



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Marijampolės kolegijos
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VERSLO VALDYMAS*
(valstybinis kodas – 653N10008)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
of *BUSINESS MANAGEMENT*
(state code – 653N10008)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Marijampole college

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Verslo valdymas</i>
Valstybinis kodas	653N10008
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Verslas
Studijų programos rūšis	koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (3), iššęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Verslo profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2012-09-26

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Business management</i>
State code	653N10008
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Business
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 Business Management
Date of registration of the study programme	26-09-2012

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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	List on alumni employment
2	Copy of the Research Journal - Homo-Societas-Technologiae

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

The evaluation of the programme *Business Management* (653N10008) of Marijampole College (MC) was based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) dated March 2015. This report contained a number of annexes that were helpful to the work of the Review Team. The Self-Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

Evaluation Report was written by a group of 8 comprising of 5 lecturing staff, a senior academic from the Faculty of Economics and Business (Kaunas University of Technology) who is a member of the colleges Business Management Study Programme Committee, a third-year student on full-time study programme and a graduate student who is also a member of the programme committee.

The report provides a comprehensive overview with some useful analytical insights into the relative strengths and weaknesses of aspects of the programme the self-evaluation group identified during the preparation of the report. The scope of work and responsibilities identified within the self-evaluation group members was clear and appropriate.

The visit took place on Thursday, 22 October and included all of the required meetings with the differing groups including senior administrative staff, staff responsible for the preparation of the self-evaluation, teaching staff, students' representative of the different levels and modes of study, alumni and representatives of the social partners. The Review Team were able to inspect all of the physical resources and facilities provided by the College on this programme and were able to examine samples of student work including final thesis. The meetings were positive, helpful and conducted in a professional manner that provided the appropriate opportunity for the Review Team to be able to test the evidence presented in the SER to make judgement on the overall evaluation of the programme. The visit programme concluded with a feedback session with the College staff where an overview of the visit and general conclusions were presented. Post visit, the Review Team met to discuss and agree the contents of the report including the final evaluation and approval.

MC is a public body that has the status of a higher education institution (HEI) in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research. The College has been in existence for many years with its origins as an agricultural institution with the focus on providing for the needs of the region and the local economy, a focus that is maintained to this day. The programme *Business Management* is the responsibility of one of the 2 faculties of the College, the faculty of Business and Technology, the other faculty being responsible for Education Studies and Social Work. A number of cross departments and centres support the work of the 2 faculties. These departments include International Studies and Relations Department, Department of Project Activities, Career Centre, Information Technology Centre, Development Study Centre, Public Communication Department, Staff Department, and a Finance and Accounting Department. The College operates faculty councils and student representation with student representatives comprising of students annually elected. The academic programmes of the College are coordinated by the Vice Principal for Academic Affairs and by the Faculty Dean in the appropriate and responsible faculty.

The Department within the Faculty of Business and Technology responsible for the programme under evaluation is the Department of Business and Economics. The quality assurance systems and processes for all programmes within the College are certified in accordance with the ISO 9001:2008 standard and the Study Programme Committees have the responsibility for evaluating the quality of the study programme, its implementation and outcomes and makes the appropriate recommendations for quality improvement.

The origin of the *Business Management* study programme can be traced to 2001 when the College introduced a Business Administration Programme. The programme was renamed Business Management in 2014 following approval by SKVC. The programme is a Professional Bachelor Programme of 3 years of study full-time or 4 years of study part-time. The programme provides opportunity for 3 specialisations; International Business, Cars Transportation Business Organisation, and Trade Business Organisation.

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 22nd October 2015.

- 1. Prof. dr. Peter Jones (team leader)**, *Educational Consultant, Visiting Professor at University of Derby, University of West London, Dean of the ehotelier Academy, the United Kingdom.*
- 2. Prof. dr. Wes Wierda**, *Educational Consultant for Hobéon Agency, professor at Les Roches Gruyère University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands.*
- 3. Prof. dr. Tatjana Volkova**, *Professor at BA School of Business and Finance, Educational Consultant, Latvia.*
- 4. Prof. dr. Giedrius Jucevičius**, *Professor at the Dep. of Management, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.*
- 5. Ms. Karolina Zelbienė**, *Recruitment Project manager at "Western Union", Lithuania.*
- 6. Ms. Vaida Spūdytė**, *Master student of International Business, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The overall aim of the study programme *Business Management*, as set out in the SER, is “To prepare business professionals at bachelor level who are able to set up a company, do market research, manage the employees and the business conditions as well as developing the business”. The SER makes reference to the consultation especially with social partners and local employers that had taken place in forming the aims and objectives and in developing the specialisation within the curriculum. The importance and focus on practical training was noted and a key factor that was highlighted in discussions with the relevant stakeholders.

Evidence from the detailed discussions confirmed the need for entrepreneurs within the regional and local economies and that the areas of specialisation were a priority for the regional economy.

The aim of the programme is well defined in meeting the employment and local needs and is publicly accessible through the appropriate websites, regional newspapers and brochures.

Descriptions of the programme learning outcomes are publicly available. Whilst the aims and learning outcomes are broadly consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualification offered there is misalignment between the programme aims and learning outcomes as presented in the SER (p. 8). The ‘description of the learning outcomes’ in the 1st column in Table 2.1.1.1 could be described as aims against which specific learning outcomes can be identified. Describing learning outcomes in terms such as “to be able to...” is not entirely in line with the Dublin descriptors and imply a task activity rather than a level of understanding and ability to identify and apply the relevant knowledge in a professional context.

Overall the learning outcomes are considered to be too fragmented due to the excessive number both on the programme and specialisation levels. There are 22 defined learning outcomes at the programme level in addition to those at the specialisation level. For example, there are an additional 13 learning outcomes in the specialisation “Trade Business Organisation”. This creates the impression of diffusion and unnecessary complexity. The learning outcomes should be more balanced towards the expected outcomes related to developing knowledge, skills and attitudes. Currently they are only related to the very specific programme aims (SER, p. 7). The aims of the programme is “designed to prepare business professional bachelors who are able to set up a company, do market research, manage the employees and the business condition as well as develop business” (SER,p.6). The learning outcome (see table 2.1.1.1, SER, p.7) descriptions are entirely designed around these aims of the programme and focus only on the intended outcomes of what the learner will be “able to do”, rather than the wider and equally important outcomes of the knowledge, skills and competence. Currently the learning outcomes

by study level are the specific subsets of outcomes related to: setting-up an enterprise, market research, planning enterprise (unit) activities, organising enterprise (unit) activities in accordance with the nature of activity, leading the staff, controlling the business condition, business development and development of transferable skills. The same comments apply the development of the learning outcomes for the specialisation. This approach is somewhat at variance with Annex 5, the table titled “Programme Study Outcomes Compliance with the Study Cycle” which presents learning outcomes in the context of knowledge, capabilities and skills rather differently from those is presented in the SER. This suggests a lack of consistency and the potential for confusion.

The alignment of the approach in defining the learning outcomes is necessary to build around a common understanding of the expected outcomes of the study programme in the context of knowledge, capabilities and skills as mentioned above. It is the lack of articulation between the aims and learning outcomes that suggests some of the learning outcomes have been designed around subjects rather than a more coherent approach throughout the programme as a whole.

There is a need for greater clarity to avoid confusion. The coherence and articulation between desired learning outcomes and the identified study subjects within which these outcomes are to be developed is sometimes confused. For example, to able “to apply innovation in business” and “...to be able to motivate the employees” are both shown as related to the subject Transportation Economics (see: LO of Cars Transportation Business Organisation, SER, p. 9). However, the aim of subject Transportation Economics ”...is to develop skills to examine and assess terms of transportation sector companies functioning, by familiarising with investments in infrastructure, demand, supply, by regulating transportation market, transportation sector competitiveness and separate transportation means economics questions”. This aim of the subject is not congruent with the learning outcomes that have been related to it.

In general, the graduates of the programme as described in the meeting with the social partners “are prepared for work and to work”, which confirmed the social partners and employers recognition that the graduates were well prepared for the world of work.

The panel considered that whilst some improvement could be made to the alignment of the programme aims and the learning outcomes, overall the study programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market and the name is compatible with those programme aims and outcomes.

In the discussions with the interested parties it was recognised that the labour market needs of the region are changing with a greater emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation in

small to medium businesses. The strong commitment the social partners evidenced, provides added impetus for the future direction that the programme should consider. The study programme development plan would be useful tool with a focus more directly related to entrepreneurship and innovation in response to these needs and the new Open Economy Zone. These regional and local changes are likely to facilitate new possibilities for business development, also focusing on food industry, agriculture, car repairmen, transport services, logistics, internationalisation and export opportunities.

2.2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design meets legal requirements. The aims and the objectives of the study programme have been set in accordance with the documents of the Bologna process, Dublin Descriptors, European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Area, European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ECTS Guide, 2009), Law on Research and Higher Education (No. XI-242 of 30th April, 2009), the Statute of Marijampole College (approved by Decision No.1135 of LR Government, 21st July, 2010), the Standards of Training the Business Manager (Order No.127 of 14th February 2000), Regulations of Management and Business Administration study field (No. ISAK-2294) of July 31st, 2008).

The study subjects are spread evenly; their themes are not repetitive and provide progression opportunities for the learner. Overall the curriculum is sound in terms of subjects but the wide variation in the number of credits (3, 6 or 9 ECTS) can lead to some imbalance and lack of flexibility.

The panel considered that a more integrated approach to the curriculum design, where possible, through combining certain subjects to produce a more streamlined curriculum with subjects of equivalent credit value will also assist in preventing any over assessment of students. The study programme has been undergoing permanent supervision and improvement according to the SER (p.15): the study subjects have been developed over time, for example, study subjects “Law” and “Business Law” were merged into “Business Law”. The titles of some study subjects were changed: Staff Management was renamed Human Resource Management; Business Ethics and Communication Organisation was named Professional Ethics, Foreign Language was named Foreign Language 1 and Mathematics was named Business Mathematics. New study subjects were introduced into the study plan, namely, Foreign Language 2, Project Management and Business Organisation. Basics of Accounting and Finance and Taxes were changed to Accountancy and Finance. Some study subjects were eliminated, namely, Psychology, Enterprise Hygiene, Business Economics and Quality Management. The volume of the study subject E-Business was increased in credits. The study subject Environmental Protection was transferred

from the block of the College study subjects of general acquisition (2nd term) to the block of the specialisation study subjects (1st term). The number of elected subjects been decreased from 12 to 9. This indicates the willingness and effort to develop the programme but there still remains the opportunity to reshape certain subjects around larger ECTS credit subjects and to rename the subjects and content accordingly to reflect the professional nature of the programme. The subject Professional Ethics for example, could be merged with subject Management thus eliminating additional assessment of students, Marketing Research could be extended and the subject Business Research introduced. Is it not clear why some subjects are weighted in credit terms more than others. For example, Project Management is 6 ECTS while HRM and Strategic Management both 3 ECTS. The study subject Macro and Microeconomics could be renamed as Applied Economics and the content adjusted accordingly. The same refers to General statistics – could be redeveloped as Applied Statistics.

The scope of programme (180 ECTS) is appropriate to ensure the learning outcomes for the qualification awarded can be met.

A more balanced and innovative consideration of the titling of subjects to better reflect the current and emerging trends would also be more consistent with the type and level of studies. Currently some of the subjects with such titles as “Food Products, Non- food Products” do not provide an understanding of the content of the subject. Similarly the “Staff Management” course title would be better replaced by “Human Resource Management”, to reflect the use of industry terminology and the academic resources provided under those titles.

Curriculum design changes should be focused on the future needs of the region, with new and emerging topics and trends, thus contributing to the sustainability of programme in the longer term. From discussions, especially with the social partners and students, further internationalisation should be integrated in the programme. This requirement was identified in the SER, where it considered that there was “insufficient internationalisation of the study programme and low indicators of mobility”. If the College was to provide greater opportunities for developing additional language skills language (Russian, German, Norwegian, English) this would enhance student’s self-confidence and to prepare better for working in the international environment.

In order to reflect the latest achievements in science and technologies and to meet the overall programme aims, a focus on entrepreneurship and the role of the small and medium enterprise in the regional economy would ensure the curriculum design meets the local labour market and employment needs as well as creating a unique selling point for the programme and would assist in the sustainability of the programme in the long term.

2.3. Teaching staff

The teaching staff on the programme consists of 25 teachers: 23 lecturers and 2 assistants. One teacher of the faculty has recently defended her Ph.D. dissertation. The SER has identified that overall the programme lacks doctoral degree teaching staff and although the minimum legal requirement for the balance of teaching staff on the programme is met, the College are aware that they need to increase the academic staff profile in this regard.

The requirement that more than half of staff should have no less than 3 years practical experience matching to the subject they teach is met. It is stated in the report that 56,3 per cent of teachers have work experience longer than 3 years, although the CVs of teachers show that, in a number of cases, the stated work experience does not fully reflect the subjects currently being taught. It is recognised that for many long-standing members of staff with significant teaching experience, the relevant work experience would have been many years before when circumstances and situations would have been very different. However, this does suggest that further staff development opportunities for staff to update their industry and relevant work experience will better inform their teaching. The programme aims will be better achieved by developing a better understanding of current industry practices, especially within the specialisation of Marijampole region.

The staff group of teachers have a long standing experience in teaching, which is on average 24,2 years. From pedagogical and teaching experience point of view, this can be considered as an advantage. However, the study area of a business management has seen constant and significant developments in the theoretical underpinning and its application, with similar development and innovations in learning and teaching. Strengthen the applied research dimension in the staff and focusing on innovative learning and teaching can only support staff development. There are some commendable evidence of a commitment to these development activities as a number of teachers are part of applied research projects in the Marijampole region, as well contributors to the local research periodical journal that was launched in 2013.

The current teacher-student ratio is extremely favourable with regard to the personal and individual contact students can receive but does raise a number of questions over the sustainability of the programme. At present, the programme has the ratio of 56 students to 25 teachers, which equates to 2,24 students per teacher. Thus, although the current number of teachers of programme is more than sufficient for successful implementation of the programme, the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of these teachers needs to be considered.

The staff turnover within the programme appears to be quite limited as the majority of staff have long-standing employment relationship with MC (and the previous institution). The average age of teachers in the Programme is 50,2 years, many of them having teaching

experience dating to more than 20 years. This provides significant continuity in both the development of and teaching on the programme, but does indicate the need for continuous staff development to ensure the relevance of the subject and its material to the needs of the students and employers. As the SER has already identified they intend to strengthen the staffing position by inviting doctoral degree staff to deliver study subjects as well as increasing the internationalisation of the programme through participation in mobility programs and raising the overall language standards.

MC enables teachers of the programme to participate in training events through different development projects. The Life-Long Learning Programme includes Erasmus mobility teaching and training visits, Leonardo Innovation Transfer and training activities. From the evidence provided some 50 per cent of the staff have participated in international training activities. The College plans academic staff training and development initiatives on annual basis. The teaching staff, during the meeting, confirmed that 5 out of 11 participated in Erasmus exchange programmes abroad during the last 5 years, and a range of staff development seminars including working with new learning and teaching technologies such as Moodle were provided by the College.

The research activities of the teaching staff although not extensive, are in line with the expectations for staff engaged in a professional bachelor study programme. The research activities are concentrated on the application of the research to meet the regional needs, such as Marijampole City image, leisure opportunities for seniors in the region, development of personality through education and others. The recent launch of research periodical “Homo-Societas-Technologiae” is a significant step in recognising the staff contributions to research to a wider audience. These actions demonstrate the commitment to strengthening of research dimension in MC with regard to reinforcing the programme in Business Management.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises of Marijampole College are well equipped and adequate for teaching. The building is renovated and has an excellent classroom used for a centrepiece of the programmes the business simulation. This use of a business simulation as a structured learning activity is to be commended and provides an immersive and innovative opportunity for students to better understand the complex inter-relationships that exist within business organisations.

The classrooms visited were sufficient in numbers and were appropriately equipped for the delivery of the programme, and the supporting facilities are adequate for the current size of the student population. Computing hardware and software is widely available to students and is appropriate and up-dated with the relevant software that would be found in industry. Teaching

notes and additional learning resource materials are available to all students via Moodle which also provides opportunity for distance learning.

The internships and the development of professional practice is an integral and obligatory component for the students of the programme. The internship is appropriate (30 ECTS) and well organised. The study programme comprises different practical activities practices: Information Technologies Practice (2nd term; its aim is to develop skills in information technologies to practically apply them in company's activities; Practice at "Simulith" firm, Speciality Skills Practice (4th term) and Final Practice (5th and 6th terms) (SER, p. 15-16). Practical skills are developed consecutively. The Business Simulation Firm "Marko Mantingele" used during study process provides students with necessary knowledge, skills and competences to run a business and contributes up to great extent to the readiness of the students to access labour market. It has to be admitted that some teachers recognised that the schedule for the practice at the simulation firm is not convenient for all the students. Therefore, the schedule requires reconsideration to better fit with the students' needs.

During the discussions with the students it was also noted that some 95 per cent of students were also engaged in part-time employment thus improving their overall work experience and a better understanding of working within business organisations.

Should students seek support and assistance in obtaining internships this is provided by the Career Centre. Some students confirmed during the meeting with panel that they know almost nothing about the Career Centre. This view has to be taken into consideration by the programme management to improve communication on the resources available.

The wide range of social partners are active in providing positions within the region. There are few students who have taken advantage of the Erasmus mobility program in order to study abroad. When questioned, the students themselves felt they lacked self-confidence to travel independently abroad, in addition to the foreign language considerations. In many cases students also had domestic or the employment commitments that prevented them being able to take advantage of these opportunities. The College provides opportunities for students to undertake field trips as well as visits to business fairs and professional conferences.

The review panel found that the library has an appropriate range of facilities including access to a range of electronic resources provided by the American Embassy that would directly support this programme. There will be a need to increase learning materials as new specialisations are developed. Overall the resources are adequate for the implementation of the study programme at MC.

The retail shop in the hallway, that provides a range of confectionery, stationery and related products to students and staff, has been created as a business practice environment. This

is clearly a valuable real-time opportunity for students to exploit and practice commercial merchandise activities and was valued by the students as providing a real-world learning opportunity.

Overall, the facilities and learning resources are at an adequate level and correspond to the needs of the students and the programme of MC.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The admission requirements are on website; the information is clear and publicly available.

The small cohort size and the recent decision to alternate annual intakes to this programme does give rise to issues related to the long-term sustainability of the programme given its importance to the region and the developing economy. It is recognised that this is a broader issue than specific to the college and is a reflection of the demographic profile of current school leavers, but needs to be addressed as a matter of priority. A number of measures including increasing the part-time intake and making a number of options available through distance learning have already been taken, but a more innovative approach to developing both entrepreneurship and internationalisation could assist in providing a unique positioning for the programme and potentially enhance its international attractiveness.

It was noted that a potential further measure to strengthen the programme, as identified in the SER, was that some of the study programme material is prepared in a foreign language. Any development of this kind where study subjects are delivered in a foreign language would enhance students' confidence in working within foreign languages as well as offering greater employment opportunities in the longer term. This would be a significant commitment but would resonate with regional economic needs as well as developing mobility opportunities. During the meetings with students and alumni it was noted that only 1 student took the opportunity of foreign exchange programmes. When asked, students indicated that they lacked the confidence in their language skills to be able to undertake work or study in what may well be a third language. However, students are encouraged to participate in applied research activities. The students of the programme are involved in applied research and the 2nd and 3rd year students took part in research for "Consumers Attitude towards Market Observation and Consumer Security and the Protection of their Rights" from which two students presented their findings in a public lecture. All students carry out applied research during preparation term papers and final thesis (SER, p. 23).

With small cohort sizes and close interaction between the staff and student's, the level of academic and social support the students had access to would be in excess of that may be found

in comparable international institutions. This is a significant strength to the overall student experience. However, the students would have welcomed a more direct response to the feedback they provide through the student questionnaires, although they appreciated the very direct responses they received from the College in responding to any specific concerns.

Assessment of the student performances is appropriate in providing academic judgments that the overall outcomes are met. Whilst the students when questioned considered that the overall balance of assessments were appropriate it was clear to the panel that a better relationship could be established between the overall size, type and frequency of assessments and the "value" of the subjects in terms of credits.

The meetings with the social partners provided considerable evidence that the programme prepared the students well for the world of work. Social partners delivered feedback that students have theoretical and practical skills which are gained during studies.

The alumni community is an active one as indeed is the social partnerships with employers. Both of these can provide significant additional input to the college as well as acting as a catalyst for further programme developments. The efforts from the College could be strengthened to release hidden potential of these relationships, for example by inviting social partners to more college-based events that could include industry based seminars with the social partners and students on future regional employment needs.

2.6. Programme management

The study programme is organised in accordance with the procedures of the quality management system and is renewed as well as reviewed periodically. The Director of the College takes an active role in monitoring the Quality Management System in order to implement modifications to the programme. The responsibilities for decision-making and monitoring of the implementation of the programme among Study Programme Committee, Academic Council, Faculty and Department are clearly allocated (SER, p. 24). The management structures and responsibilities are clearly defined and implemented thus ensuring that the programme is well managed and supported based on the Internal Quality management system introduced in MC.

The student assessment results and overall performance are collated and analysed on a regular basis results and are considered in the context of the overall quality management system. Actions are taken as appropriate to meet the continuing need to the students on the programme. A number of surveys undertaken of both staff and students including a mid-term review and student and staff surveys. The results of the surveys provide additional data which can be aggregated to provide a more comprehensive overview of the programme and an important

source of information for continuous improvement. The college has recognised that the current student questionnaire does not provide a full range of appropriate feedback and will be improved.

The range of social partners, alumni, management as well as students and staff are all engaged in the programme improvement process. This provides for continuous improvement and review as an ongoing iterative process.

Social partners contribute to the improvement of the quality of study programmes through their involvement in programme discussions as well as guest lectures and career days. In any future programme development it would be appropriate to engage with the social partners at an early stage as these could provide valuable input into the curriculum design as well as acting as "champions" of the program to the wider regional community.

It was clear from the detailed discussions with students, alumni and social partners that the College responded quickly and appropriately to issues as they arose and that these were considered through the normal internal quality assurance measures that were effective and efficient.

Overall, the responsibilities for the management of the programme are clear, appropriate and provided the relevant structure through which the programme can be improved. The College may wish to consider an opportunity to involve the social partners in a more structured way in the future to capitalize on their clear enthusiasm and commitment to the programme.

2.7. Examples of excellence *

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

The College should be commended on the analytical and critical review they undertook in preparing the Self- Evaluation Report. The analysis included a reflective and critical review of the strengths and weaknesses of the programme that greatly assisted the work of the panel and demonstrated a commitment to enhancement and further action.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The aims and learning outcomes of the programme should be reviewed and clarified to ensure they provide a unique focus that meets the needs of the potential students, the labour market and the emerging regional economies. To achieve that a closer articulation should be developed between the programme aims, the programme learning outcomes and the learning outcomes of the subjects to ensure that the relationship between the aims and outcomes is clear, that the subject content is relevant to the aims and outcomes and that the assessment processes provide the appropriate evidence that the aims and outcomes are being met.
2. That through the review process, a closer integration and streamlining of the curriculum is achieved to provide a more appropriate balance in the subjects and the ECTS. This will assist in avoiding a fragmentation of the curriculum and present a more coherent integrated curriculum.
3. That the programme should develop a broader international focus while maintaining the strong commitment to entrepreneurship and innovation to meet the needs of the regional economy. This would suggest a modification to the programme aims to incorporate those factors, this would suggest for example, “To prepare business professionals at bachelor level with the knowledge, ability and understanding to develop entrepreneurial business activities including new business start-ups, that meet the current and emerging needs of the regional economy including operating in an international context”.
4. That the staff resource continue to be strengthened through; continuing the staff development activities, continuing to promote international collaboration including Erasmus exchanges, the recruitment of additional doctoral candidates as appropriate, additional language training is offered to staff to facilitate staff exchanges and further internationalisation of the curriculum, opportunity for staff to update their professional skills through short-term attachments to local industries.
5. That the research periodical “Homo-Societas-Technologiae” is further developed to encourage active research engagement between staff and social partners to the benefit of the regional community.
6. That the college should consider a more structured approach to developing the close cooperation with social partners and alumni that would strengthen the relationship with the study programme and provide valuable input into all aspects of the programme development.

IV. SUMMARY

The study programme *Business Management* (Professional BA) has many sound features and meets the needs of the local economy in that it provides students who are both "ready for work and ready to work". Through the evidence presented in the Self-Evaluation Report and gathered during the site visit the panel considered and noted a number of strengths and weaknesses of the programme of study. These are presented below and are designed to assist the college in improving the programme to ensure its sustainability in meeting the regional needs.

The aims and learning outcomes of the programme are based on the current academic and professional requirements however these require further clarification and a closer articulation between the aims and the outcomes to ensure the programme remains fit purpose given the changing needs in the regional economy. In order to facilitate this closer integration across subjects of the curriculum should be encouraged in order to provide a more balanced curriculum and to avoid the potential of fragmentation with a large number of variable ECTS credit subjects.

There is a reasonable balance and progression in the learning opportunities presented to the students and the student experience with small cohort sizes and strong academic and pastoral support that encourages student participation, motivation and a positive attitude.

The staffing base is adequate in delivering the learning and teaching on the programme although it is important to maintain the professional currency of the teaching staff through staff development activities including industry internships and collaborative research. Further engagement with doctoral candidates would support further development of the staffing base and contribute to the field of study. In order to facilitate the greater internationalisation of the programme staff development opportunities will need to be offered that includes developing enhanced language skills especially if the longer term intention is to teach some of the subjects in other languages.

The Review Team recognised that recruiting students within the region presents challenges in fostering and facilitating international exchanges. This where the students lacked self-confidence to be able to take advantage of such exchanges or were constrained by domestic or employment commitments. In developing strategies to support internationalisation the issue of developing student self-confidence in travel abroad must be a key consideration.

The Review Team considered that there was an appropriate structure in place for monitoring the programme and that this could be further strengthened with a greater inclusion of the social partners and alumni in helping to shape the future development of the programme given the rapidly changing labour market needs the local economy. The students and alumni of

the programme presented a very positive attitude and motivation to work that was recognised and valued by the social partners.

The facilities were entirely appropriate for a programme of this nature, they were well looked after and there were a number of positive developments in terms of providing professional practice opportunities through the college shop as well as through the internship programmes. The simulation exercise was recognised by the panel as being a very valuable contribution to the learning and teaching approach and was considered to have opportunity to be further developed as a central learning and teaching tool through the integration of subjects within the curriculum design.

The Review Team observed that the College had through the SER identified a number of weaknesses in the programme and that these were confirmed through discussions during the visit. In addressing these weaknesses the panel consider that the programme would be significantly strengthened and develop through a more unique focus that would improve its recruitment and sustainability into the future. The low student numbers and the decision not to recruit full-time cohorts to this programme every year, but every other year, was recognised by the panel as a contingency to ensure an appropriate student experience. However, this model may not be sustainable in the long term and therefore any strategies to develop and strengthen the programme could only enhance its recruitment potential and sustainability.

Changes and developments in the programme that would improve student self-confidence especially in the area of language skills, would also enhance students opportunity for mobility, and create the appropriate environment to develop further internationalisation of the programme. This is considered to be particularly relevant in the context of the rapid changes in the regional economy and the need for greater internationalisation in order to capitalise on the opportunities offered.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Business Management* (state code – 653N10008) at Marijampolė College is given **positive/negative** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	2
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	16

*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:

Prof. dr. Peter Jones

Grupės nariai:

Team members:

Prof. dr. Tatjana Volkova

Prof. dr. Wes Wierda

Prof. dr. Giedrius Jucevičius

Ms. Karolina Zelbiene

Vaida Spūdytė

**MARIJAMPOLĖS KOLEGIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
VERSLO VALDYMAS (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 653N10008) 2015-12-30 EKSPERTINIO
VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-369-1 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Marijampolės kolegijos studijų programa *Verslo valdymas* (valstybinis kodas – 653N10008) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	2
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	2
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	16

* 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)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Studijų programa *Verslo valdymas* (profesinis bakalauro) turi daug teigiamų bruožų ir atitinka vietos ekonomikos poreikius, nes parengia studentus, kurie yra „parengti ir pasirengę dirbti“. Remdamasi savianalizės suvestine ir vizito metu gauta informacija, ekspertų grupė apsvarstė ir pastebėjo nemažai studijų programos stiprybių ir silpnybių. Jos yra išvardytos toliau ir skirtos padėti kolegijai tobulinti programą, kad ji atitiktų regiono poreikius.

Studijų programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai grindžiami aktualiais akademiniais ir profesiniais reikalavimais, tačiau juos reikia papildomai tobulinti, glaudžiau suderinti tikslus ir rezultatus, kad programa leistų pasiekti tikslą atsižvelgiant į besikeičiančius regiono ekonomikos poreikius. Norint tai pasiekti, reikia glaudžiau integruoti studijų turinio dalykus, kad studijų

turinys būtų daugiau subalansuotas ir išvengta galimo suskaidymo į daug įvairių dalykų, už kuriuos skiriami ECTS kreditai.

Studentams numatytos studijavimo galimybės yra tinkamai subalansuotos, išlaikytas judėjimas į priekį, studentai dirba mažose grupėse, jiems teikiama didelė akademinė ir psichologinė pagalba, kuri skatina studentų dalyvavimą, motyvaciją ir teigiamą požiūrį.

Personalo pakanka studijų programai vykdyti, studijavimui ir dėstymui garantuoti, tačiau svarbu išlaikyti dėstytojų profesinį lygį, tobulinant jų profesinę veiklą, įskaitant stažuotes industrijoje ir bendrus mokslinius tyrimus. Didesnis doktorantų įtraukimas padėtų plėtoti personalo komandą ir prisidėtų prie studijų srities plėtojimo. Siekiant užtikrinti didesnę studijų programos dėstytojų tarptautiškumą, reikia siūlyti tobulinimosi galimybes, pavyzdžiui, kalbos įgūdžių tobulinimą, ypač atsižvelgiant į tolesnę perspektyvą kai kuriuos dalykus dėstyti kitomis kalbomis.

Ekspertų grupė pripažino, kad tarptautinių mainų skatinimas – tikras iššūkis studentams regione. Studentams trūksta pasitikėjimo pasinaudoti tokių mainų privalumais, juos varžo buitinės aplinkybės ar darbo įsipareigojimai. Rengiant strategijas tarptautiškumui skatinti, būtina įtraukti studentų pasitikėjimo savimi ugdymą keliaujant į užsienį.

Ekspertų grupė mano, kad veikia tinkama programos stebėjimo struktūra, tačiau reikia toliau ją sustiprinti daugiau įtraukiant socialinius partnerius ir alumnus, kurie padėtų kurti programą ateityje, atsižvelgiant į sparčiai kintančius vietos ekonomikos darbo rinkos poreikius. Programos studentai ir alumnai pasižymi labai teigiamu požiūriu į darbą ir motyvacija, ką pripažino ir vertina socialiniai partneriai.

Materialieji ištekliai yra visiškai tinkami tokio pobūdžio programai, jie gerai prižiūrimi, suteikiamos puikios profesinės praktikos galimybės per kolegijos parduotuvę ir profesinių praktikų programas. Ekspertų grupė teigiamai vertina simuliacijos užsiėmimus, kurie yra labai vertingi ir padeda tobulinti dėstymą ir studijavimą. Manoma, kad juos galima toliau plėtoti kaip pagrindinę mokymosi ir mokymo priemonę integruojant dalykus studijų turinyje.

Ekspertų grupė pastebėjo, kad kolegija savianalizės suvestinėje nustatė keletą programos trūkumų, kurie buvo patvirtinti ir diskusijose vizito metu. Svarstydama šiuos trūkumus, ekspertų grupė nustatė, kad studijų programą būtų galima žymiai patobulinti nustatant specifinį akcentą, kuris leistų pagerinti studentų priėmimą ir programos tvarumą ateityje. Ekspertų grupė pripažįsta, kad nedidelis studentų skaičius ir sprendimas neformuoti nuolatinių studijų grupių šioje programoje kiekvienais metais, bet kas dvejus metus, nėra geras dalykas tinkamai studentų patirčiai užtikrinti. Toks modelis gali būti netvarus ilgalaikėje perspektyvoje, todėl būtina rengti strategiją studijų programai plėtoti ir stiprinti, siekiant padidinti studentų skaičių ir programos tvarumą.

Studijų programos pokyčiai ir plėtojimas, kuris pagerintų studentų pasitikėjimą savimi, ypač kalbos gebėjimų srityje, taip pat padidintų studentų judumo galimybes ir sukurtų tinkamą aplinką toliau plėtoti programos tarptautiškumą. Tai ypač aktualu atsižvelgiant į sparčius pokyčius regiono ekonomikoje ir būtinybę užtikrinti didesnę tarptautiškumą, siekiant pasinaudoti siūlomomis galimybėmis.

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III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Iš naujo apsvarstyti ir aiškiau suformuluoti studijų programos tikslus ir studijų rezultatus, siekiant užtikrinti, kad jie būtų susitelkę į potencialių studentų, darbo rinkos ir kylančios regiono ekonomikos poreikių tenkinimą. Norint tai pasiekti, reikia glaudžiau tarpusavyje susieti programos tikslus, programos studijų rezultatus ir dalykų studijų rezultatus, užtikrinti aiškų studijų programos tikslų ir studijų rezultatų ryšį, dalyko turinys turi atitikti tikslus ir rezultatus, vertinimo procesas leisti tinkamai įvertinti, kad tikslai ir studijų rezultatai yra pasiekti.
2. Vertinimo proceso metu glaudžiau susieti ir racionalizuoti studijų turinį, siekiant užtikrinti tinkamą dalykų ir ECTS pusiausvyrą. Tai padės išvengti studijų turinio suskaidymo ir leis parengti nuoseklesnį kompleksinį studijų turinį.
3. Studijų programoje daugiau dėmesio skirti tarptautiškumui, išlaikant tvirtą įsipareigojimą dėl verslumo ir inovacijų, siekiant patenkinti regiono ekonomikos poreikius. Šiuo tikslu reikėtų tikslinti studijų programos tikslus ir įtraukti, pavyzdžiui, „rengti bakalauro lygio verslo specialistus, turinčius žinių, gebėjimų ir suvokimą, kaip vykdyti verslo veiklą, įskaitant naujo verslo steigimą, atitinkantį regiono ekonomikos esamus ir atsirandančius poreikius, taip pat veiklą tarptautiniame kontekste“.
4. Toliau stiprinti personalo išteklius: tęsti darbuotojų tobulinimo veiklą, skatinti tarptautinį bendradarbiavimą, įskaitant mainus pagal *Erasmus* programą, prireikus, papildomai samdyti doktorantus, siūlyti papildomus kalbos mokymo kursus personalui, tai padėtų vykdyti darbuotojų mainus ir toliau plėtoti studijų turinį tarptautiškumo kontekste, suteikti darbuotojams galimybę atnaujinti savo profesinius įgūdžius per trumpalaikes komandiruotes vietos industrijose.
5. Toliau leisti mokslinių tyrimų periodinį leidinį „Homo-Societas-Technologiae“, siekiant skatinti dėstytojus ir socialinius partnerius aktyviai dalyvauti mokslinių tyrimų veikloje regiono bendruomenės labui.

6. Kolegija turėtų apsvarstyti labiau struktūrizuotą požiūrį plėtojant glaudų bendradarbiavimą su socialiniais partneriais ir alumnais, kuris stiprintų ryšį su studijų programa ir svariai prisidėtų prie įvairių visų studijų programos kūrimo aspektų.

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2.7. Išskirtinės kokybės pavyzdžiai

Kolegiją reikia pagirti už analitinę ir kritinę apžvalgą, kurią atliko rengiant savianalizės suvestinę. Suvestinėje pateikiama studijų programos stiprybių ir silpnybių reflektuojami ir kritinė apžvalga, tai labai padėjo ekspertų grupės darbui ir įrodo pasiryžimą tobulėti ir imtis veiksmų.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)