



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

MARIJAMPOLĖS KOLEGIJOS
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS ŽEMĖS ŪKIO TECHNOLOGIJA
(valstybinis kodas - 653D77001)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
(state code - 653D77001) STUDY PROGRAMME
at MARIJAMPOLE COLLEGE

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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2014

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Agroverslų technologija
Valstybinis kodas	653D77001
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Žemės ūkio mokslai
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė – (3), iššęstinė – (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Žemės ūkio technologijų profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2001-08-31

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Agricultural technology
State code	653D77001
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Agricultural Sciences
Type of the study programme	College Studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3), part-time (4)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Agriculture Technology
Date of registration of the study programme	31 August 2001

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. *Background of the evaluation process*

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes 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) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme **is not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. *General*

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the 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

1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

Marijampole college was established in 2001 by the amalgamation of 2 institutions. Whilst the course in its present format has been delivered since 2001, Agricultural education has been delivered in Marijampole for many years previous to this. The very clear and comprehensive English version of the website has allowed Expert Team (hereinafter ET) to get a good insight into the college and not just the Agricultural Technology course it has been evaluating.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No.1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 15th October 2014.

- 1. Mr. Michael Pearson (team leader)**, *Principal of Gurteen College, Ireland.*
- 2. Dr. Antti Pasila**, *Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, SeAMK Food and Agriculture, dean, Finland.*
- 3. Dr. Endla Reintam**, *Estonian University of Life Sciences, Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, director of studies*
- 4. Mr. Gediminas Viškelis**, *head of VšĮ "Agroschool", project manager of AB „Agrowill Group“, Lithuania.*
- 5. Mr. Vygintas Eidėnas**, *student of Mykolas Romeris University, Faculty of Politics and Management, bachelor studies, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims and learning outcomes for this course are well documented in the Self Evaluation Report (hereinafter – SER). ET found a clear and coherent link between the programme learning outcomes and ultimately the subject learning outcomes. For example, the aim of the subject “Plant growing technologies” is to provide ability to create technological schemes for agricultural crops, to choose tillage method and time, suitable varieties, fertilization, crop maintenance, storage, marketing necessary to organize and manage plant growing technological process. And the learning outcomes are: 1. To organize plant growing technological process; 2. To organize agricultural production storage; 3. To organize agricultural production preparation for realization; 4. To organize agricultural production realization. Whilst the SER documentation provided is defined and clear the information is not publicly accessible

on the English version of the website. The website for the college is to be commended for the English version but does not appear to go into this level of detail.

Extensive contact with the industry is apparent at management, teacher and student levels and this means that as the course has developed over the last six years, the needs of the industry have been taken into account when developing the course syllabus. The Alumni Club is a welcome development in this area as is the use of professionals with careers outside the college to act as teachers on the course. Graduates of the course however seem to have a little direct contact with the Alumni club developed in 2011 and so more effort will be needed in this area to achieve a greater connection between former students and the college.

The college is the only higher education establishment in south-western Lithuania which provides agricultural studies and so as such should have a large potential market of students in the area.

The well designed programme and its learning outcomes are correct and applicable to this level of qualification. ET was pleased to see that the links with industry are obvious at lecture level and during the work practice. A good example of this link is that one teacher ET met also works for a big farm and he brings his students to that farm to do practical work.

The name of the programme is suitable and gives the industry an accurate description of the type of student graduating from this course. All aspects of the programme seem well linked together and co-ordinated with each other. However the learning outcomes of the programme should be better communicated to students. For example, 1st course students, ET had a meeting with, were not able to explain clearly what skills they would get and what practical tasks they would be able to perform after finishing the programme.

2.2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design meets the legal requirements for a Professional Bachelor of Agriculture Technology study programme. It has the prescribed number of 180 credits and the correct number of hours associated with these credits.

There is a clearly documented list of modules delivered in each semester. This structure makes it easy to see how progression occurs within the course and that whilst subjects are complimentary to each other they do not overlap significantly in terms of subject delivery.

Subjects appear to be delivered in a logical order to ensure sequential learning at a progressively higher level. An example of this would be Cattle anatomy and physiology (The basic subject in semester 1) followed by General Animal husbandry in semester 2 followed by Cattle Breeding in semester 4 and the Technology of production modules in semester 5.

The content of the subjects is clearly defined and follows a consistent pattern throughout the documentation. The layout within the structure of each subject is good, with immediate clarity of how learning outcomes are achieved through study methods and the processes and variety of student assessment. These factors combine to achieve the learning outcomes in the subjects.

There is a wide variety of topics such as Basics of agriculture, Plan growing technologies, Cattle breeding, Basics of veterinary, Agricultural business organization, etc. within the course of study and this should enable a student successfully completing the course to be well trained in the industry for which they hope to work in.

According to SER, there is a significant amount of Self-Study time, which makes 2777 hours or 58% of the total study hours of full time studies and 3608 hours or 75% of part time studies included in the course. The subject's specific recommended literature is a welcome addition to the study subjects' abstract document.

Consistency of presentation of the subjects within the syllabus documentation provided is also excellent and each subject where relevant makes reference to up to date science and technology. For example, in the SER, in the part describing Cattle breeding subject, we can find the recommended literature like "*Kulpys J., Stankevičius R. Produktyvių karvių šėrimo sistemos, Kaunas: Terra Publica, 2010, ISBN: 9955652101*" or "*D. Šišlavas. Traktoriai. Kronta, ISBN 978-401 082 8, 2010*" for a subject "Planting mechanization" or "*Heinz G., Hutzinger P. Meat processing technology for small to medium scale producers.-Bangkok: FAO, 2007, ISBN 978-974-7946-99-4*" for a subject „Meat and its production technology“.

The SER literature and syllabi for the production technology modules in meat and milk are comprehensive, and indicate that students' knowledge of agriculture continues beyond the farm gate which is essential in today's world trade in agricultural commodities.

Care must be taken in the quality of course delivery and outcomes when part time students have significantly less contact time with staff than full time students. Innovative use of technologies such as Moodle help with lecture type subjects, but practical elements of the course still need contact and care must be taken to ensure that part time students have sufficient learning opportunities on the course.

Whilst the content of the course is good in the detailed syllabus, two groups of people (the Students and the Social partners) interviewed made reference to the fact that the college must ensure that up to date knowledge is taught in every subject. Teachers for individual subjects and management for the overall course should ensure that this is the case.

2.3. Teaching staff

The 22 staff members listed in SER are sufficient to teach a course such as this to the numbers of 21 enrolled and 13 successful graduates of full time study and 2 graduates out of 5 totally enrolled part time students in 2013 listed in the SER.

Indications taken from the SER show that teaching staff members have a good level of academic and practical experience overall, fully satisfying all legal and practical obligations. The SER indicates that 11% of the course is delivered by people with a doctoral degree and all remaining have a Masters degree. 45% of the people teaching this programme are industry professionals, again meeting the legal requirements. Unfortunately, during the meeting with teachers on the visit day, only a small proportion of the teachers met were active working professionals, so discussion was limited in this area. It would be beneficial to increase the number of professionals teaching on the course as this would allow students to better understand what skills and knowledge is crucial working in farms and agriculture enterprises. Large amounts of experience often means a relatively low staff turnover rate which is both an advantage in terms of knowledge of delivery and a disadvantage in terms of young enthusiasm coming into the job. An age profile chart and turnover of lecturers could be useful in the SER since ET could not find this information documented.

ET strongly felt throughout the discussions that whilst teachers were dedicated to their own subject, there was an overall lack of ownership of the course by the group and that many issues such as recruitment, resource issues and success of the course were not their concern and should be addressed by others to solve or to decide. Whilst this is partially true, teachers are the front line interaction of the course with students and as such play a critical role in it's overall success, so ET strongly encourage course managers and teachers to collaborate and work as a one team going to the same direction.

The appointment of a new staff member responsible for international cooperation is a welcome development and will hopefully help encourage internationalisation amongst staff and students. Based on information in the SER, some 18 teachers have been involved in Erasmus programmes in the period 2007 – 2013 but this should be encouraged and developed more broadly.

Other training such as the 'Improvement of study quality and enhanced internationalisation' project mentioned in the SER is of definite benefit to staff. During the meeting only few teachers were able to talk to ET in English without an interpreter, therefore ET would like to stress that continued efforts should be made to develop the English language skills of teaching staff as English tends to be the language that the majority of research papers are written in. The skills of students in this area are likely to continue to increase and it would be advantageous if staff could

keep pace with this. During the visit teachers mentioned that they were partly funding courses themselves to improve in this area. Whilst this is admirable, it is suggested that the college looks at budgets to see if this could be fully funded to encourage staff further.

Throughout several meetings with Eton the site visit, applied research was mentioned, but it seemed to ET that little actual applied research was taking place, although delivery of papers at conferences was discussed in the teachers' meeting. The college must ensure that this area of requirement is adequately covered. Course managers should look for relations with external commercial companies and ensure that companies, teachers and students are integrated into common projects. This would ensure that students and teachers apply their taught knowledge and companies would benefit from the research results.

During the meeting with the social partners a representative of Aleksandras Stulginskis University mentioned that some teachers have a lack of knowledge in latest technology and science achievements. This was also obvious when a teacher demonstrated some out dated software while visiting the College facilities or when the teachers could not name any international scientific data bases at the meeting with ET.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

As a large regional college, Marijampole has an adequate range of standard teaching facilities such as lecture rooms and classrooms. The computer facilities are also adequate, although a problem emerging in many institutions across Europe is that many computers still use the Microsoft XP operating system and Microsoft have stopped supporting this product. The college should therefore move as quickly as budgets allow to a more modern operating system.

There is a long list of the College's agriculture machinery provided in the SER, however none of that machinery was shown to the ET while visiting the College facilities.

The library facilities of 145 sq.m observed during the visit were of a good standard and provided an adequate range of textbooks for this level of students. Still, it would be useful to have a larger range of agricultural textbooks in English to try and encourage students to develop their skills as part of the core programme of study and not as an extra.

One of the weaknesses which ET identifies is found in the SER, where mention is made of a 64ha farm as a learning resource. This facility was not visited, and discussions in various meetings established that whilst the college still owns the farm, it is not actively involved in it and it is rented out to a local farmer. Students informed ET that whilst they visit this facility it is purely to observe, therefore can no longer be classed as a practical teaching facility, which students miss. The graduates and the social partners also clearly stressed at the meeting with ET

that a loss of the College farm is big threat for the development of proper students' practical skills.

The college has made efforts to develop links with social partners, and visiting a 600 cow dairy farm where the manager is also teaching the students at the college was welcome and a very good use of personnel and a very valuable teaching resource. Whilst no other locations like this were visited, discussions with staff and students indicated that other locations, such as the local sugar beet factory, were also used. The use of these facilities for use as a training establishments with groups of students and not just as locations for individual student professional activities practice is critical at the moment since the college has no land and animal resource of its own to use at the moment. This type of arrangement even then would only partially replace the need for the college to have their own practical teaching facility, seen as critical for the future of this course by the ET.

The college has a good range of farms and businesses available for the individual professional practice modules such as Joint Stock venture (JSV) "Repulsas", JSV "Arvi kalakutai", JSV "Arvi cukrus", "Marijampole County State Food and Veterinary Service", "Marijampole Milk Cannery", JSV "Marijampolės pasarai", Agricultural Company "Gulbinas", JSV "Arvifertis", ŽŪB "Sesupe", Gintautas Novikas' Farm, JSV "Lytagra", Agricultural Company "Uzgiriai", Juozas Vaiciulis' Farm and Agricultural Company "Salkteksnis" mentioned in the SER.

In the previous evaluation report of this course it was recommended for the College to acquire specialized agriculture software which could be used in the students' teaching process. It became obvious to ET during the visit that the College has been only using demonstration versions of some specialized software like "eGEBA" and "Hybrimin"; however this is not sufficient to ensure an adequate level of teaching and development of practical student's skills. Demonstration versions have restricted functionality and limited period of time to use it for free, therefore it cannot ensure that students get to know how to operate with all software modules in a full scale during the whole study time and not only during the period when a demo version has an open access. On the other hand there are a lot of other specialized agriculture software like "AgroGis", "Sumanus ūkininkas/Smart farmer", "AgroSmart", "Sumanus pieno ūkis/Smart diary farm", which are widely used in Lithuanian farms and agriculture companies and students could get familiar with that software as well.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The entry of students to the course of study is in accordance with the 'General regulations of the association of higher education institutions' and is further enhanced by the regulations of admittance to Marijampole college (SER, page 19).

The entry criteria for students is well documented and whilst there is some variation in their competitive entry score from year to year, this is understandable and explained by the relative influence of graduation exam in biology when not all students participate in this.

According to the SER and information gathered during the meetings recruitment numbers were relatively stable on the full time course from 2010 to 2012, but the recruitment of no students in 2013 and only 9 in 2014 is a cause for concern, especially as graduation rate from this course is usually around 66%. This concern also exists for the part time course with between 0 and 12 students recruited each year since 2009. ET thinks that the College should reinforce their efforts marketing the programme not only in their local region, but in other Lithuanian parts as well in order to attract more students interested to study agriculture.

The college could develop a coherent recruitment strategy to increase the number of students attending the course. This is particularly important, not just to increase the number of students arriving in the first year of the course but also to ensure that the recruited students do not have a significant dropout rate.

As also mentioned extensively in section 2.2 (SER), Curriculum design's part, the study process is well organised and enables the participants to achieve learning outcomes. Still, there is a concern as it is also mentioned in section 2.4 - "Facilities and learning resources" of this Evaluation Report that the lack of practical teaching facilities is reducing the quality of learning for these students, impacting on their skills level and so ultimately reducing their employability. This was apparent when employers were questioned during the visit and it was clearly indicated: the strongest point on the course is theory teaching but the weakest point is the lack of practice which is so needed for students. During the visit it was also claimed to ET that as the college no longer has a practical training base using the latest technologies, students were weak in the area of latest scientific knowledge. Students seemed quite weak to answer when questioned on technical subjects such as milk yields which again is taught in the theory. ET thinks it is practical teaching and then practicing of a skill many times that gives a student the ability to remember this type of the fact. Milking a cow each day and seeing 20 to 30 litres of milk produced is a fact never forgotten.

As all full time students have to complete a final thesis in their third year, most of which have a research element, all students are encouraged to be involved in research as ET was informed by the teachers. The level of research in the final theses was adequate, but could be enhanced. Involvement in external seminars is also evident and ET heard in student meeting that at least 2 are attended each year. This encourages the dissemination of information amongst student groups.

Only one student out of 10 who took part at the meeting with ET was involved in an Erasmus programme. It was mentioned in the SER that the main reasons of low students' participation in international mobility programs are poor English knowledge and inability to travel since many students have a jobs. This is a weakness and this whole area should be encouraged and developed, hopefully by the new international cooperation staff member.

Academic support is given to students anytime, particularly when producing their final thesis. Each student is allocated a lecturer to assist them in the process. The students confirmed they also have a course tutor whom they can visit at any time and ET was informed about the ease of approachability to staff. There is evidence in SER of sporting activities for students such as athletics, volleyball, basketball and other sports, so ET thinks the College gives enough of academic and social support for students. Since 2013 an internet portal has been available in the college which is an excellent method allowing students to check their academic and financial data. Financial support is evident for students with a scholarship system in place – this also allows students from very low income families the chance to participate in education.

Assessment is regulated by the study regulations of the college. Regular feedback is given to students from the variety of assessments undertaken usually in staff consultation sessions with the students. The assessment system seemed clear and adequate to all the students who met with ET.

Most graduates who met the ET were employed, some concern was expressed however that a major weakness has recently arisen in that not having a farm any longer could affect the skills of future students and also employability.

The efforts to teach general subjects to joint groups of students is welcome and at least mitigates the cost of teaching relatively small numbers of students on specialist courses such as this.

2.6. Programme management

There is clear evidence of lines of responsibility for the programme, from the involvement of Faculty Boards, the vice principal, study programme committees and teachers. Each has a defined role within the system, so it seems to ET that responsibilities are clearly allocated.

According to the SER, the college has a variety of survey methods used to gather information from various groups such as students, graduates and employers. Students confirmed that they had completed surveys but it is essential that the results of these surveys are analysed and actions taken by appropriate people. SER indicates that all these surveys are analysed and reports made to Department meetings where actions are sanctioned. The College has been certified according ISO Quality Assurance System, which means that formal written procedures related to

programme management are in place, however a weakness is mentioned in the SER that planning of the study programme improvement is not systematic yet.

As was mentioned by the SER group at the meeting with the ET, all groups, including academic management, staff, students and the industry are involved in the process of evaluation and course development. It is essential therefore that if, for example, employers raise the issue of lack of practical skills amongst students that the appropriate levels of management respond to this and rectify the problem. If problems are not rectified then quickly the course may become non viable. It may be coincidence that recruitment has fallen recently on this course, as the ET was informed during the meeting with the College administration that the total number of enrolled students was 26 (full and part time studies) in the year 2013 and 18 students (both part time and full time) in 2014 or it may be influenced by factors such as this. ET can only guess but management needs to respond.

Stakeholders and graduates are represented on the study programme committee thus giving a route for information to flow into the college. At present, social partners indicated in the meeting with ET that whilst they were consulted to a small extent regarding the SER report there is not a feedback mechanism used at present to respond to industry concerns. It is then essential that feedback is given to social partners within the industry to show how the college is responding to issues raised.

Quality assurance procedures are evident throughout the system. It is disappointing however that these procedures and the SER make little if any mention of the major weaknesses in practical resources for a course such as this that is apparent to a group of observers producing this report. It is essential therefore that management takes a proactive stance to discover these weaknesses in future and begin to address them before any future evaluation reports.

The Alumni met by the ET seemed to be proactive and positive about the study programme. Whilst the Alumni have heard of a club, they do not participate in it much, yet would be a very useful student's recruitment resource. The Alumni has expressed their interest to take a more active role promoting the College, this study programme and attracting more students, therefore they can be a very valuable resource for the College.

ET must also stress that some recommendations of the previous programme evaluation report has not been implemented. For example, the College could not provide any clearly documented programme improvement aims and tasks or demonstrate newly acquired specialized agriculture software as it was recommended in the previous programme evaluation report.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is hoped that this report, whilst recognising that this programme has some strengths, significant improvements will have to be made if this course is to meet the challenging demands of Lithuanian agriculture at present and its impact on the European market. This is particularly relevant at a time when the support structure for agriculture across the whole of Europe is undergoing a fundamental change and markets will change significantly in agriculture and its products.

These therefore are ET recommendations:

- The college should urgently address its lack of onsite practical agricultural facilities, particularly in respect of the fact that the college still owns a 64 ha farm. Whilst it may not be possible for the college to farm this resource entirely on its own it should be possible to draw up an agreement with a social partner who will farm the land, yet allow the students full access, not just to look at the land but to actively participate in skills training on the land.
- Whilst the above point is being actioned, the college should ensure that social partners already recruited are willing to allow students to actively participate in skills training not just observe. These social partners should be contracted to provide a service to ensure continuity of education for students.
- The present perceived weakness of the course is that at the end of the course students are still not able to work in the industry. This was identified in meetings with both alumni and social partners and so following the first two recommendations will help to address this.
- The college must ensure that the latest knowledge in technology and scientific research is being used when teaching students. Whilst the syllabi read well, concern was expressed in meetings held on the day of the visit about this area. It would be beneficial to increase the number of professionals teaching on the course. Whilst the statistics in the self evaluation document meet the legal requirements, practitioners in the agricultural industries who also teach tend to be up to date with their knowledge.
- The college must develop a coherent recruitment strategy to increase the number of students attending the course. This is particularly important, not just to increase the number of students arriving in the first year of the course but also to ensure

that the recruited students do not have a significant dropout rate. For recruitment strategy to work it must have all layers of management, teachers, students, alumni and social partners involved. At present, ET found the perception that it is someone else's job and no one takes ownership or responsibility.

- Whilst Alumni have heard of a club, they do not participate in it much, yet would be a very useful recruitment resource. They should therefore be encouraged to actively participate, maybe by the formation of a club for agricultural specialists including alumni and social partners.
- ET also encourages more staff to develop their proficiency in English so that they have a greater chance of participating in international activities.
- ET recommends improving the management process ensuring that the recommendations of the present and former programme evaluation reports are being analysed and implemented.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE (GOOD PRACTICE)*

** if there are any to be shared as a good practice*

V. SUMMARY

It is hoped that this report, whilst recognising that this programme has some strengths, significant improvements will have to be made if this course is to meet the challenging demands of agricultural education into the future.

The programme aims and learning outcomes for this course are clear and coherent and the name of the course accurately reflects the type of student graduating from the course. Learning outcomes need to be better explained to students so that they understand what tasks they will be able to perform on completion of a subject and finally the course.

The curriculum is well designed to equip the students with the knowledge and skills required to work in the agricultural industry with a logical and coherent structure throughout the course. Staff must ensure that all material taught is up to date.

The teaching staff has a good level of academic and practical experience, but a greater number of professionals teaching would benefit the course in terms of the link between theory and the practice of farming. Teachers should also take greater ownership of the course as a whole and not just their own subjects to assist with recruitment and course development. Teachers also

need to continue to develop their English language skills as this will assist the internationalisation of the course and college.

The course is taught in a large regional college and so generic facilities such as classrooms, library and other general facilities are of an adequate standard. The lack of a practical farm of any sort managed by the college however is a serious weakness, emphasised by social partners, students and alumni and should be addressed at the earliest opportunity. Links to social partners are good but only partially address this major weakness.

The lack of a coherent recruitment policy for students is hindering the study process, as are the number of dropouts, as recruitment numbers are low. This then inhibits the development of the course and facilities due to long term uncertainty over its continuation into the future and this whole area needs to be addressed. Language skills also need to be developed amongst the students as also mentioned regarding staff. The lack of a practical training facility (the farm) on site also causes issues regarding the possible lack of skills training in future students.

There is a clear management structure for the course but all levels of management must take responsibility to adequately resource, manage and teach and promote this course. Involvement of Alumni and social partners, both groups being willing to help, is also critical. This college has had a long standing involvement in agricultural training in Lithuania, but without significant investment in resources and a willingness of management and staff to actively promote and develop the course this position is in jeopardy.

A strategic plan needs to be put in place to address the weaknesses mentioned in this report so that future groups of students graduating from the course are qualified and equipped to work in the industry. This needs to be addressed urgently as already present groups of students are generally weak in their practical application of skills and knowledge.

VI. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY (state code – 653D77001) at MARIJAMPOLE COLLEGE is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	2
4.	Facilities and learning resources	2
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	2
6.	Programme management	2
	Total:	14

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Michael Pearson
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Dr. Antti Pasila
	Doc. dr. Endla Reintam
	Gediminas Viškelis
	Vygintas Eidėnas

**MARIJAMPOLĖS KOLEGIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
ŽEMĖS ŪKIO TECHNOLOGIJA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 653D77001) 2015-01-22
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-14 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

VI. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Marijampolės kolegijos studijų programa *Žemės ūkio technologija* (valstybinis kodas – 653D77001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	2
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	2
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	2
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	14

- * 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)
 2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)
 3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)
 4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

V. SANTRAUKA

Nors ir yra stipriųjų šios studijų programos pusių, tačiau tikimasi, kad po šio vertinimo ji bus žymiai patobulinta, jei norima, kad ateityje programa atitiktų sudėtingus žemės ūkio mokslo reikalavimus.

Šios programos tikslai ir studijų siekiniai yra aiškūs ir suprantami, o studijų programos pavadinimas tiksliai atspindi jas baigusių studentų profilį. Numatomi programos studijų rezultatai studentams turėtų būti geriau išaiškinti, siekiant kad studentai suprastų, kokį darbą jie galės atlikti, kai baigs kurio nors dalyko ar visos programos studijas.

Studijų programos turinys geras, orientuotas į tai, kad studentai įgytų darbui žemės ūkio srityje reikalingas žinias ir įgūdžius, o visos programos struktūra yra logiška ir nuosekli. Dėstytojais privalo užtikrinti, kad visa dėstoma medžiaga būtų atnaujinta.

Dėstytojai turi gerą akademinio ir praktinio darbo patirtį, bet dėl ūkininkavimo teorijos ir praktikos sujungimo būtų geriau, jei dėstyčių daugiau specialistų. Padedant pritraukti studentus ir gerinant studijų programą, dėstytojai taip pat turėtų prisiimti didesnę atsakomybę ne tik dėl savo dėstomų dalykų, bet ir dėl visos studijų programos. Be to, dėstytojams reikia toliau tobulinti anglų kalbos įgūdžius, nes tai padės didinti studijų programos ir kolegijos tarptautiškumą.

Šią studijų programą realizuoja didelė regioninė kolegija, todėl bendra materialioji bazė, pavyzdžiui, auditorijos, biblioteka ar kita infrastruktūra, yra tinkama. Didelis šios programos trūkumas, kurį akcentavo ir socialiniai partneriai, studentai bei absolventai, yra tas, kad kolegijoje nėra jos pačios vadovaujamo nors kokio studentų praktinei veiklai skirto ūkio. Šis klausimas turėtų būti kuo greičiau sprendžiamas. Nors ryšiai su socialiniais partneriais yra geri, tačiau jie padeda šią didelę problemą spręsti tik iš dalies.

Studijų procesui trukdo nuoseklios politikos, skirtos studentams pritraukti, stoka, kadangi būna daug studentų nubyrežimo atvejų, o ir naujai priimtų studentų skaičius mažas. Visus šiuos klausimus reikia spręsti, nes ilgai trunkantis neapibrėžtumas dėl studijų programos tęstinumo ir ateities stabdo pačios programos ir materialiosios bazės plėtrą. Taip pat reikia tobulinti studentų ir, kaip jau minėta, dėstytojų užsienio kalbos įgūdžius. Teritorijoje nesukurta praktinio mokymo bazė (ūkis), tai gali tapti būsimų studentų praktinių įgūdžių galimos stokos priežastimi.

Studijų programos vadybos struktūra aiški, bet visuose vadovavimo lygmenyse privalu prisiimti atsakomybę už tinkamą išteklių naudojimą, vadybą ir dėstymą bei studijų programos propagavimą. Taip pat labai svarbus yra absolventų ir socialinių partnerių (abi grupės pasirošusios padėti) dalyvavimas. Lietuvoje ši kolegija žemės ūkio specialistus ruošia seniai, tačiau be žymesnių investicijų į materialiujų išteklių gerinimą ir be administracijos bei personalo pasiryžimo šią studijų programą aktyviai propaguoti ir vystyti, jai gresia pavojus.

Siekiant šioje ataskaitoje minimus trūkumus išspręsti, reikia įdiegti strateginį planą, kad ateityje programos studijas baigę studentai būtų kvalifikuoti ir parengti darbui žemės ūkyje. Šį klausimą reikia spręsti skubiai, nes jau dabar studentų gebėjimai taikyti įgytus įgūdžius ir žinias praktiškai iš esmės yra silpni.

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III. REKOMENDACIJOS

Nors yra ir stipriųjų šios studijų programos pusių, tačiau tikimasi, jog po šio vertinimo ji bus žymiai patobulinta, norint, kad programa atitiktų šiandieninius sudėtingus Lietuvos žemės ūkio ir jo įtakos Europos rinkai sąlygojamus reikalavimus. Tai ypač svarbu tuo metu, kai visoje

Europoje vyksta žemės ūkiui skirtų paramos struktūrų esminiai pokyčiai, dėl ko labai pasikeis ir žemės ūkio bei jo produktų rinkos.

Todėl vertinimo grupė rekomenduoja:

- Kolegija turėtų skubiai spręsti vietoje esamų mokomajai praktikai reikalingų žemės ūkio paskirties materialijų išteklių trūkumo klausimą, ypač atsižvelgiant į tai, kad kolegija vis dar valdo 64 ha dydžio ūkį. Nors šioje nuosavybėje kolegijai savarankiškai ūkininkauti gal ir bus neįmanoma, bet reikėtų surasti galimybę pasirašyti sutartį su tuo socialiniu partneriu, kuris tą žemę dirbs ir be jokių apribojimų leis studentams ne tik į ją žiūrėti, bet ir aktyviai ugdyti žemės darbų įgūdžius.
- Kol aukščiau pateiktas pasiūlymas bus įgyvendinamas, kolegija turėtų užtikrinti, kad jau esami socialiniai partneriai leistų studentams darbus ne tik stebėti, bet ir patiems aktyviai ugdyti savo įgūdžius. Su šiais socialiniais partneriais turėtų būti sudaryta sutartis, kuri juos įpareigotų teikti šias paslaugas, siekiant užtikrinti studentų mokymo tęstinumą.
- Dabartinės programos trūkumas yra tas, kad studijas baigę studentai vis dar negeba dirbti žemės ūkyje. Tai paaiškėjo per susitikimus su absolventais ir socialiniais partneriais. Taigi, dviejų pirmųjų rekomendacijų įgyvendinimas padės šį klausimą išspręsti.
- Kolegija privalo užtikrinti, kad mokant studentus bus naudojamos naujausiomis technologijų mokslo ir mokslinės tiriamosios veiklos žiniomis. Nors programa gera, bet per vizito dieną vykusius susitikimus dėl jos buvo pareikšta nuogąstavimų. Būtų naudinga padidinti programos dėstytojų-specialistų skaičių. Nors savianalizės suvestinėje pateikta statistika teisinį reglamentavimą atitinka, kolegijoje dėstantys žemės ūkio specialistai yra linkę savo žinias atnaujinti.
- Siekdama padidinti šios programos studentų skaičių, kolegija privalo parengti nuoseklią studentų pritraukimui skirtą strategiją. Ypač svarbu ne tik didinti pirmo kurso studentų skaičių, bet taip pat užtikrinti, kad priimtų studijuoti studentų nubyrėjimo rodiklis būtų nedidelis. Kad studentų pritraukimo strategija būtų veiksminga, į šį darbą reikia įtraukti visus programos vykdytojus: vadovybę, dėstytojus, studentus, absolventus ir socialinius partnerius. Vertinimo grupė nustatė, kad šiuo metu kolegijoje vyrauja nuomonė, jog studentų pritraukimas yra kažkieno kito darbas, ir už šią veiklos sritį atsakomybės niekas neprisiima.
- Kolegijos absolventai girdėjo apie Alumni klubą, tačiau jo veikloje mažai dalyvauja, nors toks klubas pasitarnautų norint pritraukti būsimus studentus. Todėl absolventai

turėtų būti skatinamai aktyviau dalyvauti šioje veikloje, gal net įkurti žemės ūkio specialistų, įskaitant absolventus ir socialinius partnerius, klubą.

- Taip pat vertinimo grupė skatina gilinti dėstytojų anglų kalbos žinias, kad jie turėtų daugiau galimybių dalyvauti tarptautinėje veikloje.
- Vertinimo grupė rekomenduoja programos vadybos procesą gerinti, užtikrinant, kad šios ir ankstesnės studijų programos vertinimo išvados bus išanalizuotos ir įgyvendintos.

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