simulation enterprise; performance of research and creative tasks; problem-based issues; case studies; concept mapping; presentation of the project, self-assessment; reflection; public discussions; participation in project activities; lectures given by the social partners and meetings with social partners in their enterprises (at least 2 visits per semester); assignments given by the business representatives related to the activity of a specific enterprise; volunteering of the students by taking part in the events and helping with activities; participation in the practical-scientific, student conferences by publishing and presenting papers, etc.) as well as practices (Internships) (SER Annex 2). The average percentage of independent work in study programmes in the field of Management studies is 50,44%, and practice is 40,52% (SER table 2, p.7 or see table no. 1 above). Students also have the possibility to work with different business processes, real documents and different roles of the company in the simulative enterprise on KVK premises.

KVK systematically reviews subjects, study progress and study field to ensure students' needs. Study methods are reviewed once per year, students are also part of the review process. After each semester, students fill survey about the subject and teaching methods, and then the KVK administration, together with teachers, review feedback and adjust teaching methods based on the student's needs. Alumni and social partners participate in every second-year study field review, provide feedback and collaborate with colleges in the study field review process.

KVK provided information on how graduates' feedback was implemented: added topics to strength skills: teamwork, relationships, emotional intelligence, character peculiarities of people of different generations, and strengthening communication skills, self-management, time management and others. Social partners' capabilities are also used to strengthen practical knowledge skills.

Expert panel group identified that even if KVK takes into account students' and existing social partners' needs in choosing teaching methods, there is still a need to strengthen students' self-

confidence, bravery in relation to the global world and meeting foreign companies or universities and work in virtual teams with different digital tools.

Learning outcomes assessment consists of an assessment of knowledge and its application, an assessment of general and special skills and an assessment of value attitudes. Used assessment methods: examination, problem-based questions, tests, interview, short-answer questions, presentation of an individual paper, problem-based assignments, case studies, preparation and presentation of project work, demonstration of practical skills in the workplace, reports of internships, etc. (SER p.28). Every subject has interim assessments, so learning outcomes are tracked systematically during the year.

After the studies students can continue second cycle studies in the field of business management and public administration in other Lithuanian or other European countries' higher education institutions.

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

KVK building premises are fully accessible for students with special needs. Also, there is additional IT equipment for students with special needs in the library (table, computer, keyboard, and mouse for students with movement disability). Students, during the admission interview, identify needs, and KVK prepares premises and needed software for the student to study based on his/her needs. Teachers are also prepared to work with such students, the only recommendation would be to strengthen teachers' and staff knowledge on how to identify students with special needs (especially if the needs are not visible or the student feels anxiety to let the staff know) if a student did not identify them during an interview with administration staff.

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

Students study progress monitoring is done continuously and systematically. KVK uses EDINA as an IT tool to plan the studies, monitor student study progress and provide feedback for the students.

The formal monitoring process goes through all study years from the first lecture, where expected learning outcomes are presented till the student's achievements presentation to the academic community at the end of the study year. Students get feedback via EDINA and directly from the teacher after each assessment. Also, if needed, teachers provide additional academic support for the students (consultations and etc.).

Close collaboration with teachers allows students to monitor and plan study progress throughout the year. Students can apply gained knowledge during several Internships (practices) during all study periods and get feedback from institutions about their preparation and knowledge about different business areas. Overall feedback about Internships (First Internship is in a simulative enterprise (in KVK premises) and later in public or business

institutions) is positive. Most of the students continue their careers in the same places where they had their internship (practice).

Students start gathering data for their final thesis during the Internship and continue to work with the chosen problem until the final thesis is prepared. This shows KVK's systematic approach to apply theoretical and practical knowledge during studies.

Internship feedback is used not only to evaluate student knowledge but also to evaluate studies, so KVK connects gathered information and uses it not only in monitoring studies' progress but also for the studies planning.

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

KVK conducts satisfaction of graduates in the quality of studies annually, and graduates' employers' feedback about graduates' work every second year. KVK also organises round table discussions with business partners, students and graduates to review and improve study quality (SER p. 31).

KVK collects data not only about graduates' employment, but also about their positions and career after graduation. The data is received from the Employment Service, the Government Strategic Analysis Centre, the State Social Insurance Fund Board under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Education Management Information System and from the graduate survey via the Career Management Information System (KVIS) (SER p. 31). Statistics and other data, round table discussions show that graduates have needed for business or public institutions skills and are in demand in the labour market. Most graduates, after graduation, continue their careers in high-skilled job positions. The average of graduate employment is 76.56% (SER p3.1).

KVK once a year organises Alumni days, during which feedback about studies and suggestions about study improvements are gathered.

Identified improvement areas from a survey and round table discussion: lack courage and ability to communicate, lack teamwork and planning skills and flexibility; foreign language skills should be improved; more attention should be paid to the performance of practical tasks during lectures, to more extensive communication with representatives of different organisations and helping students gain the work experience required by employers. (SER p. 31, 44) were implemented in adding new subjects or topics to the existing courses and new course development. Feedback about changes is also discussed with social partners and graduates.

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

Academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination principles implementation ensure documents: the Code of Academic Ethics of KVK and the Description of the Study Result Recognition Procedure of KVK. The Academic Ethics Committee is responsible for handling

cases of violations of academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination principles. (SER p. 33).

In addition, every student signs the Declaration of Good Faith of the Student (SER p. 33).

No cases of breaches of the principles of academic integrity, tolerance or non-discrimination.

The expert panel group identified that even if the KVK main procedures are clear and are in place, Students have a weak understanding of KVK procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

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

The Appeals Submission and Examination Regulations regulate the procedure for submitting and examining appeals and complaints. The Appeals Committee handles the evaluation and/or assessment of learning outcomes and defending of final theses violation cases.

There were no appeals or complaints about the study process or examination procedures in the field of Management.

Expert panel group identified that even if the KVK main procedures are in place, Students have a weak understanding of KVK procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Close collaboration between students, teachers and administration staff, support to the students during the study process, and various ways on how the students can be consulted if there is a need for academic or other support.
2. Subject material and teaching methods are reviewed systematically. Students, alumni and social partners formally participate in study planning, review and quality improvement processes, have several formal and informal channels on how to provide feedback and are informed about implemented changes.
3. Teaching methods system where the first internship is in the simulative enterprise in KVK premises (where students get an opportunity to work with different business processes and documents) and later the Internship in real business or public institutions creates an environment favourable for both Students and their employers.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Weak students' self-confidence, bravery in relation to the global world and meeting foreign companies or universities and working in virtual teams with different digital tools.

2. Even if academic integrity, tolerance, non-discrimination and appeal procedures are in place, Students have a weak understanding of KVK procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

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

The formal qualification of teachers at KVK is sufficient. Of the 23 teachers in the study programme, 4 are associate professors, and 19 are lecturers. 6 of the teachers (26%) hold a doctoral (PhD) degree in the field of study. Even as the share of doctoral degree holders can be considered, the study programme would benefit from adding more academic competence in the teaching staff. In addition to academic qualifications, the teaching staff in the study programme have substantial practical working experience, on average 19,7 years.

Out of the 23 teachers, 19 work at least half-time in the college. As the part-time staff might be less connected with the college and the college faculty, the division between full-time and part-time staff should be considered. The college has acknowledged this, as there is a strategic plan to increase the share of full-time teachers by 2029.

Related to the composition and qualifications of the teaching staff, the turnover has been low. In new recruitments, the college keeps a minimum requirement of a master's degree and three years of practical work experience. In addition, the recruitment needs and required competences are discussed at the department level in individual recruitment decisions, which gives flexibility to find suitable candidates.

In addition to full-time and part-time teaching staff, the college also utilises external lecturers, both Lithuanian and international. The teaching staff is adequate both from the perspective of number of teachers as well as their qualifications to achieve learning outcomes.

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)

The teaching staff working in the AIC study programme also carry out studies in the Erasmus+ exchange programme for foreign (international) students: give lectures, conduct seminars and workshops, organise outgoing lectures, prepare exam papers, and supervise the final theses. Methodological study material in English for the Erasmus+ and international students is provided in the Moodle environment. The teachers who teach study subjects in English account for 80%. The college has an Internationalisation strategy that is renewed every three years. The strategy deals not only with the mobility of students and staff but also with projects, research etc. Such a structured approach can be considered as a sign that the college is moving in the right direction regarding the internationalisation of the college.

An invitation to participate in the “Erasmus+ “programme is for academic staff sent twice a year, followed by a selection process. As for recent developments, In 2022, 8 teachers working in the study programme participated in outgoing mobility, and 17 professors and lecturers representing foreign higher education institutions arrived. These figures show that the college and the study programme are internationally connected. However, the figures also indicate an imbalance between incoming and outgoing teachers. For the college and the study programme to benefit from internationality, more emphasis should be put on a larger share of the teaching staff engaging in international activities more frequently.

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

KVK responds to the Guidelines of the Improvement of Competencies of the Teaching Staff of Higher Education Institutions, which determine strategic directions for the development of competences of higher education teachers, activities/procedures for planning, organising and monitoring the improvement of competences. Following this, an individual professional development plan is drawn annually for each staff member, taking into account the scientific interests, the field of the study subject taught and the preferences of the college.

Each teacher is able to decide and define, together with the head of the department, which competences would and should be improved in line with the decisions of the study programme committee.

The college allocates financial resources for the professional development of the teaching and academic staff in the annual budget. This includes possibilities to participate also in external courses in substance matters as well as pedagogical and language courses. As a sign of the commitment of the college to developing the competences of the staff is the possibility to account for some training and course hours as teaching in work time allocation. In addition, the college supports the staff in PhD studies by allowing a free schedule for attending lectures as well as financial support through salary. Therefore, it can be concluded that the college provides good possibilities and resources for development.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The competence development of the teaching staff is systematically supported by the college.
2. Teachers are given possibilities of internationalisation - at the same time, a larger share of the staff should be included.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Many members of the staff work part-time for the college. Increasing the share of full-time staff would most likely make the college and programmes more coherent.
2. Internationalisation of the degree programmes (both staff and students are limited).

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

The college is able to provide sufficient material resources for teaching. This applies to classroom facilities, as well as hardware and software. The college has a strategy for digitalisation of studies and is currently setting a 30% online teaching requirement. This requires investments in equipment and teacher competence development.

The purchasing strategy of the college is centralised, as everything (hardware, software etc.) is purchased through public procurement according to a predefined annual plan. It would seem that the teaching staff, as well as the students, consider the material resources of the college sufficient for teaching, studies and research.

The library provides sufficient availability of course books both in Lithuanian and English language. The staff and students are able to access a large selection of online book and journal article databases for study and research purposes, including EBSCO, Taylor & Francis, Springer and Emerald. The college utilises only centralised databases of the Lithuanian university libraries.

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

The upgrading of resources is done through a priority list that is prepared annually in co-operation with the college administration and the teaching staff. The priority list is prepared based on short-term and long-term investment needs to meet the requirements of the study programme. This formal procedure is a basis for an annual procurement and expenditure plan. The college has recently upgraded the facilities in order to enhance the conditions for students. This demonstrated that the college takes the adequacy of resources seriously, and is both willing and able to improve them as needed.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The college is acknowledging the role of digitalisation, and has made a concrete, strategic level plan to digitalise 30% of studies, also allocating resources for this.
2. The college provides sufficient IT and literature resources for the staff and students.
3. The college has a formal procedure on how investments in hardware, software etc., are coordinated.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. None.

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

KVK has a systematic assessment of the internal quality of the studies. This includes feedback from students (after each semester) and processes for how this feedback is reviewed and evaluated. Feedback is also sought from social partners and other stakeholders on a yearly basis as well as a more comprehensive survey bi-annually. The study program committee uses the collected feedback to improve the program and as well as making necessary changes that have been highlighted in the feedback. It should be noted that there might be an issue in making the system know / understood by the students as mentioned in 3.4

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

Students and social partners participate in the study program committee, which has an influence on all aspects of the study program. There is, furthermore, a yearly roundtable with social partners where the knowledge and skills are discussed. The social partners expressed their satisfaction with the process and their involvement. Students expressed that they feel they have influence and that their comments on courses are taken seriously. Any action taken as a consequence of the received feedback is communicated back to the stakeholders. The committee finds that this process works satisfactorily.

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

The collection of data regarding the studies, evaluation and improvement, including the type of data and the frequency of these (semester and yearly, depending on the data), are systematic and sufficient as a basis for the quality processes and the general update of courses and information about the degree. The public information about the degrees, e.g. web pages, seems adequate. It might be beneficial if the students and social partners were more aware of how their input was helping to shape the future changes in the degree. Overall this area seems to be satisfactory, but have the possibility for improvement with regards to making clear the impact of the received feedback

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

There is a systematic collection of data from all stakeholders. The collection of data uses a variety of methods, from surveys, roundtables and broader surveys of external stakeholders. Both students and social partners are satisfied with the process and the way in which they are consulted with respect to the use of the collected data.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Systematic collection of data from all stakeholders.
2. Close connection and involvement of social partners.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Ensuring that all stakeholders understand the use of the collected data

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

| Evaluation Area | Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle) |
|--|--|
| Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the optional courses into a more transversal skills development with a wider impact on the individual student path and weight in the curriculum. 2. Need to spread the innovative pedagogies into the different courses to ensure a more applied and entrepreneurial teaching and learning process. |
| Links between science (art) and studies | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be beneficial to focus more on international publications in the longer term and major international conferences in the medium term. |
| Student admission and support | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make more effort to motivate students to participate in academic mobility programs. 2. To strengthen students' financial support and make it more sufficient for students' needs. |
| Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To strengthen students' self-confidence and bravery in relation to the global world and meet foreign companies or universities, and work in virtual teams with different digital tools. 2. To strengthen teachers' knowledge on how to identify students with special needs (especially not visible) even if a student did not identify them during an interview with administration staff. 3. To strengthen Students' knowledge about academic integrity, tolerance, non-discrimination and appeal procedures. |
| Teaching staff | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many members of the staff work part-time for the college. Increasing the share of full-time staff would most likely make the college and programmes more coherent. 2. Internationalisation of the degree programmes (both staff and students are limited). |
| Learning facilities and resources | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep on upgrading and maintaining the facilities as of now. |
| Study quality management and public information | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all stakeholders understand the use of the collected data. |

VI. SUMMARY

KVK is a college in the Lithuanian higher education system that shows organisation and engagement of its staff in complying with the legal requirements within the bachelor's degree in the management field education offer. It presents a very practical and within-context study programme with strong business collaboration. As an applied science HEI, it has to develop its research skills and open the student engagement in financed research projects in a project-based approach. The need for continuous improvement for the soft skills development should continue to impact on the individual student path and weight in the curriculum. The entrepreneurial approach enhanced by the use of innovative pedagogies into the different courses could ensure in a stronger way the development of those skills and competencies in need in the labour market.

The internationalisation of the institution is something to be improved, not only throughout the foreign language development needed but also in a proactive and entrepreneurial perspective to enrol students in project-based and challenged-based learning and encourages their confidence, risk taking attitude and mindset.

The expert panel appreciated the welcoming of the college and staff, students and partners during the site visit and the prompt response to the additional information and questions.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Prof. dr. Teresa Paiva

(signature)